

# The workforce employed by adult social services departments in England

Workers employed by local authorities in the adult social care sector

2024

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# Adult social care in the local authority sector

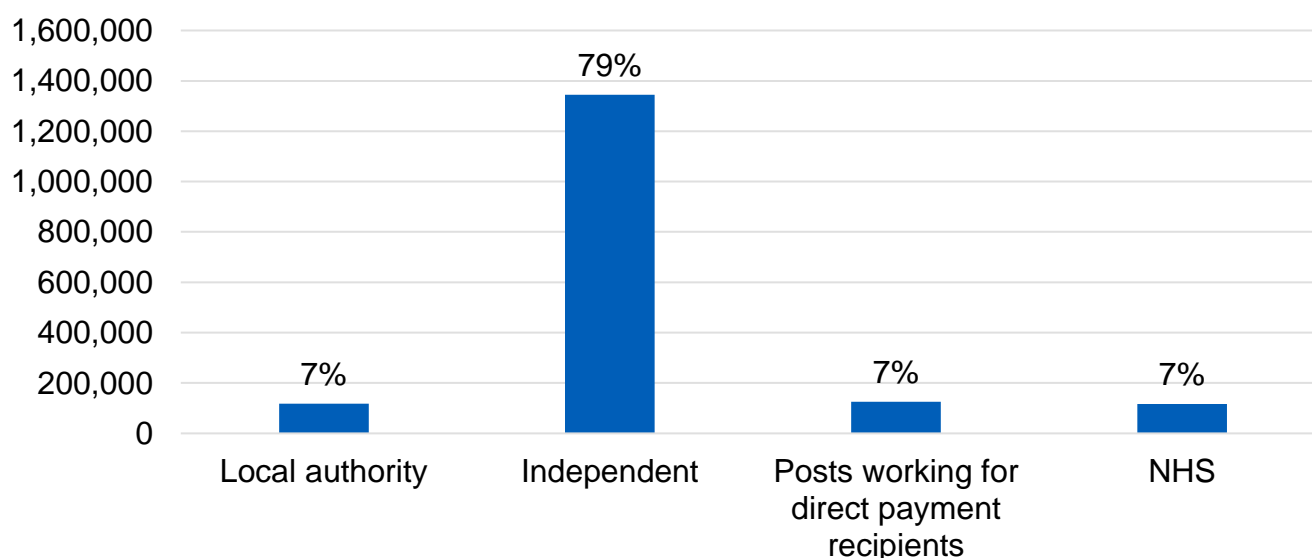
This report contains information on staff employed by local authority adult social services departments in England, who provide social care services to members of the public. In September 2024, all 153 local authority adult social services departments in England provided a data return to the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS).

**There were 119,900 adult social services filled posts within local authorities in September 2024. This part of the adult social care sector is the focus of this report.**

As at 2023/24, Skills for Care estimated that the whole adult social care sector has 1.705m filled posts<sup>1</sup>. This covers the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Chart 1 shows the proportion of the workforce employed in each sector of the adult social care at that time, for context for this report. Adult social care filled posts in local authorities accounted for 7% of all adult social care filled posts as at 2023/24.

**Chart 1. Estimated proportion of adult social care filled posts by sector, 2023/24**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



Our estimates of the size of the adult social care workforce are published annually and include local authority data from September, along with direct payment recipient and independent sector data from the following March. Estimates of the size of the rest of the adult social care workforce as at March 2025 will be published by Skills for Care in June 2025 as part of the 2024/25 figures.

<sup>1</sup> [The size and structure of the adult social care sector and workforce in England](#)

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# Contents

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Adult social care in the local authority sector .....	2
Revisions .....	4
Key findings .....	5
Classification of statistics .....	7
Users and uses of this report.....	8
Introduction .....	10
Data coverage .....	12
Methodology used to estimate characteristics of the adult social care sector .....	13
Job roles within the ASC-WDS.....	14
International recruitment.....	15
1. Size of the workforce .....	17
1.1 Reasons for changes in the number of filled posts .....	22
1.2 Number of filled posts by job role.....	24
1.3 Number of filled posts by service group.....	27
2. Employment overview.....	29
2.1 Employment status .....	30
2.2 Working time.....	32
2.3 Zero-hours contracts.....	33
3. Recruitment and retention.....	35
3.1 Starter and turnover rates.....	36
3.2 Vacancy rates.....	38
3.3 Experience in role .....	41
3.4 Average sickness days .....	41
4. Demographics.....	44
4.1 Gender.....	45
4.2 Age .....	47
4.3 Ethnicity .....	48
4.3.1 Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard .....	51
5. Pay.....	52
5.1 Average (mean) full-time equivalent (FTE) annual pay.....	53
5.2 Nominal pay trends.....	55
5.3 Real terms pay trends.....	56
6. Qualifications .....	58
Further resources.....	62
Our workforce intelligence publications .....	63
Our values .....	65

# Revisions

This report was originally published on 12 February 2025.

A revision was published on 28 March 2025 with updated figures in Section 5 (Pay) including average (mean) full-time equivalent (FTE) annual pay, nominal pay trends and real term pay trends. Revisions have been made for the following job roles:

- First line manager
- Managers and staff in care-related but not care-providing roles
- Supervisor
- Other care-providing job role
- Administrative or office staff not care-providing.

The accompanying reference tables have also been revised (see Table 11.2 and 11.3).

All other sections of this report remain unchanged.

# Key findings

This report provides the key findings from the Adult Social Care Workforce Dataset (ASC-WDS) relating to workers in local authority adult social service departments as at September 2024.

**7%**

of adult social care filled posts in England are in local authority adult social services departments

**126,800**

total posts in local authority adult social services departments (filled and vacant posts)

**117,200**

people working in local authority adult social services departments

### Workforce size

- There were a total of 126,800 adult social services posts in local authorities in England as at September 2024, made up of 119,900 filled posts and 6,900 vacant posts.
- Between 2023 and 2024, the number of filled posts in local authorities in England increased by 2% (2,500 filled posts). Meanwhile the number of vacant posts fell by 1,400.
- People can fill more than one post. There were 117,200 people working in adult social services departments in 2024. The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) filled posts was 99,700.
- One in ten workers (10%) were employed in care only homes (12,400 filled posts), 3% in care homes with nursing (3,500 filled posts) and 16% in CQC non-residential services (19,400 filled posts).
- Two in five of all adult social services filled posts in 2024 (49,800 filled posts or 42%) were direct care providing job roles.
- The number of staff working in regulated professions roles increased in 2024, to 23,600 filled posts. This is an increase of 1,000 filled posts (5%) from 2023.
- The turnover rate across all staff in adult social services departments in local authorities was 12.5%. This was a decrease from 13.0% in 2023.

