

2016 | H1

# *NHS*

## MARKET INSIGHT



## *Tapping into the Non Medical Non Clinical (NMNC) talent pool*

*In Q1, we released the first in a series of Market Insights exploring how the NHS manages its Non Medical Non Clinical (NMNC) talent, putting under the spotlight the first tenet of talent management – attraction. Specifically, we shared survey findings detailing how various NHS organisations and hiring managers attract NMNC contractors.*

*In this issue we focus on acquisition. First hand feedback from senior NHS hiring managers provides an inside view of the strategies, practices and processes currently used to procure NMNC contractors. We will share recent survey results, raise questions and offer thoughts on gaining value when acquiring the best NMNC contractor talent.*

*As always, we hope you find this report interesting and informative, and look forward to hearing your thoughts.*



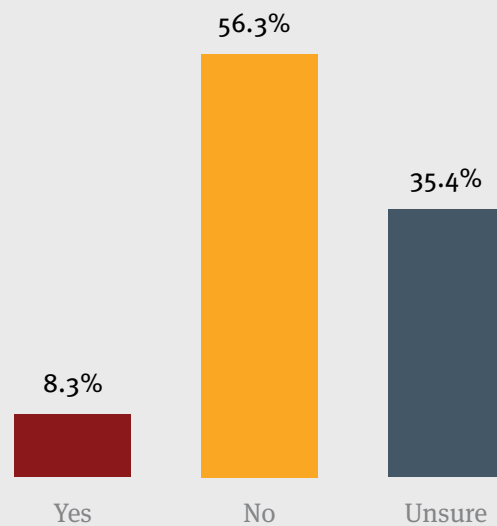
**Tracey Sherring**  
Operations Director

# Formal strategies for hiring NMNC contractors

Now more than ever, NHS hiring managers tell us that contractors are an invaluable source of expertise and support, critical to the service delivery of their departments. Consequently, contractors remain a vital and flexible part of the NHS's labour profile. However, without a formal strategy to augment contractor acquisition, NHS organisations could be sacrificing business benefits and competitive advantage.

So what should a formal talent acquisition strategy look like? In the simplest terms, it's a clear set of definable conditions or rules of engagement that trigger the hiring process. The strategy needs to be accessible and transparent so hiring managers know why, when and how they can take on contract staff.

DOES YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE A FORMAL TALENT ACQUISITION STRATEGY FOR NMNC CONTRACTORS IN PLACE?



*Now more than ever, NHS hiring managers tell us that contractors are an invaluable source of expertise*

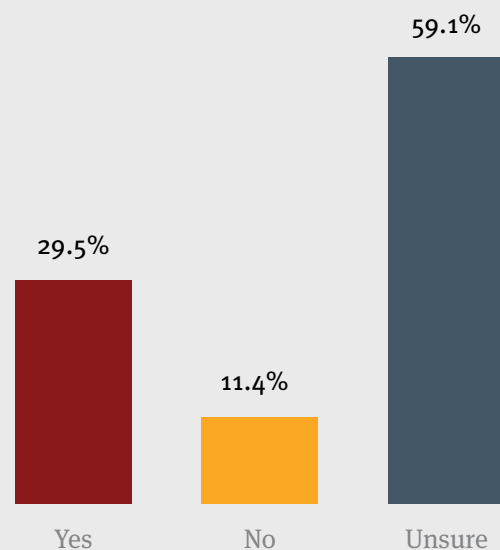
# Lack of clarity leaves managers guessing

## *NHS Improvement has offered a default formal strategy*

This sounds straightforward, but our survey results reveal a significant lack of clarity amongst hiring managers as to the existence of a formal strategy within their organisation. Specifically, 56% of respondents reported that their organisation didn't have one, with less than 10% saying they did. At a macro level, NHS Improvement has (for providers at least) offered a default formal strategy; contractors can only be resourced from framework-approved agencies provided the budget is there and the costs are within their capped rates.

With over 90% of respondents effectively saying that they don't have, or are unaware of formal guidelines, is there still an opportunity for many NHS organisations to review and implement talent acquisition strategies to support hiring managers in acquiring top talent?

DO YOU FEEL YOUR ORGANISATION WOULD BENEFIT FROM HAVING A FORMAL TALENT ACQUISITION STRATEGY FOR NMNC CONTRACTORS?



