



# How Ashford & St Peter's Hospital Trust are supercharging their workforce rostering interoperability



Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

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Your total workforce solution

# The Trust

Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is the largest provider of medical services to Surrey residents. Three hospitals serve over 410,000 people including Europe's largest women's prison. The trust attends to over half a million annual patients with just 3,800 staff and 400 volunteers.

*“Providing for our patients is our number one priority. Rotageek helps us to do this, plus give our team better access to manage their rota and reduce the effort in maintaining them, while making the most efficient use of our resources.”*

- Debbie Beck, Project Manager, NHS Ashford and St.Peter's Hospitals



# The Challenge

This year, Ashford and St Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (ASPH) discovered an opportunity to innovate their workforce management. Previous rostering systems were failing to support multiple departments with no agility or oversight of the whole organisation. This was only heightened by the pandemic which shone a light on the need for an updated solution.

The ASPH Trust hypothesized that if they bucked the trend and enlisted the help of forward-looking best of breed technology, they would benefit from better interoperability and a tech-enabled agile workforce.

Upon this realization, they decided to look around the market and consider their options. However, the ASPH Trust did not want to start this process half-heartedly or naively. In starting their procurement process, they had three main goals to secure its success:

## An agile system

This year the NHS were faced with making big changes at an accelerated pace from moving staff and patients to entire wards and new ways of delivering patient care. A solution was needed that could aid agility and not just in a clinical setting. It also had to support flexibility, helping those who suddenly needed to isolate or work from home.

## Complete oversight

The solution needed to share an overview of everything that is happening in the trust at all times. The current scheduling systems only worked for single departments, relying on managers and rota coordinators to manually fill vacant shifts.

## A single source of truth

The previous system required managers to communicate scheduling changes by email or in person, which inevitably were missed. A live platform was therefore needed, accessible to everyone in the organisation that could demonstrate real time changes as they happen.

# The Solution

In order to accomplish their objectives, ASPH Trust chose the Rotageek e-rostering platform to be used in conjunction with their new transformative bank staff platform, Locum's Nest. In utilising this advanced technology they developed the first live integration between rostering and bank staff platforms.

*“ASPH are one of the pioneers in this piece of work across the whole of the NHS.”*

- Dr Ahmed Shahrabani, Co-founder of Locum's Nest

The solution was set up to streamline and transform workforce management for the trust by delivering an integrated best of breed approach for optimum efficiency. Benefits have included:

