

## Case Study

How a remote clinical coding service has strengthened coding department stability and reduced contractor costs at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS FT



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Tracy Crookes, Head of Applied Information, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS FT.

### Background

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS FT is one of Yorkshire’s leading acute trusts, serving a population of more than 420,000 across South Yorkshire, North Nottinghamshire and the surrounding areas. Hosting three main hospital sites and a number of additional services, the trust employs over 6,000 members of staff.

### The Challenge

Prior to outsourcing, the trust was facing a significant challenge in maintaining a full workforce of full-time accredited clinical coders, which meant it was relying on expensive contractors. CHKS, part of the AdvT Group, now provides a remote clinical coding service that helps the trust fulfil its coding needs.



## The Solution

A shortfall in the market place, of experienced/ accredited clinical coders, had led to the Trust to piloting for a year the outsourcing of some coding to another company. At the end of 2017, the Trust entered into a three- to five-year contract with CHKS. The mobilisation from contract award to coding was quick and robust data quality processes were in from the start.

The team of coders at CHKS works in collaboration with the trust's in-house coding team to deliver coding services for inpatient episodes of care. CHKS coders access a combination of scanned records and electronic systems and are able to code directly into the trust's encoder system.

The CHKS team's ability to act as part of the trust's team is key to the success and efficiency of the partnership. Tracy Crookes, Head of Applied Information at the trust, says: *"The excellent communication and service delivery means we trust the satellite coding team to deliver as if they were part of the clinical coding team."*

## The benefits of working with CHKS

The service-level agreement contains key performance indicators relating to clinical coding accuracy, including 100 per cent of coding completed within five working days. Tracy says: *"The service gives us excellent support with KPIs, showing that CHKS coders attain a high coding accuracy and 100 per cent timeliness."*

Tracy says the trust and CHKS have developed a *"strong partnership"*, with regular meetings and monthly audits ensuring continual smooth working. This partnership has enabled costs savings and greater financial certainty over cost of clinical coding, as well as securing income through accurate and timely coding.

This carries other benefits too, says Tracy. *"This has also allowed the Clinical Coding Service Manager to focus on more complex coding and on supporting our in-house coders. We are also working on an exciting project with CHKS to look at auto coding for endoscopy which will provide additional value and business benefits."*



To find out more,  
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