# What are the benefits of a good talent acquisition strategy?

Our survey results showed a real divide over whether hiring managers believed there would be a benefit to having a formal talent acquisition strategy.

This could be for a variety of reasons. Perhaps formality erodes flexibility? Maybe respondents have formal strategies that fail to provide enough benefit? Is there a lack of awareness as to what the benefits could be? Are more success stories needed to inspire confidence? Or perhaps are there simply more pressing priorities?

Whatever the answer, there is a move by NHS Improvement to drive better buying behaviours by NHS organisations. Whilst this is currently based predominantly on controlling cost, resource planning should form part of the process.

*There is a move by NHS Improvement to drive better buying behaviours by NHS organisations*

## SO WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A RECOGNISED TALENT ACQUISITION STRATEGY?

Badenoch & Clark has its own internal strategy and also works with partnership organisations to support and develop their strategies. From experience there are some clearly definable benefits:

- Allows an organisation to be competitive
- Improves engagement and staff morale
- Realises cost savings
- Helps to attract top talent in the marketplace
- Supports retention of existing workforce
- Reduces time to hire

# Formal process for hiring NMNC contractors

Whilst the results point to a lack of a strategy it does appear that in most cases there is a formal hiring process for hiring managers to adhere to.

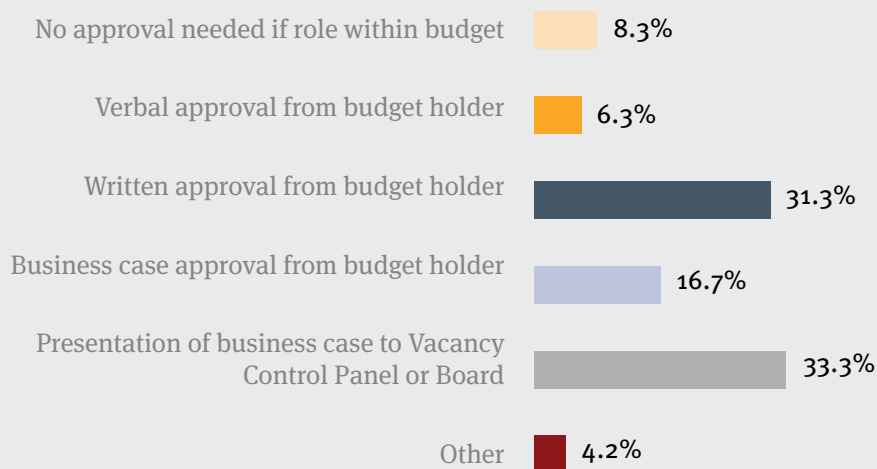
Our survey explored each of these elements to identify where greater value could be added.

## Sign-off process

Few organisations can operate without formal sign-off process for added headcount, and the NHS is no exception. However, our findings show that the rules governing the process within the NHS vary between organisations.

Over half (51.2%) of respondents require sign-off subsequent to a business case presentation to a vacancy control panel (VCP) or Board. This will come as no surprise to most given the granular level of scrutiny surrounding NHS spend. Most of the remaining correspondents (37.2%) need either written authority or business case approval from the budget holder to hire. Only 7% of respondents have the autonomy to hire without written approval from a higher authority.

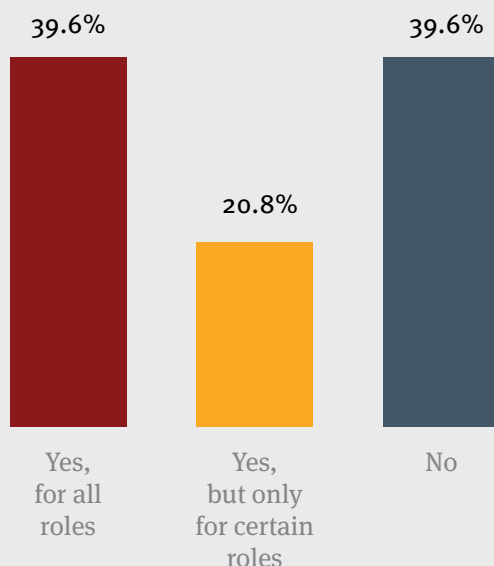
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS IS CLOSEST TO THE SIGN-OFF PROCESS, FOR NMNC CONTRACTORS, YOU FEEL WOULD BE BEST FOR YOUR ORGANISATION?



