



Royal Surrey Foundation NHS Trust Introducing Allocate Loop #InTheLoop

How Royal Surrey Foundation NHS Trust found new ways to keep staff in the loop

Background

Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust provides health care services from Royal Surrey County Hospital in Guildford and adult community healthcare services from Haslemere Hospital and Milford Hospital. Royal Surrey County Hospital provides emergency and general hospital services to a population of more than 330,000 across south west Surrey. It's state of the art tertiary cancer centre serves around two million people across Surrey, West Sussex, Hampshire and across the UK. The Trust employs more than 4,500 members of staff.

The challenge

The Trust wanted to increase its communication channels to enable staff to have conversations and receive information at a time that was convenient for them, but also ensure these exchanges were kept within a work environment. This involved not having to use personal social media or messaging sites for work use or relying on being able to use a work PC to check emails.

Our solution

Rolling out smartphone app, Allocate Loop, provided a space for all Trust news and communications as well offering rostering options where both permanent and temporary staff were able to view rosters, request duties, annual leave and bank shifts at a time that was convenient for them, allowing greater flexibility and work-life balance.

The implementation team took a proactive approach to introducing the app, starting with a successful soft launch with new junior doctors in August 2022, followed by trust wide engagement including:

- visiting managers and ward managers;
- using Trust wide internal publication channels;
- making use of the weekly Teams Q&A sessions with the CEO;
- a launch event in the canteen where mugs and leaflets that promoted the initiative were given away.

A successful roll out depended on collaboration with medics, e-rostering, resource, medical workforce and communications teams. HR Business Partners were also crucial as they work across departments alongside senior managers, managers and clinicians and were able to spread the message and encourage take up of the app.

Results

- 1 Following the initial soft launch with new junior doctors in August 2022, around 200 people signed up. This has quickly risen within three months to around 1,200.
- 2 The app is providing greater access and ease of communication, for example, the rota co-ordinator for medicine is using it for all the medics to book shifts. The junior doctors appreciate being able to easily contact the co-ordinator with queries or requests and being able to co-ordinate their shifts.
- 3 Having an app which encompasses both communications, social media and messaging platforms as well as rostering means staff can keep personal communications channels personal rather than using them for work.
- 4 The app also provides ways to reach temporary and bank staff who ordinarily may not be able to easily access all trust communications. It also gives them opportunities to converse with other temporary staff through messaging platforms.

Top tips for implementing Allocate Loop

- Be prepared to be proactive and devise different ways of involving staff. Different departments tend to engage with communications in very different ways.
- Get buy in from the communications team from the start
- Use any communications that are going out such as staff surveys, newsletters or internal publications to promote the use of the app.
- Use of the app is enhanced if HealthRoster is already implemented within the trust.