

# Big Splash

Interim Management and Support



Information for NHS IMAS members

Welcome to our Summer edition of **Big Splash**, the newsletter for NHS IMAS members.

**Big Splash** has the latest news about the NHS IMAS programme and assignments.

In this edition:

- NHS IMAS completes 150 assignments within the NHS saving over £7.1m
- NHS Elect Training Courses
- Eyes wide open
- Exciting opportunities for operational experts
- Completer Finisher
- New core team members
- Life on a NHS IMAS assignment
- An insight into NHS IMAS: The core team
- NHS IMAS products in the spotlight
- Quick Splash

## NHS IMAS completes 150 assignments within the NHS saving over £7.1m

NHS IMAS has completed its 150<sup>th</sup> assignment and saved over £7.1m last financial year.

In 2011/12 NHS IMAS generated net savings to the NHS of approximately £4.16m and approximately £2.96m to the DH, in comparison with independent sector rates for like for like assignments.

NHS IMAS, which offers NHS organisations short or medium term support, has over 500 top managers and clinicians on its registers and is currently managing 115 assignments in England.

The programme has supported a wide range of NHS organisations including NHS Foundation Trusts, Acute Trusts, Mental Health Trusts, Ambulance Trusts and the Department of Health.

NHS IMAS' 150<sup>th</sup> assignment was carried out at Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. NHS IMAS sourced an experienced Cancer Operations Manager to support the Trust in reducing their waiting times from referral to treatment.

The NHS IMAS team member, Shola Adegoye, identified recommendations of where and how improvements to the management of cancer patients could be made in line with national good practice.

Paul Williams, Director of Clinical Services at Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust said "Shola was instantly credible to the organisation and brought a professionally critical eye to the operations. The feedback received was constructive and has set us on the right track for further improvements".

In addition to the NHS IMAS assignments, the Emergency, Elective and Cancer Intensive Supports Teams (ISTs) completed over 80 assignments and managed on average 90 live assignments simultaneously last financial year.



# NHS Elect Training opportunities

NHS IMAS has joined forces with NHS Elect to give Partners and NHS pool members access to training opportunities.

The training courses are run by NHS Elect and cover a broad range of subjects from project management to marketing.

These courses are free to attend and are held in Central London, Birmingham and Leeds.

The list of courses is available on the members only area of the NHS IMAS website. This is a dedicated section of the website for Partners and NHS pool members to log on to.

The number of places available on each course are limited and are allocated on a first come first served basis.

Examples of the courses include:

- Advanced marketing tools and techniques
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Conflict resolution
- Project Management
- Advanced business case tools and techniques
- Your management style including MBTI
- Demand and Capacity
- Negotiation Skills
- Procurement, Competition and Market Management

For further information about the NHS Elect courses please visit the members only section of the NHS IMAS website:

[www.nhsimas.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsimas.nhs.uk)



## Eyes wide open

We're only as good as the people on our books – that's the people like you!

Do you work with someone or know a person who really makes a difference in the NHS? Someone who is passionate about patient care and determined to make NHS organisations a success?

If you have any colleagues who would like to join the pool and help support the NHS, please ask them to contact us on (0113) 254 6464/6424.



## Exciting opportunities for operational experts

We currently have a high demand for Operational experts.

We have been contacted by a number of NHS organisations, who have some rewarding opportunities for operations experts at senior manager and director level.

We need people with experience in dealing with operational turnaround, service development, 18 weeks Referral to Treatment and urgent care.

If you know of any colleagues who would be interested in an operations opportunity, please ask them to contact us on (0113) 254 6464/6424 or [nhs.imas@nhs.net](mailto:nhs.imas@nhs.net).



# Completer Finisher

Finding the right pool member for the right assignment can be challenging, but that is the job for our highly trained programme managers who know how to match a person to an organisation.

Once the pool member has been selected for the assignment and the assignment has been fully scoped, the pool member has to go into the organisation and deliver, which is what all our NHS IMAS pool members are experts at.

Whilst on assignment, it can be hard to find time to reflect on the work which you have undertaken and all the sustainable changes that you are in the process of making. This is why we want to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of the NHS IMAS closure report.

The NHS IMAS closure report template has been designed to help you evidence all the work that you have carried out whilst on assignment. Not only does this document form the basis of the closure call between our Managing Partner, Janet Walter, and the client, it helps you as the pool member capture what you have achieved.

The closure report template is sent to all NHS IMAS pool members two weeks before the assignment is due to finish.

