



RRP in action, part of an overall recruitment and retention strategy

Case Study Example

Experience from a large tertiary centre based in the south of England.

The centre delivers a wide range of cardiology services including many complex diagnostics. Echocardiography is delivered over three geographical sites to inpatients, outpatients and community services. In the early 2000's agency usage for specialist Cardiac Physiologists/Clinical Scientists and echocardiographers began to increase as the trust found a problem in recruiting staff to these roles. Together with their HR business partner, a strategy was developed for the recruitment and retention of these specialist staff.

- Recruitment and Retention Payments – (RRP) for band 6 – 8A staff
- Overseas recruitment – specifically USA, SE Asia, Australia & New Zealand
- Development of training posts for staff not holding all the required post graduate qualifications that were required (using annex U, now annex 21 salary scales)
- Opportunity for staff to access post graduate courses fully funded by the service
- Development of professional leadership under a consultant cardiac physiologist enabling delivery of specialist clinics and services.

Obtaining RRP for Cardiac Physiologists/Clinical Scientists benefitted the recruitment and retention strategy in several ways; It gave a higher basic salary to attract overseas staff to the trust, taking account of the higher costs of living in the south of England. RRP also allowed the trust to recruit agency staff into full time permanent posts. In conjunction, to this the trust developed a fast track recruitment process for existing agency staff. The RRP was offered alongside other opportunities such as clinical and academic development programmes. It also enabled the service to keep staff from moving to other employers who were offering other incentives such as training, reporting payments or guaranteed private patient lists out of hours.

The application for RRP was obtained through a three-stage process.

Part 1 - the writing of a business plan and evidence document.

Part 2 - consultation with unions and HR structures.

Part 3 - presentation given to the trusts rewards and benefits committee.

In writing the initial document it was very important to demonstrate the costs associated with the use of external agency staff (locums) and how this may be offset by RRP if the vacancy rate is reduced. Evidence was also needed on the quality aspects of a fully employed workforce, the reduction in the need to repeat induction and assessment of agency staff who changed frequently.

Initially the organisation offered an RRP payment of 15% of basic salary. On renewal of RRP in 2012 this was changed to a flat payment of £5130. On renewal of RRP in 2015 the evidence base was reviewed in respect to band 6 staff and it was decided

to remove this grade of staff from the RRP payments. Offering development opportunities and Annex U training programmes the organisation have been able to develop band 6 staff into band 7 highly specialist roles without the need for RRP and have remained fully staffed at that grade.

The organisation is now developing an enhanced bank rate that is designed to attract physiologists to work for the internal staff bank rather than through an employment agency. This will enable expansion of seven day working for outpatients (the service already provides a seven-day service for inpatients and emergencies) without the need to use external agencies therefore reducing overall costs by 50%.

The organisation is about to launch a professionally produced social media recruitment campaign that will feature video interviews with current staff and a rolling interview and appointments process.