



System Capability and Operations Directorate (including NHS IMAS) Annual Report 2020/21

INTRODUCTION

1. In April 2020, the System Capability and Operations (SCO) Directorate was created as a result of the proposals laid out through the NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) Joint Working Programme (JWP) and agreed by the NHSE/I Executive Management team.
2. From 1 April 2020, NHS Interim Management and Support (NHS IMAS) became part of SCO, hosted by NHSE/I.
3. The SCO directorate is centred around four key areas, utilising NHS IMAS and its systems and processes to deliver for NHSE/I and the NHS as a whole:
 - 3.1. Provide senior short- or medium-term interim management and support to resource the NHS, including NHSE/I, DHSC and ALBs
 - 3.2. Provide support to develop talent within the NHS
 - 3.3. Work with NHSE/I HR and OD on the flexible resourcing operating model for NHSE/I to ensure that the right people, with the right skills, are in the right place at the right time to meet the short and medium term flexible resource needs of the organisation.
 - 3.4. Support NHSE/I Emergency Preparedness Resilience and Response (EPRR) to deliver their statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingency Act 2004

Purpose

4. The purpose of this annual report is to highlight the work completed by the SCO Directorate, including NHS IMAS, for the financial year 2020/21.
5. The SCO Directorate comprises:
 - A small core team which concentrates on building the talent pool, assignment selection, evaluation, and project management.

- A small team to enable NHSE/I's EPRR Team to fulfil its statutory responsibilities under the Civil Contingency Act 2004 by standing up, at pace, a National Incident Coordination Centre.
 - Over 900 pool members including Partners, NHS staff and carefully selected independent consultants.
 - Volunteers from NHSE/I registered to work in both the ICC (N) and respond to any future National Incidents.
 - Specialist pools of individuals to support a number of talent programmes across the NHS
6. One of the key areas of the SCO Directorate remains NHS IMAS. The NHS IMAS offer to NHS organisations that need short or medium-term support, is the means to access the management expertise that exists throughout the NHS: 'By the NHS, for the NHS'.
7. 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.
 - Provide a real alternative to the private sector, while still offering the option to access their skills.

Funding, Hosting and Governance

8. The post of Director of System Capability and Operations became accountable and responsible for NHS IMAS, replacing the previous NHS IMAS Managing Partner role.
9. The System Capability and Operations Directorate became part of the NHSE/I People Directorate from 1 April 2020.
10. Following these changes, the Senior Sponsor for NHS IMAS is now the NHS Chief People Officer. NHS IMAS is governed by a Strategic Advisory Board that represents the broad spectrum of NHS client organisations.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Progress SCO has made to date:

NHS IMAS

11. Prior to being hosted by SCO, NHS IMAS has been operating successfully for over 13 years. Since its inception, NHS IMAS has had a gross turnover in excess of £91 million, producing overall savings for the NHS estimated at £54.5 million.
12. The commitment to support the NHS, to embed sustainable change and save money, has been, and continues to be, at the forefront of everything that SCO delivers. In 2020/21 alone the gross turnover for NHS IMAS was almost £8 million with an estimated saving to the NHS of almost £4.5 million. Costs are benchmarked against private sector alternatives, and it is estimated the equivalent cost to the NHS would have been over £12.4 million at prevailing market rates.
13. In terms of year-on-year improvement; in 2019/20 NHS IMAS made a saving of £2.95 million to the NHS. In 2020/21 NHS IMAS made a saving of £4.5 million to the NHS. This is a year-on-year increase of £1.55 million.
14. During 2020/21, an average of 154 NHS IMAS assignments were managed at any one time, finishing the year with 158 live assignments. This exceeds the target operating KPI of managing between 120 – 140 live assignments at any one given time.
15. During 2020/21, 126 new assignments were opened, and 113 assignments were completed by pool members, with 1251 assignments having been completed overall to date.
16. NHS IMAS has continued to use its expertise, International Standards Organisation (ISO 9001 and 14001) accredited systems, and processes to manage a discrete pool of individuals and work with its partners to scope, match and support individuals throughout assignments. This work will continue into 2021/22.

