

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## Managed Staff Banks



Nobody is better placed to help you meet the challenges of NHS staffing than the NHS Workforce Alliance. As a team of health workforce experts, we are motivated by a genuine desire to make the NHS better. You can trust us to act in the best interests of the NHS – always putting patient care first.

In this document you will find a list of helpful questions and answers, split into separate sections for NHS colleagues and suppliers, to help you familiarise yourself with the NHS Workforce Alliance and this specific framework and how it can support you. If by the end of the document you have any queries, please don't hesitate to [get in touch with us](#).

## NHS colleagues

### • Who is the NHS Workforce Alliance?

Crown Commercial Service and NHS Procurement in Partnership have been working together since 2019 as the NHS Workforce Alliance.

As the biggest public procurement partnership in the UK, we bring together a wealth of trusted procurement and commercial expertise to benefit the NHS.

NHS Procurement in Partnership is a collaboration of four procurement hubs:

- NHS Commercial Solutions
- East of England NHS Collaborative Procurement Hub
- NHS London Procurement Partnership
- NHS North of England Commercial Procurement Collaborative

Crown Commercial Service is an executive agency of the Cabinet Office, and the biggest public procurement organisation in the UK

### Q1. Who can use this agreement?

Whilst predominantly utilised as a solution for sourcing staff bank services for the NHS, the framework can be used by any UK public and third sector body (central government, local authorities, education, police forces, not-for-profit organisations etc.).

Access can be managed via an individual organisation, a consortium of public sector bodies or a collaborative procurement organisation such as a procurement hub, and will be supported by the Workforce Alliance partnership

### Q2. What is the scope of the agreement?

The Managed Staff Banks framework gives you access to capable suppliers to create or manage a staff bank to provide flexible cover and support to permanent staff for planned and unplanned gaps in staffing. Job roles in scope include nurses & midwives, doctors, allied health professionals (AHP's) & health science service (HSS) and non clinical staff (NCS). You can use the staff bank to:

- fill shifts which could otherwise remain unfilled and cause staff shortages
- cover staff absences and vacancies
- provide specific and needed skills for a short period of time

The scope includes services to help you:

- set up a managed staff bank, which can then be managed by you or the bank provider
- take over the running and management of an existing staff bank
- manage the use of agency job roles when the staff bank cannot fill staffing gaps
- to create a staff bank strategy that supports a move to sustainable models

### **Q3. How many lots are in the agreement?**

This is a 1 lot agreement; Managed Staff Banks - staff bank with 10 suppliers.

### **Q4. How do I access the agreement?**

No access agreement is required. You can access the agreement documents from both the CCS and NHS Workforce Alliance webpages. Rates can be requested by contacting our customer service centre on 0345 410 2222 or [info@crownccommercial.gov.uk](mailto:info@crownccommercial.gov.uk)

### **Q5. What additional assistance does Crown Commercial Service (CCS) provide to help customers use the agreement?**

A full range of templates are available to facilitate the contracting process, including data collection, Form of Contract, Specification summary and pricing. The Commercial Agreement Manager is also available to guide customers in the use of the templates, market knowledge and general commercial advice

### **Q6. Which documents is a customer required to complete if they decide to use the agreement?**

This framework does not require completion of an access agreement. All documents required to use the agreement for call-off can be found in the documents section of the [framework page](#) on the CCS website.

### **Q7. Can I run a Further Competition, if so how do I do this?**

CCS are able to offer support in your use of the agreement and we recommend an initial call with our framework team to discuss your requirements and ensure the most appropriate route to market.

To award a call-off contract under the framework through a further competition you should:

1. Develop a statement of requirements identifying the framework suppliers capable of providing the services through a process of shortlisting
2. Amend or refine the template Order Form and Call Off and Joint Schedules to reflect the services required. Include these in the invitation to tender pack, along with the award criteria and further competition process
3. Invite tenders by conducting a further competition in accordance with the regulations and your own process.

