

## **NHS Interim Management & Support (NHS IMAS) Business Plan 2024/25**

### **1. Introduction and Overview**

NHS Interim Management and Support (NHS IMAS) is hosted by NHS England (NHSE) and is part of the Workforce, Training & Education Directorate.

### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of NHS IMAS is to 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.'

### **3. Aims**

The aims of NHS IMAS are to:

- Maintain a flexible pool of senior expertise with the experience and credibility to be mobilised across the NHS in England at pace.
- Encourage and facilitate the NHS to use the wealth of skills already available to it, to improve and sustain the quality of health care 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.
- Provide a real alternative to the private sector, while still offering the option to access their skills.

### **4. NHS IMAS Funding, Hosting and Governance**

NHS IMAS is funded by NHSE and hosted by NHSE's Workforce, Training & Education Directorate, reporting into the Director of Workforce Supply. The Senior Sponsor is the Chief Workforce Officer.

The governance of NHS IMAS is through a Strategic Advisory Board that represents the broad spectrum of NHS client organisations.

The NHS IMAS Strategic Advisory Board and management team will work to ensure its' services respond to the needs of the NHS and develop effective support models for the future. As national reviews and publications (including the Long Term Workforce Plan) are updated and published, NHS IMAS will consider the impact of recommendations and how it might support client organisations in implementing these. Where appropriate, NHS IMAS will consult its Strategic Advisory Board and

adjust its Business Plan to reflect the findings in the way it operates and manages its pools.

Funding, in terms of additional staffing need, will also be sought for any significant work over and above this business plan to ensure that this does not have an impact on NHS IMAS' ability to continue to deliver its core services. Additional costs will not be charged, wherever possible, for management time and the use of NHS IMAS' ISO-accredited Quality Management Systems and processes.

## **5. NHS IMAS Business Model**

NHS IMAS has available an expert resource of experienced senior leaders. These individuals act as 'Partners' for NHS IMAS.

When resources are needed on assignments, NHS IMAS can draw upon a considerable pool of talented individuals from within the NHS and, if necessary, a hand-picked selection of independent consultants, which NHS organisations rate. NHS IMAS has a small team to facilitate, and programme manage this process.

NHS IMAS continues to build on its track record of providing cost effective and quality support to the NHS. In 2023/24 the amount spent by the NHS on resources provided through NHS IMAS was in excess of £4.5 million.

Costs for NHS IMAS are benchmarked against private sector alternatives, and it is estimated the equivalent cost to the NHS would have been in excess of £7m at prevailing market rates. Therefore, it is estimated that NHS IMAS saved the NHS over £2.5m during 2023/24. Savings anticipated for 2024/25 are expected to be in line with the operating model of providing on average 120 – 140 live assignments with anticipated savings of around £2.5m.

NHS IMAS is responsible for three key areas, utilising its systems and processes to deliver for NHSE and the NHS as a whole.

The three areas are:

- NHS IMAS Core Offer
- Talent Management
- Flexible Resourcing for NHSE

NHS IMAS will continue to meet its business objectives through its core funding. However, any reduction to this funding will result in a need to reduce the size of the team and the number of assignments and organisations it can support.

Published in June 2023, the NHS Long Term Workforce Plan is the first comprehensive workforce plan for the NHS, putting staffing on a sustainable footing and improving patient care. It focuses on retaining existing talent and making the best use of new technology alongside the biggest recruitment drive in health service history. Throughout 2024/25, NHS IMAS will continue to support the system to deliver the transformation actions delivered to improve patient care. Deliverables will be mapped against the three core pillars:

- Train
- Retain
- Reform.

NHS IMAS continues to support systems with the delivery of the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) now that all parts of England are served by a local Integrated Care System (ICS) through the establishment of Integrated Care Boards (ICBs).

NHS IMAS will continue to support the system to meet health and care needs across an area, to co-ordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities between different groups.

Further to the implementation of the new NHS England Operating Framework, NHS IMAS is aligning its operating model to an 'Account Manager' model where NHS IMAS will align resources with Regional Teams, ICBs and Providers to support their specific senior resource requirements.