Talent Management

17. SCO shared expertise and learning to deliver the best possible support to retain talent in the NHS and develop future healthcare leaders by: -

- Working with the seven Regional Talent Management Programme Boards to re-establish support as required during 2020/21 and initial conversations have taken place regarding the relaunch the talent management schemes.
- Supporting the NHS England and Improvement Talent Data Strategy Group to provide direction to the Talent Insights Team on how the data that is required to inform the national talent strategy and approach is collected, analysed and deployed.
- Supporting NHS England and NHS Improvement to develop its internal Talent Management Programme and facilitation of stretch assignments

18. Other talent schemes SCO supported include:

- Working nationally to support the Chief Nursing Officer Exceptional Leaders Network.
- Managing a bespoke register of experienced Improvement Directors who can be deployed to support challenged organisations across the NHS.
- Identifying and managing a bespoke register of individuals with significant Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) experience to provide Trusts with intensive support, as commissioned by the National IPC Programme Lead

Flexible Resourcing for NHSE/I

19. SCO played an important role in supporting NHSE/I's Human Resources and Organisational Development colleagues in establishing a new flexible resourcing operating model. This operating model was set up in just three weeks, during May 2020. This was achieved by requesting that suppliers and colleagues prioritised this work over other commitments, to enable NHSE/I to rapidly deploy staff to where they were most needed to support the NHS during the height of the pandemic. SCO has continued to support this programme by providing ongoing support, such as refining the deployment process to support the organisation's priorities and developing processes to support flexible resourcing across the organisation, including regions; and supporting NHSE/I's deployment of resources to priority programmes.

NHSE/I Response to Emergency Incidents

20. SCO was commissioned to provide specific support to the organisation's response to Covid-19 to co-ordinate the deployment, at pace, of internal staff to respond to the National Incident. Throughout 2020/21, SCO has continued to advise and support the National EPRR team in the development and continued effort of the National Incident Co-ordination Centre (ICC (N)). SCO has enabled the coordination of 250 volunteers, and successfully managed 9,969 shifts for the ICC (N). This has contributed to supporting the NHS manage intensive bed capacity and respond to supply and demand challenges throughout the system.
21. The team has also resourced and managed 1,440 shifts for the National Vaccination Operation Centre, which has ensured the coordination of the vaccination programme roll-out, and continued delivery of the programme.
22. In addition, NHS IMAS resourced, placed, and deployed skilled senior leaders on 74 Covid-19 assignments, supporting high profile workstreams including: The Vaccination Programme (nationally and locally); Covid-19 response (nationally and locally); Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) reuse, innovation and sustainability; Covid-19 testing; and provision of the strategic and operational management staff for Arrows Park hospital.

Supporting the People Plan key priorities

23. Throughout 2020/21, SCO (including NHS IMAS) has continually supported NHSE/I in achieving the priorities set out in the NHS People Plan. These priorities focus around four key areas: Looking after our people; Belonging in the NHS; New ways of working and delivering care; and Growing for the future.
24. Within each key area are sub-categories that the team have been supporting over the past year. For example, the team has supported NHS organisations across England to improve staff health and wellbeing by resourcing, placing, and deploying experienced subject matter leaders on assignment in order to deliver these objectives.
25. Through NHS IMAS, a Director of Transformation was placed at a Foundation Trust to lead on the Trust's discharge and theatre recovery change programme. Again, through NHS IMAS, a Head of Culture Transformation was placed with NHSE/I to refine the Culture Leadership Programme; with the primary aim of increasing its

adoption across NHS organisations and supporting the culture transformation approach at a challenged Trust. Both placements were successful in delivering against, and surpassing, all objectives required of them.

