



Plus Us & Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust:

Supporting Elective Theatre Recovery with a Cost-Effective Managed Service

Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust is a leading healthcare provider in the UK, delivering a wide range of medical services to the community. In 2021, the Trust initiated a plan to enhance its elective theatre recovery efforts by securing additional theatre nursing staff. Plus Us was selected to help provide a cost-effective and compliant solution for the procurement and management of agency nurses for the project, which aimed to support the Trust's recovery plan for a minimum of six months.

The Challenge

The Trust needed to source two additional teams of theatre nurses to meet the demands of its Elective Theatre Recovery Plan. Traditional insourcing models were not deemed viable, and the Trust sought an alternative, more efficient way to procure these nurses while maintaining cost control and compliance.

Key challenges included:

- Sourcing theatre nurses quickly and efficiently while avoiding high-cost off-framework agencies.
- Managing a seamless process for bookings, compliance checks, timesheet approvals, and invoicing.
- Ensuring the procured nurses integrated smoothly into the theatre team and supported the Trust's operational goals.

How Plus Us Helped

Plus Us played a key role in delivering a fully managed service to support the staffing needs of the Trust. Plus Us first established strong relationships with nursing agencies that were part of the Workforce Alliance and Health Trust Europe Frameworks, ensuring that all nurses were sourced in a compliant and cost-effective manner.

These agencies were carefully selected for their ability to meet the Trust's staffing requirements while adhering to the necessary standards.

To manage the entire process, Plus Us utilised its Workforce Manager system, which was integrated with the Trust's E Roster system. This allowed for seamless coordination of agency bookings, shift scheduling, and tracking, helping ensure that all required shifts were covered without error. By using the Workforce Manager system, Plus Us was also able to ensure that all agency nurses met the Trust's compliance standards before starting their assignments. This system provided the Trust with real-time visibility into staffing, ensuring everything ran smoothly.

Additionally, Plus Us implemented a block booking strategy for the agency nurses, ensuring that the same nurses were scheduled for the full duration of the project. This approach provided continuity and consistency of care, as nurses integrated into the overall theatre team. Theatre managers were relieved of the burden of dealing with communication and booking tasks, as Plus Us took on the responsibility, allowing them to focus on managing theatre operations.

Plus Us also helped streamline administrative processes by moving the timesheet approval system from a manual to an electronic process. This transition reduced errors, improved accuracy, and ensured that nurses were paid promptly for their work. The invoicing process was similarly simplified, with Plus Us consolidating invoices from multiple agencies into a single document for the Trust's finance team. This change improved financial efficiency and ensured timely payments.

Finally, the agency nurses allowed the Trust to run additional surgery lists on weekends, supervised by substantive theatre managers, further supporting the recovery plan and increasing theatre capacity during peak times.

The Results

The managed service provided by Plus Us helped the Trust achieve its objectives while delivering numerous benefits. Key results included:

- **15,738 hours** processed.
- **2,039 shifts** filled by the agency supply chain.
- **65 agency nurses booked throughout the project.**
- **8 framework agencies** supported in sourcing theatre staff.

- **Average tenure of agency nurses:** 16.5 weeks.
- **11 nurses** worked for the full length of the project.
- **Average charge rate** for the agency nurses was £43.92 per hour.
- The project led to a **reduction in reliance on off-framework agencies**, resulting in significant cost savings for the Trust.
- The **streamlined invoicing process** ensured faster and more efficient payment handling for both agencies and the Trust's internal finance team.

With Plus Us' support, Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust was able to efficiently manage its agency nursing staff, ensuring that the Elective Theatre Recovery Plan was successfully supported without compromising on quality or compliance.

