

Saskatoon Health Region Relieves Challenges By Leveraging Technology

USING TECHNOLOGY TO SIMPLIFY PROCESS & BE PROACTIVE

1 Understanding the Need for Change

Saskatoon Health Region (SHR) was facing a number of challenges with staff scheduling after a number of budget cutbacks and the department was in crisis mode. An additional 40 schedulers were hired to manage the new needs brought about by these changes, but it was clear that this type of process was not sustainable. A better, more efficient solution was needed to ensure that work was completed in an accurate, timely matter.



Tracking key metrics showed change was considered a necessity. Inefficient scheduling systems costed the region **\$15 million** in overtime, resulted in **1,040 shift inquiries** and **59,531 payroll corrections**. Over 80% of the operating costs for the Saskatoon Health Region were for labour, and in that state, the region would be facing a \$30 million deficit if no changes were made to scheduling.

2 On-Boarding NC Smart Call™ at Saskatoon Health Region

The fully automated, integrated and streamlined processes within NC Smart Call were implemented to leverage the existing scheduling software (Kronos ESP) with minimal disruption. Modifiable rules and logic were embedded to take into account the unique labor union rules and policies present in Canadian hospitals.



Employee uptake was positive with staff and managers feeling at ease and comfortable with the efficiency and user-friendly system, and being able to receive data, information at the palm of their hand on a call, via email or text.



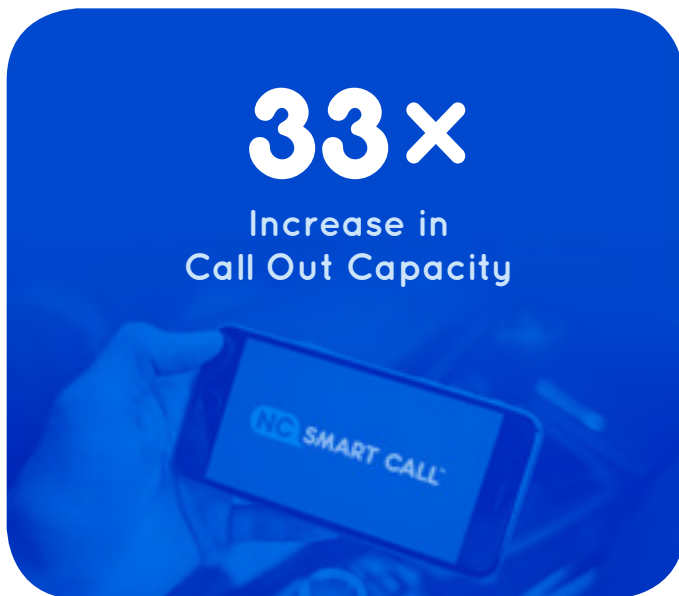
The simplified staffing process empowered employees to plan their shifts in advance and resulted in **80% gain in staff satisfaction** scores with the scheduling department.

3 A New and Improved Efficient System

With the launch of NC Smart Call, Saskatoon Health Region's main issues have subsided and significant efficiencies have been realized. The result of Smart Call into SHR has seen **33x increase** in call out capacity, **50% fewer** scheduling related grievances, **4x more** reliefs shifts filled per day by staffing clerks, a **60% reduction** in unfilled shifts and a substantial operational saving.

	Before 	After 
Shifts Filled	7,500/wk	8,800/wk
Manual Calls	25,000/wk	100/wk
Automated Calls	0	41,400/wk
Automated E-mails	0	67,500/wk
Automated Texts	0	100,000/wk
Schedulers Required	30	6
Manager Time Spent	4hrs/day	> 2hrs/day
Upcoming Shift Vacancies*	24,000	6,000

*After annual vacation requests have been processed



Employees can now view their schedules from the past, present and into the future. They can view, bid and cancel Pre-Booking shifts as well as submit automatic bids and accept single, multiple or block shifts. In addition, they can update their own personal information, identifying their availability and inputting any exceptions on shifts for sick days, vacation, etc.

4 Work Has Never Looked Better

Staff at Saskatoon Health Region can now fill over 140 relief shifts per day, allowing them to redeploy resources and do the work that is of higher priority and requires more attention.

Employees can see schedules online, bid on open shifts months in advance, control the medium of correspondence (email, text or phone) as well as filter the type of notifications they want to receive through the Smart Call system.



Staff schedulers can save time filling available shifts with automated call outs. Employee responses are collected, organized and displayed automatically, improving communication with employees through email, text or phone. Staff schedulers can also now create and post staff schedules months in advance.



Department managers are also seeing the benefits of this system by being able to quickly communicate with staff through a broadcast system and also being able to access analytics and reports providing insights into department scheduling tendencies.



5 Collaborating for Success

The Saskatoon Health Region took a unique and innovative approach to solve a complex problem facing their staff and scheduling department. A recognized software development firm (NC Consulting) was engaged to identify ways to improve manual workflows through the use of technology and the NC Smart Call platform was born. Consistent discussions and collaboration between the two parties have resulted in a robust software offering that fulfills the needs of Saskatoon Health Region on a cost effective basis. NC Smart Call is now being utilized to drive efficiencies and staff satisfaction at multiple health regions across the country.
