

CASE STUDY - AGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICE

Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Pilot partnership delivers significant staffing savings

- ✓ Innovative pilot partnership delivers **£217,980** savings in external agency costs (April-October 2022)
- ✓ Off-framework agency usage completely eliminated from over **2000** hours
- ✓ Successful collaboration providing an increase in overall shift fill to **88.6%** - up **10% YOY**

The Situation

As with all NHS Trusts during the pandemic, Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust experienced severe pressures surrounding their workforce supply agency usage in Nursing and Midwifery. Not only did this use come at a high cost, but it also meant the Trust had reduced visibility and control over their workforce trends, demand and shift fill.

Outsourcing to multiple agencies meant charge rates were variable, adding more complexity and an administrative burden to the process of filling last-minute and hard to fill shifts – all of which was costing the Trust time. Another side effect of this issue was the migration of NHS Professionals' Bank Members to agency, and agency to agency, making it harder to break the cycle.



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The Solution

To address this issue and support the Trust, from April-July of 2022, NHS Professionals implemented a bespoke pilot at Warrington and Halton for a new style of Agency Management Service. The overall aim was to improve operational efficiency and reduce costs through sourcing and utilising a high quality, contingent and compliant workforce, whilst improving fill rates and supporting patient care.

Having an in-depth understanding of their workforce challenges within the current market, including the reasons for the increased reliance on agency, meant that NHS Professionals were best placed to work collaboratively with the Trust and agencies. By implementing dedicated project teams, creating delivery plans and agreeing on the best practice approach, NHS Professionals were able to provide a bespoke solution.

This holistic agency management offering allows NHS Professionals to take full contractual responsibility for managing the agency supply chain. NHS Professionals also developed a preferred supplier list (PSL), negotiated rates and managed performance issues on behalf of the Trust.

This activity commenced by reviewing the Trust's agency usage data, including off platform, to understand pinch points and the most challenging areas. By examining current rates and suppliers, NHS Professionals strived to achieve standardisation where possible and utilised their buying power to agree and negotiate better rates.



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“We have worked with NHS Professionals for many years and are pleased with the progress of this innovative approach to agency management. Working collaboratively with agency partners through NHS Professionals and eliminating off framework usage, has allowed us to boost time and cost efficiencies, while continuing to deliver outstanding patient care and support our teams.”

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Kimberley Salmon-Jamieson,
Chief Nurse (Nursing, Midwifery & AHP) and Deputy Chief Executive,
Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



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The Result

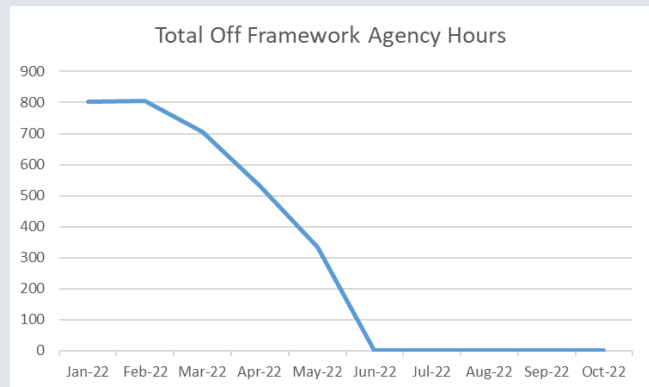
NHS Professionals took full responsibility and ownership of the project and served as a single point of the contact for the Trust. They were able to evaluate all the suppliers and cost and fill rates, identifying areas which were high priority. By developing a tailored strategy, including the introduction of new suppliers and new rates in Intensive Care, the off-framework challenges were addressed.

NHS Professionals were also able to achieve new, harmonised agency rates, supported by ongoing review and management. NHS Professionals led on all aspects of the service, including cascade and tier management, which aided the reduction of off-framework and high-cost suppliers.

Agency partners were also satisfied with 94% commenting positively of the NHS Professionals team and 100% saying they were happy with the overall service they received.

This has resulted in a saving of over **£217,980** so far in agency staffing costs and reducing the average cost per hour by **9%**.

These cost savings have been achieved with a unique and strategic approach to managing agency suppliers. This included negotiating rates, managing performance and reviewing cascades, all of which helped to facilitate an increase in fill from tier one (lower cost) agency suppliers by 14%.



“From a procurement viewpoint, we have been very pleased with the results this pilot has produced. Using their market expertise and by adopting an end to end framework solution, NHS Professionals has managed to reduce the time taken and costs associated with agency management for our Trust, meaning this is now a seamless part of our service.”

Alison Parker, Associate Director of Procurement,
Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



“The Warrington and NHS Professionals teams worked closely together to ensure all key milestones were achieved, identifying critical focus areas and addressing challenges early on. Being able to deliver such a dramatic reduction in off framework usage is a result of our trusted and long-term relationship with the NHS Professionals team. Delivering to this level is great news for the Trust, agency partners and patients alike.”

Ali Kennah, Deputy Chief Nurse
Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

