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Southern Health
and Social Care Trust

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PROTOCOLS FOR SHSCT BANK PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Trust has an established process for cyclical recruitment which has been in place since 2009. This process has facilitated the development and maintenance of a range of waiting lists. Over the years the waiting lists have been developed either as permanent only or for fulfilment of both permanent and temporary posts.
- 1.2 However the Trust has moved away from the use of temporary contracts as this was presenting a number of issues including the need to continually re-assess the suitability of individuals, who remained available for temporary work, but where their employment with the Trust had ended or when waiting lists had expired. To this end the Trust expanded its Bank provisions to non-traditional areas including for example Admin & Clerical, Allied Health Professions and Social Work staff Groups (*a full listing of 'live' Banks is maintained at Appendix 2 of this document*).
- 1.3 This change in approach as well as the introduction of Regional Recruitment initiatives and more latterly the Recruitment & Selection Shared Service Centre, who now deliver the core Recruitment & Selection Service on behalf of the Trust, has given rise to the need to introduce this document setting out the Bank arrangements within the Trust.

2.0 SCOPE OF THIS PROTOCOL

- 2.1 This protocol is intended to apply to all staff groups where a Bank exists. Whilst this is primarily for the basic grade / entry point to each profession, there may be some variations to this. The Appendices which may be updated periodically will set out the staff groups and bands to which these protocols will be applied. The HSC E-locum system for Medical staff is excluded from this protocol as it is intended to operate against a set of regionally agreed principles.

3.0 WHAT IS A BANK AND HOW WILL IT BE USED?

- 3.1 'Bank' must be understood as the new mechanism to securing a flexible workforce which had previously been serviced through staff being employed on temporary contracts. This meant that each time their temporary work came to an end, their employment ended and they had to re-apply to the Trust for further

work. This included those who may have come in originally from a Trust waiting list but where that list had expired. The bank arrangements simply allow for the retention of this type of staff member between assignments by issuing them with an underlying zero hours based contract and then offering them work as it becomes available.

- 3.2 The population and operation of each Bank may vary as this is dependent on the needs of the staff group and 'intelligence' about how the Bank for that group is best managed. This 'intelligence' has been built up over the past two years as the Trust has tried and tested various approaches.
- 3.3 Banks will be used for filling of single shifts and / or a series of shifts known as a block booking. A block booking is any single assignment that lasts for 4 weeks or more.
- 3.4 The arrangements for allocation of assignments for bank staff will vary both depending on the population of available bank workers in the particular pool, the frequency of available assignments and the duration of assignments. For these reasons the arrangements for allocation of assignments may be subject to change in light of the changing needs of the service and the economic environment which will impact on the available pool of workers. The 'live' arrangements will be maintained at Appendix 2 of this document.

4.0 KEY PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS

- 4.1 For the Bank system to operate effectively, it is necessary to ensure that this system is used only to fill short term gaps until decisions about longer term solutions can be made. Bank is not a long term solution.
- 4.2 Where Adhoc Bank systems are available (*restricted to Nursing & Midwifery posts currently*), the intention is that such should only be accessed as a back up to unforeseen staffing shortages. Adhoc Bank cover should not be used for long term gaps in staffing rota's or permanent vacancies. If such is required then as a minimum a block booking should be sought.

- 4.3 All staff on the Bank (s) will have been through the full rigors of the Trusts normal pre-employment checks¹. These individuals will be checked to the highest level of requirement so they can work flexibly in any part of the Trust. In most instances no appointee will go live on the bank until they have fully cleared all checks. In exceptional circumstances where assignments are immediately available and for example an assignment does not require an Access NI check appointees will go live on the bank but will be restricted to duties in posts not requiring the particular check which is pending.

5.0 ENGAGEMENT OF STAFF ON THE BANK

- 5.1 All staff available for work on the bank will be issued with a zero hours based contract of engagement. This does not guarantee any work will be offered nor does it require the individual to accept any work per se. However staff held on the bank systems are expected to be available for work at reasonable intervals. Non availability in the previous 12 months, taking account of the work opportunities available, / failure to respond to posting alerts will normally result in staff being removed from the Bank. Staff will be issued with details about how the particular bank they are on will operate.
- 5.2 Staff held on the bank who are inactive and have no other employment with the Trust are not eligible to apply for internally trawled posts
- 5.3 Those engaged on a block booking assignment will be issued with a 'letter of modification' and will be entitled to normal Terms & Conditions during such assignments.
- 5.4 Where an individual has been engaged continuously² in a post through the Bank for a significant period³, for reasons of service continuity and in recognition of the training investment, the Trust will reserve the right to offer that person a permanent position if one becomes available in the area where they have been working in preference to going to the Trusts standard recruitment waiting list. This should be in exceptional circumstances only and must be justifiable in the circumstances. All such decisions must be signed off by a senior member of the Corporate HR Team with the rationale and circumstances being clearly documented.

