



SARD
CONSULT



CASE STUDY

Project Name

Workforce Optimisation
That Delivers Real Change

CLIENT NAME

Countess of Chester NHS
Foundation Trust

OVERVIEW

SARD Consult helps NHS Trusts turn job planning into a valuable workforce tool by boosting engagement, consistency, insight, and safer staffing decisions.

**“This has been the best
Job Planning exercise.”**

Chris Giles
Sales and Marketing Manager



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust partnered with SARD Consult to reset job planning at scale.

Within six months, engagement rose from under 20% to 100%, 276 job plans were completed, activity language was standardised, and capacity and demand models were created across 18 services, giving the Trust a sustainable framework for confident workforce decisions.

PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Diagnostic Assessment

A full review of job planning engagement, data quality, and risks, pinpointing where change is needed.

Policy Review

Strengthening or refining job planning policies to ensure clear expectations and strong governance.

Core Activity Language Integration

Standardising terminology across services to improve consistency, clarity, and comparability.

Consistency Panels

Providing expert guidance on creating cross-functional panels to review plans fairly and ensure accountability.

Training and Engagement

Role-specific training via SARD Academy to build understanding and buy-in at all levels.

Capacity and Demand Analysis

Using job planning data to map service-level capacity against demand and inform team-based workforce models.

WHAT GOT THINGS STARTED?

How Countess of Chester Took Control of Medical Workforce Planning



Facing increasing clinical pressures and low engagement with job planning, Countess of Chester NHS Foundation Trust made the forward-thinking decision to reset their approach. With under 20% of consultants having an agreed job plan, and 10% without a draft plan, the Trust needed a rapid, practical, and sustainable solution and engaged with SARD.

OUR PROGRAMME OF WORK

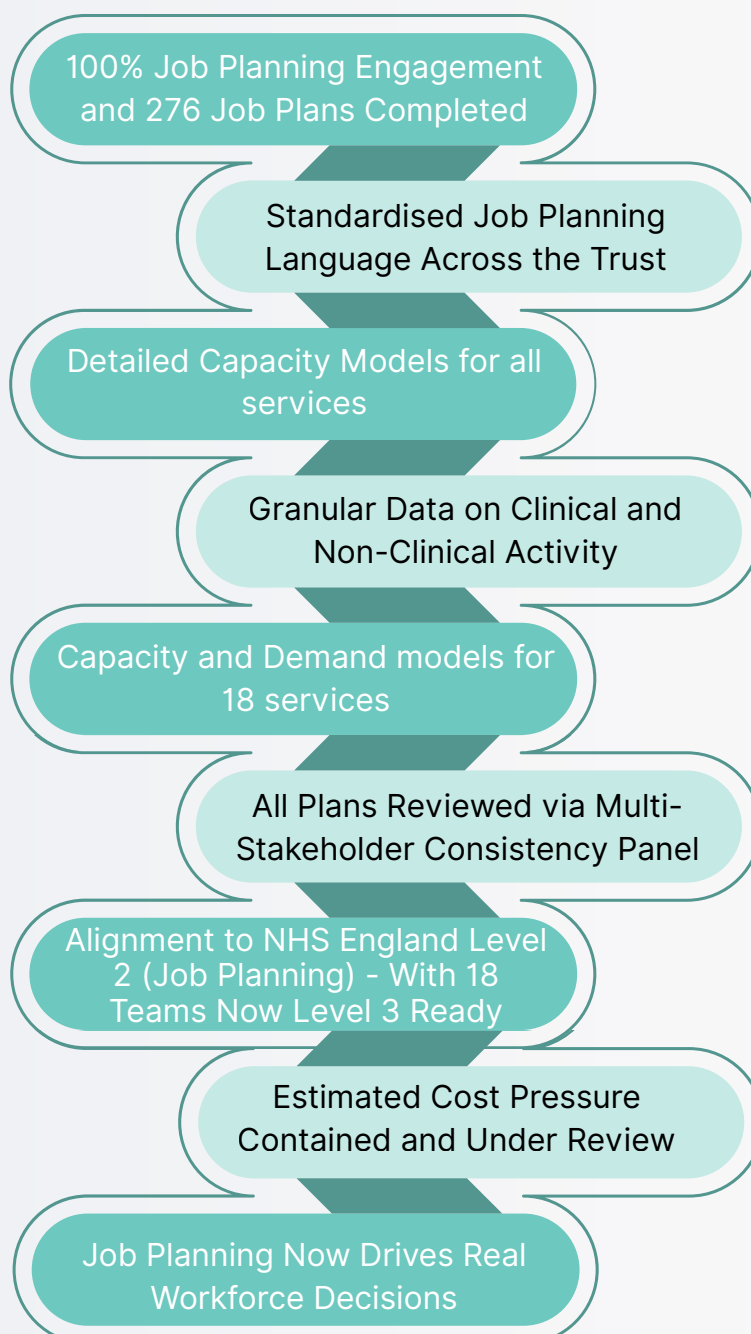
- Conducted a full diagnostic review of existing job plans, data, and processes.
- Delivered a revised job planning policy, co-produced with JLNC and agreed at first review.
- Supported the replacement the legacy system with a new e-job planning platform.
- Mapped all activities in existing plans to a standardised Core Activity Language, reducing ambiguity and inconsistency.
- Ran over 120 one-to-one sessions and speciality-specific training workshops for over 70% of the clinical workforce.
- Created and embedded a Consistency Panel including the Medical Director, CFO, AMDs, People Directorate, and BMA reps.
- Worked with service leads to develop team-level job plans aligned to actual service delivery.
- Modelled capacity and demand across 18 clinical areas, using job plans and real-world service data analysed within our consult system.
- Identified and evidenced areas of under- and over-utilisation of capacity, providing a basis for targeted improvement and resource reallocation.

