**NHS IMAS Annual Report 2015/16**

**Introduction**

**Purpose**

NHS Interim Management and Support (NHS IMAS) offer NHS organisations that need short or medium term support the means to access the management expertise that exists throughout the NHS: ‘By the NHS, for the NHS’.

The aims of NHS IMAS are to:

* Encourage and facilitate the NHS to use the wealth of skills already available to it, in order to improve and sustain the quality of healthcare services in the local communities they serve.
* Provide the support that is needed by the NHS, but to do so in a way that builds a sustainable legacy.
* Grow and develop local NHS talent, working with NHS leadership development work streams.
* Reduce dependency on the private sector, while still offering the option to access their skills.
* Provide flexible, rapidly deployable expertise to local health communities to support operational performance improvement and turnaround in emergency and elective care.

**NHS IMAS team**

NHS IMAS comprises:

* A small core team which concentrates on building the talent pool, assignment selection, evaluation and project management.
* Partners and pool members from the NHS and carefully selected independent consultants who undertake the assignments.
* The Intensive Support Teams (ISTs) who specialise in Urgent and Emergency Care, Elective Care and Cancer. They focus on operational improvement, performance turnaround, and building sustainable delivery.
* Hosting by NHS England with Karen Wheeler, National Director: Transformation and Corporate Operations, as Senior Sponsor.

**Achievements**

**Progress so far**

The commitment to support the NHS, embed sustainable change and save money is at the forefront of everything that NHS IMAS deliver. In 2015/16 gross turnover for NHS IMAS increased by 11% from the previous financial year, to just over £10 million (m).

Costs for NHS IMAS are benchmarked against private sector alternatives and it is estimated the equivalent cost to the NHS would be over £15m at prevailing market rates.

During 2015/16 104 assignments were completed by NHS IMAS pool members, with an average of 132 being managed at any one time.

From April 2015 until the end of March 2016, the NHS IMAS Intensive Support Teams (ISTs) completed 169 operational assignments, a slight increase (0.5%) on the previous year. They managed 237 unique assignments during the year, including 28 systems being supported as part of the Emergency Care Improvement Programme (ECIP).

During 2015/16, the teams worked closely with NHS England, the NHS Trust Development Authority and Monitor by supporting local health communities to diagnose areas for performance improvement; supporting implementation planning and delivery; and transferring knowledge to produce sustainable and resilient solutions.

The Urgent and Emergency Care IST expanded to deliver the Emergency Care Improvement Programme (ECIP). This focused on helping the 28 urgent and emergency care systems across England under the most pressure, to deliver real improvements in quality, safety and patient flow.

Both the Elective and Cancer Care and the Urgent and Emergency Care ISTs, along with the ECIP Programme, transferred to the newly formed organisation, NHS Improvement, at the end of the financial year. NHS Improvement is the operational name for the new NHS organisation that brings together Monitor, the NHS Trust Development Authority and a number of teams from NHS England, including the ISTs, from 1 April 2016.

**Client feedback**

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| In 2015/16 NHS IMAS has again evaluated very positively with 100% of clients stating that they would use NHS IMAS again and almost 97% stating that in their experience NHS IMAS was good value compared to independent consultancies. |

The NHS IMAS core team manage all assignments from the initial enquiry and scoping through to the evaluation. Evaluating the assignment and gathering feedback from the client is an essential and fundamental part of the process. This feedback is used to build on success and further improve the quality of service offered to client organisations.

This is a selection of comments from clients during the feedback calls about using NHS IMAS:

**The pool member fulfilled the scope brilliantly, delivering a huge amount of transformational change in very challenging circumstances and the work they did will definitely support sustainable change.**

**The pool member fulfilled the scope and went above and beyond it. They did a fantastic job. It was a difficult issue and they got behind the personalities and complexities in a really good way. The pool member’s level of experience and expertise and their ability to take people with them made them very good value for money.**

Chief Executive

**Mental Health NHS Trust**

Operations Director

**NHS Foundation Trust**

Director of Operations

**Acute NHS Foundation Trust**

**The pool member fulfilled the scope to an extremely high standard. They were excellent value and their knowledge, expertise and work ethic were very welcome.**

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Programme Manager

**Clinical Commissioning Group**

**The pool member completely fulfilled the scope and did a really good job for the CCG. They were excellent value as their day rate is good for the level of experience they have.**