- 5.5 All staff engaged in bank assignments will be required to conduct themselves to both the personal and professional standards expected of all other employees. In some instances the Trusts general policies and procedures will not be easily applied to bank staff and as a result some policies have addendums⁴ which will specifically highlight the management arrangements for bank staff linking to this document where some key points are noted.
- 5.6 All bank staff will be assessed in line with Occupational Health (OH) requirements at the point of first going onto the live bank. For existing staff registering with an adhoc bank (*currently restricted to Nursing & Midwifery*) directly related to their substantive appointment, on the basis that the individual is remaining in the same job family doing similar work then there is generally no real need to refer them to OH for review.
- 5.7 For those who are engaged in Back to back block bookings (*or moving on promotion for example from perm band 2 A&C to bank band 3 A&C*) there is generally no real need to refer such individuals to OH for review. The only exception to this will be where at the point of re-booking their sickness record is a matter of concern. If this breaches the triggers as per the sickness absence policy and procedures, the individual's sickness absence should be reviewed for assessment of overall concern and this may lead to termination from the Bank. Absences which are pregnancy related will be excluded.
- 5.8 Where an individual has been out of any bookings but this is less than 6 months before being rebooked then again there is generally no real need to refer them to OH for review.
- 5.9 If there is a break between bookings of 6 + months then need the individual must complete a new Declaration of Health form and return this to Occupational Health. However this is primarily to allow the updating of their records and will not normally prevent them from starting the booking.

6.0 PERFORMANCE AND ATTENDANCE

- 6.1 All bank staff must be monitored during ad hoc and block bookings to ensure a satisfactory standard of attendance, performance and conduct is achieved. All bank staff will be managed in accordance with the principles as set out in the Trust's Management Guidance Note for Managing Probationary Periods, the

Trust's Capability Procedures, the Disciplinary Procedures and the Trust's Management of Sickness Absence Procedures.

- 6.2 Due to the nature of bank working, there is not one specific post for which achievement of satisfactory performance, conduct and attendance must be assessed. Therefore the achievement of a satisfactory standard must be assessed for all positions which an individual may cover from the bank.
- 6.3 The form in Appendix 3 should be used by managers to provide information on their assessment of competence of the staff member concerned. This proforma should be completed when the individual has been in post for 3 months and at the end of each block booking. The completed forms should be returned to the address at the bottom of the form. If a manager has any concerns at any time with regards to a bank workers performance, conduct or attendance they should manage such in the normal manner, seeking advice as required and taking note of the provisions in this protocol and any addendums for Bank staff.
- 6.4 The form in Appendix 5 should be used for identifying concerns which have arisen involving an ad hoc bank worker. It is important that all concerns are raised promptly with the Nurse Bank office to ensure appropriate action and safeguards can be implemented.
- 6.5 Where a member of Bank staff becomes unavailable for work due to illness, given that the bookings are intended to provide for short term cover, the booking may have to be brought to an end / not renewed due to unavailability. If this instance arises the manager should initially seek advice from the Employee Engagement & Relations (EER) team, with a view to meeting with the individual to explain the situation and advising they will be returned to the bank for assessment as to whether they can remain on the bank for future engagement when they are fit for duty. Managers will be expected to be reasonable in the circumstances, seeking Occupational Health advice as required.
- 6.6 Where a member of Bank staff on a block booking breaches the triggers in the sickness absence policy for consideration by an Attendance Management Panel, this will be considered as a serious matter. An Attendance Management Panel will have discretion to consider issuing a Warning / Final Warning or Termination taking account of the individual circumstances.