As soon as you receive the document, start work on completing it and reflecting on what you have achieved. If you want the template sooner, just contact your Programme Manager.

This document is designed to help you celebrate your achievements and illustrate to the client that you have carried out exactly what was scoped initially and more! Use this document to your advantage; it is there to benefit you as an NHS IMAS pool member.

So, when the constant reminders from our Programme Managers about your closure report start popping into your mailbox, just think of it as a positive thing and a way to document all that you have achieved!



## The NHS IMAS Closure report – what you need to know:

- Always write the report in the third person and refer to yourself as the NHS IMAS pool member
- Its quality not quantity, make sure your report is concise and to the point and focus on what you have delivered
- Stick to the headings – they are there to guide you through what you have achieved and how you have achieved it
- Keep your report factual and non emotive – remember this is a business document
- Most importantly – be positive about your achievements and celebrate your work !

## NHS IMAS new team members

We would like to welcome Julie Godfrey and Rebecca Wooton to the team.

Julie is on secondment from NHS Airedale, Bradford and Leeds and joins the core team as a Programme Manager.



Julie Godfrey

Rebecca joins us from NHS Direct and is PA to the Intensive Support Teams.



Rebecca Wooton

**This month we hear from NHS IMAS pool member, Philip Calvert, Head of the Intensive Support Team - Elective, about his NHS IMAS assignment providing support to an acute trust.**

My NHS IMAS assignment was a six month, three day a week project to provide support to an acute Trust. The support had several components but primarily involved assurance around the Trust's processing of referral to treatment (RTT) data, developing an RTT recovery plan and making booking and scheduling data more readily available, through the use of simple pivot tables. At the same time the outpatient booking and theatre scheduling staff across the four sites of the hospital were being centralised into one large team. I was assigned to that team.

As ever, scoping the work was critical and although I had clear ideas regarding what the Trust needed, agreeing what the deliverables would be and the individual outputs of each was essential. I was eager to get the work underway but taking the time to get the scope right was not wasted.

Prior to developing a recovery plan for RTT delivery, I met the local PCTs to discuss the plan's negative impact on performance. Being an external / independent voice did help, although imparting such news is rarely well received. Within the Trust I met consultants and clinical directors to explain the true extent of some of their waiting times, to explain the changes underway to centralise booking and scheduling and to encourage more pooling of routine procedures.

In some specialties there was significant progress. Following a visit with waiting times data to one clinical director, all but a few specialist procedures were pooled to minimise unnecessary waits. In addition the clinical director began meeting the scheduling staff to ensure theatre lists for the following

month were appropriately filled, maximising utilisation without overbooking lists and risking cancellations.

Within the Trust, information on patient waiting times was predominantly at a patient level. Although useful to booking and scheduling staff such reports did not give supervisors and managers any oversight of the current situation and where patients were being left to wait unnecessarily. Pivot tables are simple to build, understood by the majority of staff after some rudimentary training and were able to highlight current problems and problems looming on the horizon. Once set up, the Trust's information staff were able to maintain and refresh the pivot tables and they became central to the weekly Trust meetings set up to date patients (PTL meetings).

The key to this work was using a simple tool and then incorporating it into the infrastructure the Trust already had around waiting list data. By embedding the new tables in the Trust's suite of existing reports, they were made readily available and after some basic training, were easily understood.

My NHS IMAS assignment taught me several things.

- Contribute to the tea/coffee fund as soon as possible (and the occasional pack of biscuits)
- Wherever possible, use simple solutions. They are more sustainable once the assignment is over
- Use the infrastructure that's already in place to support the assignments deliverables. They stay visible longer

The feedback I had following the assignment was good and I felt the work had achieved its aims.



**Philip Calvert**

*"As ever, scoping the work was critical and although I had clear ideas regarding what the Trust needed, agreeing what the deliverables would be and the individual outputs of each was essential".*

# An Insight into NHS IMAS: The core team by Lydia Whiteoak

When I first joined NHS IMAS as a Programme Manager, one of the things that struck me was how everyone I spoke to was so positive about what we were doing as an organisation. The amount of people who said “what an amazing idea” and “why hasn’t this been done before” was unbelievable.

Nearly three years on from when I first started and the positivity about NHS IMAS continues. The strong enthusiasm from the NHS about what we are doing drives the core team to continually strive to support the organisation as a whole.

