

Big Splash

Information for NHS IMAS members



Welcome to the latest 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 annual report 2009/2010
- Learning from Lean in the public sector
- Life on a NHS IMAS Assignment
- Clinical engagement
- Training opportunities for NHS IMAS Partners and pool members
- NHS IMAS products in the spotlight
- Spread the word
- Elective Care Intensive Support takes on a new challenge
- Quick splash
- Contact us

NHS IMAS annual report 2009/2010

The first NHS IMAS Annual Report 2009/2010 has now been published. The report describes our achievements in the last financial year and future plans for the year ahead. Highlights from the report include the savings that our programme has made to the NHS:

“Last financial year, NHS IMAS saved the NHS 60% more than it costs to run the programme. This means that for the 37 completed assignments, if we compare the like for like cost of using independent sector healthcare consultancies against NHS IMAS, we made a saving of almost 65% for the NHS”.

The annual report shows that as an organisation we are making strong progress:

“At the end of March 2009, the core team were managing on average 10 live assignments at any one time. Last financial year, this figure increased by over 50% and NHS IMAS delivered an average of 22 live assignments simultaneously in 2009/10”. As you are aware from our business plan, we intend to almost double that to 40 by the end of March 2011.

Demand for our services is continuing to grow and the NHS IMAS team is excited about the year ahead, constantly looking for further ways to help the NHS.

Learning from Lean in the public sector

As part of our series of development and learning events, we are holding a ‘Learning from Lean in the public sector’ symposium for Partners and pool members in London this month.

The day will consist of case studies demonstrating how Lean techniques have been used in the NHS and other areas of the public sector including defence.

Delegates will get the opportunity to explore the case studies in further detail and gain an understanding of how Lean could be implemented within their own organisations or utilised when they are on assignment.

Places at this event are limited and are on an invitation only basis. If you haven’t already responded and would like to attend please contact Gemma Jones at gemmajones@nhs.net.

Life on a NHS IMAS Assignment

This month, we hear from pool member Mike Weaver about his experiences on an NHS IMAS assignment.

“The following is a summary of my first assignment for NHS IMAS. It includes detail of how the assignment was agreed, planned and delivered to meet the requirements of the requesting organisation.

Agreeing a Project Brief

After an introductory meeting, the following terms of reference were agreed with the Trust Chief Executive:

- To review the current staffing arrangements within the governance and risk team, assessing the current roles and responsibilities in the context of both the team and the wider organisational structure within the Trust
- To review the current skill mix within the governance and risk team to determine any gaps that will lead to difficulties in delivering the key governance and risk requirements across the Trust
- To make recommendations on the future structure of the governance and risk department, focussing on the requirements to ensure sufficient skills and expertise exist to deliver key governance and risk requirements

It was of particular importance to the Trust that the assignment could be completed within ten working days and that the focus of the project would be related to roles rather than existing Trust structures.

Implementing a Project Plan

This assignment followed the following project structure:

1. A review of Trust Policies and Procedures, Trust Board Papers, External Reports and Job Descriptions
2. Interviews with 15 members of staff that included Internal Audit and Non-Executive Directors
3. The production of a report that reported upon the findings, cross reference to key documents and the records of staff interviews

Delivering an Assignment

The key requirement for this assignment was to provide a report for the Chief Executive that would recommend a future structure for Governance that was fit for purpose.

It was vital that the assignment report presented a clear plan that would advise the Trust on what changes should be made that reflected the needs of the organisation and supported its system of Integrated Governance.

It was therefore the intention of the report to provide the detail of a new team structure for Integrated Governance along with the job descriptions of key staff that would be appointed to support that structure.

Continued on to next page...



Mike Weaver

Key points to remember...

- Agree an introductory meeting with the assignment sponsor before undertaking the scoping exercise. This will help to clarify what support is required and ensure any further scoping meets the needs of the project sponsor.
- Ensure that the project terms of reference are deliverable and possible within the agreed timescale for delivery of the assignment.
- It is vital to have a single point of contact in the Trust who is responsible for providing documentation, scheduling meetings with staff and facilitating the arrangements for when you arrive onsite to undertake fieldwork.

Did the assignment meet its Terms of Reference?

Without doubt the success of any assignment is measured by the feedback it receives from the requesting organisation.

The feedback I received included:

“The report is proving an extremely useful benchmark in highlighting issues and helping us to decide how to move forward”

“The report is helping us to take forward our debate in a constructive and much more informed way”

The absolute value of the NHS IMAS service is that it offers resources, experience and expertise to parts of the NHS that understand how it wants to improve but lacks the immediate resource to identify and implement change.

A successful assignment should enable NHS organisations to understand, develop and maintain their own expertise and capability for the future benefit of their own organisation.”

Clinical engagement

One of the objectives for NHS IMAS this year is to increase the number of clinicians registered with the talent pool.

In order to help us to do this, we have commissioned some research amongst clinicians, including those currently registered with NHS IMAS as well as other networks, including the SHAs to understand:

- the current perceptions of NHS IMAS amongst clinicians
- how we should market NHS IMAS to clinicians to make joining the pool an attractive proposition
- what barriers doctors face which may prevent them from signing up with NHS IMAS
- Any additional issues which we are currently unaware of

Telephone interviews and focus groups with clinicians will be taking place during April and May.

The outcomes from this work will be presented at our next Partner day in July and will be shared in Big Splash.

