

Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan 2023-2024

NHS Interim Management and Support (NHS IMAS)

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1 Introduction

The purpose of the stakeholder engagement and communications plan is to describe the communications and engagement activity for NHS Interim Management and Support (NHS IMAS) and establish how the service will manage its relationships with stakeholders to ensure the best possible outcome.

The stakeholder engagement and communications plan has been developed to identify and implement communications activities that will support the achievement of the [NHS Long Term Plan](#) and [We are the NHS: People Plan 2020/21 – action for us all](#) through the NHS IMAS Business Plan objectives.

The plan identifies, analyses and prioritises the programme's stakeholders and defines the objectives of the communications and stakeholder engagement activity.

Included is a detailed communications and stakeholder engagement action plan which describes:

- What activities will be undertaken;
- When they will be undertaken; and
- Who is responsible for delivering these activities.

The Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Plan will be reviewed and updated following the completion of the NHS England Organisational Change Programme in October 2023 to ensure the documents remain accurate and relevant.

2 Background

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'.

NHS IMAS has several talent pools made up of experienced senior NHS managers and carefully selected independent consultants who undertake assignments to support NHS organisations.

A small core team at NHS IMAS is dedicated to building the NHS talent pool and managing assignments, they are the key point of contact for both the client and the NHS IMAS pool member.

NHS IMAS is hosted by NHS England's Workforce, Training and Education Directorate as an independent resource to support all NHS organisations in England.

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

The four areas are:

- **NHS IMAS Core Offer:** Provide senior short- or medium-term interim management and support to resource the NHS, including NHS Trusts, Integrated Care Systems, Academic Health Science Networks, NHS England, Arm's Length Bodies and other Health related organisations.
- **Talent Management:** Provide support to Regional Talent Boards, specialist NHSE Registers and senior NHS leaders to develop talent within the NHS.
- **Flexible Resourcing for NHS England:** Work with NHSE HR & OD on the flexible resourcing operating model for NHSE to meet the resource needs of the organisation to fulfil the needs of NHSE priorities.
- **NHS England's Response to Emergency Incidents:** NHS IMAS will work with EPRR and CSUs to build and develop a national register of EPRR specialist skills to meet national and local incident response roles as and when required across the system.

2.1 Scope

The scope of this plan includes all anticipated communications and engagement across NHS IMAS, along with associated stakeholders.

2.2 Timeframe

This plan will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with the overall NHS IMAS business plan and organisational priorities. This document will be reviewed in line with the timescales of deliverables identified in the five-year strategy document which is in development.

3 Aim and Objectives

The objectives of this stakeholder engagement and communications plan are to:

- Promote the services offered by NHS IMAS.
- Encourage NHS organisations to use NHS IMAS in the first instance when they have senior (Agenda for Change band 8d and above) interim management and support requirements.
- To raise awareness of developmental benefits for NHS staff at Agenda for Change band 8d and above (or those at an 8c ready to move into an 8d role) to register with NHS IMAS.
- Secure NHS IMAS as the preferred option in supporting NHS organisations to develop local talent programmes.
- Sharing widely with NHS organisations the benefits and outcomes of using NHS IMAS.

This plan will support the delivery of the above objectives through undertaking specific NHS IMAS communication related procedures, which include:

- Establishment of a detailed project plan which will include key milestone deliverables and timescales to ensure transparency of outputs.
- Robust ISO Quality and Environmental Management Systems to ensure NHS IMAS continually improves its services through use of the business management system, making changes as appropriate.
- Production of a comprehensive stakeholder map to ensure clear, consistent, proactive engagement.
- Robust risk management to ensure associated risks affecting NHS IMAS are proactively managed and wherever necessary escalated accordingly.

4 Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

The nature of the NHS IMAS business model means that a wide range of stakeholders are directly involved, and it is therefore imperative to ensure that they are all appropriately engaged with. A comprehensive stakeholder map is in place and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure alignment with the overall NHS IMAS business plan and priorities.

The following list aims to illustrate who the key stakeholders are and in which context.

Key audiences include:

- **NHS organisations** (i.e. NHS Trusts, Integrated Care Systems, Academic Health Science Networks, NHS England, Arm's Length Bodies and other health related organisations)
 - to encourage them to use NHS IMAS for interim and consultancy support and to support them on their wider talent programmes;
 - to encourage senior staff to register with NHS IMAS as NHS pool members; and
 - to provide tailored support to specific teams and Programmes of work including Improvement Support (IST); Infection Prevention and Control (IPC), the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) Exceptional Leaders Network and other specialist registers.
 - to offer coaching and mentoring opportunities targeted at specific groups of senior staff including Chairs, Chief Executives and Operational leaders.

- **Regional Talent Management Boards**
 - to encourage and promote the use of NHS IMAS for support, expertise and management of bespoke talent pools, enquiries and assignments.