### Workforce characteristics

- The average number of sickness days for staff in adult social services departments was 10.8 days, an increase of 0.1 days from 2023.
- The average age of adult social care staff in local authorities was 47.6. This was 4.3 years higher than the latest available equivalent for the independent sector (March 2024).
- Nearly one in five (19%) of the workforce were male, an increase from 18% in 2023.
- Adult social services departments staff saw an increase in their average (mean) nominal full-time equivalent (FTE) annual pay<sup>2</sup> between 2023 and 2024. Care worker pay rose by 9.0% to £26,100.
- Historical real term pay is adjusted to account for inflation<sup>3</sup>. Between 2023 and 2024 real term pay rates also increased in adult social services departments; care worker real term pay increased by 7.2% over the period.
- Over half (52%) of staff in adult social services departments held a relevant social care qualification in 2024, excluding workers in regulated professions (who must be qualified).

<sup>2</sup> 'Nominal pay': pay is not adjusted for inflation and shows the actual pay rates as they were at the time.

<sup>3</sup> 'Real term pay' rates have been calculated using the [Consumers Price Index](#), as at September 2024.

# Classification of statistics



Skills for Care is the leading source of workforce intelligence for the adult social care workforce in England. We publish reports and data visualisations each year using information collected in the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS). From 1 October 2021, responsibility for publishing the 'Personal Social Services: Staff of Social Services Departments' report moved from NHS Digital (now part of NHS England) to Skills for Care. In 2021, staff from the Adult Social Care Statistics team in NHS Digital worked with Skills for Care during the transition period and supported Skills for Care with their voluntary adoption of the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

The code plays an important role in ensuring that producers of official statistics inspire public confidence by demonstrating trustworthiness, quality and value in the statistics they produce. Details of Skills for Care's commitment to the Code of Practice for Statistics can be found here: [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WI-values](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WI-values)

In 2023 Skills for Care became an official statistics producer, having been added to the [Official Statistics Order 2023](#). This means that all official statistics produced by Skills for Care will include oversight from the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) (OSR), ensuring it follows the Code of Practice for Statistics. In February 2025 this report was badged as an [Accredited official statistic](#) following an assessment from OSR.

In terms of data collection, as Skills for Care has managed the collection process since 2011. There were no changes of contact arrangements for local authority data providers despite the change in ownership of this report from NHS Digital to Skills for Care. Mandating the data collection through the single data list continues, however the list has been updated to reflect the change in statistics producer.

This is an annual publication, as such there are no scheduled revisions after publication. If any unscheduled revisions are required, we would follow the [Revisions policy](#) which can be found on our website.

## Users and uses of this report

This publication may be of interest to members of the public, policy officials and other stakeholders to monitor the quality and effectiveness of services. It can also be used to monitor workforce trends and to make local, regional and national comparisons.

It is appropriate to use this report when specifically thinking about the adult social care workforce employed by local authorities. The data analysed here is a snapshot in time as at September 2024.

Please note, when discussing the adult social care sector workforce (including those working for local authorities, independent sector providers and posts working for direct payment recipients) this report should be looked at alongside other Skills for Care workforce intelligence



publications. Information about these can be found on our [website](#) or in the 'Further resources' section of this report.

A number of external partners also use the data shown in this report as part of their own reporting and processes. Some key stakeholders are mentioned here:

### **Stakeholders at the national level**

These organisations use our workforce data to understand, influence and advocate for the adult social care workforce.

- Academics and accredited researchers from universities and research organisations across the UK
- Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) - [www.adass.org.uk](http://www.adass.org.uk)
- Care England - [www.careengland.org.uk](http://www.careengland.org.uk)
- National Care Forum - [www.nationalcareforum.org.uk](http://www.nationalcareforum.org.uk)
- NHS England - [www.england.nhs.uk/integratedcare](http://www.england.nhs.uk/integratedcare)
- Social Care Institute for Excellence - [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)
- Social Work England - [www.socialworkengland.org.uk](http://www.socialworkengland.org.uk)
- The King's Fund - [www.kingsfund.org.uk](http://www.kingsfund.org.uk)

### **Stakeholders at a local level**

These organisations work at a local level to monitor and improve services. This often involves comparing our workforce intelligence with other data sources to inform in key areas, such as workforce planning.

- Local authorities across England
- Local Government Association (LGA) - [www.local.gov.uk](http://www.local.gov.uk)
- NHS Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) and NHS Integrated Care Boards (ICBs)

### **The Care Quality Commission (CQC)**

Adult social care workforce data is shared by Skills for Care with the CQC, with permission from employers. This information forms part of their local and national reporting about the state of the CQC-regulated workforce in England. It is also used as part of the CQC [local authority assessments](#), to help understand the workforce employed by local authorities and assess how they meet their duties under Part 1 of the [Care Act \(2014\)](#).

### **UK Parliament**

The data presented here is regularly used in parliamentary debates and research by the House of Commons Library. Most recently this included a research briefing on '[Adult social care workforce in England](#)', published in October 2024.

# Introduction

This publication contains information on posts filled by people in the 153 local authority adult social services departments in England, as at September 2024. The Department for Education publish separate statistics on the [children's social work workforce](#).

In this report we have compared our findings to other data sources where a comparison is useful and appropriate. Links to these sources are provided at the point of discussion. Further comparison of the data in this report with other similar data, such as adult social care statistics from other UK nations can be found on the [Analysis Function website](#).

Skills for Care is the strategic workforce development and planning body for adult social care in England. We work with employers, Government and partners to ensure social care has the right people, skills, and support required to deliver the highest quality care and support, now and in the future. Our role is to respond and adapt to the emerging trends and needs within social care, using data and evidence to drive forward widescale change.

The Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS) is an online data collection service that gathers information about the adult social care workforce in England. Prior to 2019 it was known as the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) service, which had been collecting information about social care providers and their staff since 2006. For more information about the ASC-WDS, visit the [Skills for Care website](#).

The ASC-WDS is the means of collection for the adult social care workforce data return for local authorities (adult social services departments). This report uses estimates created from all local authority data returns to analyse the workforce in this sector (see Section 0 - Data coverage). For further information on all variables analysed in this report, including trended data, please see the accompanying [reference tables](#).

Between 2012 and 2021 all local authorities in England met the [mandatory criteria](#) of an ASC-WDS return for people working in adult social services departments. In 2024, all local authorities again completed a data return of their adult social services staff.

In 2022 all local authorities apart from Salford submitted a return. In 2023 Cumbria divided into two new local authority areas (Cumberland, and Westmoreland and Furness) but neither of the new areas provided a complete data return. Despite this we are confident in the accuracy of our analysis over this period due to our quality assurance processes and methodologies, as outlined below.

We have published a [glossary of terms](#), which includes variable definitions and other terminology used in this report. For information about this, our other publications and how our workforce intelligence is used in the adult social care sector, see the '[Users and uses of this report](#)' section of this report.

## Data coverage

This report analyses the 153 local authorities in England. From 2012 to 2021 all adult social services departments in local authorities completed a data return. In 2022 and 2023, not all local authorities submitted a full data return. In 2024 all local authorities provided Skills for Care with a data return.

In 2022 Salford local authority did not submit a data return to Skills for Care. To account for the missing information, we based the figures for that year on the 2021 Salford submission.

In 2023 Cumbria local authority separated into two new authority areas: 'Cumberland' and 'Westmoreland and Furness'. Both of these local authorities only provided a total number of filled and vacant posts via email for each area in September 2023. No further information about the workforce for either area was provided via the ASC-WDS or via a data return. Data from Cumbria local authority area in 2022 was used to create 2023 estimates for Cumberland and Westmoreland and Furness.

There is no evidence to suggest that adult social service departments systematically omit information from a data return. As such, we trust the information provided to be unbiased. Any missing information identified during data quality checks in the data return period is assessed accordingly by the Workforce Intelligence team.

When local authorities do not provide a complete data submission, we use proxy information and estimations in place of the missing data. For further information on response rates for each question across all local authorities in 2024, please see the accompanying [reference tables](#).

- For variables that are similar year on year, e.g. average age, gender and ethnicity, we use the local authority's data from the previous year as a proxy (where possible).
- For variables that are likely to change e.g. starters, leavers, sickness and pay using a proxy is not possible. Instead, we use estimates based on the local authority's data return from the previous year alongside regional trends to try and reduce the impact on national and regional totals.

From 2012 to 2021 and in 2024 all adult social services departments in local authorities completed a data return. However, some individual data items for specific workers or local authorities are missing each year. [Workforce estimates](#) are therefore created to compensate for any missing data items across all local authorities. Despite this and the lack of coverage in the three local authorities in 2022 and 2023 referenced above, there is still minimal uncertainty in the dataset due to the high levels of overall coverage and our [methodologies](#) in place to create our workforce estimates (see the following section below).

Findings shown in this report that are derived from our workforce estimates are noted as such in chart and tables. The number of filled posts from 2012 to 2021 and in 2024 are actual counts of data submitted in the annual data returns with no estimation required. Filled posts trends in this

report however are taken from our workforce estimates due to the missing local authorities in 2022 and 2023.

Please note, all information included in this report has been aggregated and rounded. Exact counts are not shown unless specifically stated.

## Methodology used to estimate characteristics of the adult social care sector

Meeting the criteria for a full ASC-WDS return means that for each workplace the following fields must be completed: type of organisation, service provided, service user groups for whom care is provided, capacity, number of service users, number of staff, number of vacant posts, and number of leavers in the past year.

Also, for every worker a staff record must be completed with the main job role and the employment status. And at least 90% of staff records must have the following information: gender, date of birth, ethnicity, contracted/average hours, sickness, pay and qualifications. The ASC-WDS collects other data items including staff training, experience in sector, and nationality but these data items were voluntary for local authorities to complete and have not been included in this publication.

Due to the mandatory criteria for local authorities, we have high response rates for most data fields from this part of the sector. For further information on response rates across all local authorities in 2024, please see the accompanying [reference tables](#).

To ensure that the data we provide in our publications is trustworthy and adds value to the sector, and as part of our commitment to the Code of Practice for Statistics, we use several methods to quality assure the data. In September each year, Skills for Care works with each local authority to collect a complete and accurate data return. Applicable data is validated at the point of entry into the ASC-WDS and data from local authority employers is also checked by the Workforce Intelligence team. Issues with data quality (if any) are then fed back to the local authority who are asked to re-submit their data return. This can be a time-consuming process, but Skills for Care is dedicated to working with local authorities to provide high-quality intelligence about their workforces.

Despite the rigorous checking and validation of data at the point of collection, not all local authorities are able to provide high quality data for every question. We therefore use our workforce estimates methodology to filter the data and to fill any gaps in our coverage, in order to create a better picture of the adult social care local authority sector and workforce. We have confidence in the quality of these estimates; the methodologies used have been peer reviewed by universities and an independent statistician. To learn more about our methodologies, you can read our '[Methodology for estimating the size and characteristics of the adult social care workforce in England](#)' paper.

Throughout this report we have adhered to statistical disclosure controls whereby we have aggregated the data and suppressed our findings where appropriate. This is to protect individuals from being identified in this publication and any accompanying documents. As a result, charts and tables shown here display rounded whole numbers and percentages. It should be noted therefore that charts and tables may not always total to 100%. For more information on our suppression and rounding rules and the rationale behind these, please visit the [Methodology webpage](#).

Prior to publication this report undergoes an internal peer review process. This is an additional measure to maintain our high standards of quality assurance.

## Job roles within the ASC-WDS

At the point of data collection, local authorities are given a choice of job roles to choose from to best reflect the role of each of their workers. Skills for Care understands that within each local authority there will be differences in the skills, requirements and responsibilities associated with each job role and that the information provided is the best reflection of the staff in each local authority.

