University Children's Hospital Basel: Continuity for hospital processes

T-Systems is modernizing the SAP IS-H hospital management system for the Swiss healthcare sector

UKBB
University Children's Hospital Basel

"With its follow-on solution to SAP IS-H, T-Systems is ensuring the continuity of an essential software solution for the Swiss healthcare sector."

Detlef Schnell, Head of SAP Systems at University Children's Hospital Basel

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University Children's Hospital Basel (UKBB) was created in 1999 as the result of a merger of two formerly independent children's hospitals in Basel City and Basel County. As a university competence center, UKBB plays a key role in providing medical care to children and young adults. The hospital is also known for its broad expertise and is a major player in medical research and teaching. UKBB operates the largest pediatric orthopedic department in Switzerland, as well as one of the country's largest pediatric emergency care wards. More than 1,000 employees care for over 6,000 inpatients and over 113,000 outpatients in 2023.

UKBB strives to become a national pediatric research campus, but also faces increasing cost pressures and a growing skills shortage. The hospital knows how valuable digitalization will be for medical care, research, and teaching. Digitalization plays a key role in the hospital's "Strategy 2022++", for example, for automating hospital workflows and using data and artificial intelligence.

For over a quarter-century, UKBB has relied on the market-leading IS-H (Industry Solution for Healthcare) from SAP to manage hospital workflows efficiently – making it a pioneer in setting new standards for patient management and billing. Today, SAP IS-H manages nearly 75 percent of all hospital beds in Austria and Switzerland, making it the de facto standard in healthcare, especially in larger hospitals.

However, in October 2022, SAP announced the discontinuation of IS-H development for the new SAP S/4HANA platform. This meant SAP was effectively withdrawing the solution from the Swiss market by 2030. It was a turning point for UKBB: Starting in 2027, additional fees will be charged for any necessary extended maintenance. However, there is another question that is even more important. How does the hospital intend to digitally manage its processes if IS-H is no longer available? This is where T-Systems came in.

At a glance

- Discontinuation of the leading hospital management system, IS-H, by SAP
- Search for alternatives to maintain the continuity of core processes
- Significant financial challenge for rolling out alternative systems
- Protecting investments
- T-Systems is taking over the further development of SAP IS-H and transforming it into T-Systems Solution for Healthcare (TSHC)
- SAP license agreement
- End-to-end package for application transformation with partner ATSP (custom code conversion, data conversion to SAP HANA, readiness check)
- Capture SAP HANA and SAP S/4HANA potential
- Native, standard offering for the healthcare sector in Switzerland and Austria
- Future-proof setup for hospital management
- Continued use of partner add-ons

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Reference in detail

Customer pain points

Sebastian Fernandez, Head of ICT at UKBB, describes the situation in a nutshell, "In light of the other upcoming SAP-related tasks, which will demand significant staffing and financial resources, a switch to a completely new system would pose an additional challenge." UKBB sought a solution that would allow them to keep using the existing SAP IS-H system. The hospital wanted to protect its years of investment in SAP IS-H and continue to leverage the available in-house expertise. Changes to employee work routines had to be avoided whenever possible. At the same time, UKBB wanted to keep the specific features of SAP IS-H for the Swiss healthcare sector.

"This topic was very important, so we wanted to find a solution as early as possible, to get in shape for the future. We definitely didn't want to wait to start the conversion project until 2026 or 2027, when we expect a run on the limited migration expertise available," says Sebastian Fernandez.

How T-Systems solved it

Jürgen Graalfs, Product Owner for Healthcare Solutions in Switzerland at T-Systems, describes the solution for UKBB, "T-Systems has been developing IS-H for the Swiss and Austrian markets on behalf of SAP for many years now. So, it was only natural for us to take responsibility for creating a successor to IS-H that could also leverage the opportunities presented by SAP S/4HANA." T-Systems is developing this "new", forward-looking IS-H version under the name "T-Systems Solution for Healthcare" (TSHC), made possible by an SAP license agreement. It allows T-Systems to use the source code.

T-Systems has put together an end-to-end migration and modernization package for SAP IS-H users, together with its partner ATSP. The package includes a readiness check, data conversion from existing databases to SAP HANA, and even conversion of custom code – individual modifications or partner add-ons. The standardized conversion tools ensure a fast, risk-minimized application transformation to SAP HANA. "We expect this to shorten migration times from the usual twelve months to around six," says Graalfs. T-Systems will roll out the first release of TSHC and the matching package for application transformation in late 2025.

Business impact

As an early adopter, UKBB is once again taking on a pioneering role in the Swiss healthcare sector. The transition from SAP IS-H to TSHC will preserve the full functionality of the software while optimizing the connection between the old and new systems. For example, legacy billing rules will be retained, and specific partner add-ons can still be utilized. There will be no changes to usability or user experience; only the underlying platform will be updated. The new platform will offer opportunities available from SAP today, such as Fiori, HTML5, and data analytics.

Detlef Schnell, Head of SAP Systems at UKBB, recognizes the benefits of this approach: "With its follow-on solution to SAP IS-H, T-Systems is ensuring the continuity of an essential software solution for the Swiss healthcare sector." This allows UKBB to safeguard its investments in IS-H while preparing for the future. The implementation of this native solution will benefit the entire healthcare sector in Switzerland and Austria.

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