

## £7.5 million to digitally schedule shifts and save NHS staff time

- The investment is part of a £26 million national fund to have all NHS doctors, nurses and other clinical staff on e-rostering systems by 2021, shown to be particularly invaluable during the pandemic
- E-rostering can save time and effort when redeploying staff, digitally matching staff skillset with patient care requirements and geography, while managing working hours and pay to save clinicians time and effort every week

NHS hospitals, clinics and pharmacies across 38 more trusts will be able to save staff time and money by rolling out digital shift planning, known as e-rostering systems, thanks to £7.5 million government funding.

During the pandemic, e-rostering has proven instrumental when redeploying staff, reporting absences and managing working hours and pay information, notably for vaccination centres. NHS trusts have reported an increased appetite across clinicians to implement e-rostering as a result.

E-rostering allows clinicians to select shifts digitally, providing them with more flexibility and more efficient work schedules. Specific skillsets can more easily be matched to the right shifts when redeploying staff using digital staff passports. The passports are currently being piloted and can save staff and HR teams time by providing a verified record of identity, employment and training on their smartphone. These have been used during the COVID-19 response to redeploy staff quickly to support areas in need.

A 2018 study (see [footnote](#)) showed one of the functions of e-rostering – caseload scheduling – could save each NHS clinician 34 minutes a week, which can add up to hundreds of hours per trust. By planning routes between healthcare settings or to patients' homes for home visits, clinical resource can be geographically matched so NHS staff can spend less time travelling and more time with patients.

Minister of State for Care Helen Whately said:

People are at the heart of the NHS. Our doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers are the greatest asset we have. I'm determined to help NHS trusts get the best out of our talented healthcare workers and give patients the care they deserve.

We're delivering on another commitment in the NHS Long Term Plan to support the use of electronic rosters. E-rostering is a crucial tool to make the most of our dedicated healthcare professionals' time for looking after patients – something which is needed more than ever during this pandemic.

Managing shifts more effectively also makes it easier to work

flexibly, giving our hardworking clinicians a better work/life balance. I'm pleased even more trusts will now benefit thanks to this £7.5 million funding boost.

I'm excited to see how this technology can be implemented in the future, not just in hospitals and pharmacies, but in social care too – making sure everyone gets the right care at the right time.

The trusts benefiting from this latest funding include mental health and community, specialist and general acute trusts.

The technology can also cut costs for the NHS by reducing the reliance on staffing agencies.

Five NHS trusts will be using the software to also schedule patient appointments.

The £26 million national rollout to 68 trusts in total is part of the NHS Long Term Plan ambition to equip all shifts for doctors, nurses, Allied Health Professionals, health scientists and pharmacists with e-rostering systems by the end of 2021.

Four NHS trusts which received funding earlier in the rollout have created the North West London Collaborative Staff Bank, a shared pool of available clinicians who can fill shift vacancies to match surges in demand from the pandemic and wider winter pressures.

This is part of a wider strategy by NHS England and Improvement and NHSX to build a collaborative and flexible workforce through the use of technology. The Department of Health and Social Care will continue to work with NHS trusts to improve and upgrade their workforce deployment systems.

Anna Stabler, Executive Chief Nurse at North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust said:

We're delighted to have been awarded this funding to help us develop a community workforce deployment system for our nurses and Allied Health Care Professionals working in the community. The funding will be utilised to deliver electronic rostering and case management systems that will in turn benefit our staff and patients alike.

It will mean our staff can support patients in a more timely manner, whilst reducing their travel time and improve their working arrangements. We're very much looking forward to getting this piece of work underway.

<b>NHS organisation</b>	<b>Bid type</b>	<b>Professional group</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Total award ('000)</b>	<b>Additional trusts involved</b>
<b>Cambridgeshire Community Services</b>	e-Rostering and e-Scheduling Implementation	Nurses and AHPs	East of England	Community	£74	
<b>Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Medic Rostering	Doctors	East of England	Acute	£290	
<b>James Paget University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Norfolk and Waveney Collaborative Bank	Multi-professional	East of England	Acute	£520	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn NHS Foundation Trust
<b>James Paget University NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Community e-Rostering Project – includes interface with patient information system	Multi-professional	East of England	Community	See above	
<b>Sutton Health and Care (SHC) and Surrey Downs Health and Care (SDHC)– hosted by Epsom and St Helier Trust</b>	E-Allocate – SHC and SDHC (ESHT)	Multi-professional	London	Community	£36	SWL, Surrey Heartlands (for Surrey Downs Health and Care)
<b>King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Medical e-Rostering Project	Doctors	London	Acute	£336	
<b>University College London Hospital</b>	e-Rostering System	Doctors	London	Acute	£203	
<b>Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Medical Rostering Improvement	Doctors	London	Mental health	£62	West London NHS Trust
<b>East London NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Medics Rostering	Doctors	London	Mental health	£190	
<b>Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust</b>	AHP job planning and rostering	AHPs	London	Acute	£218	

