

System Capability & Operations Directorate (including NHS IMAS) Business Plan 2021/22

1. Introduction and Overview

NHS IMAS is hosted by the NHS England and NHS Improvement People Directorate, reporting into the Director of System Capability and Operations. The Senior Sponsor is the NHS Chief People Officer.

2. Purpose

The purpose of NHS Interim Management and Support (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:

- Encourage and facilitate the NHS to use 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.
- 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 hosted by the NHS England and NHS Improvement People Directorate, reporting into the Director of System Capability and Operations. The Senior Sponsor is the NHS Chief People Officer.

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

5. NHS IMAS Business Model

NHS IMAS has available an expert resource of experienced and 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, who 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 2020/21 gross turnover for NHS IMAS was almost £8 million(m), which is higher than average due to the increased number of assignments supporting the systems response to Covid-19.

Costs for NHS IMAS are benchmarked against private sector alternatives and it is estimated the equivalent cost to the NHS would be almost £12.4m at prevailing market rates. So, it is estimated NHS IMAS saved the NHS almost £4.5m during 2020/21. Savings anticipated for 2021/22 are expected to be in line with the operating model of providing on average between 150 – 170 live assignments with anticipated savings of £3.5m.

The System Capability and Operations Directorate is responsible for four key areas, utilising NHS IMAS and its systems and processes to deliver for NHS England and NHS Improvement and the NHS as a whole.

The four areas are:

- NHS IMAS Core Offer
- Talent Management
- Flexible Resourcing for NHS England and NHS Improvement
- NHS England & NHS Improvement's Response to Emergency Incidents (including Covid 19)

The [NHS Long Term Plan](#) confirmed that all parts of England would be served by a local Integrated Care System (ICS) from April 2021, building on the lessons of the earliest systems and the achievements of earlier work through sustainability and transformation partnerships and vanguards.

With each part of the country now ready to function as an ICS, NHS England and NHS Improvement has asked the Government and Parliament to establish ICSs in law and to remove legal barriers to integrated care for patients and communities. Following the recommendations from NHS England and NHS Improvement on legislating for ICSs, the Government is working on the potential for a bill and legislative intent in 2021 to take effect from 1 April 2022.

The System Capability and Operations Directorate will work to support the system in transitioning to the new partnerships between the organisations that meet health and care needs across an area, to coordinate services and to plan in a way that improves population health and reduces inequalities between different groups.

In addition, NHS IMAS continues to support the delivery of the We Are the NHS: People Plan for 2020-21 – action for us all. The People Plan 2020-21 set out actions to support transformation across the whole NHS and focuses on how we must all continue to look after each other and foster a culture of inclusion and belonging, as well as action to grow our workforce, train our people, and work together differently to deliver patient care by:

- Responding to new challenges and opportunities
- Looking after our people
- Belonging in the NHS
- New ways of working and delivering care
- Growing for the future
- Supporting our NHS people for the long term.

This business plan supports the principles underpinning the practical actions that employers and systems should take, as well as the actions that NHS England and NHS Improvement and Health Education England took responsibility for in 2020/21, which endure beyond.

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 ensuring we continue to work closely with colleagues developing Talent Management Programmes.

We will also source high quality Independent pool members to provide excellent support, whilst also ensuring good value for money and remaining within the day rate caps identified by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

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.
- the provision of agreement letters (specifying the objectives of the assignment and working arrangements),
- allocation of a Programme Manager 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 sustainability and that pool members deliver an excellent service to clients.

Last year client feedback continued to be very good and, where appropriate, resulted in changes to NHS IMAS processes to ensure that we remain efficient and effective in delivering the needs of the NHS. Client feedback given during closure calls continues to be strong with 100% of clients saying they would use NHS IMAS again.

For 2021/22 we aim to continue this evaluation and high level of service.

6.1 Quality Management

NHS IMAS gained accreditation 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 March 2021. 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 customers' expectations.

The next audit will take place by the end of March 2022.

6.2 Environmental Management

NHS IMAS was accredited 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 March 2021 which demonstrates that it continues to meet the standard.

The next audit will take place by the end of March 2022.

6.3 Communications & Engagement

NHS IMAS' reputation continues to be the main marketing tool to attract repeat and new client organisations.

During 2021/22 NHS IMAS services will be marketed through:

- The Big Splash newsletter, distributed electronically to all pool members, Strategic Advisory Board members and clients.
- External articles recording the progress of NHS IMAS.
- Appropriate partnerships with other national NHS organisations and teams (such as the NHS Leadership Academy).
- 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 and Improvement's Improvement Directorate to support challenged Trusts. Twitter - tweeting regularly to raise awareness of NHS IMAS and its services and to encourage new high quality pool members to register with us.

