

CASE STUDY

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust

Collaboration boosts Bank fill and drives down agency costs

- ✓ Bank fill increased by 10%
- ✓ Bank members provided 10,000 hours of additional support
- ✓ Agency use for qualified nurses reduced by over 3%
- ✓ 62 agency workers migrated over to Bank - saving more than £350,000

The Situation

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust provides a wide range of mental health, physical health and learning disability services for people across Hampshire. The Trust has a team of 6,500 staff who work across 300 sites, spanning both urban and rural locations and serving a population of around 1.5 million people. In September 2022, a new temporary staffing manager was appointed whose aim was to reduce agency use across the Trust. NHS Professionals worked closely with the Trust to help it achieve its goal by prioritising our Bank Members over agency for temporary staffing needs.

November 2023



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The Solution

We began talks with key stakeholders in the Trust to identify areas experiencing high agency use to help create an agency migration plan.

Using our prior experience migrating agency staff over to the NHS Professionals Bank at other Trusts, we developed a bespoke plan focused on:

- identifying migration targets
- data and reporting
- promoting the benefits
- open communication
- supporting agency workers throughout the process

To encourage better use of the NHS Professionals Bank, the Trust placed tighter controls on its agency suppliers and completely reworked the agency cascade to prioritise more cost-effective and reliable agencies.

Working with the Trust, we co-ordinated our efforts to ensure consistent shift cover through the Bank while shifts traditionally worked through agencies were transitioned across.

The Trust was very proactive, reducing the lead time of agency bookings and 'bumping' out agencies in order to give Bank Members every opportunity to fill the shift first.

Our on-site team were able to boost engagement with our Bank Members and build key working relationships with Trust colleagues who collaborated on the agency migration project.

Our operations manager based at Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust prepared and delivered bespoke training to fellow NHS Professionals on-site colleagues. This training course was also shared throughout our other client Trusts within the region, sharing best practice for successfully engaging agency migration and ensuring consistent communication.

We met with agency workers to begin conversations about migrating over to the Bank and answer any questions. These in-person drop-in sessions allowed us to highlight the benefits of the change, such as a competitive pay rate and greater access to training and development opportunities.



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The Result

By making more use of the NHS Professionals Bank, the Trust has seen greater stability across its temporary staffing while reducing its reliance on higher-cost agencies.

In June 2023, we improved overall Bank fill for nurses by 10%, compared to June 2022. This improvement translated into an additional 10,000 hours of care provided by our Bank Members and a reduction in agency use of over 3% for qualified nurses, helping the Trust reach the 3.7% national agency spend reduction target.

As at August 2023, some 62 agency workers across nursing and midwifery, administration and clerical and allied health professionals staff groups had been migrated and now work shifts through the NHS Professionals Bank. This has generated a cost saving of nearly £200 for every Bank shift - a total saving of nearly £400,000 between June 2022 and August 2023.

Supporting agency workers throughout the process as part of our migration plan, we were able to make the transition smooth, reduce drop-outs and ultimately aid retention, with the Trust's temporary staffing manager regularly visiting our on-site office to discuss the project.

Our collaborative approach has made these improvements possible, resulting in the Trust benefitting from a reliable pool of temporary staff that can flex to demand.

“By embracing a collaborative approach to agency reduction with NHS Professionals, we have made great strides in migrating agency workers over to the Bank. We have seen encouraging results in the last 9 months thanks to our renewed focus on this migration project, even in our more rural locations. Looking forward, we will continue this partnership to drive cost savings, maintain safe staffing levels and provide flexible working opportunities.”

**Kevin Barrett, Temporary Workforce Manager,
Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust**

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