# Clarity and Speed is Key

We appreciate the length of the sign-off process often prevents managers responding with agility and speed to immediate staff requirements. This in turn can mean losing out to the top talent in the marketplace, as a competitor with a stronger strategy can move quicker, therefore securing the best people in the contractor market.

DOES YOUR ORGANISATION HAVE A STANDARD PROCESS FOR ANALYSING JOB ROLES FOR NMNC CONTRACTORS?



## Job role analysis

A further critical success factor for talent acquisition is the ability of managers to understand who they need to hire. Job role analysis (JRA) is a simple methodology for this – identifying the best candidate by analysing the tasks required to do the job and the relevant skills and experience to successfully perform them. Job descriptions are the typical physical outcome of job role analysis, although time pressures often expedite the process into a series of verbal instructions to the recruitment service provider. The quality of this process varies dramatically depending on the circumstances, the hiring manager and the organisation. So does providing better information (based on robust JRA) to a recruitment supplier at the outset make for a better, more efficient hiring process? If so, how can this be analysed to create more value for the NHS?

### Clarity and Speed is Key

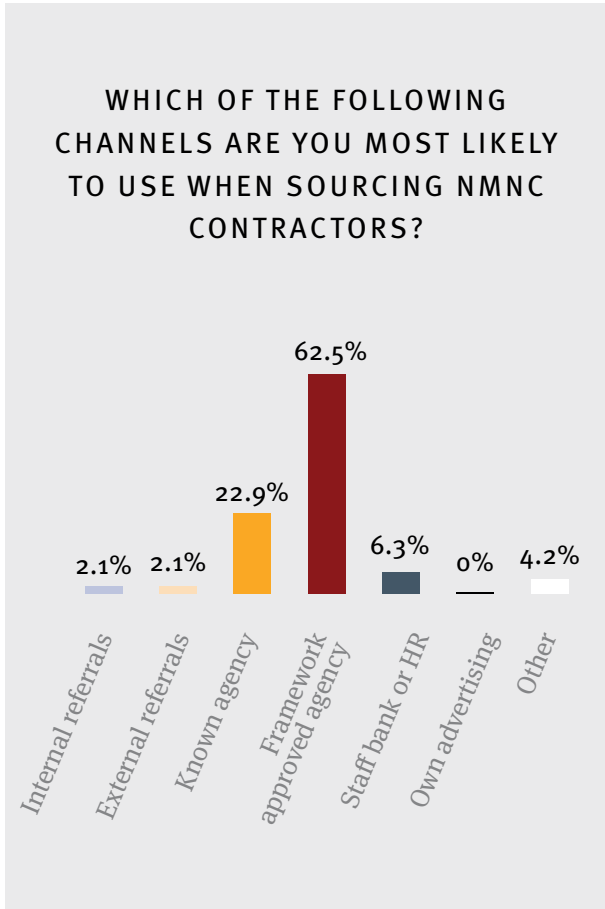
We asked hiring managers whether their organisation has a standard JRA process for NMNC contractors. While a minority reported that they have no standard process, it was a significant minority – nearly four in ten. On the other hand, a similar number reported they have a standard process for every single role. When asked about the requirements of a contractor based on job role analysis, most respondents (86%) valued competencies over technical, motivational or commercial skills.

So how should job role analysis deliver value and how can it be measured? Well, in theory at least, the better defined a role, the easier it should be to identify the right person to perform it. We use a number of metrics to then analyse the value, including the number of roles filled (fill rate), how long it takes to fill them (fill times) and how many contractors complete their assignments (completion rate).

When we analysed our 2016 vacancy metrics, we identified a number of trends. Where we received roles with verbal instructions instead of a written description, fill rates were stronger (92% vs 68%), fill times were shorter (4 days vs 17 days average) and contract completion rates higher (96% vs 84%). Where hiring managers verbalised their requirements, they articulated and prioritised required skills and experience to enable quick identification of the best candidates. Additionally, fill times were reduced because hiring managers didn't generally engage and manage the recruitment process with multiple supply channels - hence fill rates were high and fill times were low.

Where hiring managers provided a full written job description, but no verbal instructions, there was generally a greater lead time to find the right candidate. Importantly, job descriptions were emailed, sometimes via a procurement department or staff bank. More often than not, roles were also distributed to multiple suppliers, rather than just one or two. When combined, these factors made it more difficult, and therefore slower, to identify the right candidate.