In June 2024 seven new job roles were added to the ASC-WDS, and two roles were removed. Subsequently new staff have been attributed to these roles and some existing staff have been re-coded into different roles to better reflect their duties. For a full statement about the changes in filled posts linked to new job roles, visit our [website](#).

In September 2024, at the time of data collection for this report, the ASC-WDS collected information on 32 different job roles. These roles were then aggregated into four groups for the purposes of analysis. The main roles within each job role group are as follows:

- **Managers**, including senior, middle and first-line managers, registered managers, supervisors, managers and 'staff in care-related but not care providing roles', deputy managers and team leaders.
- **Regulated professions**, including social workers, occupational therapists, registered nurses, allied health professionals, 'safeguarding and reviewing officers' and registered nursing associates.
- **Direct care**, including senior care workers, care workers, community support and outreach workers (referred to as 'support and outreach workers' throughout this report) and other care providing job roles.
- **Other roles**, including administrative or office staff who are not providing care, ancillary staff who are not providing care, activities worker or co-ordinators, care co-ordinators, assessment officers, learning and development leads and other job roles which are not providing care directly.

Information provided in this report is either reported by job role group, or for selected individual job roles of interest.

## International recruitment

Changes to [immigration rules](#) in the UK came into effect on 1 January 2021 following Brexit. These rules effectively meant that people could not come to the UK to take up care worker roles, but people could still arrive to take up some regulated professions roles. These rules have remained in place for regulated professions roles but have been updated periodically for direct care roles (care workers and senior care workers); details of this are outlined below for clarity.

Social workers, occupational therapists and registered nurses were listed occupations on the 'skilled worker visa route' and were on the Shortage Occupation List (SOL) on 1 January 2021. Therefore, workers could still immigrate to the UK under those rules providing they had a job offer and could speak English to the required standard. These rules have remained in place since this time and workers continue to come to the UK to take up these roles.

From 1 January 2021 people could no longer come to the UK to take up direct care providing roles. However, from April 2021 the senior care worker role was added to the SOL and the [Health and Care Worker visa](#) route. This meant people could come to the UK if they met the entry requirements, including having a licenced sponsor and a job offer which met the minimum salary threshold. In February 2022, the care worker role was also added to the SOL, meaning that providing workers had a licenced sponsor and met the salary threshold of £20,480 or £10.10 per hour (based on a 39 hour week) they could come to the UK to take up care worker roles.

From 11 March 2024, direct care workers arriving from outside of the UK were no longer allowed to apply to bring dependants (that is, partners and/or children) to the UK on their visa. Care providers sponsoring international recruits were also required to register with the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Following the announcement of these changes, according to [data from the Home Office](#), the number of Health and Care Worker visas granted has decreased. In the year ending June 2024 there was a 26% decrease in visas granted to applicants. There was also a notable fall in visa applications over the last quarter, between April and June 2024, 81% lower than the same period in 2023<sup>4</sup>. Workers in regulated professions that are employed on the [Skilled Worker](#) visa may continue to apply to bring dependents with them to the UK.

In April 2024, the Shortage Occupation List was replaced by the [Immigration Salary List](#) (ISL). The same adult social care sector job roles remain [eligible occupations](#) on the Skilled Worker route as before. Care workers and senior care worker roles are on the ISL, which allows workers to be paid a minimum of £23,200 in these roles (up from £20,960). Some occupations are subject to national pay scales requiring people in those jobs to be paid in line with the rates on the relevant national scale.

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<sup>4</sup> Home Office statistics – [monthly monitoring of entry clearance visa applications](#)



Nationality and year of entry to the UK information are not mandatory fields in the local authority data collection. Therefore, they have low response rates in the dataset. This means it is not possible to quantify the number of international recruits joining adult social services departments.

The table below shows that, of workers with nationality recorded, the proportion of posts filled by non-British workers has increased. This table should be treated with some caution however due to the level of missing data in each year (44% of staff did not have nationality data recorded in 2024).

This evidence available suggests, however, that there has been some international recruitment in adult social services departments of local authorities with the percentage of non-British workers increasing from 13% in 2021 to 16% in 2024. This trend was more pronounced in the independent sector over the same period, where the proportion of non-British staff increased from 18% to 28% between 2020/21 and 2023/24.

**Table 1. Breakdown of nationality data recorded in ASC-WDS for adult social services staff, 2021 to 2024**

Source: Unweighted ASC-WDS data, September 2024

Nationality	2021	2022	2023	2024
British	87%	86%	85%	84%
Non-British (subtotal)	13%	14%	15%	16%
Non-EU	3%	3%	4%	4%
EU	2%	3%	3%	3%
Non-British (not known)	8%	8%	9%	9%
<b>Total known staff records</b>	<b>65,053</b>	<b>62,902</b>	<b>63,348</b>	<b>67,257</b>
Not recorded/unknown	49,999	51,029	53,099	52,634

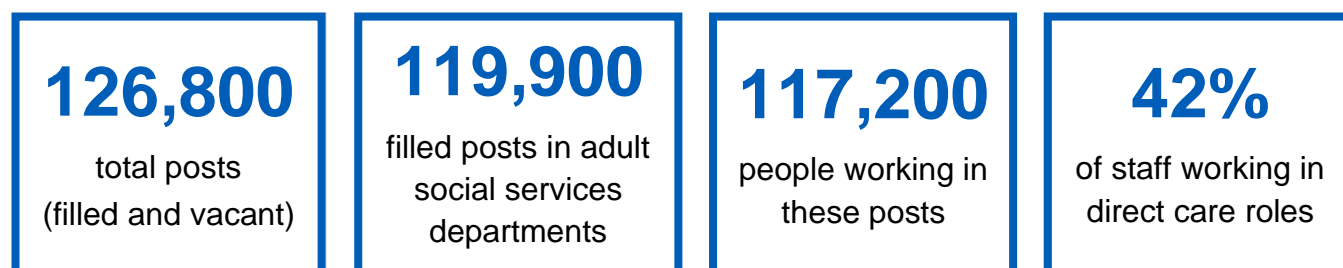
Evidence from the independent sector shows that recent international recruits have, on average, different demographic and employment characteristics compared to British workers. For example, international recruits are younger on average, a higher proportion are male compared to the workforce as a whole, and they are more likely to work full-time hours. As such, international recruitment should be considered as one of the possible reasons for differences in demographic and employment characteristic trends in the local authority sector seen over the period.

