**Via email**

**Nursing Directorate**

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Dear *(Chief Nurses)*

**Re: Faculty for Safe Staffing Programme**

Shelford Group Chief Nurses and NHS Improvement recognise the vital requirement to ensure that there is strong support to Trusts and Executive directors in making evidenced based decisions on safe and effective staffing.

Following the publication of the National Quality Board (NQB) publication [Supporting NHS providers to deliver the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time: Safe, sustainable and productive staffing](https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/nqb-guidance.pdf) (2016) which outlined the expectations and framework within which decisions on safe and sustainable staffing should be made to support the delivery of safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led care on a sustainable basis.

As you are aware from April 2019, the compliance of all providers will be assessed against NHSI’s Workforce Safeguards guidance published in October 2018 - https://improvement.nhs.uk/resources/developing-workforce-safeguards/ - in order to support a consistent approach to the application of workforce planning and safe staffing decision support tools.

In addition to this, NHS Improvement advises NHS organisation of the requirement to ensure ‘A systematic approach should be adopted using an evidence-informed decision support tool.’ (NHS Improvement 2018)

Within these documents, we endorsed and support the decision by the Independent group led by Professor Dame Hilary Chapman, that the Safer Nurse Care Tool (SNCT) is essentially the only evidence based tool currently used in the NHS. Its development has been led by a core group of highly experienced and professional leaders alongside leading academics. The team leading the development of this tool, and its subsequent operationalisation in the NHS is small and the increasing use of these tools requires further development of the expertise and skills in the wider NHS.

We recognise that there is a variation in the knowledge of evidence based decision support tools such as the SNCT as well as a lack of consistency in the correct implementation and application of these tools across England.

In collaboration with the Shelford group, NHSI has developed a Fellow’s programme with the first cohort commencing the week beginning 11th February 2019 (Cohort 1) and the second cohort commencing the week beginning 29th April 2019 (Cohort 2).

We are writing to all Chief Nurses to highlight the programme and to give you the opportunity to sponsor an employee. We will recruit 24 Senior Nurses who will join an academic programme to the develop skills and knowledge of tools such as the SNCT, their development and operational application so that they are consistently applied to the service according to the evidence base underpinning them. The programme will be modular, accredited by a UK University and lead to a post graduate certificate/diploma with the option to progress to Masters level qualification. The programme leading to the PG Cert will require a total of 12 study days over 12 months with 7 of these being classroom based.

If the programme is of interest to you, please ask your Senior Nurse to complete the attached application which must be countersigned by you to demonstrate your commitment as their sponsor. Please note that anyone interested in submitting an application can choose which cohort (1 or 2) they wish to be considered for. The deadline for completed applications from Trusts is 5th November 2018.

Should the response to the programme is high then NHSI will explore further cohorts of the programme for later in 2019.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

With kind regards

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| **Ruth May Executive Director of Nursing, Deputy CNO, National Director of Infection, Prevention and Control**  | **Professor Mark Radford****Director of Nursing (Improvement)****NHS Improvement** | **Janice Sigsworth CBE****Director of Nursing** **Imperial College Healthcare NHST Trust/Chair Shelford Chief Nurse Group/Chair SNCT Steering Group** |