About this release

This release from the Information Services Division (ISD) provides a quarterly update on the number of staff employed by NHSScotland and vacancy information for nursing and midwifery, allied health professions and consultants as at 30 September 2017. When describing the size of a particular staff group figures are presented either as headcount (actual numbers of staff) or whole time equivalent (WTE) which adjusts for part-time working.

Main Points

As at 30 September 2017:

- The 162,695 staff employed by NHSScotland represents an increase of 0.5% over the last year. Adjusting for part time working, the WTE has risen by 0.6% to 139,492.1. The WTE has risen by 5.8% since September 2012, representing five years of consecutive growth. However, the annual growth rates in each of these years were 1.8%, 1.9%, 0.8%, 0.7% and 0.6% showing that growth has slowed in recent years.

![NHSScotland Total Workforce Trend](image)

Notes:

1. Workforce data was published annually until September 2010 and then quarterly from March 2011 onwards.
2. The y-axis range has been adjusted in order to display the trend in more detail.

- There has been a 1.9% increase in the number of doctors and dentists in training grades over the past year from 5,832.5 WTE as at 30 September 2016 to 5,945.1 WTE in 2017, the first annual increase since 2014.
During 2016/17, the student intake for nursing and midwifery increased by 3.2% to 3,266, the highest intake recorded since 2010/11.

7.7% (430.5 WTE) of consultant posts were vacant. This compares to 7.0% at 30 September 2016. Of these vacancies, 254.3 WTE were vacant for six months or more, an increase of 70.8 WTE over the past year.

4.5% (2,789.2 WTE) of nursing and midwifery posts were vacant. This compares to 4.3% at 30 September 2016. Of these vacancies, 826.9 WTE were vacant for three months or more, an increase of 2.3 WTE over the past year.

There were 642 Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANPs) in post, equating to 577.1 WTE. These figures are published for the first time following collaboration between NHS Boards and ISD to develop data in relation to the increasing importance of this role and the Scottish Government’s commitment to invest in training an additional 500 ANPs by 2021.

Background
The NHSScotland workforce has a significant role to play in the delivery of quality services that meet the needs of patients, their families and the general public in a modern health service. 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. ISD works with NHS Boards to improve data quality and previously published information may change from one publication to the next to reflect these improvements.

ISD recently ran a consultation on proposed changes to modernise the presentation, improve the usability and enhance the accessibility of NHSScotland workforce statistics. This summary presents the key findings and outlines the next steps for implementation. Changes relating to data visualisation, open data and frequency of reporting will be applied when the new look publication is released on 5 June 2018.

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Further Information
Further information can be found in the NHSScotland Workforce Information - Quarterly update of Staff in Post and Vacancies at 30 September 2017 report. Workbooks containing the data from this publication are available to download.

The next release of the publication is scheduled for 6 March 2018.

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.

ISD and Official Statistics
Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of ‘Official Statistics’. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Further information about our statistics.