Axiom Drives Efficiency & Transparency for Growing **Hospital Sisters Health System**

Hospital Sisters
HEALTH SYSTEM

Over the past decade, Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS) has expanded to encompass 15 hospitals throughout Illinois and Wisconsin without adding staff to its two-person corporate finance team.

Accurate, efficient, secure, and reliable finance solutions are essential for the lean team to coordinate finances across the growing health system, said Spencer Young, Senior Financial Analyst for HSHS. Strata's Axiom software has been the key to managing all budgeting, cost accounting, and financial planning processes across the health system.

Prior to implementing the Axiom™ Healthcare Suite, managers at the various hospitals pulled data manually from multiple sources. In many cases, they didn't have access to all of the systems, so the corporate team pulled data for them. The process often took days or weeks, depending on the demand.

With Axiom, Young said his department can build a framework for the requested reports easily. Hospital leaders and department managers then refresh the reports to get updated data, as opposed to waiting for the monthly reports generated under the previous system. Axiom provides managers access to more timely data and saves hundreds of work hours.

"Once we set up an Axiom report, it takes no time, because the managers can serve themselves," Young said.

The software is so efficient, HSHS added two newly acquired hospitals plus the Axiom™ Enterprise Decision Support (EDS) module without adding staff. The solutions offer automation so everything functions seamlessly. Young estimates the acquisitions expanded their capacity 50%, but the solutions' ease of use empowered them to take on that additional capacity with their existing headcount.

Easy, Transparent Reporting

Axiom™ Budgeting and Financial Planning solutions give HSHS a single source of truth by collating data from the general ledger, payroll, and other sources systemwide to produce financial statements for all HSHS hospitals.

50%
greater capacity without the need for more staff

$10x
the value of the health system's previous cost accounting solution

Hundreds of work hours saved through seamless automations

The flexible reporting function empowers managers, directors, and vice presidents at the various hospitals to zero–in on specific data they need, view system–level data, or slice it by division, region, and more to fit their needs.

"We love Axiom because we know exactly where to go to get all of our information," Young said. "It is like a one–stop shop. Whether they're looking for information on 10 different departments, one hospital, or just one department — everyone can see exactly what they want to see in Axiom."

The solutions help improve billing accuracy by giving managers real–time information. Under the old system, any incorrect charges, billing, or accounting items required the individual who identified the error to coordinate with multiple departments to correct the mistake within a tight, 24–hour period. With Axiom, errors can be identified and flagged promptly as they occur.

"Now we can run reports daily to see if anything is off before the month actually closes," Young said. "That helps with our accounts payable. If a bill is not supposed to be in that department, we can transfer it before month's end."

More Informed Decision–Making

Prior to Axiom, HSHS used a disk operating system (DOS) solution for cost accounting. While the cost was comparable to Axiom Enterprise Decision Support (EDS), Young said Axiom offers 10 times the value compared to their previous software.

As with Budgeting, Axiom EDS seamlessly integrates with the organization's different systems, giving managers accurate and timely information to support decision–making, which positively impacts cash flow and profitability. Managers also can monitor workforce productivity and staffing levels to better manage productivity.

"The end user can run a report and get insights almost instantlessly," Young said. "We are only a day behind on our information that we feed from our patient extracts. As of today, we have all of yesterday's information in there already."

The corporate finance team has set up a combination of standard and customizable reports that users can run themselves and drill down into data as needed. For example, users can link to accounts payable directly from financial statements. Under the old system, they were in disparate systems.

"I love how you can drill down into everything," Young said. "It is all in one place and everything is spelled out as to what bill it was, who put it in, and what time it went in."

Users can even embed links into the reports. For example, the finance team can put an invoice code in and add a link to it in a report. This provides transparency for end users because they can navigate directly to associated invoices. Busy managers can quickly track documents and pinpoint any errors. It also saves administrators' time, because they don't have to manually search for individual documents when questions arise.

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> ***Spencer Young***
> *Senior Financial Analyst for HSHS*

Adding Axiom EDS was a no–brainer, Young said. It was easier, faster, and a better fit than the other, third–party cost accounting solutions HSHS considered.

"We already had our general ledger and accounts payable structures set up, so when we added Cost Accounting and EDS, we were already over halfway there," he said. "Adding products to our existing software suite was much easier than adding a whole different solution."

HSHS also uses Axiom™ Capital Planning to help managers prioritize and make more informed capital decisions. Once managers submit capital project requests in Axiom, each hospital receives a file containing all the capital requests in one report, and the vice presidents rank them by priority. HSHS leaders then make the final capital planning decisions based on that feedback. The process ensures department managers and others have a clear view to how capital decisions are made. It also helps ensure that decisions are based on sound, accurate, and timely information.

Optimal Support for Optimal Results

Overall, the Axiom Healthcare Suite provides HSHS a high degree of accountability, measurability, and accuracy, Young concluded. It empowers the health system's leaders to view reports and make decisions more confidently based on real–time data. For security, the corporate finance team assigns permissions to limit access within the system to the appropriate individuals.

Young recommends Strata to other health systems seeking enterprise performance management solutions. Both the products and the customer service exceed his expectations, as the company offers a wealth of expertise to help healthcare providers get systems up and running and provides ongoing support. In addition to the live help desk, users can access hundreds of online tutorial videos anytime to advance their skills and troubleshoot.

"All the consultants that we worked with walked us through the implementations step–by–step," Young said. "It is so easy to use. I'm an accountant and have no information technology background, but the Axiom Healthcare Suite is easy to pick up and run with from day one."

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