

Buckinghamshire HealthCare **NHS**

NHS Trust

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust

Supports enhanced resourcing of wards with
Central eRostering Bureau

Since implementing centralised rostering the Trust has identified reductions in sickness of 1% for Health Care Assistants and 0.8% for qualified nurses.



Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust is a major provider of community and hospital services in South East England, providing care to over half a million patients every year. The Trust has a workforce of around 6,000 including highly trained doctors, nurses, midwives, health visitors, therapists and other support staff, caring for the full spectrum of patients from newborn babies to elderly people needing help to maintain living independently at home.

Central Bureau Model Enhances Benefits

The Trust is using SMART eRostering across its acute wards, and operating theatres. The production of all rosters is undertaken by a central team who are expert in the use of the system, releasing clinical nurse time to care for patients, improving the cost-effectiveness of rosters and enhancing the deployment of staff across other clinical areas rather than a traditional one-ward perspective.

The central bureau was fully supported by the Trust Management and involved HR and Finance departments working closely with the wards to deploy staff as efficiently as possible.

Lynne Swiatczak, Chief Nurse and Director of Patient Care Standards at the Trust explained: *“The introduction of a centralised bureau using e-rostering brings significant benefits to the wards. Band 7 nursing staff are no longer spending time on the admin associated with building and managing rosters, releasing highly qualified staff back to patient care.*

“By ensuring that e-rostering is implemented effectively making best use of the staff we already have, we have seen a lower

requirement for temporary staff, reduced absence, better management of leave, reduced admin for other departments such as payroll and ESR, all of which save the Trust money. The transparency that the centralised approach gives us means that we are able to apply best practice across the trust, which ultimately improves patient care.”

The Challenge

Variations of shift patterns both between and within wards were leading to multiple handovers, fixed working patterns and an inability to roster in a way that was clinically and financially effective.

The project team found that often training needed to be repeated due to staff changes in the wards, resulting in many staff not appreciating the full benefits of using eRostering.

The Solution – A change in culture

SMART eRostering provides a fair and transparent system to ensure that staff resources are optimised as efficiently as possible, ensuring patient care is maintained. The centralised bureau supports the nursing teams in with efficient rosters, whilst ensuring that they keep control at the point of delivery. They are able to run their wards or departments knowing that the skills mix is optimised and patient care is supported.

Following the initial consultation with staff, standardised shift patterns were agreed, to ensure that both the needs of the wards are met as well as the individual requirements. This provided a good foundation for central rostering.

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Benefits

The bureau produces rosters not less than six weeks in advance, enabling staff to plan social and family obligations for the weeks ahead. Previously rosters were often not published until the week before, making it difficult for staff to plan.

Sharing of Best Practice

The new system enables the sharing of best practice, for example, two similar wards are compared and the best of each taken and applied to the benefit of all.

Financial Accuracy, Greater Efficiencies

Greater transparency and more accurate financial controls means that ward managers are now fully aware of all budget available to them, which has in many cases, made resourcing easier. Closer working with Finance and HR departments has identified budget for management days previously unused, a significant benefit to the resourcing of wards.

A link with ESR has led to more accurate payroll, which saves time for the payroll department and results in staff being paid in a timely manner and tighter management of sickness. Within the last 6 months payroll verification has improved dramatically from 19% to only 2.6% as unverified by payroll.

Managing Hours and Leave

Ensuring all ward staff have access to, and are using, SMART's eRostering means more accurate records of actual shifts worked. The rosters highlight where there are gaps in the rosters, allowing staff with the right skill levels to be deployed across wards and reducing the need to use agency staff.

Benefits that ensure compliance and reduce costs:

- Identifying over worked hours, which contravene EWTD
- Holiday entitlement for leavers means the Trust is now able to negotiate leave to be taken rather than paid
- Frequent spot checks eliminate staff claiming hours for Bank shifts when on duty

Sickness Reduction

Since implementing the bureau approach, the Trust has seen reductions in sickness of 1% for Health Care Assistants and 0.8% for qualified nurses.

Accessibility

SMART hosting means that the system can be accessed from any location via the internet enabling staff and managers to view rosters, redeploy staff at times of shortage or make leave requests in a timely and convenient manner.

Transparent Rosters Improving Staff Morale

As well as ensuring that the wards have the right skills mix to deliver patient care, staff are still able to request particular shift swaps, annual leave or apply for extra shifts. This ensures that flexibility is maintained for staff, which is proven to help with staff morale.

The transparency of SMART eRostering with the centralised bureau approach taken by Buckinghamshire Healthcare has ensured that staff are treated equally and fairly and are able to maintain a work life balance. Creating the rosters centrally, and close collaboration with the HR and Finance departments, means that Ward Managers have a total support solution for managing the workforce within their wards.

Fast Facts

- Central Bureau approach supports departments in the production of rosters, saving management time and enhancing user take up
- Staff hours more closely managed meaning better compliance with Working Time Directives, less over taken leave, reduced use of Bank and temporary staff, reduced sickness
- More transparent budget control has led to benefits for the Wards in terms of previously unused management resource
- Automated rosters are produced six weeks in advance improving staff work life balance
- Staff able to request shifts swaps, apply for extra shifts and book annual online
- Automated ESR links will ensure more accurate payroll

SMART

t: +44 (0)1438 822 221

f: +44 (0)1438 822 240

e: info@smart-workforce.com

w: smart-rostering.co.uk

Making People Count.