This was a Trust-wide transformation, driven by partnership, transparency, and comprehensive support.

THE HEADLINE IMPACT

An engaged workforce that understands why job planning matters is far more likely to plan well, and to do it consistently.

Our programme didn't just improve processes, it supported a culture shift, supported by the executive team, and facilitated a genuine desire to engage in the process.

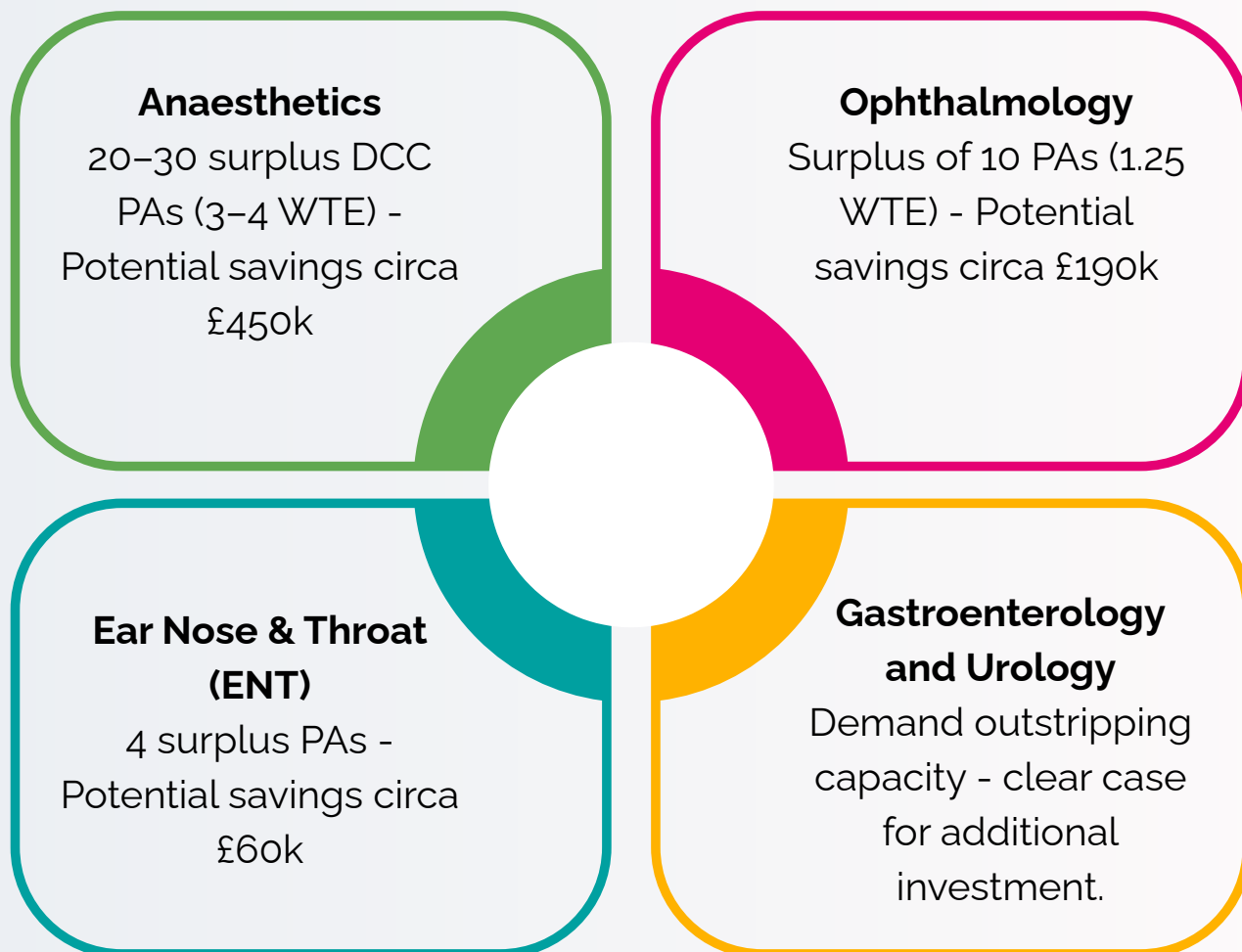


“In my 14 years as a Consultant Physician, this has been our best job planning exercise.” – Clinical Director, Diabetes

A WORKFORCE EQUIPPED FOR THE FUTURE

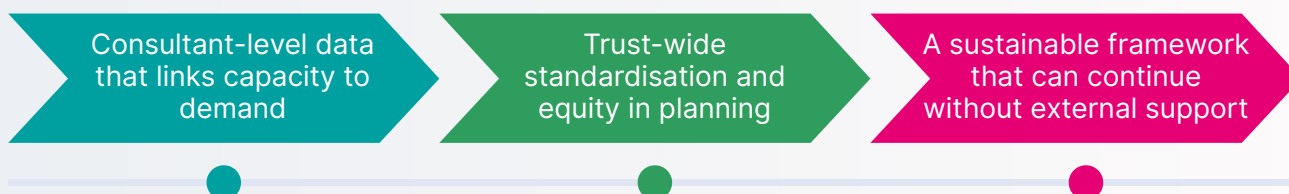
This programme is delivering more than compliance. It gives the Countess of Chester the insight and the data to make smarter, faster workforce decisions with confidence.

CAPACITY AND DEMAND ANALYSIS



These insights don't just highlight financial pressures; they enable the Trust to make ethical workforce changes that improve patient care and ensure safer staffing across services.

WHAT THE TRUST NOW HAS



“Every consultant now has a meaningful job plan. It’s fair, accurate, and useful.”
– BMA/LNC Chair