

NHS Hospital Trust creates significant cost-savings

with a compliant, costed plan to manage out hard-copy records

This hospital is one of the UK's largest Trusts, looking after over 750,000 patients every year.

Since 1996 they have stored all of their medical records with Iron Mountain in a secure offsite facility, enabling them to review and manage all records in one place, via one system, with full visibility of costs and the ability to model future costs easily.

However, the Trust had circa 5 million files stored with Iron Mountain by 2022 and was aware that, due to changing practices as well as budgetary pressures, there was an increasing need to review the way records were managed as well as to put in place a more proactive destruction programme. The Trust wanted to be in the best position to reduce both the volume of records and costs.

Historically, the files had been stored on an open-shelf storage basis, which means that files are stored individually on low-density shelving for fast access. This was a common requirement for NHS files which can be needed at very short notice.

However, this is a less widely-used approach today as the NHS moves to more digital ways of working.

The Trust worked with Iron Mountain to review their entire holdings and move to box-level storage with reduced storage costs and files stored together according to the year in which they should be destroyed. Iron Mountain frequently runs programmes such as this under its 'Smart Sort' service, which means that files can confidently and accurately be destroyed at box-, rather than file level, thereby also reducing activity and destruction costs while still maintaining a full chain of custody for audit purposes.

The Trust can now immediately destroy nearly 1 million of their records and will be able to almost halve their inventory by the end of 2024



Industry

Healthcare

Challenge

The hospital had consolidated their records but wanted to minimise ongoing costs, reduce exposure to risk and have a clear, costed plan for phasing out their hard-copy records

Solution

Iron Mountain Smart Sort, which boxes up records by retention date

Value

- The Trust estimate they will be able reduce their holdings by 80% over 7 years with a fully-costed and defensible destruction and storage programme, with an associated cost reduction of 70%.



Previously, the Trust could only destroy records at individual file level but after implementing a Smart Sort programme they will be able to destroy records at box level, significantly reducing their cost to maintain an up-to-date destructions programme.

Management of destructions are managed via Iron Mountain's IM Connect portal, which enables instant visibility of all documents for fast decision-making.

This revised approach also gives long-term visibility of what the Trust's storage costs will be over time and they will be able to see the impact of any decreased storage volume on costs in real time.

The Trust can now immediately destroy nearly 1 million of their records and will be able to almost halve their inventory by the end of 2024, significantly reducing their storage costs and exposure to risk. By 2031, the Trust aims to store only 1 million records in hard copy, making them fully compliant and reducing their overall annual storage costs by nearly 70%.

Before Smart Sort Project	After Smart Sort Project
Open shelf file storage service	File from box storage service
Files stored on shelves with mixed retention dates	Files boxed up by retention dates Identification of files past retention for immediate destruction
Compliance and audit risk (GDPR/NHS CoP 2021) by retaining records past retention dates	Full compliance by destroying records currently past retention and also the ability to show an auditable long term plan on destructions moving forward
No cost effective plan to reduce and eventually eliminate physical storage altogether	Long term plan to map out storage from current levels down to the minimum
Destruction and certification by file	Destruction and certification by box, reducing the cost by over £3m
Contract exit cost calculated per file	Contract exit cost calculated per box, significantly reducing liability

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About Iron Mountain

Iron Mountain Incorporated (NYSE: IRM), founded in 1951, is the global leader for storage and information management services. Trusted by more than 220,000 organisations around the world, and with a real estate network of more than 85 million square feet across more than 1400 facilities in over 50 countries, Iron Mountain stores and protects billions of information assets, including critical business information, highly sensitive data, and cultural and historical artifacts. Providing solutions that include secure storage, information management, digital transformation, secure destruction, as well as data centres, art storage and logistics, and cloud services, Iron Mountain helps organisations to lower cost and risk, comply with regulations, recover from disaster, and enable a more digital way of working. Visit www.ironmountain.com/en-gb for more information.

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