- **Senior NHS managers**
 - to encourage them to use NHS IMAS for interim and consultancy support;
 - to encourage them or their staff to join the NHS IMAS pool and/or NHS IMAS Incident Co-ordination Centre Reservist pool; and
 - NHS staff with specific skills and experience that could undertake assignments that NHS IMAS has identified as being 'hard to fill'.

- **National EPRR colleagues**
 - to build and develop a national register of EPRR specialist skills to meet national and local incident response roles as and when required across the system.

- **NHS England and Flexible Resourcing colleagues**
 - to support the HR & OD Directorate to develop and operate a flexible approach to staff deployment within NHS England to enable it to meet organisational priorities;
 - to encourage them to use NHS IMAS for any internal interim and consultancy requirements; and
 - to work closely with HR & OD colleagues to join up and refine policy and processes to support Flexible Resourcing across the organisation, including the Regions;

- **NHS IMAS Partners and Strategic Advisory Board (SAB) Members**
 - to keep them updated on NHS IMAS business;
 - to support them in their duty to act as ambassadors for NHS IMAS to senior leaders in NHS organisations;
 - to encourage them to recommend experienced individuals to join the NHS IMAS pool;
 - to encourage them to coach and mentor pool members where appropriate;
 - to encourage them to participate in presenting informative webinars for NHS IMAS pool members; and
 - to use their skills, knowledge, experience and expertise to enhance the development of NHS IMAS' offer to organisations and individuals.

- **NHS IMAS pool members**
 - to keep them updated on NHS IMAS business;
 - to make them aware of training and development opportunities;
 - to ensure their information is up to date; and
 - to encourage them to recommend experienced individuals to join the NHS IMAS pool.
- **Experienced independent consultants**
 - to encourage them to join the NHS IMAS pool; and
 - to keep those who are already pool members informed of NHS IMAS' activities and developments.

5 Key Stakeholder Messages

The overall messages that NHS IMAS wish to tell its stakeholders are:

- NHS IMAS offers 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'.
- NHS IMAS offers current and potential pool members a comprehensive framework to access the wide variety of roles and fields that are available across the whole health care sector, and the opportunity to take part in short or medium-term assignments with continued support and assistance from the NHS IMAS team throughout the assignment.

To ensure consistent messages to our stakeholders, there are key messages for the specific stakeholders in appendix A.

6 Communication Methods

Key NHS IMAS communication and engagement activities are:

- Regular updates to the NHS IMAS website.
- Posting on LinkedIn at least three times per week.
- Posting on Twitter at least three times per week.
- Publication in internal and external NHS bulletins and staff network newsletters, as appropriate, including specialty specific bulletins where these are available and appropriate.
- Utilisation of the electronic corporate brochure to publicise NHS IMAS' key messages to target stakeholders.

- Invite NHS IMAS' network of Partners to act as ambassadors and market NHS IMAS across the wider NHS.
- Raise awareness of NHS IMAS and its core offer through the NHS England Flexible Resourcing function.
- Encourage NHS IMAS' network of Partners to come to NHS IMAS with support requests and recommend colleagues who may be suitable to join the pool.
- Develop and maintain an NHS IMAS Intranet page within the NHS England SharePoint Hub.
- “Word of mouth” and reputation are powerful communications tools. The NHS IMAS team will proactively encourage clients and pool members to recommend NHS IMAS to colleagues and to encourage senior NHS staff to apply to join the pool.
- All opportunities will be considered and exploited as they arise to market NHS IMAS through new channels, such as networks, conferences and events, presentation opportunities and communication bulletins.
- Routinely review closed enquiries to confirm the ‘hard to fill’ roles to inform targeted communications to encourage NHS staff with those skills to apply to join the talent pool.
 - NHS IMAS will also continue to proactively support the NHS' Talent Management Programmes, within NHS England. This includes, acting as a key partner and working closely with the Talent Management Schemes in the seven NHS regions to support the management and deployment of aspirant Directors.
 - This also includes supporting the experiential placements of the Executive Pathway Development Programme.
- Deliver the ninth cohort of Introduction to Consultancy and Facilitation Skills Blended Learning programme for NHS pool members.
- Identify and deliver web-based training and development webinars for all pool members.
- Make available coaching and mentoring to NHS pool members on assignment as required.

6.1 Communication Channels

The below table summarises the key stakeholders for each NHS IMAS established communications channel.

	NHS organisations / clients	NHS IMAS pool members	Senior NHS managers	Potential NHS IMAS pool members with specific skillset	NHS IMAS Partners and SAB Members	Experienced Independent consultants
NHS IMAS website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Twitter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LinkedIn	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

6.2 Delivery

There is a dedicated Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Action Plan (which includes pool member recruitment) that describes the activities that NHS IMAS will undertake to specifically encourage NHS staff to apply to join the talent pool (see appendix B).

The NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead will have responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Action Plan and will be supported by the core team where appropriate.

6.3 Governance

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

7 Risks

A dedicated NHS IMAS risk register has been established to ensure risks, issues, assumptions, and dependencies are appropriately managed and monitored.

8 Evaluation

Evaluating the effectiveness of this plan and supporting approach will be undertaken by the NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead on an ongoing basis.

Key Stakeholder Messages

Key messages for the specific audiences are:

- For NHS organisations
 - NHS IMAS does not charge any fees for using its services.
 - NHS IMAS pool members are established, experienced and credible amongst their peers and the organisations they work with. Independent and NHS pool members are re-referenced every two years. This ensures high quality candidates are available.
 - Support is tailored to the needs of the client and can include elements of interim short- or medium-term capacity and capability; consultancy to offer advice and expertise or to lead a specific piece of work; and supporting whole organisational renewal by deploying and supporting key individuals.
 - For each assignment, the client is allocated a Programme Manager from the NHS IMAS team who will remain in contact throughout the assignment to ensure it is progressing well against the agreed scope and objectives.
 - Opportunity to grow and develop local talent, whilst enabling their staff to share good practice and bring learning back to the organisation.
 - NHS IMAS can carry out bespoke work to help organisations run their talent programmes.
- For Regional Talent Management Boards
 - NHS IMAS can provide bespoke support and expertise to roll out talent management programmes across all regions in England.
 - NHS IMAS has 15 years' experience in profiling pool members, storing information usefully on a bespoke database; scoping assignments intelligently and supporting pool members and client organisations to ensure the assignment is successful.
 - Support is tailored to the needs of the client and can include elements of interim short- or medium-term capacity and capability; consultancy to offer advice and expertise or to lead a specific piece of work; and supporting whole organisational renewal by deploying and supporting key individuals.
 - For each assignment, the client is allocated a Programme Manager from the NHS IMAS team who will remain in contact throughout the assignment to ensure it is progressing well against the agreed scope and objectives.
 - NHS IMAS will be the vehicle for matching individuals to assignments, tracking and managing the deployment of this resource and ensuring the scope of each assignment is agreed.
 - Opportunity to grow and develop local talent, whilst enabling their staff to share good practice and bring learning back to the organisation.

- Bespoke management reporting arrangements can be put into place by NHS IMAS.
- For Senior NHS managers and NHS IMAS pool members
 - NHS IMAS will always prioritise using NHS pool members before considering independent pool members for an assignment.
 - All NHS IMAS pool members on assignment will receive regular contact from their dedicated Programme Manager to support them through any challenges on the assignment.
 - Other support and development is available such as a coach or mentor, exclusive access for NHS pool members to our accredited course - Introduction to Consultancy and Facilitation Skills, access to NHS Elect courses covering a wide range of areas, and invitations to regular learning webinars on topical areas within the NHS.
 - NHS IMAS pool members have access to a wide network of senior managers across the NHS, whilst having the opportunities to gain broader, new experiences, and the prospect of developing their career aspirations.
- For NHS National Operation Centre Reservist pool members and EPRR colleagues
 - NHS IMAS is able to co-ordinate the deployment, at pace, of internal staff to respond to an incident and is able to provide specific support to the organisation's response to an emergency incident.
 - NHS IMAS manages a database of staff volunteers for future use when an emergency response is required.
 - NHS IMAS is able to proactively support resourcing changes during an incident, staffing structures managerially and operationally as required.
- For NHS England Flexible Resourcing colleagues
 - NHS IMAS will work in collaboration with HR & OD colleagues to join up individual systems to create a more cohesive methodology for deploying staff internally.
 - NHS IMAS will work in collaboration with HR & OD colleagues to develop policy and processes to support Flexible Resourcing across the organisation, including the Regions.
- For NHS staff with specific skills and experience
 - In addition to the benefits listed for Senior NHS managers and NHS IMAS pool members, NHS IMAS can support NHS staff with specific skills and experience to share their expertise in different parts of the NHS.
- For NHS IMAS Partners and SAB members
 - NHS IMAS Partners can help develop local NHS talent by supporting their staff to join the pool, supporting them on assignments and providing coaching or mentoring support for NHS pool members.

- An opportunity to share their personal insight into the expertise, experience and challenges facing NHS leaders, whilst inspiring NHS IMAS pool members through web-based NHS IMAS Partner events.
- For experienced independent consultants
 - All NHS IMAS pool members on assignment will receive regular contact from their dedicated Programme Manager to support them through any challenges on the assignment.
 - Other support and development is available to independent pool members including invitations to regular learning webinars on topical areas within the NHS.