For more information on international recruits in the independent sector, see Section 9 of '[The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England, 2024](#)' report.

# 1. Size of the workforce



In this section we have analysed trended filled posts information from September 2012 to September 2024, due to substantial changes in the size of the workforce between 2012 and 2017. **For subsequent sections we have analysed trends from September 2017 to September 2024 only.** Further analysis of the local authority adult social services workforce in this report, including splits by local authority, can be found in the [reference tables](#) that accompany this report.



## Key findings

- There were a total of 126,800 adult social services posts in local authorities in England as at September 2024, made up of 119,900 filled posts and 6,900 vacant posts.
- The number of filled posts increased by 2% or 2,500 filled posts from 2023. The number of filled posts fell by 28% (41,400 filled posts) between 2012 and 2017. Since 2017 filled posts have increased by 10%, an increase of 10,700.
- One full-time equivalent (FTE) filled post equates to a person working 37 hours per week or more in their role. In 2024 there were 99,700 FTE filled posts in adult social services departments.
- Two in five of all local authority filled posts in 2024 (49,800 filled posts or 42%) were direct care providing job roles.
- The number of staff working in regulated professions roles increased in 2024 to 23,600 filled posts. This is an increase of 1,000 filled posts (5%) from 2023.

In this report, total posts refers to the number, or sum, of filled and vacant posts. A filled post is defined as a role filled by a worker (person) and a vacant post is defined as a post that is not currently filled and was being actively recruited to by the local authority at the time of data collection. Frequently in adult social care, workers may fill a single post, or multiple posts. Therefore, in this report 'people' (headcount) refers to the number of individuals working in these posts, which may differ from the number of filled posts due to people working in more than one post.

The filled posts in local authority adult social services departments accounted for 7% of the 1.705 million estimated adult social care filled posts in 2023/24 (local authority data as at September 2023 and independent sector, direct payment recipient data and adult social care related roles in the NHS as at March 2024). Over three quarters (79%) of filled posts in adult social care were in the independent sector in 2024, as shown in Chart 1.

Table 2 below shows that in 2024 there were 119,900 adult social services filled posts within local authorities. This was an increase of 2% from 117,400 the previous year (2,500 filled posts).

**Table 2. Estimated number of adult social care filled posts by sector\*, 2012 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

Year	All filled posts	Local authority		Independent		Posts for direct payment recipients		NHS	
	Filled posts	Filled posts	%	Filled posts	%	Filled posts	%	Filled posts	%
2012/13	1,500,000	150,600	10%	1,140,000	76%	130,000	9%	72,000	5%
2013/14	1,525,000	140,700	9%	1,165,000	76%	140,000	9%	77,000	5%
2014/15	1,550,000	130,100	8%	1,185,000	77%	145,000	9%	81,000	5%
2015/16	1,550,000	120,100	8%	1,205,000	78%	135,000	9%	86,000	6%
2016/17	1,570,000	112,800	7%	1,220,000	78%	145,000	9%	91,000	6%
2017/18	1,595,000	109,200	7%	1,240,000	78%	145,000	9%	95,000	6%
2018/19	1,615,000	112,100	7%	1,255,000	78%	145,000	9%	96,000	6%
2019/20	1,640,000	113,300	7%	1,275,000	78%	140,000	9%	102,000	6%
2020/21	1,675,000	114,100	7%	1,315,000	78%	140,000	8%	104,000	6%
2021/22	1,615,000	115,100	7%	1,255,000	78%	130,000	8%	109,000	7%
2022/23	1,635,000	113,900	7%	1,280,000	78%	130,000	8%	109,000	7%
2023/24	1,705,000	117,400	7%	1,345,000	79%	125,000	7%	117,000	7%
2024/25	*	119,900	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

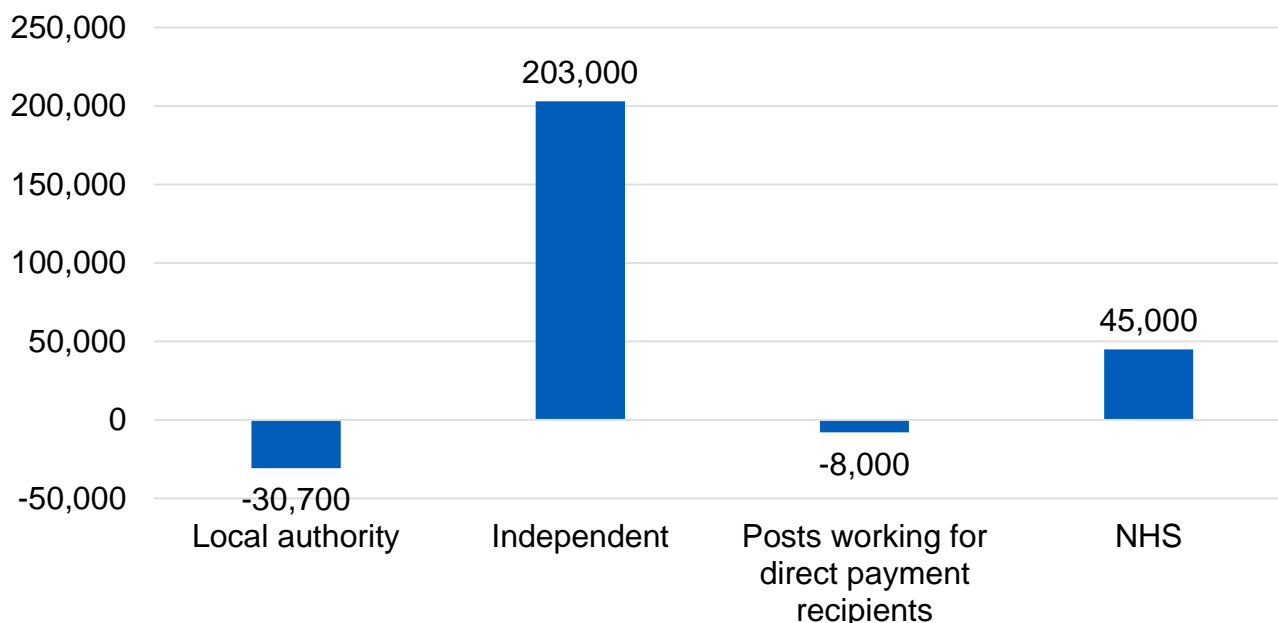
\* In the year row, 2012/13 is referring to local authority data as at September 2012 and independent sector, direct payment recipient and NHS data as at March 2013. This is repeated for all subsequent rows.