If hiring managers are to make value gains, given this data, it would appear that whilst a thorough job role analysis is crucial, the manner in which that information is conveyed to a supplier could be even more so. Therefore, whilst seeming more time consuming for hiring managers, this “higher touch-point” strategy, will actually save time in the long run.





# Talent acquisition channels

Finally, we were keen to understand how the different talent acquisition channels available to NHS hiring managers - including agencies, referrals, job boards and staff banks - were used for procuring NMNC contractors.

The results show that recruitment agencies are still the first port of call when needing to bring in temporary workers.

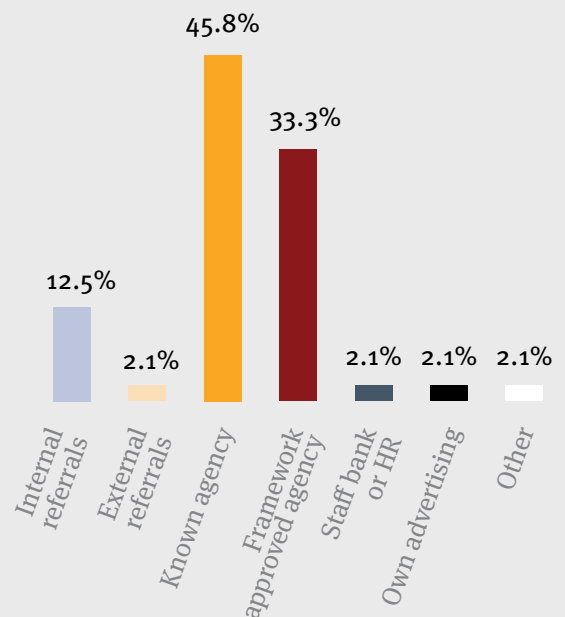
When we then asked respondents to rank what was most important for the successful acquisition of NMNC contractors, 55.8 % valued well-vetted candidates over anything else. Incidentally, reasons such as speed of service or account management scored far lower by comparison. With access to the right candidates taking top priority for hiring managers, the vital importance of job role analysis and effective supplier communication is highlighted once again.

Whilst it is clear that agencies are the preferred contractor supply channel, they aren't the only one. A strong talent acquisition process should direct hiring managers to the suppliers who deliver the desired results for the least cost. Depending on the NHS organisation, this could be a staff bank, internal recruitment team, master/neutral vendor team or agency. Gains are made when hiring managers know which of these channels delivers the best value in their organisation.

Then lies the challenge of ensuring the processes that best serve the organisation are followed. Success in this varies and hinges on factors including hiring manager engagement and governance criteria such as purchase orders for approved suppliers only. Surely, those organisations whose employees adhere to their talent acquisition process get best value?

*55.8 % valued well-vetted candidates over anything else*

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING CHANNELS DO YOU BELIEVE IS MOST SUCCESSFUL FOR ACQUIRING HIGH PERFORMING NMNC CONTRACTORS?



# To summarise

- ➔ Having a talent acquisition strategy across your organisation will bring clear benefits
- ➔ A higher touch-point communication style will improve the quality of talent introduced to the organisation
- ➔ Working in partnership with an agency will enhance results

By understanding how attraction and acquisition contribute to the overall talent management process, the NHS can work at an individual, team and organisational level to evolve, streamline and augment current processes.

## **Badenoch & Clark adding value to NHS recruitment**

In our third decade as a recruitment provider to the NHS, Badenoch & Clark is always on hand to help hiring managers achieve greater efficiency and value. In this issue of our Market Insight, we have presented a range of initiatives to boost the effectiveness of hiring NMNC contractors, delivering worthwhile time and cost savings.

Badenoch & Clark, alongside its partner company Adecco Group UK & Ireland, possess the largest footprint of any recruitment organisation within NHS Non Medical Non Clinical recruitment. We regularly meet and consult with NHS Heads of HR and Procurement on all aspects of their talent acquisition strategy, and as a result we now partner many NHS organisations, across varying sizes and healthcare disciplines, to improve their talent acquisition capabilities. Through a free consultation, we are happy to offer you our unique insight on talent acquisition challenges within the NHS and to share the benefits of our experience gained by supporting our NHS clients in improving their talent acquisition strategy.