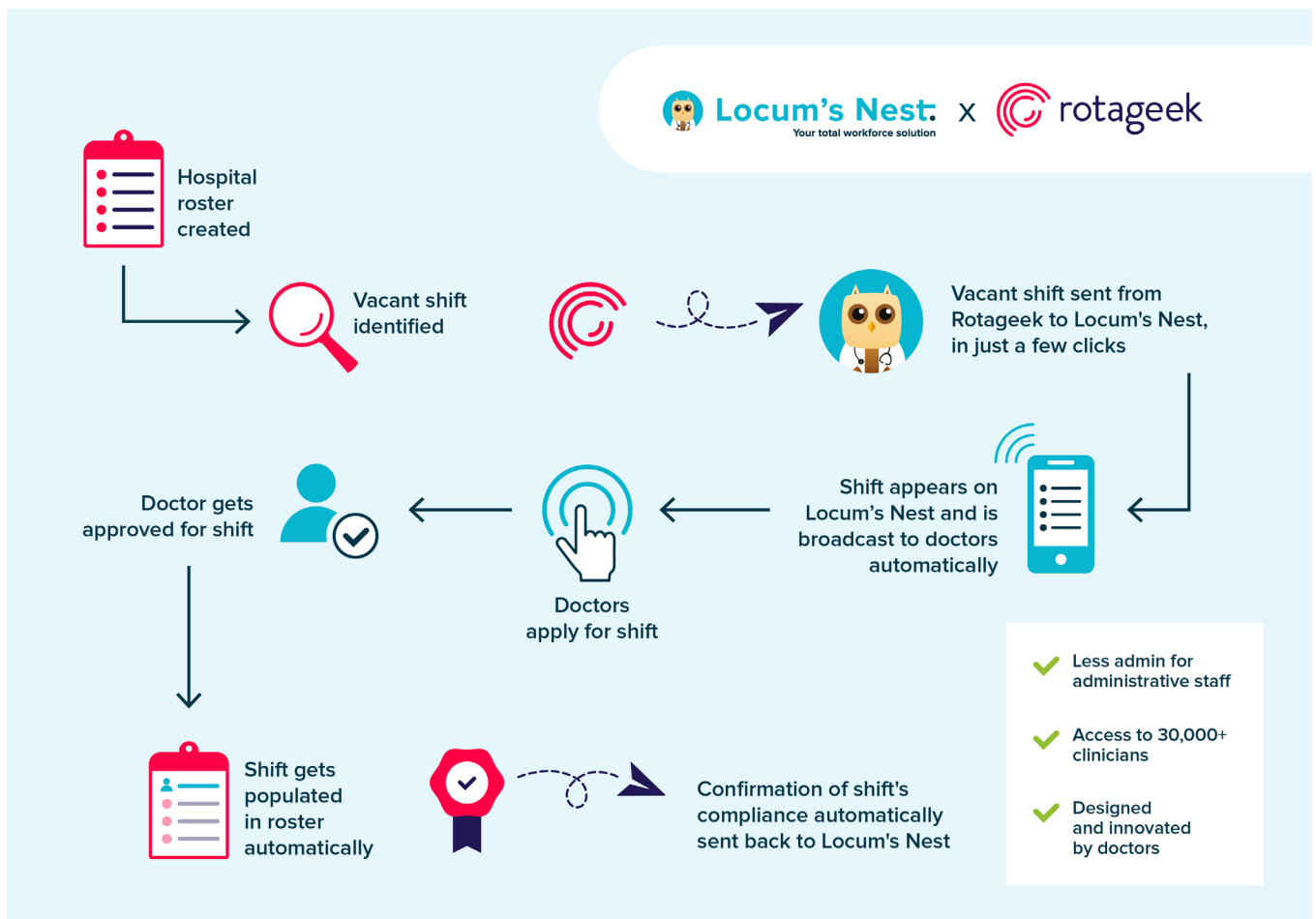
# Automatic shift filling

Shifts made vacant by coordinators in Rotageek's scheduling software are automatically pushed to the Locum's Nest app. These can be filled by any suitable user without the need for administrative support.

The user experience is analogous to checking your mobile phone and using multiple apps that serve one specific purpose. Once a step of the journey is complete, you move to another application. Users log into Rotageek to check their team schedule, swap shifts and submit preferences locally. Locum's Nest allows them to pick up additional shifts in various departments. This process is expected in a B2C experience and has now been mirrored for B2B organisations.

*"It's not fun to try and cover a shift - there is a challenge there and with our technology we want to make this process as easy as possible for the organisation and for their team."*

- Chris McCullough, Rotageek



## Shared expertise and a collaborative relationship

Rotageek's authority in automatic scheduling combined with the leading Locum's Nest bank system brought a wider breadth of experience and led to a stronger solution. With both organisations proved experts in their field, Rotageek and Locum's Nest could work together simultaneously for faster implementation.



Their collaborative approach also demonstrated clarity and trust through immediate problem solving; a top concern for ASPH who wanted to ensure the integration didn't lead to bigger, unsolved issues.

*“Locum's Nest has perfected the art of science of booking vacant shifts. Rotageek are experts in schedule management, so in this case, one plus one really is greater than two.”*

- Dr Nicholas Andreou, Co-founder of Locum's Nest

By integrating two specialist organisations, ASPH benefits from a cutting edge, innovative approach that is unique to their individual needs.

## A streamlined high-tech solution

APIs are excellent for sharing and exchanging real time information in the background. However their invisibility can create anxiety for users who are unable to visualise the process.

The need to fill a healthcare shift is a visible problem and hospitals need to have clear oversight that everything is being done correctly in order to do so. In response to this concern, Locum's Nest developed Link, a tangible product that allows NHS partners to manage integrations and witness the data being synced between the two systems.

