

HL7 Soup



# NHS Foundation Trust Case Study

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**HL7 Soup brings easy, cost-effective  
integration to Cambridgeshire &  
Petersborough Foundation Trust**

**Cambridgeshire and Peterborough  
Foundation Trust achieves low-cost, user-  
friendly integration of real-time patient  
data, thanks to HL7 Soup Integration Host.**

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# The customer challenge

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Serving a population of around 1 million, the Trust is part of the National Health Service, the UK's publicly funded healthcare system. The CPFT's sometimes overlooked mental health and community provision can be caring for 100,000 patients at any one time, but has more challenged resources than the NHS's high-profile acute hospitals.

The CPFT's Associate Director of Information and Performance, Jonathon Artingstall, manages clinical systems, the data warehouse, performance and analytics, and information governance.

With stretched resources, Jonathon says integration was vital, particularly after a move across to a new clinical system – System 1, which is made by TPP.

He explains, "All of our clinicians wanted integration with other systems, but we don't have an integration team. Nor do we have the years of experience that our acute hospitals have around integration systems, which is where HL7 Soup came in."

System 1 is used across all NHS mental health and community services, as well as about 80 per cent of GP practices. It is well established in the UK and used mainly for primary care, but with some secondary care use also.

Real-time data integration was the goal, as Jonathon explains: "Within a hospital and community environment, real-time data is crucial – and System 1 can provide that. We want access to our data – for analysis, early warnings, business intelligence – as quickly as we can."



# Implementing HL7 Soup

**HL7 Soup Integration Host is an interface engine that receives and routes EHRs and other messages, translating them into formats readable by the receiving system.**

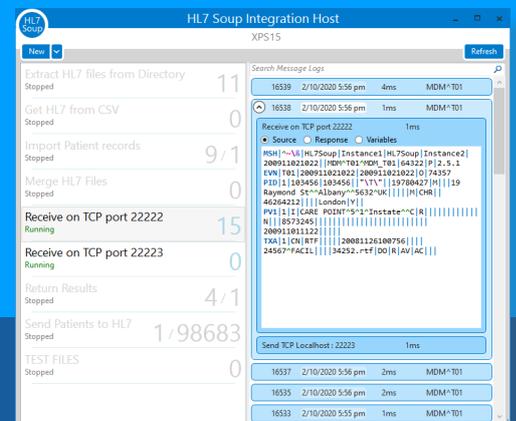
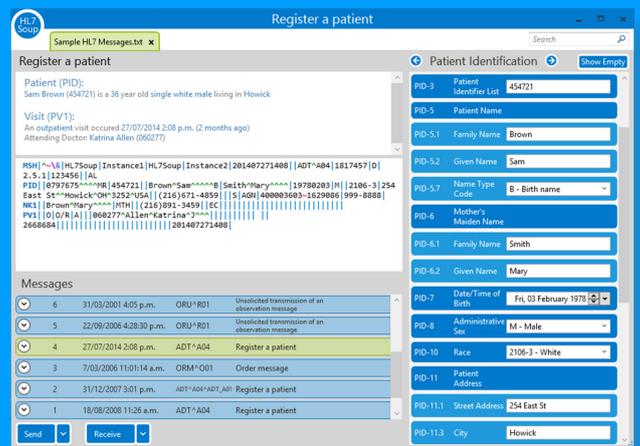
After studying HL7 Soup online, Jonathon and his team believed it could be a great fit. He says, “It seemed to give us that friendly interface between HL7 messages and what we wanted to do, which was feed it into our Azure data warehouse without the need for development skills.”

Other solutions were considered, but HL7 Soup allowed the CPFT to take that first step into integration fairly quickly and at a relatively low cost.

Jonathon says this would not have been the case with some alternatives: “Clearly cost is a factor for the NHS. We looked at an open-source integration engine, but the larger offerings came with support costs and added overheads. Plus, they did more than we needed to do at this stage. We just felt that this one was right for us.”

The CPFT’s team of SQL developers successfully implemented HL7 Soup in mid-2022.

Jonathon says, “HL7 Soup translated the complex HL7 message into something our team understood. I think that’s the unique selling point of it. Like us, lots of trusts have SQL developers, but no HL7 integration specialists. This software allows that translation.”



The CPFT is currently using HL7 Soup for two applications:

- facilitating a real-time feed of clinical data, which would previously have been 24 hours out of date; and
- giving that data to its SHREWD software, to update a country-wide view of pressures and capacities.

# Solving a crucial need

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Johnathon explains that the introducing HL7 Soup to their system has been transformative: “We used to get an overnight feed, but this allows us a real-time feed. So, whenever a patient moves out of a bed on one of our wards, we know about it within 15 seconds or so. We use that for operational reporting, so when we have beds available, there’s a dashboard that shows it, and our clinical managers can go and review that.

“We also take that same feed and pass it across to a system-wide approach. Within a couple of minutes, we can tell SHREWD that a patient’s been discharged, or that we don’t have a bed available.”

Where once the CPFT was hampered by a real disconnect, with key information being out of date, HL7 Soup has given it new system insights.

Jonathon says, “We’re trying to manage our resources as best we can, and the real-time information needed. If HL7 Soup didn’t exist, we’d have had to set up a whole HL7 integration developer team. Instead, we can implement it and leave it running, so we don’t need an ongoing developer. HL7 Soup does the integration we need and we can manage it ourselves, like an ‘add-on’ to an existing resource. If we face any challenges, they are fairly simple to solve.”

Impressed by the flexibility and high performance of HL7 Soup, the CPFT plans to use it for more applications.

Jonathon wants to take the HL7 Soup interface and feed data back in. “That’s really exciting for us. We’re going to look at some app development, and then I think HL7 Soup will allow us to reverse the mechanism, in effect. To take some data, pass it through HL7 Soup and then feed it back live into our EPR [electronic patient record] system. That’s our next plan.”

With the team’s knowledge of SQL and the back-up of HL7 Soup as a support mechanism, he is confident they will be successful. “We have HL7 Soup behind us if we’ve got a problem.”

Jonathon and his team have found HL7 Soup to be flexible, easy to use and efficient. They have had little need for the system’s specialist support services, but their brief interactions have been impressive.

He says, “We know we’ve got HL7 Soup at the end of the phone or on email, to give us some support should we need it. We have had a few quick calls with them and they’ve been really supportive and responsive, guiding us through any issues.”

HL7 Soup offers a free version of the Integration Host on a 30-day trial basis. To learn more and arrange for a demonstration of the solution, visit [www.hl7soup.com](http://www.hl7soup.com)

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