Head of Secondary Care

**Clinical Commissioning Group**

Director of Transformation

**NHS Foundation Trust**

**The work the pool member did will inform sustainable change for the organisation. The pool member fulfilled the scope completely and worked exceptionally well. The support from the NHS IMAS core team was fantastic and I’d have no hesitation in using NHS IMAS.**

Director of IM&T

**Acute NHS Trust**

Programme Lead

**National NHS Organisation**

**The pool member fulfilled the scope entirely and the work they did will support sustainable change. They were excellent value and their experience and expertise were just what was needed. They have now been appointed to a permanent post with the team.**

**The pool member fulfilled the scope completely and establishing the PMO will support sustainable change for the organisation. They went beyond the original brief and added a lot of value.**

Excellent feedback was received about the work of the ISTs:

Lead Officer

**Clinical Commissioning Group**

Senior Manager

**Acute Trust**

**The ECIST representative was really helpful and generally supportive. The actions identified as a result of the ECIST visit will result in an even higher standard of care for our patients.**

**The pool member brought a wealth of experience from other Trusts and is always prepared to be challenging. I always consider her to be a good sounding board, and she continues to make herself available for comment on schemes and ideas in between assignments. If I do not immediately agree with the pool member, I have to date invariably changed my mind and ended up agreeing with her in a matter of months.**

**Acute NHS Trust**

**The input from the IST team assisted the Trust and the Cancer Management team in gaining senior management and executive level engagement, to ensure the focus on the priorities was maintained. This also had a positive impact on the engagement of the clinical teams in the process of scrutinising pathways and developing services to improve patient care/compliance with CWT standards.**

**NHS Health Community**

**NHS Foundation Trust**

**NHS IMAS assignments**

NHS IMAS carried out assignments in all types of NHS organisations across England, including NHS England, Acute Trusts, Foundation Trusts (FTs), Community Trusts, Ambulance Trusts, Commissioning Support Units (CSUs), Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Academic Health Science Centres and the NHS Trust Development Authority. Examples of the assignments managed include providing:

* A Chief Executive to a provider organisation
* A Programme Director to a Commissioning Support Unit
* A Programme Director for Unscheduled Care at a NHS Foundation Trust
* An individual to lead strategic financial improvement at a Clinical Commissioning Group
* An individual to implement a performance framework within a NHS Foundation Trust
* An individual to undertake a capacity and demand review at a NHS Foundation Trust
* An Assistant Director for Collaborative Commissioning at a Clinical Commissioning Group.

Assignments ranged from short term pieces of work, such as service reviews, longer term discreet projects supporting specific initiatives, to filling longer-term interim roles at a senior level. 51% of the assignments in 2015/16 were consultancy work with the remaining pool members on assignments filling interim roles.

**NHS IMAS pool members**

In 2015/16, NHS IMAS had a business plan target to increase the NHS pool by 10%. NHS IMAS exceeded this target whilst ensuring that the pools remained of a high quality and only included those still actively seeking assignments.

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| **NHS IMAS Pool Members** | **April 2012** | **April 2013** | **April 2014** | **April 2015** | **April 2016** |
| Partners                      | 32 | 29 | 27 | 26 | 28 |
| NHS  | 249 | 303 | 354 | 230 | 265 |
| Independents  | 228 | 364 | 576 | 495 | 560 |
| Total | 509 | 696 | 957 | 751 | 853 |

High quality candidates continued to join both the NHS and independent pools throughout the year, enabling NHS IMAS to continue to source individuals to fulfil assignment requests. High quality NHS pool members will continue to be recruited in 2016/17.

Applicants for the NHS IMAS pools undertake a thorough registration process to make sure they have the necessary expertise, experience and credibility to undertake assignments. NHS IMAS continues to attract a high calibre of candidates, and the independent pool members remain committed to providing a high level of service at an affordable rate for NHS clients.

**Pool member development**

NHS IMAS has committed to help support and develop NHS staff who join the pool and has invested in a number of development activities during the year.

NHS IMAS held three web-based training events in 2015/16. As these were at no cost to NHS IMAS, they were opened up to both NHS and independent pool members. The first event held was on Demand and Capacity, which was delivered by an Intensive Support Manager from the Elective Care and Cancer IST.

A second event was finance-based, on the subject of cost improvement, and was delivered by a highly experienced Finance Director, a pool member with NHS IMAS. The final event of the year was ‘Breaking the Cycle’, which was delivered by an Intensive Support Manager from the Urgent and Emergency Care IST.