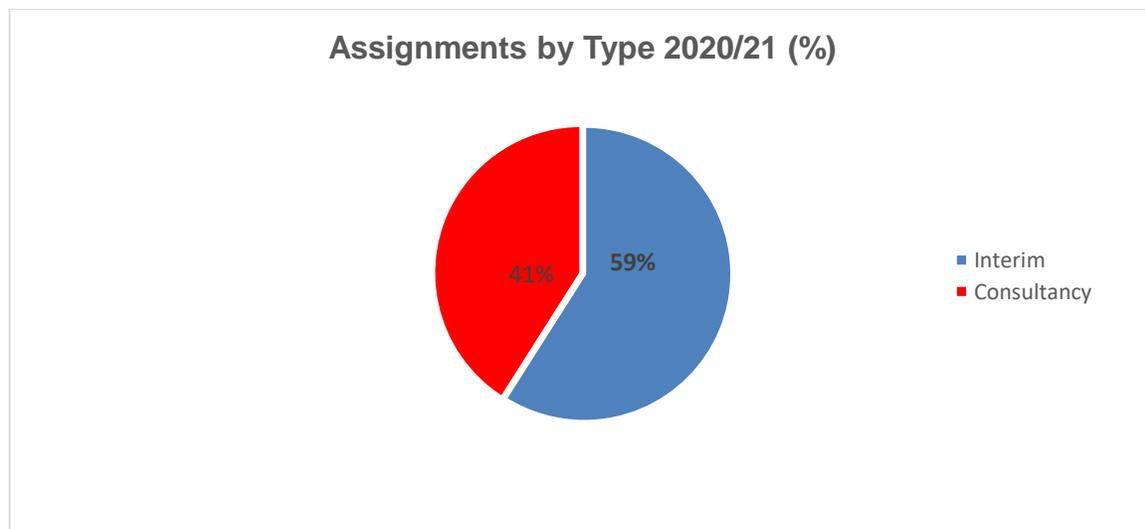
26. Aligning with the second NHS People Plan priority around 'Belonging in the NHS,' NHS IMAS has helped resource a Clinical Lead for Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) who led on the publication of the 2020 WRES report. The work done on this report provided a pivotal national picture of WRES in practice that was disseminated to colleagues, organisations and the public on the developments in the workforce race equality agenda to drive improvement.
27. NHS IMAS has been able to support workforce development across the healthcare system by sourcing experienced senior NHS leaders through NHS IMAS to develop work such as the NHS People Plan Digital Strategy and a Director of Workforce Strategy to develop work force priorities, drive development of workforce data, informatics, and analysis.
28. To support the Growing for the future ambition, SCO has worked with the seven Regional Talent Management programmes to re-establish support for the relaunch of inclusive recruitment schemes, providing the mechanism to support stretch assignments enabling aspirant directors to gain knowledge and experience in director level roles. This has allowed SCO to provide continued support to the development of quality leadership and improvement culture within NHSE/I.
29. SCO will continue to support NHSE/I with its flexible resourcing needs in collaboration with NHSE/I's Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR&OD) colleagues in order to refine the deployment process to support the organisational priorities.

NHS IMAS Assignments

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

- A Director of Change and Transition for a National Government Body
- A Director of Governance for a Foundation Trust
- A Programme Director for a Clinical Commissioning Group
- A Director of Performance for a Government Department
- An Interim Director of People and Culture for an Acute Trust
- A Director of Transformation for a Foundation Trust
- Several Directors and General Managers to support the Covid-19 response on behalf of NHSE/I

31. Assignments ranged from short term pieces of work such as service reviews, confidential investigations, consultancy projects supporting specific initiatives, to filling longer-term interim roles at a senior level. The assignments undertaken by pool members were split across interim and consultancy roles, with 59% Interim and 41% Consultancy during 2020/21.



Client Feedback

32. In 2020/21, NHS IMAS received positive feedback with 100% of clients stating that they would use NHS IMAS again and almost 99% stating that in their experience, NHS IMAS was good value compared to independent consultancies.
33. The NHS IMAS 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.
34. Comments about the NHS IMAS service often reflected this one, made by a pool member: 'Undertaking an NHS IMAS assignment is a rewarding and great way of helping NHS organisations in an interim capacity, whilst embracing new personal challenges.'
35. Further comments received from clients during feedback calls included:

"We have had good experiences of NHS IMAS . Our two recent placements have been very well matched to our needs and the customer service has been excellent. I have found NHS IMAS and the team I have worked with very responsive to our requirements and would definitely be happy to use the service again."

