

Cover Sheet

Trust Management Executive Meeting: Thursday 26 February 2026

TME2026.78

Title: Sonographers Maternity and Gynaecology Recruitment and Retention Premia, Surgery, Women's, and Oncology Division

Status: For Decision

History: First Paper to People and Communication committee 9th February 2026

Board Lead: [REDACTED]

Presenter: [REDACTED] Surgery, Womens and Oncology Division

Author: [REDACTED] Womens and Oncology Division.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Confidential: No

Key Purpose: For Decision

Executive Summary

1. This paper was discussed at the People and Communications Committee (P&CC) 9th February 2026.
2. It follows a previous paper presented from the Clinical Support Services Division (CSS) on the same matter to Trust Management Executive 2025.396 in October 2025.
3. A 15% Recruitment and Retention Premia (RRP) had been in place for SUWON Sonographers since 2015 and had not been reviewed during that period.
4. The paper proposed two options, option one to retain the 15% RRP as now or option two to reduce the RRP from 15% to 12% with a six-month implementation period allowing for appropriate communication and transition.
5. This change applies to an existing 20 staff being affected by the change and the Sonographer workforce has a 100% retention over the last 24 months.
6. There is an estimated recurrent saving of £19k per annum associated with this reduction in RRP.

Recommendations

7. The Trust Management Executive is asked to approve the following:
 - Note the paper and agree that in September 2026 following staff consultation, (6 months' notice), that the reduction in short- term RRP is reduced from 15% to 12% for band 7 Sonographers.

Sonographers Maternity and Gynaecology Recruitment and Retention Premia, Surgery, Women's, and Oncology Division

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The paper outlines the outcome of a review of Recruitment and Retention Premia (RRP) for band 7 Sonographers in accordance with paragraphs 10-12, Annex 10 of the NHS Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook and the Trust's Recruitment and Retention Premium Standard Operating Procedure (August 2021).
- 1.2. In October 2025, the Clinical Support Services (CSS) division presented a paper to People and Communications Committee (PCC) regarding a reduction in Recruitment and Retention Premia in band 7 Radiographers from 15% to 12%.
- 1.3. This paper was presented to Trust Management Executive (TME) end of October 2025 and approved to proceed.
- 1.4. Surgery, Women's, and Oncology were asked to review the RRP for Maternity and Gynaecology Directorates at the People and Communications Committee.
- 1.5. This paper provides the analysis of two options to either remain at a 15% RRP or to reduce the RRP to 12% in line with the CSS division.

Background

- 1.6. The Surgery, Women's and Oncology Division (SuWOn) Maternity Directorate have 15 band 7 Sonographers and the Gynaecology Directorate have 5 band 7 Sonographers in receipt of a 15% RRP. This has been in place ~10 years on a short-term basis.
- 1.7. It is understood that an RRP was introduced within the Maternity and Gynaecology teams to aid in the retention of Sonographers in 2016. This was at the same time the CSS Division took a paper to Board to implement an RRP to attract and retain diagnostic radiographers, radiology nurses, radiotherapists, and all Sonographers.
- 1.8. This SuWOn paper has been produced for the People and Communication Committee in response to the recent CSS paper where the Committee reviewed the RRP for Sonographers and agreed that the payment should reduce from 15% RRP to 12 % RRP.
- 1.9. Radiotherapy colleagues within the SuWOn Division are also in receipt of a 15% RRP. People and Communication Committee members approved

the continuation of this whilst further work is undertaken in parallel with the workforce planning. This review is planned to conclude in August 2026.

- 1.10. The intention of this paper is to review the SuWOn RRP within Maternity and Gynaecology to see if a reduction from 15% to 12% RRP could be supported.
- 1.11. The RRP for Maternity and Gynaecology Sonographers has not been reviewed for over 10 years, this paper is intended to understand the risks and benefits of a reduction in RRP costs from 15% to 12% on the service and workforce.
- 1.12. The recruitment and retention within the SuWOn Sonographer workforce has been 100% retention in both Gynaecology and Maternity over the last 24 months.
- 1.13. The 2024 staff survey sought feedback from the Foetal Maternal Medicine Unit (FMMU) Clinical Services Unit (CSU) regarding their satisfaction with their level of pay. In 2023, 29% of respondents reported satisfaction with their pay. In 2024, this figure increased to 33%. It remains one of the higher satisfaction rates amongst all Maternity teams and indicates a year-on-year increase in positive responses.
- 1.14. Additionally, the 2024 staff survey highlighted that the FMMU team is frequently engaged in paid work beyond their contracted hours. 71% of the team members agreed with this statement, underscoring the dedication and commitment of the staff to their roles. This information provides valuable insight into the workload and satisfaction levels of the team, which could inform future policy and staffing decisions.
- 1.15. The existing workforce of Sonographers has been stable with no peaks and troughs in staff turnover.
- 1.16. Opportunities for career development within the existing directorates is limited once band 7 is obtained however within the Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire ICB (BOB) 2 of the 4 trusts have posts at an 8a.

Options Appraisal

	Option	Risk	Benefit
1	Remain at 15% RRP for band 7 Sonographers	Sonographers in CSS may feel aggrieved that their RRP has reduced to 12% whilst Maternity	Stable workforce with morale and goodwill remaining.

		Sonographers remain at 15%. Staff may be concerned that the RRP is going to be removed in the future, and this could impact on existing retention. RRP in Radiotherapy workforce remains at 15% and are in the same Division.	An overall reduction of RRP £19k per annum would be saved.
2	Reduce RRP for band 7 Sonographers from 15% to 12%	Loss of staff to competitive local providers both NHS and private sector, which has the potential to impact on patient care and experience. Reduced morale and staff feeling undervalued. Impact on retention has potential to impact on ability to perform all relevant Sonography throughout a patient's pregnancy. This would then be linked to: Impact on the availability of Ultrasound activity within the Maternity Directorate which could potentially create some safety risks particularly in view of recent publicity surrounding Maternity services.	Would bring Maternity Sonographers in line with those in CSS. Would maintain an RRP for current band 7's. There would be a small contribution of £19k per annum towards the Maternity £2.17m CIP FY2526. Would be inequitable with Radiotherapist workforce also in the SuWOn Division who receive 15% RRP however that will be reviewed in August 2026.

		Radiology in CSS has stopped training Sonographers in obstetrics and therefore attraction to posts in SuWOn is only from external recruitment. Increase in temporary spend if staff decide to leave due to a reduction in RRP leading to a possible increase in spend rather than a reduction. The existing Matron leading the Sonographer team is leaving and this has potential to destabilise the team.	
--	--	---	--

1.17. An analysis of the reduction from 15% to 12% has been undertaken for both the Maternity and Gynaecology Directorates. This proposal would affect 20 staff and result in an overall total saving of £19k per annum.

1.18. A 6-month notice period is required for staff if the proposal to reduce RRP from 15% to 12% is supported at the People and Communications Committee.

1.19. Option 2 is the preferred option.

2. Conclusion

2.1. To implement a reduction in RRP from 15% to 12% would be a small saving for the SuWOn Division of £19k per annum.

3. Recommendations

3.1. The Trust Management Executive is asked to

- Note the paper and agree that in September 2026 following staff consultation, (6 months' notice), that the reduction in short- term RRP is reduced from 15% to 12% for band 7 Sonographers.