

# Unlocking Efficiency and Fairness: How Personalised Pay Transformed Junior Doctor Compensation at Dorset Healthcare NHS Trust

Case Study

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**This case study delves into the transformative impact of HealthRota's Personalised Pay feature adopted by Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust. Learn how this flagship innovation, shaped by user feedback, solves the complex and dynamic schedules of junior doctors, ensures fair and accurate compensation for the work they have done, while enhancing operational efficiency for administrative teams.**

## **ABOUT DORSET HEALTHCARE UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

Dorset Healthcare is the biggest provider of healthcare services in Dorset and is responsible for all mental health and many physical health services. With a team of around 7,000 staff covering a wide range of expertise and specialties, the Trust delivers hospital and community-based care serving a population of nearly 800,000 people across over 300 sites.

## INTRODUCTION

In the UK, an NHS doctor's workload is rarely the same each month. Doctors are required to work different shifts week by week to meet the needs of patients, while also balancing the demands of a busy hospital. Inevitably, this makes accurately calculating attendance and absence an almost impossible task for workforce management teams and coordinators. Traditionally, doctors' pay is calculated based on average pay calculations derived from rolling rota patterns, meaning doctors can work significantly different hours, yet be paid the same salary.

Nationally, junior doctors (sometimes referred to as 'doctors in training') and the British Medical Association (BMA), have long advocated for a compensation system that accurately

reflects individual rosters and work schedules in the form of 'individualised pay'. However, the absence of a viable, cost-efficient solution has left NHS organisations grappling with time-consuming, labour-intensive processes that are often prone to error.

However, Dorset Healthcare has become one of the first NHS organisations in the country to adopt HealthRota's groundbreaking Personalised Pay feature, helping the Trust to more accurately compensate doctors for the work they have done, while eliminating the administrative burden of manually calculating pay by rota coordinators and admin teams.

**“ Personalised Pay was a key selling point of the system for us and it didn't exist in the previous systems that we used, or the ones that were available. ”**



## 1. Complex Rosters and Manual Processes

Conventional medical rotas and rostering systems are notoriously complex, often resulting in inaccuracies when calculating doctors' work hours and shift types. Manual management of these schedules presents a host of challenges, including the misclassification of shifts, inadvertent labelling of regular day shifts as overtime (and vice versa), and oversight of unforeseen additional hours. These issues, collectively, can result in doctors receiving inaccurate remuneration at month-end, leading to dissatisfaction and frustration among medical professionals. Moreover, it can disrupt the cohesion of clinical teams, impede the delivery of patient care, and significantly increase the administrative workload due to the surge in pay-related inquiries.

Michelle Tamplin, Medical HR Manager at Dorset Healthcare says, "It didn't matter if you started that rota on a Wednesday, when other colleagues started it on a Monday. Previously, pay would be averaged over the entire cycle, so it wasn't exactly based on your own working pattern which of course is really important."

## 2. Inadequate E-Rostering Software

Many existing e-rostering solutions lack the functionality to support the complexities of modern medical rotas and are inflexible when it comes to integration with other applications. This limitation hampers innovation, efficiency and the ability to fairly compensate doctors for the hours they have worked.

## 3. Compliance with Regulations

Balancing contractual rules and regulations, such as the [European Working Time Directive](#) (EWTD) and the Working Time Regulations (WTR) in the UK, poses a significant challenge for rota coordinators. According to the BMA contract comparison guidelines, junior doctors are prohibited from working more than 72 hours over a consecutive 168-hour period. Additionally, junior doctors are entitled to a mandatory 46-hour rest period following any extended night shifts.

The absence of an automated system makes it challenging to monitor the regulations and ensure compliance for a sizable team of junior doctors.

## 4. Rotation of Placements

Junior doctors often rotate placements, moving to different departments and hospitals. This reshuffling of clinical teams adds a further layer of complexity to accurately managing pay, while impacting a rota coordinator's ability to flexibility manage a junior doctors' schedule according to the demands of the organisation.

[Find out more](#)



## PERSONALISED PAY

HealthRota's flagship Personalised Pay feature is **the first digitised and automated e-rostering solution in the UK** health and care industry that is capable of **calculating payments for doctors with precision**. This offered Dorset Healthcare an efficient way to track individual work schedules and rotations in real-time, without the need for manual recalculations by administrative staff.

[Learn more](#)



This innovative approach to e-rostering not only ensured **accurate pay** for junior doctors, but has also **saved time** and **reduced the administrative burden** for the workforce coordinators.

### 1. Mobile App for Accessibility

Dorset Healthcare's previous workforce management system had limited functionality that meant workforce teams would need to spend time manually downloading schedules and sharing these with doctors via email in advance of each rotation.

HealthRota's mobile app allows doctors to **access and review their digital rotas in real-time**, request leave, and check their remaining leave availability at the touch of a button. Crucially, the app also features an 'exception reporting' function, enabling doctors to simply and immediately report inaccuracies or additional hours. This provides full rota transparency and ensures that doctors are correctly compensated for all hours worked, including unplanned additional hours.

