

# Publication Summary



## Primary Care Workforce Survey 2013

### A survey of Scottish general practices and GP Out of Hours Services

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### About this Release

This report presents results from the 2013 Primary Care Workforce Survey. The survey is an important source of information to support workforce planning for primary medical services.

### Key Points

- The estimated Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) number of GPs in post in Scottish general practices (excluding Specialist Trainees) at 31 January 2013 was 3,735. This is only a little higher than the estimate of 3,700 generated from a previous survey run in 2009. Routinely available GP headcount information (published at [www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/General-Practice](http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/General-Practice)) indicates a recent levelling off in the numbers of GPs working in general practices after a number of years of general increase. The results of this survey suggest that the WTE number has also been fairly static over the past few years.
- An estimated 2,125 registered nurses (including nurse practitioners) were employed by Scottish general practices at 31 January 2013. This equates to an estimated WTE number of 1,420. These estimates are broadly, but not directly, comparable with the results from the 2009 survey. However, it is possible that the overall numbers of registered nurses employed by Scottish general practices may have increased a little since 2009, although any increases (if there were any) are likely to have been very small. The figures from this survey do not represent the entire registered nurse workforce working in Scottish general practices. They exclude nurses who are employed by NHS Boards but who work in independent contractor practices.
- An estimated 875 Health Care Support Workers (also known as Health Care Assistants) and Phlebotomists were employed by Scottish general practices at 31 January 2013. The estimated headcount for January 2009 was 725. Whilst the data collection for the two surveys was not exactly the same and therefore the figures are not directly comparable, there has nonetheless been a clear increase since 2009 in the number of these staff employed by general practices.

- Overall, 89% of responding practices had used GP locums and/or sessional GPs in the year ending 31 January 2013. An estimated 290 WTE was input to all general practices over this one year period. This is higher than the 255 WTE estimated from the 2009 survey. In addition, over half (56%) of responding practices reported that one or more of their own GP(s) had worked extra sessions over the year, over and above their regular sessional commitments. These extra sessions (for example to cover for colleagues on annual leave or sick leave) collectively amounted to an estimated 39 WTE of GP time over the year.
- The 2013 survey gathered new information on GPs working in GP Out of Hours services. For example, for the year ending 31 January 2013, GPs aged under 35 input an average of 3.5 hours each per week, less than half the weekly average for GPs aged 55 and over. Whilst GPs aged under 35 accounted for just under 24% of the overall number of individuals who contributed to GP Out of Hours services over the year, their combined hours accounted for 13% of the total hours input to those services over the same period. In contrast, GPs aged over 55 accounted for 14% of the overall headcount but 19% of the total hours input over the survey year.

## Background

The results for general practices are based on survey data received from 631 practices (64% of practices in the country), which between them provide primary care services to approximately 68% of Scotland's registered patient population. All 14 NHS Boards responded to the pilot survey of the GP Out of Hours (OOH) services, although the information collected is incomplete.

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## Further Information

Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#).

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