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<b>University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust</b>	e-roster for AHPs and medics	AHPs and doctors	Midlands	Acute	£154	
<b>The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Competency-based rostering	Doctors	Midlands	Acute	£127	
<b>George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust</b>	e-Rostering	Doctors	Midlands	Acute	£386	
<b>Dudley Integrated Health and Care NHS Trust</b>	Rostering and job-planning for community staff	Multi-professional	Midlands	Community	£111	
<b>Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Community Workforce Deployment System Project	Multi-professional	Midlands	Specialist	£237	
<b>The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust</b>	AHP and Pharmacy	AHPs and pharmacists	Midlands	Acute	£491	
<b>Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust</b>	e-Rostering System Project – North Cumbria Inpatient Wards and Trust Wide Community Services	Multi-professional	North East and Yorkshire	Mental health	£417	
<b>Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Medical Workforce e-Rostering Project	Doctors	North East and Yorkshire	Acute	£140	
<b>York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Medical e-Rostering Project	Doctors	North East and Yorkshire	Acute	£258	
<b>Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Integrated Scheduling System	Multi-professional	North East and Yorkshire	Acute	£200	
<b>The Walton Centre NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Improving Workforce Deployment Project (IWDP)	Nurses	North West	Specialist	£280	
<b>Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Looking Beyond the Roster Care Needs First – Mersey Care and North West Boroughs	Nurses and AHPs	North West	Community	£300	North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
<b>North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust</b>	Community Workforce Deployment System	Nurses and AHPs	North West	Acute	£618	

NHS organisation	Bid type	Professional group	Region	Sector	Total award (£'000)	Additional trusts involved
Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Medical e-Rostering	Doctors	North West	Acute	£133	
Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust	e-Rostering and e-Job Planning for Medical Workforce	Doctors	North West	Specialist	£97	
Lancashire teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	Collaborative AHP Staff Bank	AHPs	North West	Acute	£505	Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundations Trust, East Lancashire Hospitals Trust, Morcombe Bay Foundation Trust
Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust	e-Rostering Project for Clinical Professionals	AHPs, pharmacists and HCS (non-medical)	North West	Acute	£367	
Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust	e-rostering	Multi-professional	North West	Mental health	£116	
Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust	Clinical e-Rostering	Doctors	South East	Acute	£118	
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust	Medical e-Rostering Solution	Doctors	South East	Acute	£285	
Ashford and St Peter's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Workforce Deployment System Project	Doctors	South East	Acute	£220	
				Total	£7,489	

Footnote: A May 2018 Newton Europe Consultancy review of community services found that route planning and geographic matching of clinical resource and demand could save travel time by 20% and 30% respectively. The use of scheduling solutions could, assuming a conservative estimate of 10% lower travel time, save 34 minutes per clinician per week, allowing them to see more patients.

# Environment Agency invests £48 million in projects to benefit fishing

The Environment Agency invested over £48 million in projects to enhance fisheries and make improvements for anglers, angling facilities and the environment during 2019-20.

The EA's [Annual Fisheries Report](#), published today (15 January), shows that over £20 million was raised from rod licence sales, with almost a million (940,974) fishing licences sold between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. This was supplemented by partner contributions and additional government funding, allowing the EA to spend over £48 million to support the management of fisheries.

Environment Agency fisheries staff also used rod licence income to work with the Angling Trust and the police to educate anglers, enforce fisheries law and protect the sport for those who want to fish safely and legally. This resulted in 1,611 successful prosecutions and over £285,900 in penalties against people committing angling offences, demonstrating that angling crime doesn't pay.

Fishing licence sales have also allowed EA fisheries officers to save thousands of fish and helped protect hundreds of fisheries. In 2019-20, the agency attended 309 reported incidents of dead fish or fish in distress. When responding to incidents, trained officers collect evidence for prosecution and where possible help mitigate impacts of both natural and preventable incidents.

**Kevin Austin, Deputy Director for Fisheries at the Environment Agency, said:**

Income from fishing licence sales is used to fund vital work to improve and protect our fisheries and much-loved fish species. Our new Annual Fisheries Report shows how income generated is invested directly back into our angling community, improving fish stocks, boosting opportunities for anglers as well as working with partners to make it easier for anyone to take up fishing.

