

NHS IMAS Talent Pools - Growing for the future...

NHS IMAS continues to support senior NHS staff across the NHS in England, here is a quick snapshot of pool member's contribution to date...



*supported
over 200 NHS organisations*



*completed
over 1200 assignments*



*Over 850
pool members registered*

This has only been possible thanks to the highly skilled network of senior NHS staff (ready for Agenda for Change Band 8d and above roles) registered as part of our talent pools, being able to be flexibly deployed to support NHS organisations across England.

Talent Pool Member Benefits

Talent pool membership offers a unique platform to access a variety of interim opportunities across all NHS organisations and specialities and encourages individuals to grow and develop in their NHS careers. Interim assignments can be incredibly rewarding, with the opportunity to work on a wide range of projects alongside talented people in challenging environments as well as building lasting networks and skills.

- ✔ **Challenging Opportunities**
- ✔ **Virtual Learning Webinars**
- ✔ **Assignment Variety**
- ✔ **Career Development**
- ✔ **Defined Objectives**
- ✔ **External (system wide) Exposure**
- ✔ **Feedback & Support**
- ✔ **Coaching and Mentoring**
- ✔ **Sharing Local Best Practice**
- ✔ **Networking**
- ✔ **Blended Learning Course**
- ✔ **National Stretch Assignments**

This year and what this means for you...

Delivering on the People Plan promise of growing talent, NHS IMAS will continue to support the development of senior NHS leaders through supported "stretch" assignments that develop their skills and experience. We welcome applications from experienced senior NHS staff working at Agenda for Change Band 8c and above. At present, we are particularly keen to hear from individuals with strong digital, HR & OD or programme management experience.

Looking at the priorities for the recovery phase from the pandemic, NHS IMAS will provide senior interim management and support to the NHS using the wealth of skills already available to it, in order to improve and sustain the quality of health care services in the local communities they serve. This will be vital in supporting the NHS through organisational transformation and change, including the development of ICSs, and the wider NHS recovery.

If your NHS organisation is looking for short to medium interim support, please get in contact via nhs.imas@nhs.net or phone 0113 486 0132 to speak to a Programme Manager to discuss your requirements.

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 - Peter Kennedy, Mark Gough and Diane Scott
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Richard Jeavons' thoughts:

The long term future plan of the NHS after Covid-19

NHS IMAS Senior Partner, Richard Jeavons, shares his opinions on the long term future plan of the NHS after Covid-19.

“As hospitalisation of Covid-19 sufferers reverts to more normal proportions and NHS capacity switches back to routine work, the scale of the backlog of treatment and impact of delays on patients’ health and outcomes is coming into focus. Moving forward seems much more complicated than extra funding for extra capacity to get waiting times back to where they should be – though that is always a place to start because it can be measured and managed effectively.

The pandemic has changed the population’s future health needs, changed irreversibly how services are delivered, exacerbated capacity problems – notably workforce - and exposed for scrutiny and comment the strengths and weaknesses of our local and national health and care systems.

The pandemic inquiry will look at lessons learned and optimistically may lead to the nation being better prepared for the inevitable next time. But what are the prospects that the health and care system’s evident longstanding issues will be addressed by a coherent long term approach from government?

Back in the early days of the millennium, chronic NHS under capacity, including workforce, social care and effective use of IT were identified as needing fixed with long term investment in health care and public health. Twenty years later after a banking crash, public finance austerity, NHS reforms and a pandemic it looks like we are back to the future.

History, most recently charted by Nick Timmins in *The most expensive breakfast in history* | The Health Foundation, suggests it will take the most extraordinary combination of political ambition and circumstances for today’s politicians to step forward. Perhaps the pandemic legacy is the best hope in a generation.”



Richard Jeavons

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Life on Assignment - Deepa Nair-Pillai

NHS IMAS Pool Member Deepa Nair-Pillai shares her experience of being on assignment as the Deputy Director of Programmes within the Equality and Inclusion team, NHS England and NHS Improvement.



Deepa Nair-Pillai

I am on assignment as the Deputy Director of Programmes within the Equality and Inclusion (E&I) team. I joined this team in December 2020 on a four month secondment from the East of England regional team with the specific remit of developing a governance and oversight framework for the E&I team, and providing support to the E&I Directors.

The role has been a learning experience for me in more ways than one, as it was my first experience in the National team, so getting that 20,000ft level view is always helpful. It was also my first role in the E&I space which has been educational to say the least. I am involved in a wide range of projects at the moment ranging from managing HR processes, setting up risk escalation frameworks, business planning, stakeholder management on National advisory groups.

I joined the NHS from the private sector about 11 years ago, in what was then known as Monitor and have been with this organisation through its multiple iterations.