## *Initiatives to boost the effectiveness of hiring NMNC contractors*

From experience, Badenoch & Clark also understands that the most robust talent acquisition strategy is worthless and will not be successfully mandated without an effective internal marketing campaign and supporting recruitment process guidelines. We can offer you our invaluable experience and support in the best techniques and tools available to assure that your chosen talent acquisition strategy is successfully communicated and implemented into standard practice; guaranteeing that your theoretical recruitment cost savings are realised.

## *To summarise*

Finally, a key fact highlighted in the survey was that the respondents identified that the provision of well-vetted candidates was by some distance the most important factor when considering the key element in the supply of high performing contractors. As standard, Badenoch & Clark's consultants are highly trained in making the Job Role Analysis process as effective as possible for our customers, guaranteeing that we have a full and detailed understanding of your true requirements.

We pre-screen and interview candidates for all roles before submitting them to a client's requirement, in person whenever possible, assuring that they are fully suitable for your requirements before you see their CV. We also fully reference all candidates submitted to the NHS prior to any contract assignment to guarantee that they have delivered successfully for other customers previously. In addition to this, 40% of the contractors we place within the NHS have worked via Badenoch & Clark for other customers of ours, mostly for other NHS organisations, so we can first-hand guarantee their abilities and competencies. All this means that Badenoch & Clark has full confidence that the contractors we supply are amongst the best vetted in the industry.

*40% of the  
contractors we place  
within the NHS  
have worked via  
Badenoch & Clark  
for other customers  
of ours*



As we meet to discuss our findings, we look forward to hearing your feedback and to discuss how we can add value to your talent acquisition strategy.

# Contact us

Take the first step in a lasting partnership.  
Contact us to discuss your career or business goals.

## Birmingham

Part 5th Floor,  
35 Livery Street,  
Birmingham, B3 2PB  
+44 (0)121 234 9200  
birmingham@badenochandclark.com

## Brighton

3rd Floor,  
Ovest House,  
58 West Street,  
Brighton, BN1 2RA  
+44 (0)1273 628 243  
brighton@badenochandclark.com

## Bristol

101 Victoria Street,  
Bristol, BS1 6BH  
+44 (0)117 930 8534  
bristol@badenochandclark.com

## Cambridge

53-54 Sidney Street,  
Cambridge,  
Cambridgeshire, CB2 3HX  
+44 (0)122 341 7000  
cambridge@badenochandclark.com

## Edinburgh

3rd Floor,  
The Capital Building,  
13 St Andrew Square,  
Edinburgh, EH 2AF  
+44 (0)131 524 9020  
edinburgh@badenochandclark.com

## Glasgow

20 Blythswood Square,  
Glasgow, G2 4BG  
+44(0)141 220 6460  
glasgow@badenochandclark.com

## Leeds

First floor,  
Civic Court,  
Calverly Street,  
Leeds, LS1 3ED  
+44 (0)113 231 4545  
leeds@badenochandclark.com

## London Head Office

Millennium Bridge House,  
2 Lambeth Hill,  
London, EC4V 4BG  
+44 (0)20 7634 0100  
londoncity@badenochandclark.com

## Manchester

12th Floor,  
Lowry House,  
17 Marble Street,  
Spring Gardens  
Manchester, M2 3AW  
+44 (0)161 838 7920  
manchester@badenochandclark.com

## Middlesbrough

10 Albert Road,  
Middlesbrough,  
North Yorkshire, TS1 1QA  
+44 (0)164 226 1019  
middlesbrough@badenochandclark.com

## Milton Keynes

Part 2nd Floor,  
Chancery House,  
199 Silbury Boulevard,  
Milton Keynes, MK9 1JL  
+44 (0)190 820 2700  
miltonkeynes@badenochandclark.com

## Newcastle

Apollo House,  
Northumberland Road,  
Newcastle, NE1 8JF  
+44 (0)191 269 9520  
newcastle@badenochandclark.com

## Nottingham

3rd Floor Angel House,  
12-13 Cheapside,  
Nottingham, NG1 2HU  
+44 (0)115 958 6777  
nottingham@badenochandclark.com

## Reading

3rd floor,  
St Mary's House,  
Reading, RG1 2LG  
+44 (0)118 959 1800  
reading@badenochandclark.com