

Case Study

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust accelerated the number of workers moving to bank, increased shift fill rate and eliminated requests for weekly pay.

All by using Allocate InstantPay powered by Wagestream.

"I think it's been really positive for our organisation. I've been here a long time, over 20 years – and for the staff this has been a real leap forward."

Julie Burgess

Head of Nursing for Surgery,
Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust

What is InstantPay?

A set of financial wellbeing tools, including flexible pay options, offered to NHS Trust employees to improve financial health, reduce stress, smooth cashflow and build better financial wellbeing for the future.

What were Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust trying to achieve?

- Respond to staff requests for weekly pay cost-effectively
- Increase retention and improve bank fill rate
- Reduce reliance on agency workers
- Support staff financial wellbeing

Weekly pay no longer dominates the agenda

Like many Trusts, Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust wanted to respond to the needs of their workforce to increase engagement and satisfaction. Weekly pay was a common request but would not have been possible to accommodate in-house.

Julie Burgess, Head of Nursing for Surgery, has been at the Trust for over 20 years and knows how attractive weekly pay is to the team.

"18 months ago, every single meeting I went to with Tom [Deputy HR Director] we would talk about weekly pay," says Julie. "It was a drum I was banging very loudly on behalf of the staff. Prior to InstantPay, we went through three years of weekly pay being on every agenda. It's not on the agenda at all now. No-one ever says we would prefer weekly pay to InstantPay."

Tom White, Deputy HR Director, also points to the ease of implementation as one of the biggest advantages over the move to weekly pay.

"Compared to changing your payroll frequency, it was a very smooth implementation," explains Tom. "The fact it's a cloud-based app, works on mobile phones, it's intuitive, easy-to-use. We had to do very little training: all queries and questions were generally managed centrally by InstantPay. That was a huge benefit, not having to feel like we had responsibility there."

An increase in the number of bank shifts filled

The move to a flexible pay cycle (InstantPay allows employees to access a proportion of their earned wages at any time of the month) has helped to drive improvement in the Trust's key performance indicators, especially around bank shift uptake rates and the number of agency workers moving back to bank.

"You can go up to people and say we have an unfilled shift and now they are more inclined to fill it," says Julie. "Compared to where we were a year ago, we now have a much better fill rate on our bank shifts."

Tom agrees. *"You're decreasing that gap between agencies and Bank and you're giving agencies less ability to keep hold of their workers."*

Key outcomes

- 5,000 employees now have access to innovative financial wellbeing tools
- Increase in bank fill rate and reduction in agency spend
- Agency workers are increasingly moving in-house
- Eliminated requests for weekly payroll

Vacancy rates going down

The incentive of weekly pay is also helped to decrease vacancy rates. Staff that were doing agency work to access the money straight away have now come back and are doing shifts at the Trust. This is unsurprising considering that before implementing InstantPay, staff working a bank shift would need to wait up to six weeks to be paid for it.

"In the last 12 months our Trust has done very well at decreasing our vacancy rates which are down about 30%. I feel InstantPay has been part of that package helping us convert long-standing agency staff over to the bank."

For Tom, the relative ease of implementing InstantPay created a momentum for further action and momentum.

"There's certainly been that positive correlation between implementation and what our workforce indicators are saying."

The data to know you're doing something important

Tom and the team were adamant that they didn't want to create more problems for staff and had some concerns that moving from a locked, monthly payroll to a flexible pay cycle could potentially get staff into more debt.

NHS Trusts using InstantPay get full control (such as how much of earned wages can be accessed by staff each month) and visibility into how the service is being used.

For Tom, this visibility was a key assurance piece for all stakeholders.

"We have detailed reports every month of the use and we can highlight any hotspots or concerns that we wish to do so. Since the launch there was only one time we had to do that and it was actually an employee who needed more help, it wasn't to do with the InstantPay app, so overall we're pleased with how it has ending up landing."

This ability to track users that may need additional support is an added benefit of InstantPay. Financial stress has a significant impact on individual health, interpersonal relationships, productivity and patient care and usage visibility allows Trusts to know where to provide additional support before problems get worse.

The overall impact of implementing Allocate InstantPay

Ultimately for Tom, the proof is in the pudding and implementing InstantPay has turned the dial on key workforce indicators, built trust with staff and helped improve financial wellbeing.

One indicator is turnover and Tom thinks that Allocate InstantPay has helped contribute to a reduction.

"The best indicator is turnover," he says. "We've moved from a Trust that had quite high turnover to a Trust with one of the lowest and we're seeing the impact of that on our vacancy rates. If staff perceive you're responding to concerns you build up that trust and respect as well."

If you're an NHS Trust thinking looking to take action in any of the following areas, get in touch to find out how InstantPay can help:

- Reduce reliance on agency workers and associated costs
- Increase uptake of bank shifts, especially unsocial hours
- Raise staff morale and relationship with the workplace
- Improve staff cashflow without moving to costly weekly payroll
- Empower staff to improve their long-term financial wellbeing