- LinkedIn – posting articles and regular updates to encourage new high quality pool members to register with us and clients to utilise the Service.

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 six 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. Following evaluation completed during 2020/21 for cohort six, a seventh cohort will take place in 2021/22.

NHS IMAS runs a number of web-based training events, which receive positive feedback from NHS pool members. These will continue to be provided for pool members in 2021/22 with at least six events on topical subjects and on subjects where pool members indicate there is a training need. Partners will continue to 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.

7. Talent Management

NHS IMAS supports all seven regions of NHS England and NHS Improvement in their Talent Management approach.

A valuable part of NHS IMAS is the development of senior NHS leaders through supported “stretch” assignments that develop their skills and experience.

NHS IMAS is expanding its contribution to the development of future healthcare leaders in three ways:

- In partnership with NHS England and NHS Improvement and the NHS Leadership Academy developing Talent Management Programmes, supporting NHS senior staff through providing stretch assignments.
- Working with NHS England and NHS Improvement 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 England and NHS Improvement's Improvement Directorate refer organisations that require interim support to NHS IMAS. NHS IMAS scope the requirements directly with the client organisation and record all received enquiries. NHS IMAS manage the matching process, discuss opportunities with individuals and submit CVs to the client for consideration.

8. Flexible Resourcing

Working in collaboration with NHS England and NHS Improvement'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.
- Refine internal HR&OD systems to support more flexible recruitment and deployment.
- Develop policy and processes to support Flexible Resourcing across the organisation, including the Regions.
- Support NHS England & NHS Improvement's response to emergency incidents

9. NHS England & NHS Improvement Response to Emergency Incidents (including Covid 19)

NHS IMAS is able to co-ordinate the deployment, at pace, of internal staff to respond to an incident and is commissioned to provide specific support to the organisation's response to emergency incidents:

- Advise and support National EPRR team in the development of the National Incident Co-ordination Centre (ICC).
- Profile staff volunteers based on their skills and match to roles within the ICC.
- Manage a database of staff volunteers for future use when an emergency response is required.
- Proactively support resourcing changes during an incident, staffing structures managerially and operationally as required.

10. Objectives for 2021/22

10.1 Business Model

The NHS IMAS Strategic Advisory Board and management team will work to ensure its services continue to respond to the needs of the NHS and develop effective support models for the future. As national reviews and publications (including the People Plan) are 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.

Business Planning for 2021/22 included the provision for supporting the NHS in its continued response to Covid-19. 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.

Funding, in terms of additional staffing need, will also be sought for any significant work over and above this business plan. Additional costs will not be charged, wherever possible, for management time and the use of NHS IMAS' ISO-accredited quality management systems and processes.

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. In addition, NHS IMAS have been commissioned to support the Infection Prevention and Control National Programme.

NHS IMAS will be an integral part of NHS England and NHS Improvement's Flexible Resourcing Function. The NHS IMAS management team will work closely with senior stakeholders across NHS England and NHS Improvement to ensure its services continue to meet the needs of the organisation.

10.2 Consulting and Interim Management

- With the additional resources identified through the Joint Working Programme, NHS IMAS will work to manage on average between 150 and 170 live assignments at any one time.
- NHS IMAS will work with NHS colleagues to develop an offer to fulfil the needs of developing Integrated Care Systems (ICSs), identifying the experience and skills required and the availability of these through NHS IMAS.
- NHS IMAS will continue to increase the number of new NHS pool members by 10%, and identify and target specific areas of need, offering support to providers, NHS England/NHS Improvement, CCGs, CSUs, STPs, ACSs and Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs) of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).
- NHS IMAS will seek guidance and support to ensure that it is operating in a way that promotes and embodies equality, diversity and inclusion. This may include a review of pool member data, within appropriate GDPR guidelines. This will inform NHS IMAS' recruitment and deployment processes for the future. A targeted recruitment campaign will continue in 2021/22 and NHS IMAS assignments will be offered as 'stretch assignments' for individuals' personal development, where appropriate.
- Further development of pool members' consultancy skills by continuing to offer the NHS IMAS unique blended learning course: An introduction to consultancy skills, with a seventh cohort to take place in 2021/22.

