NHSScotland Workforce

Quarter ending 30 September 2019

Publication date: 3 December 2019

About this release

This release by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) provides a quarterly update, as at 30 September 2019, on the number of staff directly employed by NHSScotland and the number of vacant posts there were for nursing and midwifery staff, allied health professions, and medical and dental consultants. The release also includes data on the number of dentists working in Scotland and on student nurses. When describing the size of a particular staff group figures are presented either as headcount (actual number of staff) or whole time equivalent (WTE) which adjusts the headcount to take account of part time working.

As of 1 October 2019, ownership and responsibility for collecting and reporting workforce data transferred from Information Services Division (ISD) to NES. Further details about this change are given in this letter on the ISD website. Previous quarterly Workforce publications have been released as National Statistics. NES anticipates becoming an accredited provider of Official Statistics in December 2019. For the current publication NES has voluntarily applied the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics.

Main Points

Staff in Post

- The 164,802 staff employed by NHSScotland, as at 30 September 2019, represents an increase of 1.1%, compared to a year ago. The WTE has risen by 1.2% (1,660.4 WTE) to 141,425.2. There have been seven consecutive year-on-year periods of growth.
- There were 3,735 dentists working in Scotland as at 30 September 2019. This is the largest number of dentists recorded as working in Scotland, an increase of 1.4% since 30 September 2018. The majority of these dentists are self-employed under contract to the NHS and are in addition to the staff in post above.

Vacancy Rates

- 8.2% (483.1 WTE) of medical and dental consultant posts were vacant. Of these vacant posts, 52.5% had been vacant for 6 months or more.
- 6.0% (3,826.0 WTE) of nursing and midwifery posts for qualified and support staff were vacant. Nursing and midwifery vacancies tend to peak in June, with a subsequent drop in September. There are 802.0 WTE more nursing and midwifery vacant posts in September 2019 than in September 2018, an increase of 26.5%. Over three-quarters of this increase (630.2 WTE) is in NHS Lanarkshire, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and NHS Tayside.
- The number of vacant posts for allied health professions is 608.2 WTE, with a vacancy rate of 4.9%. This is an increase of 66.5 WTE compared to a year ago (541.7 WTE vacant posts in September 2018).

NHSScotland Vacancy Rates
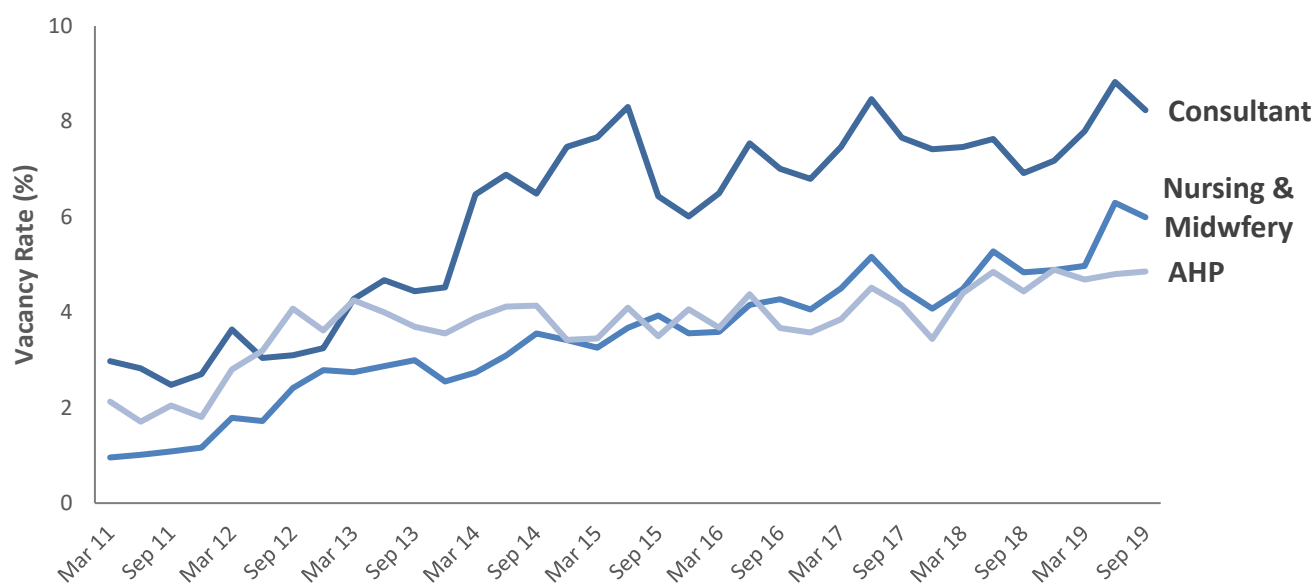
Student Nurses

- The number of initial entrants to nursing and midwifery degrees in Scotland in 2018/19 was 3,642, a 4.9% rise on the previous year. This intake was the highest since 2004/05.

Background

Information on staff directly employed is sourced from each NHS Board's human resources and payroll systems. These are dynamic, operational systems and data can change over time. Work is undertaken with NHS Boards to improve data quality and previously published information may change from one publication to the next to reflect these improvements.

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Further Information

The data from this publication are available to download from our data tables and dashboards along with a background information and glossary document. The full report can be found on the publication web page. The next release of this publication will be 3 March 2020.

NHS Performs

A selection of information from this publication is included in NHS Performs. NHS Performs is a website that brings together a range of information on how hospitals and NHS Boards within NHSScotland are performing.