*“With Link, we have translated the code that happens in the background into meaningful English so that the hospital can access it, see it, read it, understand it, audit it and action it without feeling at the mercy of this potentially obscure piece of code. Transparency was key when we were developing this.”*

- Dr Nicholas Andreou, Co-founder of Locum's Nest



# The Results so far

Since the initiation, ASPH has saved hundreds of thousands of pounds in expensive agency bills and already filled over 2,000 shifts. With Rotageek & Locum's Nest, ASPH has already achieved outstanding results:

## Doubling the pool of available clinicians

The pool of available clinicians for covering shifts has more than doubled due to Locum's Nest implementation at the trust. More than 5,000 healthcare workers are now available to call upon when doctors fall ill or need to self-isolate. This has led to a dramatic improvement in the trust's ability to fill vacant shifts. Before the implementation of Locum's Nest, the [ASPH was lucky to fill just 4% of gaps](#) - this has now grown to over 90%.

**Colleen Sherlock, Assistant HR Director, at Ashford and St Peters, said:**

*"It is so simple, you find yourself thinking why didn't I think of that. It really is just Match.com for clinical shifts."*

## Supporting doctors' mental health

This year has been the most challenging in history for the NHS and the strain of the pandemic has resulted in a fatigued, stretched workforce. But the combination of flexible scheduling and effective bank staffing is a simple solution that delivers big results.

By implementing both platforms, the trust - any many others - benefit from a better work life balance, decreased rate of sickness and reduce those leaving the NHS all together. With the ability to self-roster, doctors are granted the ability to swap shifts and input their preferences at a time where the NHS are under more pressure than ever.



With the ability to self-roster, doctors are granted the ability to swap shifts and input their preferences at a time where the NHS are under more pressure than ever. This is all the more important in the current phase where we are seeing staff pulled in various directions from vaccination clinics to self-isolation.

*“The idea that you can really leverage scheduling to be a great employer is a really easy win, particularly in an organisation like the NHS where people start working at 20 and retire at 65 - their workforce needs will change and their flexibility and stability needs will change.”*

- Chris McCullough, Rotageek

## A unique, bespoke approach

The different departments in the ASPH means a complexity in rostering requirements. Varying teams have varying needs with multiple terminologies. Rotageek and Locum's Nest partnered with the trust's rota managers to deliver a bespoke solution that solved each departmental issue, rather than implementing a one size fits all approach.

*“Working with different companies who are experts in their particular area gives us an agile, lean system that joins up together and can help us achieve our end goal.”*

- Debbie Beck, Workforce Deployment Systems Project Manager at Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

# About Rotageek

Rotageek is a data-driven workforce management solution creating staff schedules using cloud-based technology to effectively manage and engage employees. More than just digital scheduling, Rotageek uses machine learning algorithms to create millions of shift possibilities in seconds, to deliver a perfectly optimised schedule that meets business rules and legal requirements.

The brainchild of Chris McCullough, alongside co-founders Roy Pounder and Nick Mann, the solution was first built to support scheduling within hospitals. McCullough, previously an A&E doctor, wanted to find a way to overcome the inflexible rotas of British hospitals, developing a cloud-based solution to support better scheduling for busy employees.

Today Rotageek is used by leading businesses and organisations including Gap, O2, Pret a Manger and the NHS.

# About Locum's Nest

The Locum's Nest workforce suite of products provides healthcare organisations with a cloud-based web platform to manage their vacancies efficiently and eliminate paper-based admin barriers.

The platform provides a mobile app free for healthcare professionals who are instantly notified of vacancies within their chosen parameters increasing fill rates from within the organisations by supercharging the staff bank. Locum's Nest connects 30,000 healthcare professionals to temporary work in healthcare organisations, including 30 Trusts and hundreds of GP practices.

*“Locum's Nest has been a great exemplar of digital enabled transformation by helping us better empower our workforce – vastly improving shift fill rate and reducing costs. It has supported us to create a collaborative staff bank with 8 other Trusts, which has transformed the way we are able to fill locum medical shifts and improved harmonisation of rates”*

- Suzanne Rankin, CEO, Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



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