

Adventist Retirement Plus future-proofs operations with SAP

CUSTOMER

Adventist Retirement Plus

LOCATION

Queensland, Australia

INDUSTRY

Healthcare / Aged Care





Challenge

- Replace disparate systems with one integrated solution
- Ensure the new system is user friendly and accessible
- Provide real time analytics to support planning and decision-making.



Solution

- A single, scalable, integrated cloud-based ERP
- A user friendly, web-based interface and reporting tool
- Seamless integration between back and front office enabled with cloud based ERP, SAP Business ByDesign and Health Metrics eCase as the care management software.



Results

- Full operational visibility across all locations
- Real-time analytics dashboard enabled transactional analysis and improvements
- Improved business accountability between departments
- More timely and accurate order to cash processes and improved cashflow
- The digitisation and integration of business processes has minimised workloads for staff
- Transformed business operations have increased engagement across the workforce, suppliers, residents and their families



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Adventist Retirement Plus is an aged care provider operating in South Queensland, Australia. As a ministry of the Adventist Church it offers 'Christ-centred care', based on Christian principles for people of any faith. In a sector impacted by regulatory changes, reduced funding and the arrival of 'for profit' providers, Adventist Retirement Plus had a stark choice – 'evolve or die'.

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— Eric Anderson
CEO, Adventist Retirement Plus

Operating across four sites, Adventist provides three different levels of client care – retirement living, supported living (home care) and residential aged care services.

In striving to always deliver the best possible care, Adventist realised it faced a number of key business issues. These stemmed primarily from the number of disparate systems in use throughout the business. Manual reporting processes, labour intensive reconciliation practices and poor information flow between front and back office functions were hindering workforce productivity and limiting financial visibility into the business. Ultimately, all this was also reducing the amount of direct care staff could offer residents.

Disparate systems and information silos

The CEO of Adventist Retirement Plus, Eric Anderson, says the business was running five different accounting systems – one each at its various sites and one at head office, as well as other standalone systems that did not talk to each other.

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The key issue with non-integrated systems was the time spent doing manual reconciliations, says Anderson. “A great amount of effort was going into ensuring the information was accurate, up-to-date and consistent across all our systems. This was resulting in days’ worth of work for our back office team. It was time-consuming, low value work that we wanted to invest into delivering better results for our residents.”

In order to free up time for more hands-on interaction with residents, staff needed to do more things on the move rather than having to take information back to their desk to update a system. “If we could get anytime, anywhere access to our core systems and introduce portable devices we knew we could become more efficient and minimise the amount of times we have to pull people off the floor who are delivering direct care,” says Anderson.

To resolve its business issues, Adventist Retirement Plus opted to embark on a digital transformation project with DXC Technology aimed at lifting competitive performance by reducing costs and improving operational efficiencies. The project’s ultimate aim was to increase ‘hands-on’ interaction time with customers – a metric vital to its mission of enriching the lives of residents and their families.

Seamless integration, access and security

Anderson says Adventist Retirement Plus selected DXC Technology’s regional SAP Practice, because it promised to deliver an industry-leading solution that integrated its key front and back office activities.

“The overriding reason we chose DXC was they offered a cloud-based solution that would integrate seamlessly with our clinical system, eCase. That was absolutely imperative for us as it would give us a simple interface for our front of house activities.”

DXC implemented SAP Business ByDesign cloud-based ERP system together with Health Metrics eCase – an aged care specific solution that integrates with ByDesign and manages the entire patient experience with CRM, waitlist and exit/transfer processing capabilities.

“Both SAP and eCase have partnered to offer this industry specific package and DXC had the expertise to integrate and deliver it,” says Anderson.

“It was a no-brainer for us because DXC could demonstrate the two systems operating seamlessly.

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Anderson says the security and accessibility offered by having an ERP deployed in the cloud was another critical factor. “Security is not something we specialise in, but the cloud provisioning has been done in such a way to ensure we meet all our obligations around privacy legislation. It is also facilitating more workforce flexibility. People can work off-site at one of our other locations or from home quite easily thanks to the cloud deployment.”

Reporting improvement with real time data

Working off-site is something that has improved the work life balance for Adventist Retirement Plus Senior Accountant Katherine Patriarca and her finance team.

“Thanks to SAP when I work from home or at another site, I can still access everything I need to. I no longer have to put things aside until I am at my usual desk. I can email information straight from the system knowing that it is going to the right end user.”

Patriarca says preparing financial statements and reports prior to SAP was a challenge. “It took a long time to get our reporting done each month, because we had different systems and data was very slow to be extracted and reconciled.”

As Adventist Retirement Plus grew, these issues got bigger and bigger, she says. “We were unable to keep up with our end user demands and reporting was delayed dramatically. This meant management was making decisions based on old data.” Now that an integrated solution is in place, information is much more

accessible, says Patriarca. “We can send information to people without having to set up manual procedures. Reporting happens without unnecessary manipulation of data.”

The fact that documents can be stored in SAP allows the finance team to attach valuable background information to invoices and has enabled paperless processing.

“It has revolutionised our accounts payable processes. We receive invoices paperlessly by email, and they are processed the same way. All the attachments to emails are stored in the system and available to anybody who needs to see them. We no longer run into blockages due to the fact someone has misfiled a paper document.”

Benefits imperative to survival

Adventist Retirement Plus now has improved management oversight with full visibility into all locations, thanks to the solution’s analytics dashboard that allows transactional analysis to be undertaken in real-time. Management can delegate day-to-day jobs to key users and focus more on strategy.

The solution has enhanced business processing with clear accountability between departments. It has provided users with one version of the truth allowing staff to better support customers. Cash flow has improved due to timely and correct order-to-cash processes. The business also has better insights into business expenses and the ability to create more accurate forecasts across all of its geographies.

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— Katherine Patriarca
Senior accountant,
Adventist Retirement Plus

In an industry that is constantly seeing its funding reduced, Anderson says these benefits were imperative to the survival of the business.

“We knew we had to evolve or die. Our industry is facing significant disruption and the only way to keep pace is to ensure your business moves with the times. The rollout of new systems that are fully integrated keeps us one step ahead of the competition.”

With financial, payroll, rostering and clinical systems operating in an integrated fashion, Adventist Retirement Plus has brought much greater efficiency to its back office processes and is reaping operational improvements equal to those of much bigger operators.

“The arrival of ‘for-profit’ operators has increased competition in the sector. The number of providers is reducing, while the remaining ones grow in size. That, combined with increased financial pressure of reduced government funding, means we had to become a smarter more efficient operator,” says Anderson.

For Adventist Retirement Plus, digital transformation involves getting information into, and out of, its core system electronically, with as little human interaction as possible. Says Anderson: “As part of this project we have implemented systems both on the floor and in our back office that mean people spend less time and less effort doing what they’ve done before.

“The time we do spend at our computer now is high value. The information is up to date, consistent and reliable. It means we can deliver better care because with better data you can make better decisions. Our clients benefit because we now spend more time with them and less time doing time-consuming administrative functions.”

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