

# Enabling two Merseyside based CCGs to block book beds with ease

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Midlands and Lancashire  
Commissioning Support Unit

## Background

Two Merseyside based CCGs recently engaged with MLCSU for support in procuring a block contract for Intermediate Care Beds (ICB) split over both COVID-positive and COVID-negative cohorts. Rebecca Crawford, Care Brokerage Lead at MLCSU, worked with South Sefton and Southport and Formby CCGs to explore the procurement options available. She advised that our existing DPS solution – *adam*, would allow the bed-base and contract to be in place in a matter of weeks.

## Action

MLCSU joined a weekly project group and supported the CCGs to specify their exact requirements, using *adam*'s wealth of intuitive functionality:

- **Creation of bespoke requests** including: detailed tender instructions and contact details to guide providers, responses to 18 different key requirements, all in an easy-to-compare format
- **Automatic distribution to pre-enrolled providers:** automatic email system, automated system ensuring submission of fully compliant offers
- **Easy offer analysis and contracts creation:** automatic filtering and ranking, offer collation, automatic facilitation of service agreement and payments

The CCGs quickly requested quotes for up to 20 beds for COVID-negative cases and up to 10 for COVID-positive cases, from 76 pre-vetted care home providers (within a desired distance of the CCGs). The bespoke requests meant that providers could easily understand exactly what was asked.

Additionally, providers could ask the CCGs questions via *adam*'s two-way communication platform, and *adam*'s support team were on hand to assist providers with any queries and proactively encourage offers.

## Impact

Six fully compliant offers were received within six days of the request for quote. Once the CCGs had reviewed and accepted an offer, contracts were created immediately (at a rate of £100.90 per day for care homes [lower than local market average]). From the moment the CCGs engaged with MLCSU, a decision on a provider was reached in less than a month.

With Rebecca's help and *adam*'s digital CHC commissioning solution, the CCGs could specify their exact requirements, be it ensuring residents were kept in one place or appropriate disease control.

Offers collated in an a structured and easy-to-follow format enabled the project group to undertake an efficient evaluation and to select the most appropriate provider.

The automatic creation of service agreements and payments resulted in patients placed swiftly in the care homes, in line with the CCGs' timescales and pre-agreed standards.

The CCGs were so impressed with the result, that they drafted a 'lessons learnt' report. MLCSU experts state that block contracts can take several months of resource-intensive procurement.

## Professional support

Throughout the process, *adam*'s and MLCSU's service delivery teams were on hand to guide and support the CCGs with their daily and strategic use of the system. The teams also made sure that all providers were engaged and supported in using the system.