

Allocate Awards 2019
Winner: Achieving Cultural Excellence

West London NHS Trust

Fairer and flexible working charter improves retention

West London NHS Trust has increased the happiness of its staff and created a better culture across the trust through improvements to shift allocation management.

West London NHS Trust has been looking to improve its culture and increase the happiness of its staff for several years. The trust has various streams of work to support this, one of which was to develop a fair and safe shift allocation charter. It was identified that shift allocation was one of the key influencers to having a workforce that believed it was being treated fairly.

The trust wanted to understand how staff felt about the shift allocation process and see how the work-life balance could be enhanced. A staff survey was conducted, and it identified specific themes that needed to be improved around rest times and transparency and equality of shift allocation. The trust carefully analysed these results and collaborated with executive directors, managerial colleagues and staff-side reps to compile the charter.

The trust used Allocate's e-rostering software to make sure that there was automatic visibility of everyone's shifts, making sure each member of the team could see their colleagues' shifts as well as their own.

The trust covers a large geographical area and has built a strong internal communications structure to make sure its messages are received. There is a regular e-rostering bulletin update as part of this.

The improvements in rostering has improved staff retention with turnover falling from 15.3 to 13.2 per cent. Shift requests have increased by 79 per cent, which demonstrates staff are taking advantage of the flexibility to arrange work around their lives. Lead times for roster publication are at 5.4 weeks in advance, in comparison to the national average of 2.5 weeks.

Critical to the success of this has been engaging with a diverse range of stakeholders and making sure the senior leadership team is cohesive. It is also vital to listen to staff and show the action that is being taken following that feedback.

Chris Russell, head of workforce productivity, said:



The team at West London NHS Trust also won the Allocate Award for Achieving Cultural Excellence

“The charter is a commitment the trust has made to its staff and it has been positively received by our staff working in shift-based patterns.”