Between 2012 and 2017 the number of filled posts in local authorities decreased by around 41,400 (28%). However, between 2017 and 2024 the number of filled posts increased by around 10,700 (10%). Filled posts in the local authority sector have now nearly returned to where they stood in 2015 (120,100 filled posts).

Since 2012/13, in contrast to the local authority sector, other parts of the adult social care workforce have mostly grown. In particular, the independent sector has increased by 203,000 filled posts (18%) between 2013 and 2024. The number of filled posts in adult social care roles in the NHS have also increased over the period (up 45,000 filled posts) while the number of posts working for direct payment recipients has fallen (down 8,000 filled posts). Chart 2 below shows the change in the number of filled posts in adult social care across the different sectors between 2012 and 2024.

**Chart 2. Estimated change in the number of adult social care filled posts by sector, 2012 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



New estimates for the whole adult social care workforce in 2024/25, which will include local authority information analysed in this report, will be published in June 2025 as part of [The size and structure of the adult social care sector and workforce in England](#) report.

In September 2024, the total number of posts in adult social services departments stood at 126,800. This is the sum of the 119,900 filled posts and 6,900 vacant posts. Table 3 below shows that the total number of posts has decreased over time between 2012 and 2017, in line with the decrease in filled posts shown in Table 2. In 2012, the total number of posts was at its highest (161,700) and steadily decreased to a low of 118,600 in 2017. Since that time, as the number of filled posts has increased, so has the total number of posts .

**Table 3. Estimated number of filled and vacant posts in adult social services departments, 2012 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

Year	Total posts	Filled posts	Vacant posts
2012	161,700	150,600	11,000
2013	152,000	140,700	11,300
2014	139,200	130,100	9,100
2015	130,600	120,100	10,500
2016	121,800	112,800	8,900
2017	118,600	109,200	9,300
2018	119,400	112,100	7,300
2019	120,600	113,300	7,300
2020	120,700	114,100	6,600
2021	123,100	115,100	8,000
2022	123,200	113,900	9,300
2023	125,700	117,400	8,300
2024	126,800	119,900	6,900

The number of vacant posts has varied over time but has remained between 5% and 8% of the total size of the local authority adult social services workforce year-on-year. In 2020, the number of vacant posts was the lowest recorded since 2012, at 6,600 posts. However, this increased to 9,300 in 2022, in part due to the reopening of other parts of the economy following the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in England. Since then the number of vacant posts fell to 8,300 in 2023, and again to 6,900 in 2024.

Across all sectors of the adult social care workforce it is possible for a person to fill more than one post. The number of people working in these posts (headcount) is therefore different to the number of filled posts. As at September 2024, there were 117,200 people working in adult social services departments in local authorities in England.

In addition to staff filling multiple posts, not all staff will work full-time hours. Many posts are filled by staff working part-time hours, for more information see Section 2.2 – Working time. To account for these variations in staff working patterns, we must also estimate the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) filled posts.

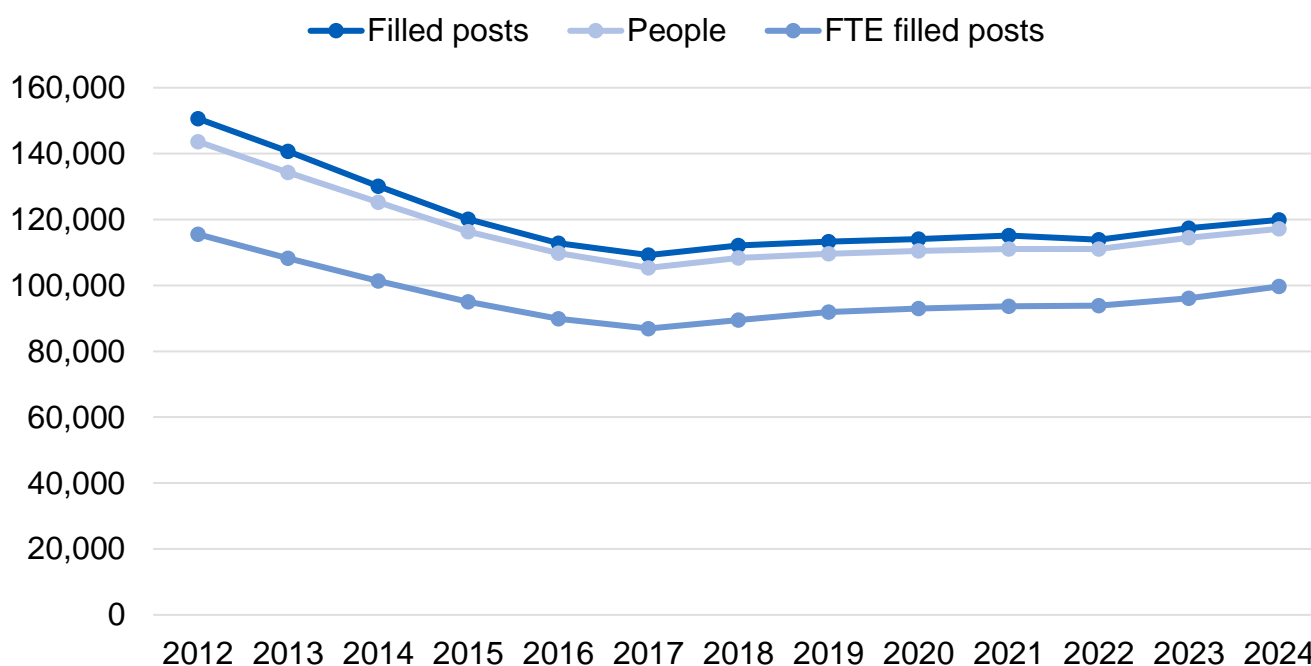
FTE filled post estimates were created by applying contracted hours and average hours data to estimates of the number of filled posts. 37 hours per week has been classed as ‘full-time’. There were 99,700 FTE filled posts in adult social services departments in 2024. The FTE filled posts ratio was 0.83, which reflects the full-time nature of many adult social services filled posts.