For more detailed information on running a further competition, please refer to Framework Schedule 7 – Call Off Procedure.

All customers may run their further competition via our eTendering System, or any that they believe is suitable. We are able to provide support from in using our eTendering System.

### **Q8. Can I Direct Award, if so how do I do this?**

CCS are able to offer support in your use of the agreement and we recommend an initial call with our framework team to discuss your requirements and ensure the most appropriate route to market.

To direct award under the framework without holding a further competition you should:

1. Develop a statement of requirements and determine whether this can be met by the supplier(s)
2. Determine that all of the terms of the framework and the call-off terms do not require amendment or any supplementary terms and conditions
3. Award using the short form call-off contract with the successful framework supplier(s).

## **Q9. As a customer, can I award multiple suppliers?**

It is possible that a customer could have a main nursing bank and a separate arrangement for medical staff but typically a single supplier will deliver a bank for all staff groups

## **Q10. Is there any Management Levy on this agreement?**

Levy of 1% under the agreement is chargeable on the supplier management charge only (i.e. excluding any element of worker pay).

The Management Charge is the sum of the fixed Annual Management Charge, and the Transaction Fees which are hourly (plus any set up or mobilisation costs). Management Charge excludes Worker Pay.

Levy under bank is charged this way so that suppliers are charged equitably, whether they employ the workers (and therefore declare Worker Pay) or not

Levy is included in the rates the supplier charges the customer, and is not costed separately.

## **Q11. How long will the agreement run for?**

The framework duration is 3 years (36 months) with the option to extend by 12 months.

## **Q12. Is there a maximum contract length?**

No but contracts are typically 4 years in length.

## **Q13. Is there a minimum contract length?**

No, see above answer

## **Q14. Is there an option to extend the call off contract?**

Extension options can be written into the Call Off Contract, this would be for the Buyer and Supplier to agree upon during the award stage

## **Q15. Where can I find a supplier list? Is there a supplier matrix?**

A list of the awarded suppliers on the framework can be found on [the website](#) or your Workforce Alliance framework manager.

The Supplier Matrix can be found in the Documents section on the Website.

## **Q16. Is subcontracting allowed?**

Subcontracting is permissible but would not normally be a feature of this framework.

**Q17. Can the customer use their own procurement or tendering portal documents?**

Yes but the contracts must be on the terms contained in the framework documents.

**Q18. Is there an evaluation weighting?**

This is decided by the customer in line with Framework Schedule 7.

**Q19. Is there a minimum or maximum spend?**

No

**Q20. Where can the customer find pricing information?**

Maximum framework rates can be obtained by contacting your Workforce Alliance framework manager. CCS can be contacted on 0345 410 2222 or by emailing [info@crowcommercial.gov.uk](mailto:info@crowcommercial.gov.uk). Rates are maximum framework rates, therefore it is beneficial to arrange a discussion with your Workforce Alliance framework manager in addition to provision of the rate card information.

**Q21. Is there a Digital Platform? Who looks after or maintains this?**

There is no digital platform for this agreement.

**Q22. Are there any external FAQs for suppliers? If so, please provide a link to them (on CCS' website)**

Currently none available, any changes to this will be updated

**Q23. Can suppliers add, change or amend their products, services or description of services? If so how?**

N/A

**Q24. What level of supplier governance do CCS apply to the suppliers on the agreement?**

CCS holds copies of Accreditation Body certification, cyber essentials certification and valid and appropriate insurances which are required to be kept up to date by Suppliers.

**Q25. Once I have uploaded my signed agreement, is there anything else I need to do as a supplier?**

You will need to comply with the requirements set out in the Framework Agreement through the life of the agreement

**Q26. I have been successful in getting onto the agreement and want to amend my pricing. How do I do this?**

Pricing can be lowered at any time. Applications for price increases must be in line with the terms of contract

## **Q27. I want to amend my terms and conditions. How do I do this?**

This is not permissible under the live agreement.

