COVID-19 | Hints and Tips for customers using Allocate's Workforce Technology to support the response

The team at Allocate understand the impact COVID-19 is having or is likely to have on our customers. In a period where there is an anticipated increase in staff sickness and extra demand for services we want to support you to ensure our Healthcare People Management (HPM) technology is helping to monitor and deploy your people as safely as possible. As part of this support we have compiled a series of hints, tips and reminders that you may wish to consider.

We will keep these hints and tips updated over the coming days and weeks. The Allocate customer community has a strong tradition of sharing experience and innovation, if you have any feedback or useful additions to this list of hints or tips please email corona.virus@allocatesoftware.com and we will add them to this document for wider sharing.

Tracking the numbers of staff affected by COVID-19

- Consider creating a new sickness reason for 'self-isolation' to be able to track it, and ensure staff are fully paid for it.
- Use the sickness report in HealthRoster and HealthMedics (Unavailability Sickness report) as this will highlight the sickness reasons per unit & division, it will allow managers to review current duration and planned sickness end dates.
- You may be changing the care leave policy for staff impacted by school closures, for example policies on single days/max days per year, annual leave or unpaid leave, offer alternative shifts where care may be available. Any changes should be reflected in HealthRoster and HealthMedics.

Incident Plan Use

- Encourage review of the Incident Plan Report within HealthRoster and HealthMedics (Rostering>Daily Staffing>Incident Plan by Unit / Incident Plan by Skill) and test the functionality – the report would be very helpful to identify staff to call in during a major incident, and to allow prevention plans to be put in place.
- Consider asking all staff to check and update contact details in EmployeeOnLine.
- Make sure that competency and skills are up to date in the system. Using skills to mark those staff that could work in different areas to make redeployment easier. Consider including any staff not currently working in clinical areas that may have clinical experience / skills. For example, a member of staff who has past ICU experience but who is no longer necessarily in that department. Should there be a shortage of staff with a required skill, a review across the organisation would identify staff who have the required skill(s) and whether they are on shift.

Managing new care units, for example isolation units/areas/pods

- Many organisations are setting up new care units such as testing portacabins, or have identified new areas for high dependency and critical care beds. Where this is taking place create new units and rosters to manage as required.

Temporary Staffing Cover

- Consider implementing two new 'Bank Request Reasons' for when sending out vacant duties for Bank/Agency via HealthRoster or HelathMedics, for example;
    1. 'Additional dependency – COVID-19' (Increased pressures of workload due to virus)
    2. 'Sickness – COVID-19' (shifts needing to be covered by Bank/Agency due to staff COVID-19 absence)
  Both of these reasons are captured in the reporting in BankStaff, HealthRoster & HealthMedics, which organisations may need to utilise after the pandemic to view the costs incurred whilst managing the virus.
- Contact all staff on the bank who have not worked a shift for a period of time and ask them if they would be available for work if required, noting shifts they would be available for.
- Sort bank workers into 'pure' bank or bank with substantive contracts, thereby ensuring that any out of date mandatory training is updated as soon as possible to allow the staff to work.
- Encourage bank staff to provide availability via EmployeeOnLineL/ME App so efforts can be targeted to the right staff when trying to cover gaps.
- Utilise the 'Available but not booked' report in BankStaff, this will give a report on who has registered availability via EmployeeOnLine/Me but are not booked, to ensure all opportunities are utilised.

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Supporting home working for e-roster and e-job planning administrators/coordinators

- All our implementations have the ability to be accessed from home i.e. over the internet. In some cases customers have asked Allocate to disable this internet access. Please check the status of this for your organisation and where required request that this is changed by Allocate, thus allowing access to HealthRoster and HealthMedics from anywhere to support organisations whose staff may have to work from home.
- To do this simply log a support case with us to enable "internet access" and we will do the rest.

Daily visibility of staff/Impact – current and prospective

- Use Daily Staffing to show any unfilled duties, and staff assigned to study days or working days who may be able to be brought back on to clinical shifts.
- Use SafeCare to get an overall picture of each units patient demand requirement.
- Set-up an automatic email in RosterPerform for the sickness % KPI, to send the sickness % for all units for the desired period (can include the future) to understand where sickness is particularly impacting staffing levels
- Consider creating new Red Flags within SafeCare to track additional incidents or issues in this area. Turn on email notifications for creation of red flags if not already done so.
- Create a task on the unit to specify that a patient has been isolated. This could help track the number of patients that a ward has had to keep isolated, and the subsequent extra care need and staffing need that is required.
- Monitor the unfilled duties report (HealthRoster>Daily Staffing), or send a Daily Notification for Unfilled Duties from RosterPerform.
- Activity Manager can help identify which activities are impacted by closed theatres and which staff are now on standby.

TimeClocks Hygiene

- Customers are urged to clean the TimeClock screens. The manufacturer recommends this is done with alcohol cleanser at least twice a day using an alcohol based solution of 70% minimum. This should be applied in small amounts with the use of a tissue, cotton wool pad or alcohol wipe.

Our team is on hand to support our customers throughout. Please use online support and support contacts as usual. Outside of usual support please send any specific COVID-19 related questions to corona.virus@allocatesoftware.com

Click here to access the support portal

Web: www.allocatesoftware.co.uk
Twitter: @AllocateS