

## NATIONAL BANK CASE STUDY

# Driving down agency spend at Somerset NHS Foundation Trust with the NHS Professionals National Bank™

- ✓ Utilising National Bank flexible worker pool has saved the trust an average of
  - £47 for a Registered Nursing shift
  - £79 for an Unregistered Nursing shift
- ✓ Estimated Trust cost savings an average of £4.00 per hour for Unregistered Nurse shifts and £6.00 per hour for Registered Nurses when migrating from Agency
- ✓ National Bank flexible worker pool reported as Bank, reduces costs, and maintains safe staffing levels

## The Situation

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust is the first Trust on the English mainland to provide Acute, Mental Health and Community Services, working across 13 community sites with a wide range of mental health and social care partners.

In August 2022, Somerset joined forces with NHS Professionals to reduce its agency usage for Registered and Unregistered Nurses, and to create a flexible worker pool to take precedent over agency shifts.

We recommended our innovative National Bank solution, which is designed to bridge the gap between agency workers and a Trust's internal Bank with the supply of a flexible worker pool that allows Trusts to access cost-effective, flexible and fully compliant staff.

This case study reports on our early progress with Somerset during the first six months of the partnership.



### The Solution

Our first step was to gain an in-depth understanding of the challenge from the Trust's temporary staffing team and learn more about the areas experiencing high agency use. With this data, our dedicated National Bank recruitment consultants were able to launch a bespoke recruitment campaign and help build a 'net new' supply of National Bank staff for the Trust to use before commercial agencies.

Working in partnership with the Trust, we reached out to the local community with regular drop-in events, backed up by online recruitment advertising and social media campaigns. We also worked with the Trust to screen and interview candidates against essential criteria and jointly agreed to a plan to provide agency staff with the option of working through the NHS Professionals National Bank by holding on-site recruitment events. A key action was to co-design access to the flexible worker pool to reduce reliance on using external agencies.

This worked by providing a flexible worker pool after shifts had passed through the Trust's internal Bank supply. Introducing this new step allowed a cost-effective solution for Bank provision and Bank reporting, while maintaining continuity of care and safe staffing levels. Working collaboratively, the Trust and National Bank team have been able to proactively fill vacant shifts as a priority and 'bump' agency bookings.

“ My really positive experience working with NHS Professionals for seven years made me want to join the National Bank in Somerset NHS FT. Applying to be a National Bank member was smooth and easy and NHS Professionals kept me informed throughout the joining process. NHSP supported me with signing onto shifts and routinely check in with me to see if I am ok. Joining the NHS Professionals National Bank at Somerset NHS FT has given me the ability to go around the different wards and improve my knowledge on different areas. I really recommend working for NHS Professionals and their National Bank. ”

#### **Pavla Narozna**

HCSW - National Bank Member at Somerset NHS FT





## The Outcome

Although in its preliminary stages, the partnership between NHS Professionals and Somerset has already started to convert agency shifts into more cost-effective Bank reporting.

The success of sourcing a net new pool of Bank workforce has led to an average saving of up to £79 per shift for the Trust.

Our unique agency 'bumping' model has also helped to reduce agency spend. For example, a single week in February 2023 saw a cost saving of 60% thanks to National Bank Registered Nurses working shifts instead of agency worker shifts and further savings are expected.

A critical part of the collaboration's success so far has been the highly visible and dedicated National Bank delivery team, who were available throughout the agency transition project and for the ongoing recruitment supply. They hold weekly meetings with the Trust's temporary staffing team to help make vacant shifts more visible and maximise National Bank fill. Such close working has allowed NHS Professionals and the Trust to unify objectives. This means they can better understand booking trends and pre-empt variables that could impact shifts going out to agency.

“ Finding only one word to sum up our National Bank Members is difficult... if I had to pick one it would be, amazing! They have integrated brilliantly within our team and have a fabulous manner with the patients. We will be extremely happy for them to continue coming to Waverley Ward to work alongside us ”

**Donna Mellor**

Ward Sister at Somerset NHS FT



National Bank is just one of the ways NHS Professionals is able to help Trusts drive down agency spend and Trusts using the service can take full advantage of these. Our Healthcare Support Worker Development Programme (HCSWD), for example, can deliver skilled and motivated trainees to work in areas with higher agency spend and convert even more agency shifts to Bank. An added benefit of our partnership with Somerset is that we're exploring how our HCSWD programme could be tailored to meet the Trust's unique needs and deliver HCSW trainees working a minimum of 30 hours week on the front line. Discussions on this exciting development are at an early stage but will focus on how the HCSWD programme could work in harmony with our National Bank service to make further agency savings for the Trust.

“ The National Bank team have given us the confidence in our flexible worker pool, as they build their workforce and recommend solutions to support us in reducing our agency spend. It's been highly beneficial to work together, and we are really starting to see the results both in terms of the number of Bank Members working at the Trust and their cost effectiveness – it's a real working partnership. ”

**Daniel Williams**  
Temporary Staffing Manager at Somerset NHS FT

“ NHS Professionals have been lovely and very helpful. Their systems worked really well, and they always answered my questions and kept me informed. I found the process of joining NHS Professionals' National Bank to be very straight forward. What I love most about my role is the fact that it's not agency working. Every shift that I work adds to my holiday allowance and booking shifts is easy and convenient. I would recommend doing bank work through NHS Professionals instead of through an agency ”

**Kieran White**  
RN - National Bank Member at Somerset  
NHS FT