APPENDIX 1 – LIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR POPULATION AND ALLOCATION OF BANK ASSIGNMENTS – LAST UPDATED MAY 2014

A1.0 SCOPE OF THIS APPENDIX

A1.1 This document sets out the arrangements for the allocation of assignments to all Trust Bank staff with the exception of Medical Locums which are subject to separate arrangements. Given the differing types of work opportunities available and the differing starting positions of each Bank as we go through the current development phase, the arrangements for each bank will be set out independently.

A2.0 NURSING & MIDWIFERY BANK

A2.1 The majority of the cover managed through the Nursing & Midwifery Bank (*hereafter referred to as the Nurse Bank*) is single shift cover with only a small proportion of block bookings required.

A2.2 The Nurse Bank is populated through a variety of means as follows;

A2.2.1 Internal Nursing & Midwifery staff may register their interest for work at the band they are substantively employed at (or a lower band);

A2.2.2 Internal staff outside the Nursing & Midwifery staff group may register their interest to work in the support roles, subject either to confirmation of transferrable skills from their existing role. This would normally be assessed by reviewing if the individual meets the minimum criteria for the post and actively using the skills in their current workplace.

A.2.2.3 Persons who are appointed to the Trusts Nursing & Midwifery Waiting lists who wish to undertake bank work in the interim period may be registered for bank work. All such individuals will only be added to the Nurse Bank once they have been cleared through the usual pre-employment safeguarding checks. It should be noted however that newly qualified staff / those still in their preceptorship

period will not normally be permitted to work adhoc shifts at the Band 5 level until preceptorship is completed. Possible exceptions to this may be where an area has high adhoc usage and an individual can be aligned, with the agreement of the ward area, to pick up regular adhoc in that ward only. This must provide for preceptorship arrangements. Those on the Band 5 Nursing & Midwifery waiting lists may also be considered for Band 2 / Band 3 work.

A.2.2.4 From time to time where specific urgent needs exist, a registration process may be used for further population of the qualified roles only. All such individuals will only be added to the Nurse Bank once they have been cleared through the usual pre-employment safeguarding checks.

A.2.2.5 Where there is a need to 'top up' the Nursing Assistant roles on the Nurse Bank, an invitation may be issued to those on waiting lists for similar roles such as AHP Assistants and / or the Physiotherapy / Occupational Therapy Band 5 waiting lists.

A.2.3 When work becomes available all those staff on the Nurse bank matching the requirements for the shift who have provided availability will, in most circumstances, receive a text message inviting them to pick up the shift. The first to phone in to the specified number in response to the text message will be allocated the assignment.

A.2.4 In the instance of a block booking being required, all those who have indicated an interest in accepting a block booking will receive a text message inviting them to pick up the shift. The first to phone in to the specified number in response to the text message will be allocated the assignment. As the majority of staff coming onto the Nurse bank are only interested in adhoc work, normally there are more block bookings available than staff interested. If this process does not render any interest then the booking will be passed through to the Recruitment & Selection Shared Service Centre who will seek to offer from the waiting list, to anyone not already on the Nurse Bank. If this route is successful the individual aligned to the vacancy will be added to Nurse Bank.

A3.0 OTHER BANKS – FIRST RESPONDER BASIS

A3.1 This section applies to the following Banks for the reasons stated;

- **ADMIN & CLERICAL BAND 2 / 3** – due to fluidity of this group and following trial of various approaches, this bank is populated only through a specific bank advertisement / Registration process therefore no rank orders are available.
- **CARDIOGRAPHER** - limited in size and very limited activity. Population has occurred through a variety of means.
- **RESIDENTIAL CARE SUPPORT** - limited in size and very limited activity. Population has occurred through a variety of means.

A3.2 Replenishment of the banks will either be through the use of a registration process or from a cyclical recruitment exercise as detailed in A3.1 above. All such individuals will only be added to the Bank once they have been cleared through the usual pre-employment safeguarding checks. Processing of such will be handled in manageable batches either in order of application or rank order if coming off a waiting list.

A3.3 Once on the Bank staff will retain a permanent zero hours based contract with the Trust. Since there is no rank order available, these Banks will operate on a 'first responder' basis and will be replenished on a regular basis through the process described in A3.1.

A3.4 When a requisition is received the usual 'matching' process will be applied to select from the bank all those who meet the requirements of the assignment specifics i.e. hours, location of work, skills etc. Over time, specific skills gained through the bank work allocated will be noted and may be used as criteria for matching to future assignments. Therefore, staff who have been in a block booking from that bank previously and have acquired training, skills and experience in a similar post within the Trust may be considered in the first instance. Staff in a block booking at the time of the new requirement will not be included in the selected listing unless their booking is confirmed as coming to an end.