The Business Plan for 2024/25 has:

- considered the possible impact of the New NHS England structure on NHS IMAS. The Business Plan has been reviewed in line with new capacity following the outcome of the consultation process and confirmation of the structure.
- ensured NHS IMAS will proactively support NHS England with the implementation and delivery of the new flexible resourcing model for the organisation following the Change Programme.
- included the development of partnerships with NHS organisations to ensure the NHS gets the best value and expertise to deliver for patients and the community it serves.

## **6. NHS IMAS Core Offer**

NHS IMAS will ensure that it supports high quality NHS pool members and leaders to undertake challenging roles by considering what further training and development can be provided for them and working closely with colleagues developing Talent Management Programmes.

NHS IMAS will also source high quality independent pool members to provide support, whilst also ensuring good value for money and remaining within the day rate caps identified by NHSE.

With its focused programme approach, in-house specialists and network of NHS and independent resources, NHS IMAS is committed to providing a supportive professional service including:

- scoping of resource requirements.
- identification of readily available, highly skilled staff and the facilitation provision from initial introduction, interview arrangements through to confirmation of the assignment.
- ensuring pool member records contain up to date information.
- the provision of agreement letters (specifying the objectives of the assignment and working arrangements).
- allocation of a Resourcing Lead from the NHS IMAS team for each assignment, who remains in contact throughout the assignment to ensure it is progressing well against the agreed scope and objectives.
- regular assessment with the pool member of any support they require to assist them whilst on assignment, including access to health and wellbeing resources and support in addition to coaching and mentoring as appropriate.
- providing a closure report at the end of the assignment which summarises the impact of the work completed and captures any learning and good practice.
- maintaining confidentiality and discretion between all parties throughout the process.

NHS IMAS will continue to evaluate every assignment to ensure that it meets the client's needs and expectations, that the work being done, where appropriate, leads to sustainable change and that pool members deliver a high value service to clients.

Client satisfaction is vital, and NHS IMAS seeks feedback from each assignment to ensure that it remains efficient and effective in delivering the needs of the NHS. The target is for 100% of clients to say that they were so satisfied that they will use NHS IMAS again in the future.

For 2024/25, NHS IMAS aims to continue this evaluation and high level of service.

### **6.1 Quality Management**

NHS IMAS gained certification to a new, revised standard ISO 9001:2015 for its Quality Management System in March 2017. NHS IMAS retained the standard following an external surveillance audit in January 2024 with an external accredited certification body. This is a set of standards that represent international agreement on good quality management practices. The ISO 9001:2015 standard provides a framework for taking a systematic approach to managing processes to ensure that it consistently meets customer's expectations.

The next audit will take place by the end of January 2025.

### **6.2 Environmental Management**

NHS IMAS was certified for its Environmental Management System to the revised ISO 14001:2015 International Environmental Standard in March 2017.

NHS IMAS retained the standard following an external surveillance audit in January 2024 which demonstrates that it continues to meet the standard.

The next audit will take place by the end of January 2025.

### **6.3 Communications & Engagement**

NHS IMAS' reputation continues to be the main marketing tool to attract repeat and new client organisations. NHS IMAS commissioned a review of all communications resources and activity in Quarter 4 (2023/24), and the outcomes from this review will inform the 2024/25 Communications and Engagement Plan.

During 2024/25 NHS IMAS services will be marketed through:

- Regular communications on the NHS IMAS website and social media platforms including Twitter and LinkedIn - posting regularly to raise awareness of NHS IMAS and its services and to encourage new high-quality pool members to register.
- Delivery of Workshops and Presentations to Regions, ICBs and Providers to increase the profile of NHS IMAS.
- External articles recording the progress of NHS IMAS.
- Appropriate partnerships with other national NHS organisations and teams (such as NHS Providers, NHS Employers and Commissioning Support Units (CSUs)).
- Support to Regional and National Talent Management Boards and initiatives.
- The network of Partners.
- “Word of mouth” – Clients and pool members recommending NHS IMAS to colleagues.
- Working with Partners and Strategic Advisory Board members to identify appropriate events to attend or for information about NHS IMAS to be shared.
- Working with NHS England Programmes who require bespoke support and registers in line with the specialist nature of their work, as follows:
  - Senior Nursing individuals with significant experience to provide Trusts with Intensive Support in the NHS.
  - Individuals with significant experience in Infection, Prevention and Control to provide Trusts with appropriate support in the NHS.
  - Individuals with significant experience to provide Trusts with Intensive Support as required.
  - Provide NHS England access to senior clinical expertise to be deployed to support an incident requiring clinical resources.
  - Provide NHS England access to individuals with experience in managing Children and Young People's Services to assist organisations who require specialist support in these areas.
  - Individuals with digital experience to enhance and support the NHS' digital capability.
  - Specific Mental Health Improvement Support.
  - Individuals to carry out HR investigations.
  - Peer to Peer Mentoring Schemes (Chair and Chief Executives and Proud2BOps Networks).

#### **6.4 Training for NHS Pool Members**

NHS IMAS will continue to provide training and support to its NHS pool members using a range of tools.

NHS pool members will be able to access mentoring through NHS IMAS whilst undertaking assignments. NHS IMAS Partners will act as mentors to pool members, and those with coaching qualifications have agreed to provide coaching, as and when appropriate.

NHS IMAS has developed a unique blended learning course to help NHS pool members develop their consultancy skills. Feedback from the first eight cohorts has been overwhelmingly positive with 100% of participants reporting that they have used the techniques and tools since completing the course and feeling that the learning has provided them with the foundations to undertake a challenging NHS IMAS assignment. The ninth cohort will take place in 2024/25.

NHS IMAS run a number of web-based training events on topical subjects and where pool members indicate there is a training need, which receive positive feedback from pool members. Partners carry out web-based events to talk about their experiences and challenges and give pool members information and tips to help them in their career progression within the NHS. Six web-based training events are planned to take place in 2024/25.

#### **6.5 Core Offer Objectives for 2024/25**

NHS IMAS will deliver the core offer by managing on average between 120 and 140 live assignments at any one time and working collaboratively with NHS colleagues to develop an offer to fulfil the needs of the NHS, identifying the experience and skills required and the availability of these through NHS IMAS.

NHS IMAS will build upon the work done in 2023/24 to increase the number of NHS organisations it engages with by 10% in 2024/25.

NHS IMAS will expand the skills available within the system by increasing the number of new NHS pool members by 10%, and identifying and targeting specific areas of need, offering support to providers, NHSE, ICBs, CSUs, Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). These skills will be reinforced through the NHS IMAS core business and working collaboratively within NHSE through Flexible Resourcing.

NHS IMAS is committed to aligning delivery with the NHS England Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Improvement Plan to support the NHS in improving the culture of our workplaces and the experiences of our workforce, to boost staff retention and attract diverse new talent to the NHS. NHS IMAS will support organisations to deliver on the six high impact actions of the plan through its own systems and processes as well as deployment of expert resources.



NHS IMAS will continue to document and publicise case studies of pool member's experience and lessons learnt on assignment in regular communications on the website and social media platforms.

## **7. Talent Management**

NHS IMAS supports all seven regions of NHSE in their Talent Management approach.

Following the NHS England Change Programme, NHS IMAS is developing its contribution to the development of future healthcare leaders in line with local requirements, in three ways:

- In partnership with NHSE developing Talent Management Programmes, supporting NHS senior staff through providing stretch assignments.
- Working with NHSE to develop its internal Talent Management Programme and facilitation of stretch assignments.
- Using Partners' expertise and extensive leadership experience to help NHS pool members understand their development needs and how they can progress towards the higher leadership levels of the NHS.

NHS IMAS will continue to support the Chief Nursing Officers Exceptional Leaders Network and the work of the Improvement Directorate, holding specialist registers to support sustainable change.

Working with the Operations Directorate in NHSE, NHS IMAS will develop the offer to support challenged organisations who require short term improvement support.

