

PRIMHD vendor search and selection guide

Please be aware the information contained here is general in nature and is not intended to serve as advice. You should obtain independent advice from your professional, legal or other competent advisors before acting on this information. It is up to your organisation to ensure you adopt sufficient process and rigour for your selection process in the purchase of software solutions. If you are considering purchasing a software solution, your organisation needs to ensure the solution is appropriate for your functional and technical requirements, and determine the full commercial impact over time of any investment you may make. Your organisation may also wish to consider running a competitive tender process to choose the most suitable software solution and obtain best value for money.

Choosing the solution to meet your requirements

If your NGO is considering implementing a software solution, you will probably want to address the issues of collecting and reporting PRIMHD data, as well as perhaps providing additional functionality (e.g. compliance for other reporting requirements, care plans, notes, and scheduling).

Questions to ask potential vendors include:

- Does the solution capture and record the required PRIMHD information?
- Does the solution simplify your reporting to the Ministry of Health and does it also provide flexible local reporting, including ad hoc reporting?
- Has the vendor previously worked with the Ministry of Health and can they demonstrate that the application combined with your data-set can achieve PRIMHD compliance? (Note: it is not just the application that obtains PRIMHD compliance; rather, it is the NGO's data-set that achieves compliance. The Ministry does not certify vendors, only submissions from a NGO.
- How easy is it to modify the system to ensure it can meet future PRIMHD requirements? (Note: PRIMHD data-set will be reviewed every three years. As a result of field codes used, the software might need to be updated, and may include new fields.).
- It is most likely that your organisation will want to gain additional functionality and benefits other than just PRIMHD reporting. You should be working with the vendor to understand what other areas of benefit a software application will provide.
- Ensure the vendor has outlined how the application will provide additional functionality, and the potential impact on your organisation (eg change management) to implement and use the additional functionality of the system.
- If your organisation has other compliance requirements, eg reporting to the Ministry of Social Development, how will the system assist you to meet these requirements?
- User access and search capabilities to give different views depending on specified requirements (eg the ability for people to view only limited records, or for clients to view only their own information).

Commercial requirements

When considering the commercial impact of your purchase, ensure you are clear on the following areas:

- Initial purchase cost;
 - Annual licence renewal costs;
 - Annual maintenance fees;
- Software updates, including frequency, ease of upgrade, any additional cost (e.g. consulting fees);
- Consulting fees for non-contracted modifications to the software, on-site support etc. (e.g. creating reports);
 - Maturity of the software product, number of users, length of time in production environment, number of mental health NGOs using the system;
 - Vendor support (post-implementation support), help desk, issue resolution, etc, access to consultancy resources;
 - Manuals and other documentation and training provided.

Technical requirements

Some software might require a specific infrastructure in place before being able to run.

Areas to consider include:

- Compatibility of the software with different types of systems (eg Mac, Microsoft Windows, databases, networks);
- Support for mobile users (eg remote access via Web portal and from laptops), if this requirement is appropriate for your business;
- Any extra costs for software (does the particular software require a different server if it has a web-based application and require further user licensing);
- Level of technical requirements for users to administrate/customise the software.

Summary

Before deciding on a software vendor, your organisation needs to do a full comparison of features, costs, and support over the expected lifespan of any chosen solution. You should have a clear idea of your organisation's requirements, some of which will be mandatory and others will be optional.