



ttm

Healthcare Solutions

We Power Potential

 **NHS Employers**

Person-Centred International Recruitment

WEBINAR KEY LEARNINGS

TTM Healthcare Solutions and partner **NHS Employers** co-hosted a highly insightful webinar in March 2024 - a rallying call to our industry in terms of the importance of international recruitment. Overseas candidates now form a vital part of workforce supply.

For TTM, it proved a chance to share the value and insights gleaned across two long-running partnerships: **University Hospital Sussex NHS Foundation Trust** (within the UK) and **Health and Social Care** (HSC) Northern Ireland. Panellists provided insights into best practice through the lens of NHS & HSC, across the geographies of England and Northern Ireland.

The Panellists

NHS Employers



CAROLINE WATERFIELD
Director of Development and
Employment at NHS Employers

TTM Healthcare
Solutions



PETER MAHER
Sales Manager
International Workforce Solutions

Health & Social Care
Northern Ireland (NI)



SHARON MCROBERTS
Former Assistant Director
Nursing Workforce & Education

University Hospital Sussex
NHS Foundation Trust



FIONA KEELING
Head of Nursing
International Recruitment

The webinar explored the underpinning factors of successful international recruitment to help healthcare clients drive greater long-term results from recruitment campaigns.

Key Learning 1

Meeting individual needs is critical to pastoral care.

Peter Maher, Sales Manager for TTM's International Workforce Solutions division, spoke of the need to consider the entire candidate journey when it comes to international recruitment. He pointed to TTM's successful track record of onboarding 1,200+ International Nurses for University Hospital Sussex NHS Foundation Trust and 2,100+ International Nurses for HSC Northern Ireland from countries including India, the Philippines and the Caribbean highlighting the wealth of global talent.

But he also invited attendees to consider the daunting nature of moving to a different country with different culture, language, living conditions and work expectations.

Peter talked about TTM's unique, **person-centred approach to pastoral care** which is designed to help candidates feel safe from the outset. He explained that moving to the UK or Northern Ireland (NI) 'is a choice' and that the industry has a crucial role in helping talent to make the decision to stay here.



University Hospital Sussex NHS Foundation Trust

- Founded in 2021
- Employs 22,000 staff
- Seven Hospitals
- Serves 1.8M people in West Sussex, Brighton, Hove and parts of East Sussex.

2002
Started International Recruitment

1,200+
International Healthcare Professionals placed (2015-23)



Overview of NHS & HSC

Health and Social Care Northern Ireland

- The NHS in NI is referred to as Health and Social Care (HSC)
- Employs approx. 72,000
- Five Health Trusts responsible for health and social care
- Serves a population of 1.93M

2016
Started International Recruitment

2,100+
International Healthcare Professionals placed (2016-23)



Key Learning 2

The pre-arrival and arrival experience must set the right tone.

The discussion was continued by **Fiona Keeling, Head of Nursing International Recruitment** at University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust, and **Sharon Davidson, Former Assistant Director of Nursing and Education, HSC Northern Ireland**. Fiona and Sharon focussed specifically on the pre-arrival phase before overseas staff come to the UK & NI.

They described the interventions put in place, working with TTM, to ensure candidates are given an exceptional, supportive experience, including:

Pre-arrival information and video: covering important information on living in the UK – from identifying schools and doctors, to creating social networks and calculating cost of living.

Arrival support: including meeting and greeting candidates at the airport, transporting them to their new hospital-based practice accommodation, and arranging lunch with past cohorts to understand their experiences.

Key Learning 3

OSCE preparation courses give the best chance of success.

Fiona and Sharon discussed **the value of training** in thoroughly preparing international nursing staff for work in the UK and NI. Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) Part 2 Preparation Courses enable healthcare providers to brilliantly support new nurse arrivals as they settle into their new lives, with every opportunity to be successful and add value. Giving them the best possible chance of passing their OSCE at first attempt, while equipping them to meet UK and NI nursing standards.

The speakers also described how mandatory and IT training were covered as part of the induction process.

Key Learning 4

Ongoing support boosts longer-term retention.

Concluding the topic on pastoral care, Fiona and Sharon highlighted **the importance of providing ongoing support to international nurses**. This, they said, was vital for longer term retention. Under the partnership programmes supported by TTM, the trusts provide international candidates with:

- A 24/7 support line and named contact for help and guidance.
- A 6-week transition programme, including simulated English language discussions.
- Accommodation for 6 weeks, followed by support to identify new accommodation.
- 12 months of mentoring.
- Career development sessions – comprising interview practice, further education and training

Key Learning 5

Working through challenges to success.

Introducing the second topic on the challenges associated with international recruitment, **Caroline Waterfield, Director of Development and Employment**, NHS Employers positioned the importance of staying focussed on the end goal. She described how the urgent need for healthcare talent can be met partly by global supply, and that international nurses introduce much needed diversity to our health system.

Sharon and Fiona described the barriers faced around slow vacancy fulfilment, the failure by some clinical practices to acknowledge the prior skills and education of international nurses, and the reluctance of international staff to apply for promotions. They also explained how existing staff had been quick to report issues with practice and communication.

By increasing support, introducing additional training and establishing a Diversity Forum and Ethic Diversity Officer, the Trusts were able to navigate these challenges successfully. They also worked to **fully recognise and accredit skills gained overseas, encouraging more international nurses to seek promotions**.



Healthcare employers have a role in becoming 'culturally ready'.

Finally, the discussion moved to the role of employers and their cultural 'readiness' to take on international talent. Sharon and Fiona described key differences that international nurses face within NHS or HSC settings, such as being given greater autonomy and decision making.

They also explained how English language proficiency, cultural differences and bias amongst the existing workforce could all create barriers to successful transition.

Through the partnership programmes, they were able to work with TTM to support international nurses to understand what it means to be a nurse within the UK and Northern Ireland care systems. Positive case studies were shared, misconceptions challenged and a 'cheat sheet' of common English phrases introduced. By supporting better education, the Trusts were able to break down barriers to ensure all staff felt confident, valued and given a voice.

TTM Analysis

At TTM, nothing gives us greater pleasure than sharing value that supports our clients and candidates to realise their highest potential. This webinar was an opportunity to share our valuable insight – based on years of work with two esteemed, high-profile partners in the UK and Ireland, together with over 21 years of dedicated sectoral knowledge.

It's clear that our International Workforce Solutions Division holds real weight when it comes to attracting, deploying and retaining overseas talent. In turn, we are supporting organisations across the UK and Northern Ireland with the vital extra capacity to deliver patient care. We're also enriching our health systems with the diversity needed to better reflect the needs of our diverse communities.

I'll end with several thoughts:

- It's so important we continue to walk in others' shoes, **taking time to truly understand their lived experiences, ambitions and needs.** This is at the very heart of our approach to pastoral care and our placement of over 200 international nurses each month. It takes real bravery to move halfway around the world. We must match this with compassion.
- Fiona and Sharon highlighted the importance of OSCE Part 2 Preparation Courses in effectively preparing international nursing staff for their transition to work in the UK, ensuring they have **the best chance of success in passing their OSCE exams and meeting nursing standards.**
- As a healthcare-dedicated talent management organisation, we take pride in supporting our talent to move upwards in line with their career aspirations. **Nationality should never be a barrier to realising potential.**
- In the competitive and complex market of international recruitment, **it pays to work in partnership.** Our international reach, insight and talent database place us strongly to support our clients' recruitment needs, meaning no-one has to undertake this journey alone.

If you've been motivated to consider the many benefits of international recruitment, and would like support to develop a tailored approach, please get in touch.

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