A.3.5 From the search returned, all meeting the criteria will be issued a SMS text message inviting them to express their interest in the assignment between certain hours / dates. The SMS text messages will normally be issued with a notification period. Details will be stated in the text message.

A4.0 OTHER BANKS – RANK ORDER BASIS (IN FIRST INSTANCE)

A4.1 This section applies to the following Banks where rank orders are available and can be managed;

- **DIETETICS BAND 5**
- **OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY BAND 5**
- **PHARMACY BAND 6**
- **PHYSIOTHERAPY BAND 5**
- **PODIATRY BAND 5**
- **RADIOGRAPHY⁵ BAND 5**
- **SOCIAL WORK BAND 5 / 6**
- **SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY BAND 5**

A4.1 The vast majority of the work covered through these banks, are block bookings. By nature these tend to last for a number of months and therefore offer an opportunity to gain experience in particular aspects of the Trusts work.

A4.2 These Banks will, from the date of this document be populated from those deemed suitable for appointment following a selection process. This will normally be rooted in a cyclical recruitment file for a permanent waiting list with individuals who wish to undertake bank work in the interim period. All such individuals will only be added to the Bank once they have been cleared through the usual pre-employment safeguarding checks. Processing of such will be handled in manageable batches in rank order.

A4.3 Once on the Bank these individuals will retain a permanent zero hours based contract with the Trust. As we add to these banks each year following the cyclical exercise, those on the bank will be reviewed to see if they are on the new waiting list. Where they are, they will be assigned the rank order from the new waiting list⁶. Where they are not they will be listed as no rank order and in most circumstances will be placed at the bottom of the listing and normally only considered for block bookings once all those in rank order matching the post

requirement have been considered. This element will be managed on a first responder basis since there is no rank order available.

- A4.4 When a requisition is received the usual 'matching' process will be applied to select from the bank all those who meet the requirements of the assignment specifics i.e. hours, location of work etc. Over time, specific skills gained⁷ through the bank work allocated will be noted and may be used as criteria for matching to future assignments. Therefore, staff who have been in a block booking from that bank previously and have acquired training, skills and experience in a similar post within the Trust may be considered in the first instance. Staff already in a block booking will not be included in the selected listing unless their booking is due to come to an end.
- A.4.5 From the search returned, the top number⁸ of applicants will be issued a SMS text message inviting them to express their interest in the assignment by a specified date / time. Once the specified date / time has passed, the highest ranked individual who has expressed their interest within the time frame will be offered the assignment. If no-one from this search responds and there are a further batch of staff available who had been returned in the original match these individuals will then be approached using the same methodology until someone accepts the booking.
- A4.6 Only where it is clear that the booking is for a defined period of less than 4 weeks consecutive work or where all those holding a ranked position have been exhausted will a 'first responder' process be used i.e. all who match the requirements of the post are text out and first to respond to the call is allocated the work.

APPENDIX 2 – LISTING OF LIVE BANKS

Banks Maintained by Resourcing Team⁹

Staff Group	Band	Date Introduced	Points to note
Admin & Clerical	2	2011	
Admin & Clerical	3	2011	
Social Worker	5/6	2011	
Physiotherapy	5	2011	
Podiatry	5	2013	
Occupational Therapy	5	2011	
Radiography	5	2012	
Cardiographer	3	2011	Very limited numbers on these banks
AHP Support	3	2013	
Speech & Language Therapist	5	2012	
Radiography	6	2013	
Physiotherapy	6	2012	
Residential Care Support	4	2011	
Dietetics	5	2013	

Banks Maintained by Nurse Bank Office¹⁰

Staff Group	Band	Points to note
Nursing Assistant	2	
Nursing Assistant	3	
Nurse	5	Those registered are on the Adult, Learning Disability, Mental Health and the Children's (limited) parts of the register
Nurse (Adult)	6	Usage is limited to Patient Flow cover
Midwife	6	
Nurse (Adult)	7	Usage is limited to Patient Flow cover

**APPENDIX 3 – STANDARD PRO-FORMA FOR COMPLETION BY MANAGER
AT END OF BLOCK BOOKING**

Personal / Booking Details – For completion by HROD

Name	
Home Address	
Contact Telephone Number	
Staff Number	
Date Booking started	
Date Booking completed	
Directorate of Booking completed	
Location of Booking completed	
Line Manager of Booking completed	

