

AllocateAwards Case Study

Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The e-roster team at the Countess of Chester Hospital has successfully implemented HealthRoster and SafeCare across 30 wards and departments, enabling the trust to develop a workforce based on patient care needs, predicted in real time.

The programme aimed to manage and optimise the workforce required for high quality patient care. The new workforce would be acuity focused with staffing based on the care needs of the patients, predicted in real time. Using the workforce more efficiently across the hospital would also avoid bank, overtime and agency costs.

HealthRoster and SafeCare provide the trust with transparent, reliable data on nurse staffing and patient acuity. The data is entered three times a day by the nurse in charge, which is visible across the trust at all levels. It is used by matrons and hospital co-ordinators at daily 'bed meetings' to plan nurse staffing in accordance with patient acuity.

The trust's directors are trained on both systems and use the information to optimise the substantive workforce and reduce temporary staffing. The heads of nursing and matrons have monthly 'confirm and challenge' sessions to provide systematic challenge and oversight of rosters.

To ensure maximum benefit from the system, avoidable costs such as unused contracted hours and additional duty shifts are highlighted and challenged. The introduction of KPIs with peer review is encouraging ward managers to manage rosters more effectively.

In year one the trust has reduced nursing agency spend by 41 per cent and nursing overtime spend by nine per cent. The confirm and challenge sessions have reduced unused contracted hours by 52 per cent, which is an approximate saving of £631 per ward per month. Ward managers have around four hours more time each week, which has been put back into the ward to improve clinical leadership and reduce the need for temporary staffing.

Jane Hayes-Green, clinical project lead, acuity based workforce said:

“The programme’s success is due to the commitment and strength of the e-roster team, they had a real desire to succeed. HealthRoster and SafeCare have given us clarity, transparency and consistency of rostering across all wards and departments. We now have a live view of patient care that links patient acuity with nurse staffing to provide safe staffing and optimum use of the substantive workforce.”