

# Primary Care Workforce Survey Scotland 2015

## A Survey of Scottish General Practices and General Practice Out of Hours Services

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### About this release

This report by the Information Services Division (ISD) presents results from the 2015 National Primary Care Workforce Survey. The survey is an important source of information to support workforce planning for primary medical services. The report presents estimates based on the responses to the survey by general practices and GP Out of Hours services.

### Main points

- A total of 561 general practices (58%) responded to the “In Hours” survey. All 14 NHS Boards responded to the GP Out of Hours section.
- The Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) of GPs working in practices declined by 2% between 2013 and 2015 (from 3,735 to 3,645).
- Between 2013 and 2015 the WTE of registered nurses employed by general practice increased, by 2% (from 1,420 to 1,455). The WTE of Health Care Support Workers increased by 23% (from 300 to 365).
- One in five practices reported having a GP vacancy at 31 August 2015, twice as many as in 2013. Half of the vacancies reported had been vacant for over 6 months. Vacancies among nurses in general practice were much lower with 5% of practice reporting a vacancy.
- More than a third of GPs working in Scottish general practice are over 50. This proportion is higher in males, with nearly half (47%) aged over 50 while for female GPs only 29% are over 50. The age profile of nurses in general practice is much older, with over half (53%) aged over 50.
- 2,228 GPs were reported as working within GP Out of Hours services, however there was a large variation in the amount of time input to the services. 6% of GPs working in GP OoH services worked an average of 20+ hours per week which accounted for 35% of the total GP hours worked. The remaining GPs working in Out of Hours Services generally worked only a small number of hours each over the year.
- All NHS Boards, with the exception of Shetland, reported having to take actions due to being unable to fill all GP OoH service shifts as planned, with 9 NHS Boards reporting having to do so at least weekly. The most common action taken was for staff to work longer shifts or start a shift earlier.

## Background

Most general practices in Scotland are independent contractors and there is no contractual requirement for them to provide information about the staff that they employ. Although information is routinely available on the headcount and age/gender profile of GPs, practices are not obliged to report whether individual GPs work full time or part time. There is also a need for more information on the workforce involved in the provision of GP Out of Hours (OoH) services and this 2015 survey was expanded to build upon the experimental, pilot survey of GP OoH workforce in Scotland introduced in 2013.

## Contact

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## Find out more

Further information can be found in the [Primary Care Workforce Survey Scotland 2015](#) report.

A Primary Care Workforce Survey Scotland 2015 Excel workbook containing [the data from this publication is available to download](#).

An [Interactive Excel workbook](#) is also available to provide more detail at local level.

Previous survey reports for [2013](#) and [2009](#) are available online

The Information Services Division also publishes routine statistics on General Practice. You can find more by visiting our [General Practice webpage](#).

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