Ambulance Service NHS Trust

"Using NHS IMAS to support delivery of this role was invaluable; providing cost effective placement and quality assurance throughout the assignment for both the team and individual placed. Rating 10 on a scale of 1-10 compared to independent agencies."

NHS England and NHS Improvement

“Thank you for the support given to the National Incident Coordination Centre and to the Covid response nationally, regionally and locally since February 2020. The whole team have provided a helpful, responsive, flexible and extremely supportive service provided and for the continued support throughout the year. The EPRR could not have achieved what they have without the service and support received from NHS IMAS.”

Director of EPRR (National) - NHS England and NHS Improvement

“The pool member hit the round running, delivered everything and more that was expected of them and embedded sustainable change which also laid the foundations for the Coronavirus response. Their skills and experience could not have been found in the private sector and they were excellent value for money.”

NHS England and NHS Improvement

“The pool member more than fulfilled the scope of the assignment and the work has supported sustainable change within the organisation. The work has continued to change the ways in which the team work together. The support from NHS IMAS was just what was needed, and I would definitely use NHS IMAS again in the future.”

Acute NHS Trust

NHS IMAS Pool Members

36. In 2020/21, NHS IMAS saw an increase of 17% in its number of senior leaders recruited to its talent pools. The team were successfully able to register 41 new NHS pool members and 42 new independent pool members. High quality candidates continued to join both the NHS and independent pools throughout the year, enabling NHS IMAS to continue to source high calibre individuals to fulfil assignment requests. NHS IMAS finished the 2020/21 year with a total of 918 pool members which includes individuals registered for talent management programmes.
37. Applicants for the NHS IMAS pools complete 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.
38. NHS IMAS will continue its recruitment campaign aimed at bringing in new NHS pool members in 2021/22, with targeted recruitment being carried out for high demand specialisms.

NHS IMAS Pool Member Development

39. NHS IMAS is committed to helping support and develop NHS staff joining the pool and invested in a number of development activities during the year including online learning, webinars, and access to a range of development workshops through NHS Elect.
40. A sixth cohort of NHS pool members completed the Introduction to Consultancy and Facilitation Skills blended learning course. The course helps prepare NHS staff to undertake assignments in other organisations by providing them with the tools and techniques when operating in an interim role and undertaking a consultancy assignment.
41. Feedback from the first six cohorts has been overwhelmingly positive with 100% of participants indicating that they learnt new skills and techniques that they would go on to use and share within their current roles and organisations as well as using them during NHS IMAS assignments. A seventh cohort is planned for 2021/22.

42. NHS IMAS hosted two web-based training sessions with over 160 pool members benefitting from these training sessions, with both sessions receiving positive feedback. These sessions were delivered in conjunction with NHS IMAS Partners who are senior and experienced leaders in the NHS, and who were able to share good practice and learning gathered from within their own organisations. The number of webinars was lower than usual, due to the commitment of staff and pool members to the Covid-19 response.
43. NHS IMAS has utilised its membership with NHS Elect and offered pool members access to over 120 webinars and virtual workshops covering a wide range of topics since 1 April 2020. These courses have moved to an online platform, so more pool members have access to these rather than in a face-to-face setting. During 2020/21 course topics made available included: Business and System Development; Coaching and Personal Development; Customer Care and Patient Engagement; Leadership and Organisational Development; Marketing; Communication and Branding; and Quality Improvement - as well as many other unique courses.
44. NHS IMAS provided coaching, mentoring and added value sessions 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.

Quality Systems Management

45. NHS IMAS was again successful in maintaining its standards of accreditation to the European Quality Assurance Standards ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015, following a re-assessment to maintain certification in January 2021. Following the audit, the EQA Lead Auditor stated in their report that:
- “Overall, the management system was considered to be fully embedded in the Directorate and considered best practice. It has been tested during the pandemic lockdown and proven to be robust. Continued certification is recommended.”*
46. NHS IMAS has two systems, a Quality Management System, which is accredited to the international standard ISO 9001:2015 and an Environmental Management System, which is accredited to the standard ISO 14001:2015. NHS IMAS prior to being hosted the SCO directorate has successfully held ISO standards for nine years.