There are eight of us in the NHS IMAS core team and we are based in Quarry House, Leeds. When we talk to our NHS IMAS pool members (which we all do on a daily basis) they are often surprised at the size of our team.

Being such a small team delivering a national programme means that we are always extremely busy (the way we like it) and it also means that we all have time to develop strong working relationships with our pool members and understand exactly what they are looking for in their next assignment. Whenever you call the team, it’s almost guaranteed that you will have spoken to one of us before.

Every Tuesday we have a team meeting where we discuss what is currently happening out in the NHS and how we can help provide further assistance.



We also look through our report and assess how many NHS organisations we are already supporting.

We are currently running 115 live assignments . As a team it gives us a great deal of job satisfaction to see the number of NHS IMAS assignments increase as this means we are doing more and more to help the NHS.

One of the most exciting things about being a Programme Manager at NHS IMAS, is knowing that you are helping people to develop their careers and providing them with opportunities to develop their skills and experience so they can move to the next level.

It’s great when you find the right person for the right assignment and you know how much it will benefit them. That’s another part of the job that gives everyone in the team an enormous sense of satisfaction.

So, if we haven’t spoken to you recently and you would like to have a conversation with us about your career development and potential NHS IMAS assignments, pick up the phone and give us a call on (0113 ) 254 6464/6424 or email us at [nhs.imas@nhs.net](mailto:nhs.imas@nhs.net).

You never know which NHS organisation you could end up supporting!

## NHS IMAS: Products in the Spotlight

A different product from the NHS IMAS toolkit is showcased in each issue of Big Splash to demonstrate the broad range of tools that are available to all of our NHS pool members.

We do not claim that these tools are ‘best practice’, but they are good practice and we know that work as they have been tried and tested elsewhere.

This month we would like to share the **Programme Preparation Plan**.

Defining a Programme involves the detailed planning and design of all aspects of the programme. A Programme Preparation Plan for this work is produced, so the Sponsoring Group is fully aware of, and willing to commit to the cost, time and resource that will be required in the next part of the programme - ‘Defining a Programme’.

If you would like a copy of this template or further details on how to use this tool, please contact Lydia Whiteoak at [Lydia.whiteoak@nhs.net](mailto:Lydia.whiteoak@nhs.net).

# Quick splash...

**This month, NHS pool member Ilse Newsome answers our quick fire questions.....**

***I work as...*** a Financial Planner with North Staffordshire PCT.

***My typical day involves*** – the setting of ongoing work programmes for the continued development of the performance management regime within our portfolio of contracts, agreeing agendas and meeting cycles and chairing the contract meetings.

***The best thing about my job is ...*** that I have been able to implement a robust contract management framework across services which have previously not been afforded a priority.

***Have you been on an NHS IMAS assignment?*** I have just started my first NHS IMAS assignment and the role I have been asked to fill is that of Corporate Governance Manager across two Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

This is my first NHS IMAS assignment and I am really enjoying it so far; it is giving me opportunity to expand into new areas of organisations outside of the Finance discipline.

***Tell us a bit more about it...*** I'm hoping to bring some of my previous experience of introducing new governance in organisations to the CCGs. In preparation for how this will be tested by both internal and external bodies, I can hopefully prepare the ground for this to be expedited as smoothly as possible.

***What would be your perfect assignment?*** I'm not sure I would answer this honestly if I gave a definitive response just now. I would never have imagined that this assignment would have been so interesting or have such potential, so I guess at the moment I would say 'never say never'. As everything is changing so much at the moment who knows what fabulous opportunities are around the corner?

***Word of advice for other pool members.....*** Please don't restrict your horizons or aspirations, there are so many new things happening at the moment it would be a shame to limit yourself.

***What do you want to do next?*** If I was asked to prepare a 'Specification' for my perfect job, as the most important 'essential' criteria would be 'to be able to see what difference I can make'. As long as I am able to see how my contribution makes a difference to people's lives, then I'm happy!

***If I didn't work for the NHS...*** I'd love to be an Architect. When I was at school I really wanted to train as an architect, but unfortunately the opportunity did not arise. Although to be fair, I'm not sure my taste in design would necessarily be either feasible or practical... (and certainly not affordable!).

***In my spare time..*** I go to the gym at the weekends, take as many interesting holidays as I can and am co-author to a number of published children's books.



**Ilse Newsome**

*"This is my first NHS IMAS assignment and I am really enjoying it so far; it is giving me opportunity to expand into new areas of organisations outside of the Finance discipline".*