All three events were evaluated by participants and positive feedback was received across all events.

NHS IMAS took the first full cohort of NHS pool members through its bespoke blended learning package on developing consultancy skills. The package gives pool members the opportunity to develop consultancy skills via a distance learning package and to record development of the skills at a pace to suit their own work demands. Due to its success a second cohort will be taken forward in 2016/17.

NHS IMAS remained a member of NHS Elect and, as part of its membership, was able to give its NHS pool members opportunities to attend courses provided by NHS Elect throughout the year.

More than 100 coaching, mentoring and added value sessions were provided to NHS Pool Members during the year. This provided very senior level support and gave pool members useful insights and techniques when dealing with particularly difficult issues.

**NHS IMAS Partners**

During 2015/16 NHS IMAS added four new Partners, who are Chief Executives or Directors within NHS organisations. Our Partners provide support and advice to NHS IMAS and to its NHS Pool Members, through Mentoring, as required.

Partner teleconferences were held twice during the year, which gave Partners a chance to hear about developments from national speakers and to feed their views and experience in to this national work. The teleconferences also gave Partners a chance to hear about the good work being carried out by other Partners in their own organisations and a chance to share best practice.

The teleconferences took the place of the development events formally held in London, allowing Partners to take part in the events without having to travel away from their organisations, helping them to use their time more effectively and for NHS IMAS to work within its ISO 14001 Environmental Standard, to minimise its impact on the environment from travel.

**Communicating, sharing and learning**

There were 17,558 unique visits to the NHS IMAS website during 2015/16. The website has a password protected area for NHS pool members where they can access all NHS IMAS tools and this is regularly updated to feature new tips and techniques.

The NHS IMAS newsletter ‘Big Splash’ was issued four times during the year. The newsletter is issued to all pool members, Partners and stakeholders and is accessible via the NHS IMAS website. The newsletter featured case studies from both clients and pool members on how NHS IMAS assignments worked for them.

In addition to successfully managing a large number of assignments, the ISTs hosted three national conferences in 2015/16, attracting over 600 clinicians and managers to look at ‘Challenging the Norm’, ‘Think Home First’ and ‘Elective Care’. Guest speakers were provided for 16 conferences and events.

**Business Systems Management**

NHS IMAS has been continuously reviewing its processes as part of its Business Management Systems. NHS IMAS has two systems, a Quality Management System, which is accredited to the international standard ISO 9001:2008 and an Environmental Management System, which is accredited to the standard ISO 14001:2004.

NHS IMAS was successful in being reaccredited the ISO 9001 standard for its Quality Management System in 2015/16 and a successful surveillance visit was held on the environmental standard ISO 14001. NHS IMAS continues to be committed to delivering both standards going forward.

As part of meeting these standards, NHS IMAS consistently reviews and, where appropriate, makes changes to its processes to enhance both the efficiency of its service and ensure that the quality of service provided is constantly improving.

As part of the NHS IMAS commitment to its Environmental Management System, both the NHS IMAS core team and ISTs have reduced travel, where possible, alternatively using web-based tools, teleconferencing and video conferencing. The NHS IMAS core team has also improved its recycling and reduced its power consumption by ensuring all electronic equipment and lighting is switched off when not in use.

Through using these operational and environmental processes that we know work, and by adapting them when we find the need to, NHS IMAS can continue to develop to meet the changing needs of clients and ensure a quality service continues to be delivered and the future impact on the environment continues to be reduced.

**The Future**

NHS IMAS will continue to develop and respond to the needs of the NHS, delivering effective support models for the future. The team will continue to manage between 120 and 140 live assignments at any one time in 2016/17.

The team will also continue to increase the number of its pool members with specific skills to provide support to organisations under pressure and will continue to improve the number and quality of active candidates registered.

The team will help to further develop pool members’ consultancy skills by rolling out its second cohort for the blended learning programme ‘An introduction to consultancy skills’ and will continue to hold web-based training events for Partners and pool members in relevant and topical areas.

NHS IMAS will continue to use its Business Management Systems to improve services and adapt to the changing needs of clients and reduce further the impact on the environment. Continued assessment against the ISO standards will confirm NHS IMAS’ drive for continual improvement.

The ISTs left NHS IMAS at the end of the financial year 2015/16, when they were transferred to become part of the new organisation NHS Improvement. NHS IMAS will continue to work closely with IST colleagues and other colleagues within NHS Improvement throughout 2016/17.