In addition, NHS IMAS will continue to support:

- The Infection Prevention and Control National Programme, to develop a pool of expertise, to ensure patient safety is maintained.
- The Nursing Directorate with access to individuals with experience in managing Children and Young People's Services to assist organisations who require specialist support.
- The Operations Directorate to manage a bespoke register to provide NHSE access to senior clinical expertise who can be deployed to support an incident requiring clinical resources as required, and work with NHSE Transformation Directorate to support digital transformation across the NHS.

NHS IMAS will identify opportunities to develop further specialist pools to meet the changing needs and priorities of the NHS.

### **7.1 Talent Management Objectives for 2024/25**

NHS IMAS will continue to work with NHS organisations to support their Talent Management Programmes and with NHSE to support the Regional Talent Boards.

The NHS' Talent Management Programmes, both within NHSE and across the NHS, will continue to be proactively supported and developed, by utilising the NHS

IMAS systems and processes to retain and map data and match individuals to appropriate stretch assignments as and when required by NHS organisations, supporting equality, diversity and inclusion.

NHS IMAS will proactively engage with any individuals identified through the Talent Management Programmes to support individuals working at a senior level with interim redeployment options as appropriate.

## **8. Flexible Resourcing**

NHS IMAS will continue to work in collaboration with NHSE's Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR&OD) colleagues to:

- Refine the deployment process to support the organisational priorities.
- Join up individual systems to create a more cohesive methodology for deploying staff internally.
- Redefine internal HR&OD systems to support more flexible recruitment and deployment.
- Support the development of policy and processes to support Flexible Resourcing across the organisation, including the Regions.

### **8.1 Flexible Resourcing Objectives for 2024/25**

NHS IMAS will continue to work with HR&OD colleagues in NHSE to support an agile way of working and operating model designed by the organisation to enable the mobilisation of the required skills and experience to meet the prioritised needs of the organisation.

In addition, NHS IMAS will work directly with NHSE Programmes to understand their resource requirements and support the quick deployment of high-quality interim resources.

Working collaboratively, NHS IMAS will ensure that flexible resourcing maximises the talent available across the organisation and through CSUs to improve service to the front-line NHS and will also ensure recruitment and deployment are aligned to make best use of resources and support the talent development of the organisation's staff, supporting equality, diversity and inclusion.

## **9. Organisational Transformation**

NHS IMAS will:

- Work with the NHS to meet its need for transformational change.
- Evaluate learning and feedback from clients for continual improvement.
- Strengthen partnership working with key bodies across health and social care, including DHSC, NHSE, NHS Professionals and NHS Providers, NHS Employers, CSUs and third sector organisations.
- Support the delivery of the new NHSE Operating Framework.



## 10. Risks and assumptions

The main risks and assumptions to the delivery of this Business Plan and the on-going development of NHS IMAS are:

- Increasing the pipeline of potential pool members to meet the needs for assignments, including getting agreement from their employers for them to be released for assignments.
- Maintaining the high quality of pool members and their availability to undertake assignments.
- An assumption that NHSE will continue to fund NHS IMAS with any additional funding provided by the appropriate client for significant work over and above the business plan.
- Ensuring that key software and systems are supported by NHSEs IT Department and contingency plans.

A risk register is in place to mitigate against potential risks.

## 11. Budget

The NHS IMAS Budget required for 2024/25 (based on the structure of 8 WTE) is as follows:

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Budget (£)</b>
NHS IMAS Admin Funding - Pay 2024/25	471,116
NHS IMAS Admin Funding – Non-Pay 2024/25	187,504
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>658,620</b>

## 12. The Business Planning Process

This Business Plan for 2024/25 is subject to agreement by the NHS IMAS Strategic Advisory Board and approval by NHSE. Progress on delivery of the plan will be reported to the Board throughout the year. This Business Plan will also feed into the NHSE Workforce, Training and Education Directorate's Business Plan. Management Information showing progress against the Business Plan objectives will be provided on a monthly basis to the SRO and key stakeholders within NHSE.