



Case Study: Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) and Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust have formed a ground-breaking partnership to deliver reliable and flexible food safety training to staff and ensure compliance before the impending introduction of new legislation around the safety of hospital food.

The brief

CIEH was approached by Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust in 2021 to provide a food safety training solution for all staff handling food.

With the proposed introduction of 'The Health & Care Bill: hospital food', the mental health care provider was keen to ensure all staff encountering food - from catering, healthcare and nursing staff to occupational therapists - understand the importance of food safety and compliance.

Due to the high volume of staff requiring training and their changing shift patterns, training courses needed to be run online and, to ensure compliance and peace of mind, managers needed to be able to see when training had been completed.

The Trust was also keen to work with a reputable and experienced training provider with the ability to provide up-to-date, accessible and trusted training materials.

Unique requirements

After initial meetings with the Trust and a CIEH training expert, it was agreed that CIEH would provide them with its Level 2 and 3 online courses for Food Safety in Catering. The NHS Foundation Trust stipulated that CIEH's online training courses be delivered through its Electronic Staff Record (ESR) – a nationwide system holding all personnel details.

Due to the size and sensitive nature of the portal, along with the unique requirements of the brief, there were both technical and security challenges that needed to be overcome before the courses would be ready for staff to access.

Additional time and expertise were therefore provided on both sides to ensure the courses could be delivered securely via ESR without any disruption to its operation.

The solution

When the strict brief was finalised and agreed, CIEH's account management team held regular meetings with relevant members of the Trust to steer the project forward, pulling in expertise from the organisation's internal IT team to work alongside developers at the NHS.

After several months working on the system, both courses were ready for staff to access on the NHS' ESR.

Susan Coulson, Workforce Development Lead at Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Food safety is incredibly important to us and with the Health & Care Bill: hospital food coming into force later this year there was added impetus to ensure all staff who come into contact with food – wherever they work within the Trust - were aware of their obligations to comply.

"We decided to work with CIEH as their reputation to deliver food safety training is second-to-none. However, to deliver the courses in the way we wanted wasn't an easy process and so we needed to call on additional expertise. A special thank you must be made to the ESR central team and Corporate System Team for the amazing work they did to make this happen.

"CIEH took our requests seriously and jumped through hoops to deliver what we needed and input their courses onto our ESR system. The response time to queries was fantastic and I'm thrilled with the results. I would recommend CIEH to other trusts and NHS departments."