



Dear Colleague

GUIDANCE ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF BANK WORKERS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

1. Director's Letter [DL\(2020\)5](#) contains the following guidance with regard to bank workers:
 - Health Boards are asked to offer bank staff without part-time contracts fixed-term contracts to help manage staffing levels for COVID-19, and to offer them security and stability.
2. Recognising that the needs of the service have changed as a result of COVID-19, the Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee (STAC) has discussed and agreed a further set of principles around the fair treatment of bank workers at this time.

Overview

3. NHS Boards need to work in partnership to ensure that bank workers are not disadvantaged as a consequence of COVID-19, and any concerns are dealt with at a local level.
4. Although the choice of areas of work may be different, there are still shifts available for bank workers and the assumption is that, as NHS Scotland re-opens a wider range of services in the coming weeks and months, the service will continue to rely on bank workers for support.

Recommendations

5. Detailed below is a set of arrangements designed to guarantee a regular income for bank workers where demand fluctuates as a consequence of COVID19:
 - a) Where there has been significant reductions in demand, Boards should consider in partnership offering annualised contracts for bank workers, the principles of which are set out in NHS Scotland's [Supporting the Work-Life Balance PIN Policy](#) (Annex F).

DL (2020) 15

20 May 2020

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards and Special Health Boards and NHS National Services Scotland (Common Services Agency)
Directors of Human Resources, NHS Boards and Special Health Boards and NHS National Services Scotland (Common Services Agency)

For information

Members, Scottish Partnership Forum
Members, Scottish Terms and Conditions Committee
Members, Scottish Workforce and Governance Group

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- b) Bank workers who are not being offered as many shifts as a consequence of changes in demand should be offered an annualised contract based on their average number of shifts over the last 12 months, covering the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. This would provide a regular income for bank workers and will assist Boards in dealing with increased demand for resources when services are reopened.
- c) There should be no change to existing pay arrangements e.g. if the bank worker is currently paid weekly they should continue to be paid weekly or if the bank worker is paid monthly they would continue to be paid monthly.
- d) Appreciating that the demand for bank workers may have changed as a result of COVID-19, bank workers may be asked to work in different areas from where they had worked in the past. If individuals had worked a regular pattern of shifts on certain days of the week, then they should be offered a fixed-term contract to reflect the historical working pattern and a reference period of 3 months prior to 1 April should be used to identify any regular pattern.
- e) The annualised contract will be implemented from 1 April 2020 and can be offered to both bank only workers and to bank workers who also have substantive contracts.
- f) All Boards should continue to work in partnership to resolve local issues associated with bank workers and concerns raised by individual bank workers should be addressed at a local level.

Review

6. The intention is that these provisions will apply over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the uncertainty which exists around the impact of COVID-19, this policy will be kept under partnership review and may be updated if circumstances change in the future.

Action

7. NHS Boards and Special Health Boards should ensure that this policy is widely publicised to staff and managers.

Yours sincerely



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