Across all in local authorities in England, the 99,700 FTE filled posts equates to an estimated 3.7 million hours worked per week by adult social care staff. This is an increase of 134,000 since last year.

Chart 3 shows the estimated number of filled posts, the estimated number of people filling those posts (headcount) and the estimated number of FTE filled posts within adult social services departments in local authorities over time.

**Chart 3. Estimated number of adult social services filled posts in local authorities, people and full-time equivalent (FTE) filled posts, 2012 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



The relationship between people and filled posts has been relatively consistent since 2012. In 2024 there were 117,200 people working in 119,900 adult social care filled posts in local authorities, an increase of 2,700 people from 2023. The ratio of people to filled posts in 2024 was 100 filled posts per 98 people in local authority adult social care services, the same as in 2023. This indicates that there are a relatively small number of people filling more than one adult social services post (in other words, workers usually work in only one role).

The number of FTE filled posts has increased by 15% between 2017 and 2024, to 99,700 FTE filled posts. A particular increase was seen in FTE filled posts between 2023 and 2024, where FTE filled posts increased by 3,600 (4%). This increase was larger than the increase in filled posts (2%), which suggests the average number of hours worked increased as well as the number of people in post.

## 1.1 Reasons for changes in the number of filled posts



Between 2012 and 2017 the number of filled posts in adult social services departments fell from 150,600 to 109,200 (see Table 2). This large decrease in filled posts was driven predominantly by local authorities moving towards outsourcing adult social care to independent providers.

Each year on completion of their data return, local authorities are asked to provide reasons for changes in the number of filled posts compared to the previous year. They are also asked for any other comments, including any structural changes that might have affected the types of filled posts within the local authority. Free text responses from local authorities are then coded by Skills for Care.

Table 4 shows a breakdown of the responses local authorities provided for these questions in 2024. Local authorities can name multiple reasons for changes in their total number of filled posts. The most commonly stated reason, was restructure.

When looking at the responses from just those local authorities which had an increase in the number of filled posts between 2023 and 2024, restructure, recruitment and increase in agency/casual staff were amongst the most commonly stated reason for the changes.

**Table 4. Reasons for differences in the total number of adult social services filled posts in local authorities between 2023 and 2024**

Source: Information provided by local authorities alongside their annual data return

Reasons for changes in total filled posts	All local authorities (LAs)		LAs with an increase in filled posts		LAs with a decrease in filled posts	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
No change / small change	71	46%	43	45%	26	48%
Restructure	15	10%	11	11%	4	7%
Recruitment / filling vacancies	8	5%	8	8%	0	0%
Insourcing / TUPE	6	4%	5	5%	1	2%
Agency / casual staff decrease	5	3%	3	3%	2	4%
Agency / casual staff increase	5	3%	5	5%	0	0%
Other	4	3%	2	2%	2	4%
Budget cuts/freeze	3	2%	1	1%	2	4%
Closures	3	2%	0	0%	3	6%
Natural turnover, resignations and/or retirement	3	2%	1	1%	2	4%
Data quality issues affecting last year's data	2	1%	1	1%	1	2%
Redundancy	2	1%	0	0%	2	4%
Additional funding	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%
Total	153		96		54	

## 1.2 Number of filled posts by job role

Local authorities provided the number of filled posts split by a set list of 32 job roles. During the analysis we group these job roles into four job role group categories: 'managers', 'regulated professions', 'direct care' and 'other'. For a full list of individual job roles attributed to each job role group, see the introduction of this report ([Job roles within the ASC-WDS](#)).

The ASC-WDS data collection process is continually being reviewed and modified, with regular user-research sessions with our users to improve their experience and reflect the changing nature of the adult social care workforce. In 2023, three new job roles were added to the ASC-WDS: deputy manager, learning and development lead and team leader. Around 85% of staff in these new job roles in 2023, were previously coded in the same job role group so we don't expect this change to have had a large impact on any trend analysis by job role group. For more information about these changes, see our [statement on job role changes in 2023/24](#).

In 2024 a further seven roles were added: data analyst, data governance manager, IT and digital support, IT manager, IT service desk manager, software developer and support worker. Around 93% of staff in these new job roles in 2023, were previously coded in the same job role group so we don't expect this change to have had a large impact on any trend analysis by job role group. However, this change should be considered when looking at the individual job roles such as care workers, where around 1,200 care workers were re-coded into the new support worker job role.

In 2024 two job roles were also removed: Technician and Care Navigator. Around 79% of Care Navigators were coded into the same job role group and therefore this will have had little impact on job role group trends. Technicians, however, were mostly re-coded into a different job role group. Technicians were classed as 'direct care' in 2023, but most of them were re-coded into the 'other' job role group in 2024. As such, when interpreting job role group changes between 2023 and 2024, around 400 of the decrease in direct care roles and 400 of the increase in 'other' roles was due to this change.

Further detail can be found on our website, in our [statement on job role changes in 2023/24](#).

Table 5 shows the number of adult social services filled posts in local authorities, split by job role group. The change in the number of filled posts, between both 2012 and 2024 and between 2023 and 2024, has not been evenly distributed in terms of job role groups.