47. As part of meeting these standards, SCO (including NHS IMAS) consistently reviewed and, where appropriate, made changes to its processes to enhance both the efficiency of its service and ensure that the quality of service provided continuously improved.
48. SCO, along with the vast majority of NHSE/I staff, moved to home working arrangements in March 2020. Working from home, and severely curtailing commute travel, has allowed SCO staff to make a net reduction of 6.35 tonnes in carbon emissions during the period April 2020 – March 2021. This reduction in carbon emissions is equivalent to 15,757 miles driven by an average passenger vehicle¹.
49. To further reduce its carbon footprint, SCO's Continuous Improvement team continued to share relevant information around the benefits of ensuring the team are mindful of NHSE/I's commitment to the reduction of carbon emissions.
50. Utilising both of these operational and environmental processes, and by continuously improving them when we find the need to, SCO can continue to develop the service it provides to meet the changing needs of clients; to ensure a quality service continues to be delivered; and the future impact on the environment continues to be reduced.

NHS IMAS Partners

51. During the year SCO consulted with its NHS IMAS Partners on how they could best continue to contribute to SCO and its services.
52. They were asked to support their senior staff in registering with NHS IMAS, and to encourage their health economies to use NHS IMAS as a first port of call for support needs.
53. Partners offer advice, support and recommendations to NHS IMAS, and in many cases, coaching and mentoring for NHS pool members. This is provided free of charge, enabling NHS pool members to benefit from the experiences of very senior colleagues within the NHS.
54. Partners help NHS pool members learn from the challenges they have faced, and the experiences they have had to help them as they move forward in their careers. Many

¹ Information calculated using: <https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator>., (accessed: 06/04/2021), data accurate as at 06 April 2021.

have agreed to continue to lead a number of web-based training events in 2021/22, to share their experiences and help with our pool members' development and learning.

Communicating, sharing and learning

55. There were 15,028 unique visits to the pages of the NHS IMAS website during 2020/21. 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.
56. The newsletter 'Big Splash' was issued four times during the year, to share information regarding the work of NHS IMAS. The newsletter featured case studies from both clients and pool members on how assignments have worked for them (<http://www.nhsimas.nhs.uk/news-and-publications/>).
57. In addition, NHS IMAS used social media platforms to keep pool members, NHS organisations and other interested parties abreast of its developments and to encourage registration from appropriate senior professionals. NHS IMAS actively promoted itself through Twitter and LinkedIn in 2020/21. (<https://twitter.com/NHSIMAS>).

THE FUTURE

58. SCO will continue to develop and respond to the needs of the NHS, delivering effective support models for the future. The Business Plan target for 2021/22 has been increased due to additional responsibility and support to talent management and the NHS IMAS team will manage, on average, between 150 and 170 live assignments at any one time in 2021/22.
59. SCO will work with the NHS IMAS Strategic Advisory Board and Partners to see how it can best support the newer areas of the NHS such as Integrated Care Systems (ICS) and will continue to develop its systems and processes in order to ensure it can continue to deliver an excellent and appropriate service to the NHS as it continues to change and develop.



60. SCO will continue to proactively support the NHS' Regional and National Talent Management Programmes, utilising NHS IMAS established systems and processes to retain and map information on individuals and match and support them on appropriate stretch assignments as and when required by NHS organisations.
61. SCO will also increase the number of its NHS IMAS 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 source, where available, the required expertise either through the NHS or within the financial limits set for, and by, NHS organisations.
62. SCO will continue to support NHSE/I in its response to the Covid-19 Pandemic in any way appropriate and as required.
63. SCO will continue to work with NHSE/I in supporting their EPRR requirements both nationally and regionally. Support including, but not limited to - managing a register of EPRR volunteers that are rapidly deployable to support national or regional EPRR activities; and providing a 24-hour, seven day a week on-call service for the national EPRR team.