When you buy a licence, you are supporting important work by the EA, including restocking, fisheries enforcement, habitat improvement and fish rescues when needed.

The report shows that in 2019-20, licence sales funded:

- In-depth monitoring of fish stocks, with EA teams conducting 1,521 fisheries surveys to assess fish stocks and the health of waters across England
- Over 40,000 people encouraged to try fishing for the first time at 1,525 angling participation events

- Installation of 58 fish passes and the improvement of 515km of rivers providing habitat for all fish to thrive
- The enhancement and improved access to 185 hectares of stillwater fisheries
- 27 projects to protect fisheries from predation from otters and cormorants through the Angling Improvement Fund (AIF)
- 135 projects to improve and enhance fisheries via our Fisheries Improvement Programme (FIP)
- Collaborative work with over 2,000 partners (including the Angling Trust, Wild Trout Trust, local rivers trusts, land owners and angling clubs)
- The supply and stocking of more than half a million coarse fish including roach, dace, chub, barbel, tench, rudd, common bream and grayling. These fish are essential in helping to develop fisheries and for waters impacted by major pollution incidents.

Annual fishing licences are available from only £30. Anglers under 16 can fish for free and concessions are also available. As well as being a legal requirement, purchasing a fishing licence contributes to the enhancement of rivers and lakes across England and supports participation events which helps angling become more accessible to everyone.

[Find out more about fishing licences](#) to enjoy fishing and make sure you fish legally.

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## [Near miss with a member of staff at Rowlands Castle](#)

News story

Investigation into a near miss with a member of operational staff at Rowlands Castle, Hampshire, 19 December 2020.



Rowlands Castle station (Photo by Simon Burchell on Wikimedia Commons. Used

under Creative Commons licence.)

At around 19:14 hrs on 19 December 2020, a Network Rail Mobile Operations Manager (MOM) was nearly struck by a non-stopping passenger train passing through Rowlands Castle station, between Petersfield and Havant. The MOM was on the track retrieving a bag from the line, when he saw the train approaching. He managed to get onto the platform and clear of the train about one second before it passed at around 60 mph (97 km/h). Nobody was injured, although the MOM and the train driver were distressed by the incident.

The MOM did not request that trains through the platform be stopped and was not aware of the train's approach because he had contacted the wrong signaller to check whether there were any trains approaching. Instead of contacting the signaller at Havant signalling centre, which controls the area including Rowlands Castle, the MOM contacted Petersfield signal box, which controls the adjacent area on the approach to Rowlands Castle. The signaller and MOM did not discuss the fact that Rowlands Castle was not in the control area of Petersfield signal box.

Our investigation will determine the sequence of events that led to the incident and include consideration of:

- the factors affecting the decisions and actions of those involved
- verbal communications between the MOM and the signaller
- the training, assessment and monitoring of MOMs
- information sources available to, and used by, MOMs
- any local management factors
- any other relevant underlying factors.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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Published 15 January 2021

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## [British Army trains 500th Somali](#)



# soldier in infantry skills

The British Army has trained its 500th Somali soldier in the essential infantry skills they need to combat armed groups and ensure security and stability in the country. The latest batch of 113 troops marked the end of their training with a ceremony in Baidoa, Somalia on 31 December.

The eight-week Company Collective Training course is designed to prepare officers and soldiers from the Somali National Army (SNA) to conduct security operations in the country's South West State, countering the threat from Al-Shabaab and other jihadist and criminal organisations. The 26-man British training team from 2nd Battalion, Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment taught students skills including marksmanship, patrolling, medical aid and counter improvised explosive device (IED) techniques.

On completion of the course, soldiers were provided with uniforms and equipment which, when combined with their training, will allow them to operate much more effectively. The contingent are the fifth Somali company trained by Britain since the course was rolled out in the country in September 2019. The UK has also provided the SNA with military vehicles to support security operations and a new barracks in Baidoa that can accommodate 450 troops.

Minister for the Armed Forces James Heappey said:

This milestone shows Britain's ongoing commitment to help Somalia provide security and stability for its people, while combating terrorist groups that threaten the UK's interests at home and abroad.

The United Kingdom and our Armed Forces will continue to support Somalia, with plans to double the number of troops trained under this scheme in 2021.

Ben Fender OBE, British Ambassador to Somalia, said:

The UK remains fully committed to training the Somali National Army in Baidoa. In September, we ran a course for headquarters staff in how to plan and run operations, and this week are graduating another infantry company (of 113 soldiers). We expect to train a new company around every eight weeks next year, and to complete our training of 8 Brigade by the end of 2021".

