Case Study

From Escalated Authorisation to Demand Control: Delivering Sustainable Workforce Savings and Change Management at UHD

NHS
University Hospitals Dorset
NHS Foundation Trust

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Partnership timeline overview

2018
Poole Hospital NHS FT started using the Locum's Nest flagship solution, Match.

2019
Poole Hospital joined The Digital Collaborative Bank; the country's largest workforce coalition of Trusts, seeing 11 NHS Trusts and 9,000+ doctors come together across 6 ICSs.

2020
Poole Hospital NHS FT, The Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS FT, merged, to form University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust (UHD). This saw 3 independent hospital sites come together under 1 NHS Trust. Locum's Nest was chosen as the system to support the project based on a previously successful partnership.

2022
A personalised and dynamic data dashboard to harmonise rates and provide equal opportunities for doctors across the multiple hospital sites was put in place.

Partnership timeline overview

2025
Demand Control goes live: Building on the success of escalated authorisation, UHD introduced Demand Control to strengthen oversight of temporary staffing requests and challenge avoidable demand before shifts reached the workforce.

2024
Stricter escalation processes were put in place, to go hand-in-hand with the rate card. This meant aligning the use of Locum's Nest technology with policy changes across hospital sites.

This case study highlights how UHD and LN have partnered to drive continuous improvement, leveraging gold-standard consultancy to deliver operational efficiencies and sustainable financial savings.



Supporting UHD with a personalised & dynamic data dashboard

The challenge

Despite merging in 2020, UHD lacked rate harmonisation across the 3 hospital sites and its absence complicated matters.

Achieving rate harmonisation required a bespoke, dynamic data dashboard to address key issues:

- **Doctors frequently cancelled shifts in favour of higher-paying alternatives, often at short notice, creating stress for temporary workforce teams**
- **Increased spending & rate violations**
- **An unhealthy culture of competition and friction among healthcare professionals**

It was important for policy and process changes to be consistent across hospital sites. The added difficulty was adhering to tight time constraints; the initial request to go live was less than 2 months!



Supporting UHD with a personalised & dynamic data dashboard

Project objectives

The project team set clear objectives for the intelligence dashboard, including:

- **Harmonising rates across different hospital sites, making processes and shift management fairer and ensuring equal opportunities for all doctors**
- **Increasing the lead time for filling shifts, thereby improving the chances of successful staffing**
- **Improving shift fill rate**
- **Improving the mental health and job satisfaction of medical professionals**
- **Cultivating a healthy organisational culture**
- **Strengthening data-driven decision-making**



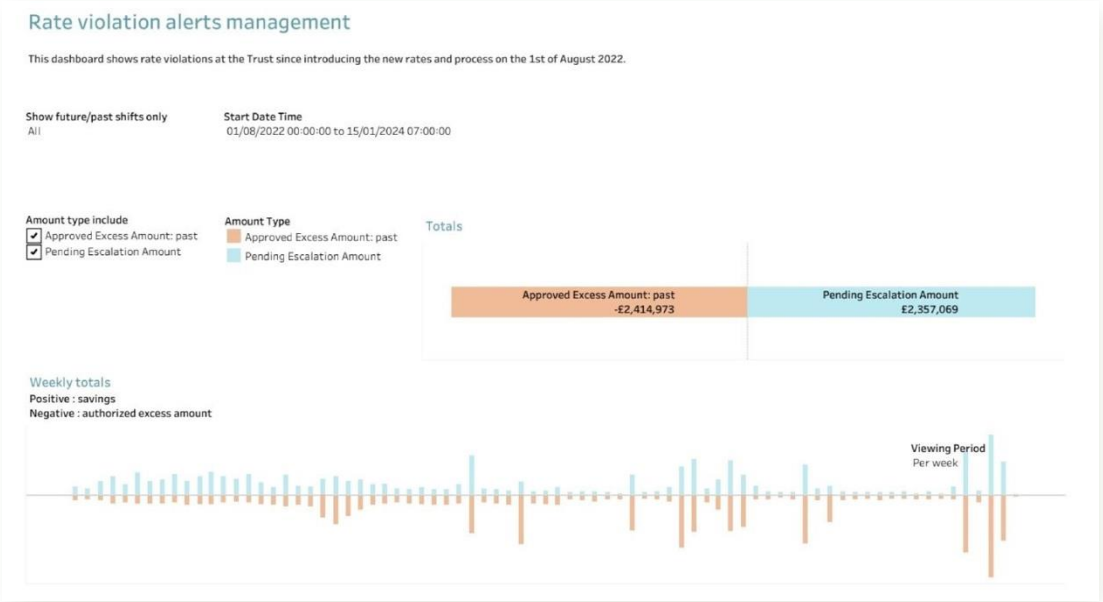
A bespoke dashboard built in partnership via LN Intelligence

It included 3 categories of savings:

1/ Approved excess amount:
Resulting from shifts violating rates but subsequently approved

2/ Unapproved excess amount:
Savings due to shifts violating rates which were not approved

3/ Pending escalation amounts:
Excess amounts for future shifts, including authorised and pending authorisation shifts.



