Managed Flexible Worker Service
Introducing NHS Professionals:
Managed Flexible Worker Service

A managed service that supports your workforce strategy, maximising the productivity of your substantive staff and improving the quality of your temporary workers. A managed service to reduce demand for flexible workers, eliminate agency expense and minimise pay costs through our experienced people and leading technology.

No Trust can afford to run at 100% staff levels. Training, annual leave, short and long-term absence and delayed recruitment all leave gaps in your shift fill. That’s where a reliable bank of experienced, approved temporary workers is essential in order to avoid excessive agency costs. But it’s not just about numbers. The quality of flexible staff working in your Trust has a direct impact on patient care.

NHS Professionals offers a cost-effective way to deliver your temporary staffing strategy and contingent cover that minimises expense without compromising patient safety.

As part of the NHS and the no.1 provider of flexible worker managed services to the UK healthcare market, our mission is to reduce the overall cost of employing professional flexible healthcare workers whilst helping you improve the underlying quality of patient care. Our job is to help you optimise your workforce strategy by making your bank efficient and effective.
Workforce strategy

Gaps in shift rosters can usually be filled well in advance at minimum expense to the Trust through more productive use of substantive hours, supported by experienced bank staff.

However, unpredictable short-term absence and ‘no shows’ can leave a ward vulnerable. Understandably, ward managers need to react quickly to ensure continued safe operation, but at what cost?

We provide client Trusts with a comprehensive operational process for requesting shifts, monitoring quality and managing expenditure.

More than 80 NHS Trusts have chosen NHS Professionals’ Managed Flexible Worker Service to replace an in-house bank. Here are a few questions you might want to consider about your workforce strategy:

Is your flexible worker bank:

• Reliable with controllable attendance?
• Providing first class Management Information (MI) that helps you to manage demand?
• Compliant with the NHS Employment Check Standards?
• Minimising and verifying expensive agency usage?
• Optimising pay rates and benefits for all flexible workers?
• Managing overtime rates for substantive staff?
• Recruiting sufficient flexible workers of the right quality?

Understanding costs

The visible cost of running the bank is often only the tip of the iceberg: many other costs may be less obvious. Recruitment, for example, is usually the major cost in running an effective bank. The national average cost of recruitment is estimated around £2,000 per employee (CIPD Recruitment Survey 2009).

In our experience, flexible worker banks can churn at 100% per annum. That means continuous recruitment just to stand still. With economies of scale our recruitment costs are a fraction of the national average.

We are confident that NHS Professionals will be more cost-effective than operating an in-house bank and will help you save up to 20% of your total flexible worker spend.
Why a managed service?

A managed flexible workforce service is fully maintained, managed and controlled by NHS Professionals on behalf of the Trust. You get a comprehensive service level agreement describing our responsibilities and contractual commitments.

Managing your flexible worker bank service becomes our problem and we take responsibility for all bank recruitment and clinical governance.

Your Trust gets access to the industry leading online temporary staff system with many unique features. No maintenance, no update costs. Our ‘one-stop-shop’ covers all of the services required to manage your temporary staffing needs including nurses, doctors, AHP, A&C and other staff groups.

Improving patient safety

Short-term cover is essential to keep wards functioning properly but can have implications for patient safety. As an integral part of the NHS and registered by CQC, patient safety is at the heart of our business. All flexible workers recruited by NHS Professionals comply with our rigorous quality standards and NHS Employment Check Standards.

But quality is not just compliance: we are committed to providing dependable flexible workers that will deliver continuity of care on the ward. We understand the risks created by a flexible worker not turning up and our processes penalise people who don’t attend (DNA) or cancel at short notice. That's why more than 90% of the shifts our flexible workers fill are for second and subsequent shifts in the same ward.

Our records show that half of all shifts are filled by Trusts' own substantive staff working through the NHSP bank. Combined with bank-only workers who are familiar with your wards, NHS Professionals helps you maintain consistency and continuity of care.

Actionable management information

Our job is to help you make difficult decisions as easily as possible by ensuring your team has access to MI that is relevant, current and comprehensive.

Every month our on-site management team will present a package of MI that covers all of your flexible worker demand and fill patterns. We will give you visibility across all wards and staff types, allowing you to determine where you can effect changes that will reduce cost and maintain patient safety.

We will also highlight where Trust policy on flexible working is not being followed and pinpoint excessive agency expense.

NHS Professionals manages over 200,000 shifts/month. We have a wealth of experience of guiding management teams, helping them understand their current flexible worker costs, identifying where and how costs can be reduced.
Secure online operation

NHS Professionals Managed Flexible Worker Service is delivered to your ward managers via an internet browser interface directly from our secure servers via the NHS N3 network.

Timesheets are completed and approved online, minimising errors and reducing administration time. Automatic systems continuously collect information for real-time MI that reflects your shift usage and demand.

Shift bookings are fully integrated with ESR, automatically generating weekly payroll.

What savings can I expect?

We will work with you to establish your existing costs and promise you savings by guaranteeing that we will always operate the bank for less than your in-house cost.

However, savings on the administrative costs of running the bank are only the minor part of the equation.

Our recruitment capability will grow your bank availability, greatly reducing the need for expensive agency staff. Comprehensive management information helps you make informed choices that control demand. We will help you save up to 20% of your total flexible worker cost.

What costs are involved?

Unlike agencies who charge commission on their flexible workers, NHS Professionals offers a transparent management fee plus a small transaction charge for every shift filled. Management fees will flex down as shifts reduce.

What about my existing bank?

Our aim is to ensure continuity of bank supply with your Trust and our ‘transition methodology’ achieves this. From the outset we will work with you to encourage substantive staff and flexible workers to join NHS Professionals to ensure their continued availability to the Trust bank.

We will help you:

• reduce agency demand and expense
• maximise the shifts fulfilled by your own staff (subject to WTD)
• implement standard pay bands for flexible workers
• eliminate unnecessary overtime
• reduce overall shift demand
• meet shortfalls in demand via local recruitment
What's included:

- Recruitment to NHS Employment Check standards
- Comprehensive Management Information to underpin performance management
- Expert advice on demand reduction, rate optimisation and quality standards
- Secure access to our market leading shift management and recruitment platform
- Telephone support from NHS Professionals Service Centre
- On-site client relations team
- Ongoing maintenance of mandatory training, occupational health and employment requirements
- Robust controls track out-of-date qualifications and employment suspension
- Electronic timesheets to reduce administration and speed-up approval
- Weekly payroll to attract flexible workers
- Agency invoice validation and payment to reduce fraud
- Detailed reports on invoices with your cost codes and accrual reports
- Regular business improvement reviews and monthly performance reporting
- All licence fees, system upgrades and maintenance
- Integration with eRostering solutions
- Online Learning and Development portal
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What happens next?

We are so confident in our continuous cost improvement that we offer you a challenge: Let us show you the true cost of your flexible worker bank, completely free of charge.