RLDatix

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Modernising Medical Workforce Management at Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Overview

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has embarked on a transformative journey to modernise its approach to medical workforce management. As the Trust continues to integrate services across Bedford and Luton & Dunstable Hospitals, the need for visibility, consistency, and clinician engagement became a priority. Partnering with RLDatix, the Trust has implemented a suite of digital solutions to strengthen workforce planning, improve compliance, and support a safe, sustainable working environment for doctors.

Challenge

Luton and Dunstable University Hospital faced growing pressures in managing medical rotas across multiple sites and navigating ongoing integration with Bedford Hospital. Inconsistent systems, siloed data, and administrative burdens were limiting transparency and making it difficult to ensure safe staffing levels and regulatory compliance. As the 2025 junior doctor reforms approach, the Trust recognised the urgency of adopting a joined-up, digital-first solution.

Solution

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust deployed RLDatix's Medical Workforce suite, including:

- **Optima (formerly HealthRoster) for centralised staff rostering**

- **Rota for compliant, flexible, and specialty-specific rota design**

- **MedicOnDuty for real-time visibility of staffing levels and gaps**

- **ActivityManager for integrating job planning and activity tracking**

- **BankStaff+ for effective locum shift management and booking**

A phased rollout began at Luton and Dunstable University Hospital, setting the foundation for Trust-wide standardisation. As integration with BedfordHospital progressed, the Trust took a proactive approach to adapting these solutions to meet the complex and dynamic needs of different specialties — most notably Anaesthetics, where daily changes to activity plans are routine.

> "It's been really important that we haven't seen this as a plug-and-play system. The strength has been in designing processes that reflect how our clinicians work, and ensuring the technology supports that — not the other way around."
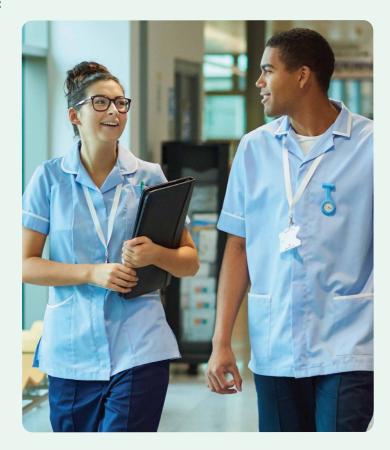
Dr Glyn Harrison,
Consultant Anaesthetist and Clinical Lead

Implementation Success Factors

The Trust's transformation team adopted a collaborative, clinically led approach to implementation. Each department was supported to review and optimise workflows in advance of go-live, ensuring that the technology aligned with their needs. This proactive strategy ensured the technology was seamlessly aligned with departmental needs.

A key factor in the project's success was the Trust's multi-disciplinary working group, comprising the Clinical Lead, Rota Coordinator, Workforce Lead, Roster Lead, and the RLDatix Medics Roster Specialist. Meeting weekly, this team worked to fine-tune implementation at the specialty level, a model that proved particularly effective in the Anaesthetics department.

Helping you strengthen outcomes and drive continuous learning to improve the quality of patient care.

Anaesthetics and Activity-Based Rostering

Anaesthetics is widely recognised as one of the most complex specialties to roster, with frequent last-minute changes, consultant-led variations, and high operational risk. To address these complexities, the Trust has successfully implemented RLDatix's ActivityManager, and Rota, leveraging activity-based rostering, and most importantly, it's delivering results.

The department's success is attributed to three key factors:

- Rigorous, clinician-led testing of workflows before go-live
- Exceptional coordination between the Clinical Lead, Rota Coordinator, and rostering teams
- A shared commitment to refining processes in real-time

> "Every workflow was tried and tested in advance of go-live to validate the department had the slickest process possible for managing the rota."
>
> **Chris Bond,**
> Medics Rostering Specialist, RLDatix

This achievement demonstrates the clinical reliability of RLDatix's Medical Workforce solutions in supporting medical and clinical teams, even in the most challenging environments.

While some alternative tools may offer ease of use in isolation, they often lack the integration essential for whole-hospital visibility and coordination.

Through strategic implementation, supported by strong clinical engagement and partnered by RLDatix on the ground support, Luton and Dunstable University Hospital (now part of Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust) has shown how even complex specialties like Anaesthetics can benefit from a fully integrated, clinically robust digital workforce solution. It also highlights the Trust's dedication to driving digital transformation in collaboration with its clinical teams.

Early Outcomes

Although the project is still ongoing and indeed has some way to go yet before full implementation, key improvements are already being observed:

- A more transparent and accessible view of medical rotas across departments
- Improved alignment of job planning and rota coordination
- A stronger foundation for meeting exception reporting and safe working hours requirements

Additionally, cross-site collaboration has strengthened as teams at Bedford and Luton align their processes, setting the stage for a fully unified approach.

Next Steps

With the ongoing integration between Bedford and Luton & Dunstable Hospitals, the Trust is poised to have both sites working from a single source of truth.

- Embedding medical workforce analytics to support decision-making
- Supporting resident doctors and clinical leads through ongoing training
- Gathering feedback to evaluate impact at both the organisational and clinician level

A follow-up review is planned post-rollout to capture the full scope of benefits from both medical leadership and clinical teams.

About the Trust

Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust provides hospital services to over 620,000 people living in and around Bedfordshire. Formed in 2020 through the merger of Bedford Hospital and Luton & Dunstable University Hospital, the Trust aims to deliver safe, high-quality care across its two main sites.

About RLDatix

RLDatix is the leading provider of workforce and governance solutions to the NHS and the health and care sector. Its Medical Workforce suite supports Trusts in delivering compliant, safe, and transparent staffing systems that align with clinician needs and evolving regulatory demands.