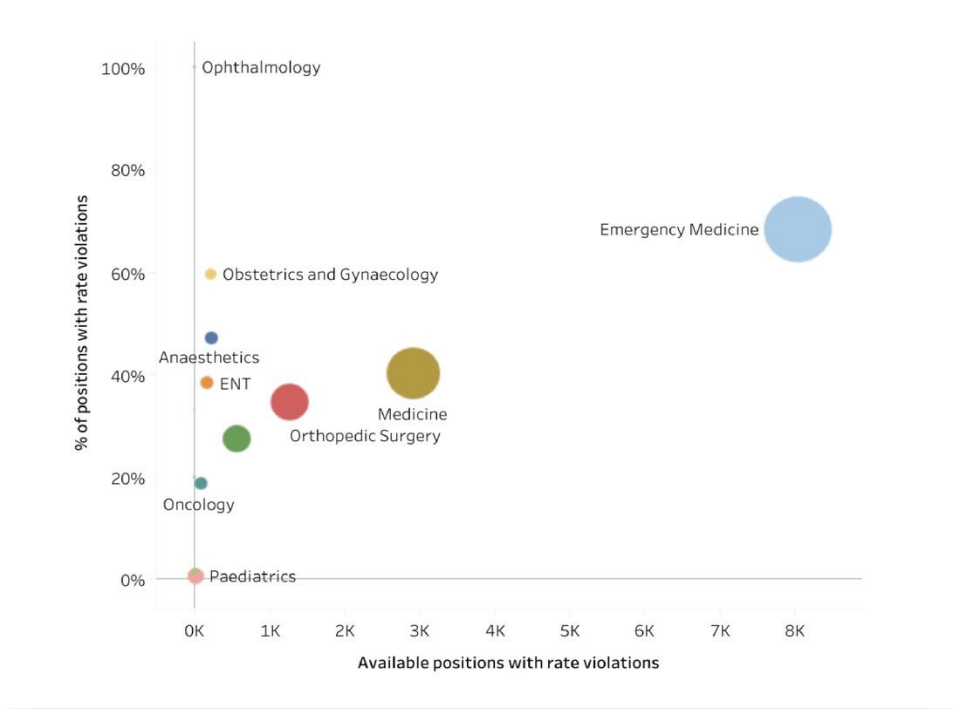
This gave big picture data and helped bring everyone together on data-driven decision-making being key.

The versatile impact of the rate violation card

Let's drill into the granular details:

1. Detailed breakdown by department and grade, including **full rate violation insights**.
2. Clear, **digestible graphs** and charts provide complete visibility, highlighting departments and grades with the highest violation percentages and the most affected positions.
3. Empowers **data-driven decision-making** while enhancing collaboration and information sharing across departments and hospital sites.
4. Informed decisions lead to **improved processes**, optimised clinical pathways, and enhanced patient care.
5. The dashboard actively **engages operational and clinical teams** in driving meaningful change.

The versatile impact of the rate violation card



This chart highlights departments with the highest rate violation percentages, the most rate violation positions and the relative amount of published positions.

How the creation of a new authorisation process came about

The bespoke rate card allowed Locum's Nest and UHD to explore issues which were arising with escalated spend.

It laid the foundation for transparent, data-driven conversations, shaping our latest initiative - creating a new escalation authorisation process.

By leveraging this data, UHD and Locum's Nest worked together to change the Trust authorisation process and ensure this is reflected in the Locum's Nest system - working towards positive KPI outcomes, creating a catalyst for meaningful change.



How the creation of a new authorisation process came about

So, how was this achieved?



The insights led to UHD's Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Becky Jupp speaking internally and then to Jonathan Hern, Locum's Nest, Customer Solutions Lead about rate escalation violations.



The data had everyone engaged and was a key starting point for a new rate card and authorisation process to be created in partnership using the thoughts and opinions of UHD staff and Jonathan's experience and expertise.



