

For the Record – Press Statement

Publication and reporter	Express & Star, Richard Guttridge
Date of article	15/10/16
Headline	£20m temporary staff bill at hospital trust
First paragraph/s of article	More than £20 million was spent on temporary staff by the trust which runs Dudley’s Russells Hall Hospital in just one year, it has been revealed.
Press enquiry	The Trust was contacted in relation to a Freedom of Information response which outlines the total spent on temporary agency staffing in the 2015 calendar year. The Trust was asked to comment on the spending and highlight some of the reasons for using agency staff.
Trust response	
<p>COMMENT FROM PAUL HARRISON, ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DUDLEY GROUP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring all our patients receive the best possible care and so patient safety is always an absolute priority. We always try and cover vacant shifts first from our own staff bank before employing agency staff, but we make no apologies for making sure our services are safe.</p> <p>To make sure patients are safe and cared for by appropriately skilled staff at all times, we use agency staff to cover staff shortages.</p> <p>The main reason for agency spend is the high number of unfilled vacancies due the national shortage of many health professionals including registered nurses and Allied Health Professionals such as speech and language therapists and radiographers.</p> <p>Our use of agency staff will obviously reduce once we are able to fill these posts and we are doing all we can to recruit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We hold regular recruitment days for nursing and midwifery and have an Allied Health Professionals recruitment day planned for November • We visit career days at universities • We have rolling adverts on NHS Jobs for a number of roles which are 	

promoted via social media

- We are working with Health Education England to encourage former and retired health professionals to return to practice
- We continue to welcome graduate health professionals following placements with us
- We are exploring further EU recruitment for nursing

Shortages can also come about due to high demand for services, the need to open extra beds to cope with peaks in demand, unplanned sickness and when somebody with a particularly specialised skill set is required.

All requests to fill shifts with agency staff go through a very stringent process involving senior staff to ensure the agency cover is needed and appropriate. Agency spending is monitored locally by individual departments and directorates and the Board of Directors also receives monthly reports on agency spending.

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Notes for editors

For further information please contact Alice Ford, Communications and Staff Engagement Officer for The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust via 01384 244403 or email communications@dgh.nhs.uk