



SMART HEALTHCARE ROSTERING

Case Study: Burnside War Memorial Hospital



Burnside Hospital

Burnside War Memorial Hospital (Burnside) is a private not-for-profit community hospital. The hospital offers services in over a dozen specialties, as well as beds ranging from short stay for day surgery through to high dependency.

Their Challenge

Rostering at Burnside falls on three highly trained clinical managers, assigned to running the general ward, maternity ward, and the operating theatre.

Their task to produce fortnightly rosters previously took at least two days each. They were also required to consider factors including the correct placement of nurses based on their skills, labour contract laws (i.e. Enterprise Agreement rules), staff availability and individual preferences, fairness across staff, and cost. While it is a necessary task, it is not the optimal way for senior staff to spend their time. It is not a task they particularly enjoy, and was often completed after hours.

Burnside realised that a more efficient process of rostering was needed and brought in Daitum. Burnside Director of Finance & Corporate Services and project sponsor, Joyce Jaeger, told Daitum "The solution must automate the roster decision making based on the hospital's business needs and rules, and the staff employment agreements."

Daitum's Solution

Daitum deployed its nurse rostering solution across the three different wards at Burnside. This web browser-based SaaS application is built on Daitum's proprietary optimisation platform requiring no local software installation. The simple user interface absorbs Burnside's existing rostering spreadsheets, minimising the need for additional staff training.

Data is uploaded via Excel file imports from Burnside's existing HR system, removing the need for complex integration. Users can then make updates to roster inputs, such as changes to the required staff numbers and skills mix.

Clicking "Optimise" automates the rostering process – the Daitum platform trying millions of alternative rosters, learning from its experiences to intelligently optimise the resultant roster. A user can then interactively review, override, and re-optimize any optimisation decision, retaining complete control over the rostering process. Customisable reports and allocation sheets are available for download for distribution to staff in a familiar and easy to read format. Different "what-if" scenarios can also be explored that vary roster inputs to answer strategic questions for the business.

The nurse rostering solution honours all staff leave requests and optimises skill mixes while adhering to all labour contract rules. This is particularly important considering the three wards adhere to different business logic including labour contract constraints, variable activity, variable skills and skills mixes, and KPIs.

Outcomes

- 6x faster roster build
- 100% compliance with leave requests
- 36% improvement in desired skill mixes
- Deployed across 3 clinical specialities with different rule sets
- Under 4 months payback period

"The time taken to produce the fortnightly roster has been drastically reduced, allowing my valuable time to be utilised in other key areas."

Wendy Gray
Clinical Manager

"Daitum's solution helps us comply with our rostering business rules and employment obligations, delivering a roster in which the same rules apply to everyone."

Suzanne Murray
Director of Clinical Operations

The Results

Daitum's solution significantly improves the efficiency of key resources, transforming what was previously a very difficult and laborious task spanning multiple days into a more efficient process. Since implementing the rostering solution, Wendy Gray, Clinical Manager, has been especially pleased with how the Daitum rostering solution has helped her. She told us: "The time taken to produce the fortnightly roster has been drastically reduced, allowing my valuable time to be utilised in other key areas. We also appreciate the responsiveness of the help and assistance Daitum provide when needed."

In the medical industry, where labour contract rules and having the necessary skills are pivotal to the success of operations, this rostering solution manages to account for all of these constraints every time a roster is created. Suzanne Murray, Director of Clinical Operations, reports "Daitum's solution helps us comply with our rostering business rules and employment obligations, delivering a roster in which the same rules apply to everyone."

Daitum's solution has also improved the ability to adhere to effective staffing budgets when it comes to having the right mix of staff on duty at all times. When asked about the project outcomes, Ms Jaeger said "This tool helps bring visibility of rostering decisions and therefore costs, but more importantly, frees up our key staff to concentrate on what they do best."

A COVID-19 SUCCESS STORY

The flexibility of the Daitum rostering solution came to the fore when Burnside had to change their rostering rules in a rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic threat. Daitum worked closely with managers in separating the larger work groups into rostered teams which was rapidly rolled out. Wendy's feedback was "Daitum have always provided excellent support and their help with the COVID-19 driven changes was appreciated."



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