UHD worked with Locum's Nest to create a new escalation policy which is now reflected in the Locum's Nest system after some technical refinement and development.

Impact: a dedicated stakeholder engagement project

There were two key steps to the project which meant stakeholders were involved in the change process. This **encouraged engagement, instilled confidence, and ensured a smooth transition** to the new process without delay.

March 2024
A new rate card escalation process was introduced aligned to a wider authorisation process to simplify the escalation process and negate candidates waiting to apply for shifts until escalated amounts were advertised.

July 2024
Further controls were introduced, disabling Ad-Hoc timesheets and requiring all submissions to link to advertised shifts. This improved demand accuracy, minimised errors, and enhanced financial reporting within a 28-day submission period.

Impact: a dedicated stakeholder engagement project

By adopting an open approach to change, stakeholders felt supported, appreciated and listened to as they were provided with:



Onsite drop-in sessions for all users



Remote sessions for dedicated user groups



Celebration of success & project progress communication along the way



Appreciation events

Impact: introducing Demand Control

Building on the success of escalated authorisation, UHD worked with Locum's Nest to introduce Demand Control, enhancing oversight of temporary staffing requests before they are released to be filled.

By challenging demand at the point of request, the Trust has strengthened workforce governance, improved decision-making and delivered additional financial savings.

How Demand Control Works

Demand Control introduces an additional review stage, ensuring temporary staffing requests are necessary and justified before progressing.

This has enabled UHD to:

- **Improve visibility of workforce demand**
- **Strengthen budgetary control**
- **Reduce avoidable expenditure**
- **Support consistent decision-making**
- **Provide reasons and accountability for approval and/or rejection**

Impact: results to date



1,500+ doctors

are part of an engaged UHD staff bank which has grown by 110% since rate card implementation in 2022



25% increase in fill rate

now averaging 90% each month, with 5% coming from The Digital Collaborative Bank



90% decrease in escalated rates

from August 2023 to August 2024. Escalation amounts now account for 2% of overall medical bank spend compared to 11% previously



£500,000 saved per month

in medical bank spend, meaning finances can be distributed elsewhere



Extra £160K savings unlocked

by strengthening workforce governance through Demand Control

Impact

- **Ongoing support and consultation**

  provided by a dedicated Customer Solutions Lead in Jonathan - an extension of the UHD team.

- **Equal opportunities**

  more flexibility and better work-life balance for medics alongside more lead time and better job planning.

- **Enhanced patient care**

  with more doctors per patient, improving patient safety alongside more shifts being filled.

- **UHD Staff Awards**

  have been sponsored by Locum's Nest for 4 consecutive years from 2023 to 2026.

- **An engaged process**

  that staff of all levels believe in as their voices were taken into consideration throughout.

“The partnership between Locum's Nest & UHD has been a success. Recent projects such as creating harmonisation of rates across UHDs 3 hospital sites through a data dashboard have led to significant cost reductions, and an improved working culture and environment for our medics and temporary staffing team. Everyone involved knows how the Locum's Nest system goes hand-in-hand with our Trust policies.

The rate card implemented has given UHD control and transparency over rates. Jonathan has been a star and once features are implemented, he is always around to support the team with any training and drive further development and efficiencies of projects.”

— Becky Jupp, Deputy Chief Medical Officer



“Jonathan has been great at supporting our Rota Coordinators and doctors. He is always sure to check in with them on site visits and is a true extension of the UHD temporary staffing team. He was quick to support us with our Staff Awards & Junior Doctor Awards evenings.

Since the partnership began we have drastically seen our staff bank increase in size, with more medics engaged and happy using the Locum's Nest app. This was all made possible with a partnership that is open to ideas, welcoming of combining technology with our changing policies.”

— Melissa Duncan, Operational Lead for Temporary Staffing



“The projects between UHD and LN have been a real partnership which has led to a better better work-life balance for our medics, with more lead time to signing up to shifts.

Bank shifts are undertaken for the right reasons which naturally bring about a happier medical workforce and improved continuity of patient care.”

— Siobhan Stainer, Engagement and Digital Communications Officer



“I enjoy engaging with all members of staff at UHD - from the doctors, to the rota coordinators, their temporary staffing teams and beyond. Being able to help create processes and align this with Locum’s Nest technology that benefit the Trust and is something all members of staff can be proud of is a wonderful thing.

I am looking forward to continue supporting UHD with further projects to help increase their efficiencies moving forward.”

— Jonathan Hern, Customer Solutions Lead, Locum’s Nest



Would you like to know more about the first-in-class partnership that makes a huge difference?

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