## **Q28. I want to remove a service. How do I do this?**

Contact the Commercial Agreement Manager to discuss.

### **Further questions & answers specific to this agreement:**

Q. Is this agreement part of the NHS Workforce Alliance portfolio?

Yes, further information can be found at <https://workforcealliance.nhs.uk/frameworks/>

Q. Does this framework include the employment of bank staff?

A number of the suppliers on the framework agreement are capable of directly employing bank staff on your behalf. Refer to the Supplier Matrix for more information.

Q. What roles can you manage via the bank?

The staff groups covered by the bank are entirely determined by you. Traditionally staff banks have been used to provide a flexible pool of staff in the nursing area, however, there is the opportunity to cover all the traditional NHS staff groups, including those detailed below. Within these staff groups any grade or speciality can be requested.

- nurses & midwives,
- doctors,
- allied health professionals (AHP's) &
- health science service (HSS) and
- non clinical staff (NCS).

Q. What services are covered?

You can use the framework agreement to access a full range of staff bank services, including but not limited to:

- flexible resource pool (staff bank) set up, including regional and sub-regional banks as required
- operation and management of a flexible resource pool (managed staff bank) including employment of the workers if required
- management of cascade to agency suppliers
- workforce analysis and advice services, to help you understand demand patterns and current use of substantive and flexible workforce

Q. Can the framework be used to purchase an eRostering system?

The standalone supply of eRostering systems or equivalent technology solution is excluded from the scope of this framework if it is not being supplied alongside other flexible resource pool services. eRostering systems can be bought via our technology frameworks. Contact your Workforce Alliance framework manager for more information.

Q. Can the framework be used to award directly to an incumbent supplier?

Call off contracts are placed under the framework contract on the basis of which supplier can offer the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) and by applying the award criteria. Full details of the call off award procedure can be found in Framework Schedule 7 – Call Off Award Procedure.

Q. Can the framework be used to source agency staff?

No, the framework cannot be used to source agency staff and this is specifically out of scope. The primary focus of the framework is the operation and management of a flexible resource pool. However, there may be occasions where the supplier may be required to act as the customer's agent in the control and management of the provision of agency staff as per section 9 – Management of Contingent Labour, within the specification.

NHS Workforce Alliance has a suite of framework contracts for the provision of agency staffing. Contact your Workforce Alliance framework manager for more information.

Q. Is the framework compliant with IR35 regulations?

We can support customers to ensure compliance with IR35 legislation. The framework is fully compliant with HMRC regulatory requirements. For any questions on the legislation please refer to the latest HMRC guidance.

Q. How do I learn more?

Contact details for Workforce Alliance framework managers are below:

**Crown Commercial Service**

Email address: [info@crowncommercial.gov.uk](mailto:info@crowncommercial.gov.uk)

Telephone: 03454102222

Website: [www.crowncommercial.gov.uk](http://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk)

**NHS Commercial Solutions (NHSCS)**

Email address: [NHSCS.agency@nhs.net](mailto:NHSCS.agency@nhs.net)

Website: [www.commercialsolutions-sec.nhs.uk](http://www.commercialsolutions-sec.nhs.uk)

**East of England NHS Collaborative Procurement Hub (EoE CPH)**

Email address: [workforce@eocph.nhs.uk](mailto:workforce@eocph.nhs.uk)

Website: [www.eocph.nhs.uk](http://www.eocph.nhs.uk)

**NHS London Procurement Partnership (LPP)**

Email address: [lppagency@lpp.nhs.uk](mailto:lppagency@lpp.nhs.uk)

Website: [www.lpp.nhs.uk](http://www.lpp.nhs.uk)

**NHS North of England Commercial Procurement Collaborative (NOE CPC)**

Email address: [enquiries@noecpc.nhs.uk](mailto:enquiries@noecpc.nhs.uk)

Website: [www.noecpc.nhs.uk](http://www.noecpc.nhs.uk)