- NHS IMAS will hold at least six web-based training and development events for Partners and pool members. This will make the most efficient use of NHS IMAS funds but also ensure that NHS IMAS can reach a wider audience with its training events.
- Integral to this, NHS IMAS will work with its Partners to provide web-based events for pool members to give them an insight into the expertise, experience and challenges facing NHS leaders as well as information and tips to help them in their career progression within the NHS.
- For 2021/22 NHS IMAS will continue to provide a high level of service and have a target of 100% of clients feeling that they would use NHS IMAS again when looking for interim or consultancy support for their organisations.
- Continue to document and publicise case studies of pool members experience and lessons learnt on assignment in 'Big Splash' and the website. Big Splash will be produced on a quarterly basis.
- To continually develop the service through the practical application of the Quality Management System (accredited to standard ISO 9001:2015) with successful retention through an external surveillance audit in March 2022.
- To positively impact on the environment through the continuation of the Environmental Management System (accredited to ISO 14001:2015) with successful retention through an external surveillance audit in March 2022.

NHS IMAS will continue to meet the needs of the NHS using its PMO function, however, any significant work in addition to this business plan, will need to be funded to ensure that this does not have an impact on NHS IMAS' ability to continue to deliver its core services.

10.3 Organisational Transformation

- Work with the NHS to meet its need for transformational change.
- Evaluate learning and feedback from organisational transformation clients and refresh the offer.
- Strengthen partnership working with key bodies across health and social care, including; Health Education England, Public Health England, the DHSC, NHS England and NHS Improvement.

10.4 Talent Management

- Work with NHS organisations to support their Talent Management Programmes.
- Continue to proactively support and develop the NHS' Talent Management Programmes, both within NHS England and NHS Improvement and across the NHS, 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.
- To support and develop talent programmes across all NHS England and NHS Improvement Regional Teams, and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) within their areas, working with the CSU Transition Team, by sourcing required expertise either through the NHS or within the financial limits for CCGs.

- Support 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.

10.5 Flexible Resourcing

Working with HR and Organisational Development colleagues in NHS England and NHS Improvement:

- Support an agile way of working and operating model designed by the organisation following the learning from Covid-19.
- Enable the mobilisation of the required skills and experience to meet the prioritised needs of the organisation.
- Provide an immediate organisational response to emergency situations when required.
- Ensure that flexible resourcing maximises the talent available across the organisation and through CSUs to improve service to the front-line NHS.
- 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.

10.6 NHS England & NHS Improvement Response to Emergency Incidents

- Proposals already submitted and approved for significant work, taken forward in 2020/21, that will require additional resources in 2021/22 include the urgent response operating model which will enable NHS England and NHS Improvement to deploy staff, at pace, who have volunteered, have the right skills and up to date training to fulfil a range of EPRR roles in a National ICC to meet the requirements of an organisational response to any incident.
- The additional staffing resources required for the above will be at Agenda for Change Band 8a x 0.5 WTE (Programme Manager) and a Band 6 (Business Co-ordinator). In addition, we will strengthen the management team by re-grading the Head of NHS IMAS to Band 9. These resources will be at a cost of approximately £99,219 (based on 2020/21 salary rates, including on costs and on call allowances). The source of this funding has not yet been confirmed.

11. Risks and assumptions

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

- An assumption that additional funding will be provided by the appropriate client for significant work over and above business plan, including funding of the additional roles agreed as part of the new structure introduced with effect from 1 April 2021 to support NHS England and NHS Improvement's response to emergency incidents.
- Maintaining the high quality of pool members and their availability to undertake assignments.

- Increasing the pipeline of potential pool members as the demand for assignments also increases, including getting agreement from their employers for them to be released for assignments.
- Ensuring the support of development programmes to register participants with NHS IMAS and undertake stretch assignments to support their development.

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

12. Budget

The NHS IMAS Budget required for 2021/22, including the additional funding to deliver the organisations response to emergency incidents is as follows:

Funding Source	Budget (£)
NHS IMAS Admin Funding Allocation 2021/22	921,776
NICC/NVOC Programme Funding 2021/22 To fund additional resources to support NHSE/I's response to Covid-19 and the National Vaccination Programme	178,913
IPC Programme Funding 2021/22 To fund system development and support to the Infection Prevention and Control National Programme	10,000
Total Cost	1,110,689

13. The Business Planning Process

This Business Plan for 2021/22 will be agreed by the NHS IMAS Strategic Advisory Board and progress on delivery of the plan will be reported to the Board throughout the year. This Business Plan will also feed into the NHS England and NHS Improvement People Directorate's Business Plan. Management Information showing progress against Business Plan objectives will be provided on a monthly basis to the SRO and key stakeholders within NHS England and NHS Improvement.