I have always felt a sense of pride and gratefulness for the quality of health care we receive in the NHS, particularly during the birth of my second child seven years ago, when they quite literally saved my life. But over the past 18 months, particularly given my stint in the National Incident Coordination Centre (ICC(N)), the level of commitment to make a difference despite of the situation and not because of the situation we found ourselves in has really stayed with me.

I was returning home from the ICC(N) after an evening shift in June last year, and stopped at the local Tesco. I didn't realise I hadn't taken my badge off until about five people in the queue let me go to the front, and the guard outside the shop said 'We can wait a little longer, you work for the NHS, you take priority.'

We asked Deepa what advice she would give to other NHS IMAS pool members or anybody considering taking on a new assignment?

The power of integration, coproduction and collaboration. If these three things are in any project it is bound to succeed!

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Life on Assignment - Peter Kennedy, Mark Gough and Diane Scott

Back in January 2020 when COVID-19 was given Critical Incident status for the NHS and a National Incident Coordination Centre (ICC(N)) was required to provide a single point of contact from which to coordinate the NHS response nationally, NHS IMAS was tasked with finding the right people for the job.

NHS IMAS Pool Members Peter Kennedy, Mark Gough, and Diane Scott have undertaken NHS IMAS assignments as Incident Directors at the ICC(N) in Skipton House. Nearly a year and a half later, I'm not sure any of them would have expected to be in the positions still.

It's been a multi-faceted and ever changing role, and has required them to balance governmental ask with NHS priority and capability, alongside the day to day operational management of a busy and ever changing environment and managing staff expectations and wellbeing.

Peter - 'At the beginning we were entering the unknown. We were setting up something very responsive to changing the needs of the service; ensuring the room was fully operational in a rapidly changing environment, standing up new processes and Standard Operating Procedures. It was all very fast-paced as we became an essential coordination function in a turbulent time. The work has developed and matured into a fairly robust and well understood coordination function, spanning the seven regions and providing a key focal point for all the regions to feed into one place.'

Generally, incidents have a steep rise of activity, a short plateau, and enter the recovery phase quickly. The longevity of COVID-19 has been so very different in that.

Diane - 'the protracted event and intensity of the unfolding Pandemic was very different to anything I had experienced in my 33 years' service in the NHS. I had to step outside of my own comfort zone, working challenging shifts whilst dealing with the competing priorities and demands from the many service areas the ICC(N) was coordinating.'

This consistency of leadership in an environment that is constantly changing has been a cornerstone in the success of creating a functional ICC(N) so quickly.

Mark - 'Providing stable and calm leadership has been key to supporting and developing all of the staff who have volunteered - the ICC(N) Incident Managers have really stepped up to that leadership role. We have all learned new skills to support and manage an effective NHS response.'



Diane Scott

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Interim Management
and Support

Life on Assignment - Peter Kennedy, Mark Gough and Diane Scott (continued)



Peter Kennedy

The longevity of this Incident has led to the creation, testing, and actioning of this ICC(N) model as one channel of communication in and out, which has been welcomed by the regions, providers, and national team.

Peter – ‘There is no way we could have done this without the commitment and tenacity of the staff. We have been completely dependent on the volunteer Reservists in particular! Once there was a foundation in place of secondees providing a consistency within the room, this was complimented by skills brought in with the Reservist model.’

‘This would not have been possible without the responsiveness and commitment of Reservists and secondees. Under pressure, they really stood up to the challenge; people stepping in last minute, traveling, staying in hotels, working in an office environment while everyone else is homeworking – though we have strict measures to keep them safe. The ICC(N) has been operating 12-15hrs a day, 365 days a year. Christmas, Easter, Bank holidays. There has been no let-up of operation whatsoever. The continued service and dedication of our team has filled me with pride’

After unexpectedly long assignments for NHS IMAS, they offer any advice to prospective or current NHS IMAS pool members?

Diane – ‘Undertaking an NHS IMAS assignment is a rewarding and great way of helping NHS organisations in an interim capacity, whilst embracing new personal challenges. Ensure there is flexibility in the agreed deliverables to allow for the unknowns that may arise during the assignment.’

Mark – ‘Don’t be afraid to dip your toe in the water and offer your services. The support and team ethos that everyone gets working together is hugely rewarding, and you really are making a difference. You will always be supported and developed.’



Mark Gough

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Development opportunities for pool members

Exclusive Webinars

NHS IMAS continues to deliver a series of exclusive webinars for pool members and clients throughout 2021/22 on a wide range of topical and relevant subject areas delivered by experts and NHS leaders.

Our most recent webinars include:

- Key implications for the NHS emerging from the draft NHS Health and Care Bill delivered by Gerard Hanratty, Head of Health at law firm Browne Jacobson.
- Relationships, results and reform delivered by Anthony McKeever, Executive Lead at Mid and South Essex Health and Care Partnership.

To watch these sessions and all previous webinars please [visit our website here](#).

