

AllocateAwards Case Study

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust

With the Lord Carter recommendation to have all medical staff on an e-rostering system by October 2018, and with nearly 100 per cent roll out to all its other staff groups, Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust took the opportunity to bring its junior doctors into the 21st century for absence management.

The existing system was flawed and frustrating for juniors, with each department having different ways of managing staff leave requests. The process was heavily paper based, inflexible and allowed little opportunity for junior doctors to plan ahead with their rotations, to agree any potential swaps or request leave.

The trust needed a system that would show an entire year's rotation, work pattern and ability to request leave. This would enable the doctors to see ahead, plan their working pattern and request leave across the year, no matter which unit of the rotation they were in.

The trust already used HealthRoster, EmployeeOnline, e-Rota and e-JP, so knew the benefits it would provide. So, the HealthRoster team set about looking at how to implement the Medic Online (MOL) and Medic on Duty (MOD) modules for junior doctors.

A pilot was commenced in the Emergency Department in April 2017. Using face-to-face meetings and support rather than e-learning. After a couple of months, the system was a proven success.

Benefits so far include complete visibility of working rosters; the ability to request leave in the future; and visibility of previous rotations by rota co-ordinators, so they can match appropriate rota slots.

The biggest benefit however, has been the ability to proactively fill gaps with substantive or locum staff, rather than having to rely on expensive agency staff. Another pilot, run on the intensive care unit, has seen rosters available to staff more than eight weeks in advance. Staff have been able to look at published working rosters and agree swaps in a timely manner, enabling a happier worklife balance resulting in a more flexible response when asking for help to cover gaps.

Ria George, HealthRoster implementation lead, said:

“Junior doctors have asked how quickly the system can be implemented across the whole organisation, as they love the ability to be able to view their rosters and request leave from a touch of a button on their smart devices using the MedicOnline Mobile app.”