If you are a clinician and would like to take part in this research please contact Fliss Wood on: flisswood@nhs.net

Training opportunities for NHS IMAS Partners and pool members

NHS IMAS has successfully secured a portfolio of training courses for Partners and pool members to attend over the next year.

The courses, provided by NHS Elect, cover a broad range of subjects including Project Management, World Class Commissioning, developing business cases and Marketing. They are free to attend for fully registered Partners and pool members and will all be held at central London venues.

As the number of places available are limited, all expressions of interest will be managed by the NHS IMAS core team. Places will be assigned on a first come first served basis.

To request a full list of the training courses or to register your interest in attending, please contact Fliss Wood at flisswood@nhs.net.

NHS IMAS products *in the spotlight*

NHS IMAS has developed a toolkit of products that can be used by Partners and pool members when on assignment.

In each issue of Big Splash, a different product will be showcased to demonstrate the broad range of NHS IMAS tools available to you.

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

The first tool we would like to share is the communications strategy template, which is intended to be used once you have completed an exercise to identify your stakeholders, ensuring you are targeting the correct audiences with your communications.

This template clearly sets out the defined areas to be considered when planning communications for your stakeholders. This covers the objectives of the communication, audiences, key messages, methods, timing and issues to manage. These all help to create an effective plan for communicating your key messages whilst enabling you to manage any potential risks and issues.

If you would like a copy of this plan or further details on how to use this tool please contact Gemma Jones at gemmajones@nhs.net

The team are continually adding new products to the toolkit so if you have any tools that you would like to share with your NHS colleagues, please get in touch with Gemma Jones (gemmajones@nhs.net).

Spread the word

Do you know of anyone who has the skills to join the NHS IMAS talent pool?

Talent pool members have access to a diverse range of exciting and challenging work opportunities which will help to develop their skills for the future.

We currently have demand for roles in operational management, finance and project management.

If you would like further information on the registration process please contact the core team on nhs.imas@nhs.net / 0113 254 6424

Elective Care Intensive Support takes on a new challenge around achieving cancer waiting times

The Intensive Support Team (IST) has taken on a new challenge in 2010. They have been funded by the National Cancer Action Team (NCAT) to support local health communities (LHCs) in achieving the national cancer standards.

The funding is being provided for NHS IMAS to:

- provide practical advice and support to LHCs in relation to the two week waiting times standard for breast symptom referrals. This will include data completeness, as well as performance against the target
- provide practical advice and support to LHCs in relation to other cancer waiting times standards (e.g. 62 day referral to treatment, 31 day DTT to Radiotherapy, two week wait for all suspected cancer referrals) as time permits, and as directed by NCAT

The IST will work with NCAT and SHAs to identify those LHCs facing the greatest challenges in relation to cancer waiting times, and will give these organisations priority, while maintaining the principle of only working with those Trusts, FTs and PCTs that request support.

Having agreed to help a particular LHC, the IST would carry out an initial 'diagnostic' visit, at which the following would be discussed in some depth:

- governance and management
- performance
- capacity and demand
- backlog
- data, and information systems
- referral and booking processes
- pathway management

Advice and support would also be offered at this visit. Where necessary, the IST will discuss and agree a 'package' of tailored support, to assist delivery of the cancer standards. Such ongoing support can take a variety of forms, but would typically involve one day per week of onsite input from the IST, for a maximum of three months.

In addition the IST could support and, or, facilitate network wide events to further add value to the Trusts that it is supporting, for example around pathway management and inter-provider issues.

This builds on the existing work of the team and also brings in some new team members who have operational experience in the cancer field.

Quick splash...



Name...Jon Schick

I work as...a Project Director for a PCT in South West London. The projects can vary in size and complexity, but currently include the externalisation of our community services and work with Practice Based Commissioner (PBC) groups to develop integrated care organisations.

My typical day involves...I'm not sure that I have a "typical day" other than that it will almost certainly involve caffeine and chocolate (not necessarily in that order). The role is very varied and I can be agreeing the detail of performance reports one minute, and working with GPs and PBC managers on how we can support them to redesign care pathways the next.

The best thing about my job is...the variety, coupled with regular interaction with frontline clinicians and patients.

Have you been on an NHS IMAS assignment? Yes – one large(ish) assignment, and a couple of smaller ones.

Tell us a bit more about it....I worked with a specialist trust to help them redesign the care pathway for children requiring long term ventilation - improving their quality of life by getting them out of hospital faster, as well as improving the use of the hospital's capacity.

What would be your perfect assignment? I think they all sound interesting. But certainly open to offers if NHS IMAS goes international!

Word of advice for other pool members...Don't forget you already have a lot of transferrable skills. And depending upon the assignment, make time to talk to frontline staff wherever possible – it may be a way of getting to some quick solutions.

What do you want to do next?

Anything interesting as long as I can see a clear link to improving services for patients.

If I didn't work for the NHS, I'd....probably come back. That's what I did last time!

In my spare time, I....run the parental taxi service, walk the dog that the kids wanted (apart from the walking bit), and like to get outdoors. I'm a keen photographer so always on the lookout for new places to go to.

Contact us

Please direct any questions regarding the NHS IMAS programme to nhs.imas@nhs.net or call the core team on 0113 254 6424

If you would like to be included on the Big Splash distribution list or have any ideas for future articles, please contact Gemma on gemmajones@nhs.net or 0113 254 6424