Assessment of Performance – To be completed by Line Manager

Absence Periods	Reasons for Absence	Action Taken

Key Performance Indicator	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Attendance		
Timekeeping		
Quality of Work		
Teamwork		
Use of Initiative		
Conduct		
Overall Performance		

If any of the Key Performance Indicators are unacceptable, detail the reason

Please detail the training provided to the individual during the booking (with dates)

Please detail any particular skills / systems developed which may be necessary to record on Bank Database to use as a means of matching skills to future job requirements;
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Please return this form to;

Email: recruitment.services@southerntrust.hscni.net

Or by Post to;

The Resourcing Team
Human Resources & Organisational Development Directorate
Hill Building, St Lukes Hospital Site
Loughgall Road, Armagh,
BT 61 7NQ

APPENDIX 4 – STANDARD PRO-FORMA TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF MEMBER AT COMMENCEMENT OF BLOCK BOOKING WHERE INDIVIDUAL HAS WORKED PREVIOUSLY.

Name	
Home Address	
Contact Telephone Number	
Staff Number	
Booking under offer	

You have recently responded to the invitation to undertake a new block booking as detailed above.

Before you can commence this booking please answer the following question;

Since your last bank booking, have you had any significant changes in your health? <i>Please indicate Yes or No only – do not provide your details here. If you answer Yes you will be required to complete a Declaration of Health for assessment by Occupational Health BEFORE you can commence this block booking.</i>	No	Yes

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Check sickness record and ensure that this is satisfactory.	
Detail date last worked	
OH Clearance Received / not required	

**APPENDIX 5 – STANDARD PRO-FORMA TO BE COMPLETED WHEN MANAGERS HAVE CONCERNS
ABOUT AN INDIVIDUAL ON AN AD HOC BOOKING**

This form should be used when ward managers have concerns about the ability or performance of staff assigned from the Bank Nursing / Nursing Support Staff. The concerns should be discussed with the person and this form used to inform the Nurse Bank Office. A copy of all Trust documentation should be attached including IR1; complaints; statements.

Full Name of Individual whom Concern is About	
Staff Number	
Band of post covered	
Date Shift Covered	
Ward / Department of Cover	
Time of Shift Covered (24 hour clock)	
Reasons for Concern	Please tick all that apply and provide supporting information
<i>Work Performance Clinical Skills</i>	
<i>Timekeeping</i>	
<i>Communication</i>	
<i>Dress Code</i>	
<i>Attitude</i>	
<i>Other (please specify)</i>	
Action Taken (please detail)	
Has this incident been discussed with the person (If No please state reason)	
Name of Nurse Manager completing form	
Signature of Nurse Manager Completing Form	
Signature of Ward/Department Manager (if not person completing form)	
Date	

Please return this form to Email: Bank.office@southerntrust.hscni.net OR by Post to
Nurse Bank Office, Fir Bank House, Craigavon Area Hospital, Lurgan Road, Portadown, BT63 5QQ

END NOTES

¹ *In connection with Occupational Health Assessments, reference should be made to Appendix 1*

² *'Continuously' will normally mean without a break however there may be some exceptions to this where an individual had a break of less than 3 months.*

³ *This will normally be a period of 2 years or more unless there are critical service needs whereby a short period can be justified.*

⁴ *At the time of writing this document such is under discussion with the EER Team.*

⁵ *A local adhoc bank is run within Radiography and is currently excluded from the provisions of this document.*

⁶ *An individuals rank order only remains valid whilst the related waiting list remains live. Outside the preference for working in the Southern Trust and interest in Bank work which will result in the person being on the list no other preference information will be used whilst on the Bank.*

⁷ *At the end of block bookings, the manager will be asked to complete a standard proforma to both confirm satisfactory performance and to identify specific skills gained during the booking, particularly in relation to use of systems.*

⁸ *The number of bank staff to be contacted will be dictated by the total number in the search, and the knowledge of the Bank office staff as to how many people might normally be expected not to respond.*

⁹ *Current Resourcing Team Manager is Lynn Magee – lynn.magee@southerntrust.hscni.net*

¹⁰ *Current Nurse Bank Manager is Mary Averall – marye.averall@southerntrust.hscni.net*