The graduation ceremony was attended by Brigadier General Mohammed Sheik Irow, Commander of SNA 60 Sector, and Lt Col Andy Wareing. Following a parade and speeches, the two officers inspected the graduating soldiers and presented individual awards.

Lt Col Andy Wareing, SNA Training and Advisory Team (STAT) Commander, said:

I congratulate the soldiers from 60 Sector stood here today. They displayed impressive professionalism and commitment during eight weeks of tough training and are well prepared for the challenges that lay ahead.

I would also like to thank their Somali and British instructors, whose relentless pursuit of excellence set a fine example to the soldiers. We look forward to the next Company Collective Training course which starts in January 2021.

The milestone graduation of the 500th soldier from the course underlines the UK's commitment to Somalia's longer-term security, with plans to train five more companies comprising around 600 troops in 2021.

Over 1,750 officers and soldiers have attended various military courses at the British-funded training centre in Baidoa.

It follows an announcement in September 2020 that the British Army had trained the first Brigade Headquarters for a generation in Somalia. A total of 19 SNA officers attended the course – adapted to ensure it could take place in accordance with COVID force health protection measures – which covered planning and delivery of stabilisation operations and prepared the officers to work alongside international partners to deliver security for the Somali people.

Lt Ibrahim Madkus Abdurahman of SNA 60 Sector, said:

The Brigade Staff Course gave me the tools to plan operations, and the Company Collective Training course gives our soldiers the skills to conduct those operations.

The UK Minister for Africa, James Duddridge MP, recently underlined Britain's continued commitment to Somalia with a new support package worth £21.8 million. The package included £1.6 million to counter the threat from roadside bombs, and a further £3.37 million for the Somali Security Forces engaged in joint operations with the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM).

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## [Government safeguards vital ferry](#)

## services

- the government announces £6.5 million to keep key ferry services running between Isle of Wight and mainland
- the vital transport link helps support jobs, ensures islanders can access key medical services and essential supplies like food and medicine
- £21.2 million has now been provided to keep lifeline ferry services running since the start of the pandemic

This funding will help ensure these communities continue to have access to vital services such as medical care on the mainland. They will also ensure key supplies of food and medicine are delivered, as well as continuing to support jobs on the island.

Ferry services play an important role for the island's 141,000 residents, providing essential supplies and access to critical services in mainland hospitals such as Southampton and Portsmouth, including cancer care, dialysis and Covid-19 emergency care, as well as providing crucial links for essential travel.

This funding builds on the £10.5 million announced in the Spring for these services and those in the Isles of Scilly.

This is in addition to the temporary suspension of competition law to allow ferry operators to work together to continue to run essential services despite reduced usage during the pandemic, maintaining a vital route for those who cannot work from home and those needing medical treatment.

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Steve Barclay, said:

These ferry services are essential to everyday life on the Isle of Wight, and this further package of funding will help ensure residents can continue to access healthcare and essential goods and services.

It's vital no community or region is left behind as we fight the Coronavirus pandemic and build back better.

Sarah Williams, Associate Director of Research & Improvement at Solent NHS, said:

The commitment of Hovertravel and other carriers to continue their service across the Solent has been a lifeline to the NHS and other communities through the pandemic – myself and colleagues (including the ambulance service) have been able to support the pandemic response across Hampshire & The IOW, the resource supply chain has been maintained, and patients have been able to access the critical

services that they need.

Without their support and service, there is no doubt that the quality of services both on the Island and the mainland would have been severely compromised, and patients would not have received treatment and care that they needed. Within the NHS and care system, we consider Hovertravel, Wightlink and Red Funnel part of our critical infrastructure and have been struck by the extra efforts they've gone to in supporting us in a COVID safe manner. The adaptability, positivity and cheer that they do this with is something that we won't ever forget and for which we are extremely grateful.

Maritime Minister Robert Courts said:

We took immediate action at the start of the pandemic to protect these vital routes, keeping the services people depend on running between the Isle of Wight and the mainland, and protecting jobs.

This additional funding will continue this essential support for local transport operators, ensuring people can access medical care as well as other crucial services.

So far the government has invested over £12 billion to keep public transport services across England running during the pandemic in order to support the economic recovery and help frontline NHS staff and other key workers get to work. This investment to keep the Isle of Wight's ferry services running to the mainland is the latest in this support to keep the UK connected.

The government continues to work closely with industry leaders and operators across the transport sector to provide them with the support they need.

#### **Further information**

The government is providing up to £6.5 million to support lifeline operators servicing the Isle of Wight. The funding will be available to support operators costs on five lifeline routes between November 2020 and March 2021.