

Clinical Governance Assurance

NHS Professionals (NHSP) has a Clinical Governance team for flexible worker governance and assurance. The Director of Clinical Governance and Operations leads the team supported by a Senior Nurse/Head of Governance. A Complaints Manager and a Clinical Advisor, together with their staff, complete the team's framework.

The Clinical Governance Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee, chaired by non-executive directors, scrutinise the work of the team. Both are sub-committees of the NHSP board.

The Recruitment Process

Employment standards

NHSP recruits flexible workers in line with NHS Employment Check Standards. These are:

- Enhanced criminal records check
- Verification of identity
- Evidence of eligibility to work
- Occupational Health clearance
- Professional registration and qualifications check including the "intention to practice" form for midwives
- Evidence of at least six months' relevant clinical experience
- Appropriate references

Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks

NHSP:Online is a booking and placement system for flexible workers. It includes a record of CRB/DBS numbers and issue dates. This record ensures 100% compliance with the requirement for DBS checks.

Identity verification and eligibility to work

NHSP requires all applicants to show evidence of identity and eligibility to work.

Assessment

NHSP requires all applicants to successfully complete:

- A knowledge-based assessment linked to grade and speciality
- A handwriting assessment

Care Support Workers who intend to undertake clinical observations in acute Trusts must successfully complete:

- An assessment of practical observation skills
- An extended knowledge-based observations assessment paper

Interview

NHSP interviews all flexible workers face-to-face.

Occupational Health screening

All flexible workers must pass Occupational Health screening to prove they are fit for the roles they have applied for.

Assignments

Training

NHSP's validation system ensures all flexible workers comply with the mandatory training requirements for their roles.

Assignment codes

NHSP gives each flexible worker a clinical classification code. This ensures that:

- The right flexible worker is on the right shift at the right time
- Only workers with the appropriate levels of skill and experience for individual clinical specialities receive assignments in those areas

Performance feedback

Performance evaluation and feedback

NHSP has an online performance evaluation process based on the knowledge and skills framework. This enables Trusts to give feedback performance about flexible workers. NHSP provides further training and support to those workers who are not performing well.

Alert notices

- NHSP receives alert notices from professional regulators, Clinical Commissioning Groups and the NHS Security Management Service.
- NHSP uses its recruitment database to record information about healthcare workers who may pose a threat to patients or staff. The database also has details of workers NHSP has dismissed. NHSP can therefore identify and reject these workers if they subsequently apply for assignments.

Concerns and Complaints

Level of Concerns and Complaints

Complaints about NHSP flexible workers relate to less than 0.2% of all shifts filled. NHSP fills circa. two and a half million shifts per annum.

How to submit a concern or complaint

- Trusts can submit concerns and complaints to the NHSP's complaints team by using the online feedback form on the website.

There is a dedicated Complaints & Incidents Management system and team that deliver a formal process for handling the sometimes complex nature of clinical and non-clinical complaints and incidents. This formal feedback mechanism can be used by either clients or flexible workers. More information on this aspect of the service is given in an accompanying senior user handout, which is also available on request.

Induction

- The NHSP: *Online* booking and placement system highlights when a flexible worker is on a ward for the first time.
- NHSP supplies Trusts with placement expectation guidelines and orientation schedules. These help Trusts provide flexible workers with inductions.
- The ward authorising officer can use the NHSP electronic timesheet to confirm that a flexible worker has completed induction before starting work.

Professional registration check

NHSP automatically checks PINs and expiry dates for professional registration. Flexible workers cannot take assignments if their professional registrations have expired.

Attendance and timekeeping

- NHSP has a policy that monitors and manages flexible workers' attendance.
- NHSP highlights the professional implications of failing to attend a shift or cancelling at short notice in its communications to flexible workers.
- A code of behaviour document explains what NHSP expects from flexible workers when they book an assignment.
- The flexible worker registration document explains that failure to attend a shift may lead to disciplinary action or dismissal.