Stakeholder Engagement and Communications Action Plan

The following table summarises the required actions to implement the content of the NHS IMAS communications plan.

Action	Stakeholders	Description	Owner	Deadline
Maintain and raise the profile of NHS IMAS on Twitter.	All audience groups as listed in table above.	Tweet via the NHS IMAS account at least three times per week.	NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead	Ongoing throughout the year.
Maintain and raise the profile of NHS IMAS on LinkedIn.	All audience groups as listed in table above.	Post via LinkedIn account at least three times per week.	NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead	Ongoing throughout the year.
Maintain and raise the profile of NHS IMAS on the NHS IMAS website	All audience groups as listed in table above.	To publish regular updates on the NHS IMAS website. Continuously review and update the NHS IMAS website content to ensure it is relevant and up to date.	NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead (Articles to be provided by all NHS IMAS team members)	Ongoing throughout the year.
Maintain an NHS IMAS Intranet page within NHS England SharePoint Hub	Pool Members, NHS England staff and Flexible Resourcing colleagues	Maintain and update a point of contact page detailing NHS IMAS business and link to NHS IMAS website and other communications channels.	NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead / Business Co-ordinator	Ongoing throughout the year.
Utilise the NHS IMAS electronic corporate brochure.	Pool members, NHS organisations and clients	The NHS IMAS corporate brochure to be widely used, to market NHS IMAS, recruit NHS pool members and feature how it can support the NHS.	NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead	Ongoing throughout the year.
Web-based training, development opportunities and Partner webinars to be	Pool members and Partners	At least six web-based training / development events to be held throughout the year.	NHS IMAS Pool Member Development Lead	31 March 2024.

Appendix B

Action	Stakeholders	Description	Owner	Deadline
identified and delivered to pool members and Partners.		Activities will be communicated via channels listed above.		
Act as key partner with NHS England for the talent management programmes providing expertise and support for managing the bespoke pool, enquiries and assignments.	NHS pool members, NHS organisations and clients, Regional Talent Management Programmes	Proactively support the development and management for Regional Talent Management Programmes across the NHS in England.	NHS IMAS Senior Manager / Head of NHS IMAS	Ongoing throughout the year.
Blended Learning consultancy course: 'An introduction to consultancy and facilitation skills'.	Pool members	Ninth cohort of delegates to have successfully completed the blended learning consultancy course. Activities and results of feedback / evaluation will be communicated as appropriate via channels listed above.	NHS IMAS Pool Member Development Portfolio Lead	31 March 2024.
“Word of mouth” communications.	Pool members, clients and Partners	All team members will proactively encourage clients and pool members to recommend NHS IMAS to colleagues.	All NHS IMAS team members	Ongoing throughout the year.
Coaching and mentoring.	Pool members	To continue to market the coaching and mentoring support that NHS IMAS can provide, including specific schemes. This support will be communicated via channels listed above and with NHS IMAS NHS pool members, as appropriate, as they start new assignments.	NHS IMAS Programme Managers	Ongoing throughout the year.
Continue to review ‘hard to fill’ enquiries.	Pool members, clients and Partners	This continuous review will help us understand the skillsets that are underrepresented within the NHS IMAS talent pool.	NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead / Pool Member	Ongoing throughout the year.

Appendix B

Action	Stakeholders	Description	Owner	Deadline
		As skill 'gaps' are identified the recruitment plan will be revised, to target these groups to encourage them to apply to join the pool.	Recruitment Portfolio Lead	
Attend NHS England Flexible Resourcing meetings	NHS England clients	Attend weekly meetings and provide potential clients with an overview of NHS IMAS' remit and support offer.	NHS IMAS Senior Manager	Ongoing, weekly basis.
Explore networks for specialities at Agenda for Change bands 8d-9 level where NHS IMAS struggles fill enquiries to encourage senior managers to join the NHS IMAS talent pool.	Pool members, clients and Partners	Identify highly regarded pool members and make contact to discuss opportunities we can link in with to recruit NHS pool members within these fields. Explore wider system leaders and make contact through known associates of NHS IMAS staff / Pool Members.	NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead / Senior Manager	Ongoing throughout the year.
Raise the profile of NHS IMAS services	Partners, Pool members and clients	Link in with NHS IMAS Partners to encourage them to raise the profile of NHS IMAS services to their colleagues and staff. Link in with Provider operational networks to encourage senior staff to join the NHS IMAS talent pool.	Head of NHS IMAS / Senior Manager	Ongoing throughout the year.
Subject matter expert to review the Communication and Stakeholder Plan and all communication activity	All audience groups as listed in table above.	Recommendations of how NHS IMAS can improve their communications and stakeholder engagement activities	NHS IMAS Communications Portfolio Lead / Senior Manager	31 October 2023