Consultancy and Facilitation Skills Blended Learning Offer

We will shortly be recruiting to Cohort Seven of our highly subscribed and successful Consultancy and Facilitation skills course.

This is currently offered online as a blended learning programme and is available to NHS pool members who are new to working in a consultancy role or wanting to develop their skills in this style of working.

The course consists of two online workshops and supporting assessed coursework. Delegates will have an opportunity to explore issues and share ideas and experiences with peers and practice and reflect on new skills in a safe environment.

One of the Cohort Six participants recommends the course, saying:

“The blended learning approach suited me because it was flexible and I was able to dedicate time to the coursework when it worked for me. The workshops are so valuable, enough people to have a range of experience to share but not too many that you feel lost in the crowd. Overall, well planned, well facilitated, extremely useful and great fun.”

Launch of Consultancy and Facilitation Skills Alumni Network

NHS IMAS is developing an online platform to enable all Cohort alumni to keep in touch and to access updated reference materials to support their work as consultants and whilst on assignment.

If you are interested in attending the next cohort of the course or in joining the Alumni network please contact Jan Pearce on janet.pearce1@nhs.net or 07825 732 889.



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Support to Regional Talent Programmes

NHS IMAS is committed to supporting emerging NHS leaders, and developing their leadership skills

The approach to talent management across the health and care system has seen foundations laid in the NHS Long Term Plan, and the NHS People Plan's commitment to better support senior NHS leaders through a systematic regional and local approach for identifying, assessing, developing, deploying and supporting internal talent.

Following on from the devastating impact Covid-19 has had on the healthcare system, there has never been a more appropriate time to recognise, celebrate and develop the wealth of talent already within the NHS.

NHS IMAS has continued to work with regional and national talent and leadership boards to understand regional and local talent priorities, whilst offering our support to enable each of the talent programmes to deliver on supporting effective NHS leaders. The level of support is tailored to the requirements of each Regional Talent and Leadership Board; from talent pool management through to full scope, placement of pool members and support whilst they are on assignment, including access to coaching and mentoring; and assignment management for the client with comprehensive report and governance arrangements in place.



Regional talent scheme spotlight

With a renewed focus, the Midlands and East of England regional talent and leadership boards will be re-launching their successful Midlands and East Executive Talent Scheme (MEETs) this autumn.

The MEET scheme, initially piloted in 2017, was a successful joint initiative between the Midlands and East of England RTBs with support from NHS IMAS. The MEET Scheme was initially designed to develop a talent pool of individuals that can be appointed into executive-level posts in trusts and this developed to also supporting Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs)/ Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) across the region, on either a stretch assignment or secondment basis. The scheme offers the chance to access opportunities which can accelerate progression into substantive leadership roles – testing the limits of existing skills and experience and providing a new setting for development.

The scheme also offers members a wide range of support opportunities including assignment matching, career development and networking opportunities, coaching and mentoring and access to regional and local talent and career management schemes/experiences.

The scheme is looking to re-launch this autumn, [further details for the East of England team are available here](#) and [details for the Midlands team are available here](#). For any enquiries relating to the MEET Scheme, please contact: MEET.scheme@leadershipacademy.nhs.uk or nhs.imas@nhs.net

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Team Update

Since the spring edition, we have had a number of changes to the NHS IMAS team.

We have recently said goodbye temporarily to NHS IMAS Programme Manager Laura Davies, who has left us to go on maternity leave and has recently welcomed her new arrival.

Rosie Hakes, who has moved across from the ICC(N) team, will provide maternity cover as Programme Manager for NHS IMAS.

We would like to congratulate Priya Bala, NHS IMAS Programme Manager as she joins the People Directorate's Leadership and Lifelong Learning Team on a secondment to assist with the recruitment of senior roles for the Integrated Care Systems.

Dyan Ellinger who worked on the SCO team supporting the ICC(N) has moved on to a new role outside the organisation, but we thank her for all her contributions while she was with NHS IMAS.



Dyan Ellinger



Laura Davies



Priya Bala

Celebrating the Queen's Birthday Honours

We would like to wish a huge congratulations to all of our NHS colleagues who have been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

We would like to start by giving a special mention to Professor Sir Keith Willett, National Director for Emergency Planning and Incident Response NHSE/I, who received a Knighthood for services to the NHS.

Alongside Professor Sir Keith Willett, we celebrate one of our NHS IMAS Pool Members Jacqueline Wendy Bird MBE, former Regional Chief Nurse, North West Region, NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I), who has been made Members of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) for services to Nursing and the Covid-19 Response.

We would like to thank all our NHS colleagues and NHS IMAS pool members for their continued hard work and are proud to be part of such an outstanding, committed, and inspirational organisation.



Professor Sir Keith Willett



Jaqueline Wendy Bird MBE

Big Splash Newsletter Review

With over 60 editions released to date, we would like to know if you find Big Splash helpful and would really appreciate you taking a few moments to complete a short survey using [this link](#).