#### ST5 (Acute Medicine)



"The HealthRota app is very user friendly. By making rotas visible across specialties, it allows easy communication between teams and safe allocation of staff. In addition, and particularly important for Doctors in Training, it makes requesting leave simple - a task that's never been straightforward when using different processes in previous Trusts."





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## 2. Real-time Tracking and Reduced Administrative Tasks

Many existing e-rostering solutions lack the functionality to support the complexities of modern medical rotas and are inflexible when it comes to integration with other applications. This limitation hampers innovation, efficiency and the ability to **fairly compensate doctors** for the hours they have worked.

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## 4. Transparency and Improved Working Conditions

Doctors gained visibility into their work schedules, hours worked, and pay calculations in real-time. This **transparency has improved working conditions** and reduced frustration among junior doctors.

Michelle noted, "It makes pay so much more transparent because junior doctors can see very clearly how they are paid. Previously, they would get a total figure and would have to work through the terms and conditions to calculate how they had been paid."

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## 6. Responsive and Adaptable Platform

The **seamless onboarding** of new doctors is yet another testament to the user-friendly design of the HealthRota software. Each new doctor receives a welcome email, details of their login credentials and comprehensive training resources are readily available for those who need them. During the recent cohort of junior doctors who started their rotations in August 2023, not a single query was raised among this group, underscoring the intuitive nature of the application.

Anne McFarlane, Medical HR HealthRota Project Support Officer, Dorset Healthcare, praised the platform's support, stating, "HealthRota has

## 3. Environmental Benefits

Dorset Healthcare has reduced the need for physical printouts of rotas every time a shift change has occurred, contributing to environmental sustainability by **reducing paper and ink consumption**.

## 5. Streamlined Administrative Processes

HealthRota consolidates critical tasks that were previously manual and prone to errors. The software **automates compliance checks with EWTB regulations** while producing individual pay schedules for each doctor. Exception reporting and subsequent authorisations has eliminated lengthy pay queries and streamlined fast and accurate pay.

[Get started](#)

been absolutely fantastic in supporting us with the platform. They're always available to go through things and make any adjustments we'd like or to explain anything. They've been with us every step of the way."



### HR Business Partner

"Fantastic work that will really make a difference to our doctors – well done to everyone involved. Keep up the great work!"





Since its deployment in Dorset Healthcare, initial results have been extremely positive, particularly in terms of the accuracy of junior doctors' compensation. It has **empowered doctors to effortlessly and effectively track their work schedules**, ensuring clarity and reliability in their pay.

Michelle underscores the significance of Personalised Pay as a key feature for managing doctors rostering. She said, "Personalised Pay was a key selling point of the system for us and it didn't exist in the previous systems that we used, or the ones that were available. It was key for us to produce the work schedules in the way that it does and because we've passed that stage now, we can say that **it's really exceeded our expectations.**"

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#### Rota Coordinator



"I like that there is a large amount of functionality under one platform. As a Rota Coordinator, this helps me do everything I need to in one place. Authorising leave, flagging shifts to fill and more involved processes like generating templates for rotations is all easy to do. I have used other rostering platforms in the past and find HealthRota more adaptable to my needs and simple to use."



“ ..the further we go into exploring the features, the more we'll see the benefits but I can honestly say, it's all been very positive!” ”



## EXPLORE THE BENEFITS

### Doctors

- Greater Certainty About Fair and Precise Remuneration Among Staff
- Full Rota Transparency Fostering an Improved Work Environment
- Added Convenience through Mobile Accessibility
- Real-Time Updates on Rota Changes

### Administration Teams and the Workforce

- Substantial Reduction in Manual Intervention, Resulting in Time and Resource Savings
- Financial Savings through Precise Shift Calculations, Eliminating Averages
- Streamlined Processes Leading to Fewer Emails for Rota Checks and Pay Queries
- Mitigated Risk of Missing Crucial Information



## CONCLUSION

**The adoption of HealthRota's flagship Personalised Pay feature has ushered in a new era of efficiency and pay transparency for medical teams at Dorset Healthcare.**

Personalised Pay has shifted the paradigm by accurately aligning pay with the exact number of hours and shifts worked, in contrast to traditional approaches that often fail to capture the true diversity of shifts carried out by doctors. Along with HealthRota's innovative e-Rostering and Workforce Management solution, this represents a significant leap forward for NHS organisations in their quest for efficient rota management systems balanced with equitable compensation for doctors, creating a win-win scenario for both medical staff and administrative teams.

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### ST6 (Respiratory)



"As a new starter to the Trust I have found HealthRota very easy to use. I also really like the iCal feature linking it directly to my personal calendar. The ability to request annual leave and study leave with an ongoing tally of the amount used is also a great feature."



## Get in touch

Find out why more and more healthcare organisations are moving to HealthRota

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