**Table 5. Estimated number of adult social services filled posts by job role group, 2012 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

Year	All job roles	Managers	Regulated professions	Direct care	Other
2012	150,600	21,600	20,000	82,900	26,100
2013	140,700	20,200	20,100	74,800	25,500
2014	130,100	18,700	19,000	68,500	23,800
2015	120,100	18,000	19,200	60,700	22,200
2016	112,800	17,200	19,200	55,700	20,700
2017	109,200	17,100	19,400	52,600	20,100
2018	112,100	17,600	20,400	52,600	21,500
2019	113,200	17,300	21,100	52,500	22,400
2020	114,100	18,200	21,200	52,100	22,600
2021	115,100	18,100	21,300	52,400	23,300
2022	113,900	18,400	21,300	50,400	23,800
2023	117,400	18,800	22,600	50,700	25,300
2024	119,900	19,600	23,600	49,800	26,800
Change 2012-24	-30,700	-2,000	3,600	-33,100	800
% change 2012-24	-20%	-9%	18%	-40%	3%
Change 2023-24	2,500	800	1,000	-900	1,500
% change 2023-24	2%	4%	4%	-2%	6%

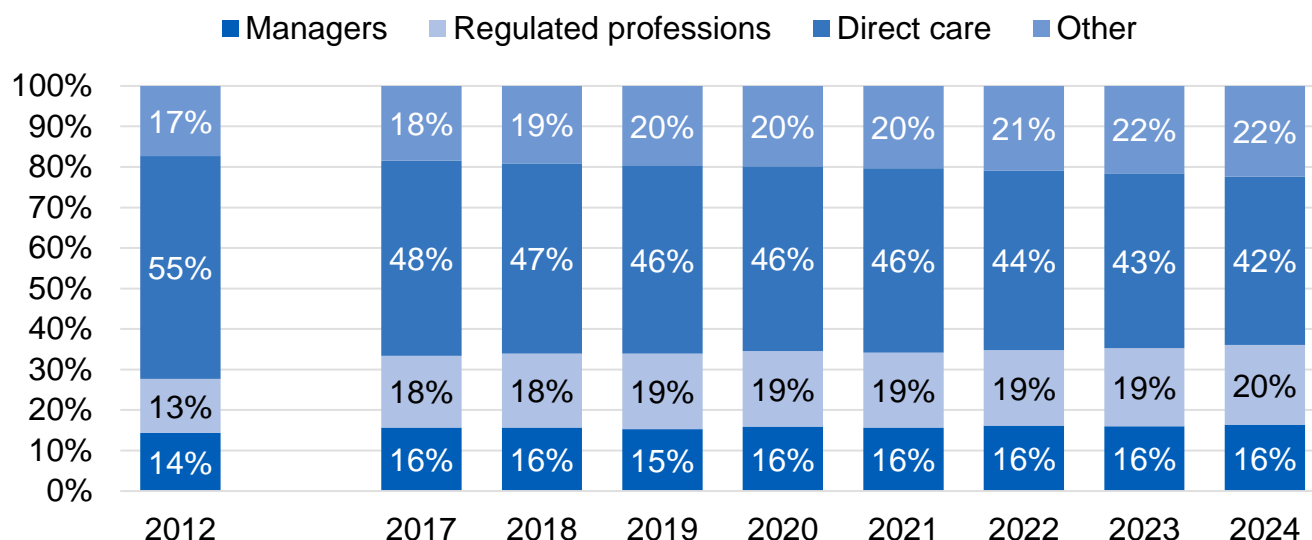
Over the period, two of the four job role groups have increased in absolute terms: regulated professions, which have seen an increase of 3,600 filled posts, and 'other' job roles which increased by 800 filled posts. This trend shows that even during the period of local authority outsourcing of adult social care (2012 to 2017), regulated professions job roles were generally kept within the adult social services departments. In 2024 there were 23,600 regulated professions filled posts; the highest number recorded.

Around two in five of all filled posts in 2024 (49,800 or 42%), were in direct care providing roles, a decrease of 900 from 2023 (as noted above, around 400 of this decrease was a result of the changes in job roles collected). Overall, filled posts in direct care providing roles have reduced by 33,100 (40%) between 2012 and 2024. The number staff in managers filled posts has also increased over time and between 2023 and 2024 the number of filled posts increased by 850 (4%).

In local authorities there has been a gradual proportional shift away from direct care providing roles, as shown in Chart 4. Direct care accounted for 55% of the workforce in adult social services departments in 2012 but only 42% in 2024. In contrast the other three job role groups have all increased in proportion over time. Regulated professions saw the largest change, increasing from 13% in 2012 to 20% of the local authority adult social services workforce in 2024.

**Chart 4. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts by job role group, 2012 and 2017 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



In 2023/24, across all sectors of the adult social care workforce, including adult social care related roles in the NHS and independent care sectors, there were an estimated 21,500 social worker filled posts. 89% of these were employed by adult social services departments in local authorities. In contrast local authority filled posts only made up 7% of all adult social care filled posts. For more information about the proportion of the adult social care workforce in 2023/24 across different sectors and job roles, see the latest [The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England](#) report.

As at September 2024, there were 23,600 regulated professions filled posts in the local authority sector. This was predominantly made up of social worker filled posts (19,200 filled posts or 82% of the local authority regulated professions workforce). Occupational therapist filled posts accounted for 14% of the regulated professions workforce (3,400 filled posts).

**Table 6. Estimated number of adult social services filled posts as a proportion of the whole adult social care sector, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

Job role	All sectors * (March 2024 and Sep 2024)	Local Authority ** (Sep 2024)	Proportion of all sectors
<b>All job roles</b>	<b>1,705,000</b>	<b>119,900</b>	<b>7%</b>
Managers	123,000	19,600	16%
Regulated professions	62,000	23,600	38%
Social worker	21,500	19,200	89%
Occupational therapist	4,100	3,400	84%
Direct care	1,195,000	49,800	4%
Other	206,000	26,800	13%

\* 'All sectors' data includes the latest local authority information as at September 2024, and independent, posts working for direct payment recipients and NHS data as at March 2024. As such the figures shown are weighted workforce estimates.

\*\* Local authority filled posts here are actual results from the September 2024 data collection.

## 1.3 Number of filled posts by service group

Adult social care filled posts are categorised by the 35 care service types offered in ASC-WDS, these are grouped into four service groups: residential care, day care, domiciliary and community care. The service types allocated into each service group are listed in the [glossary of terms](#) on our website.

Table 7 (below) shows the community care service group accounts for nearly two thirds (62%) of filled posts in local authority adult social services departments in 2024. This service group is historically the largest of all the service groups in the local authority sector and includes social work and care management services, carers support, community support and outreach, occupational or employment related services and other services that are delivered within the community. Commissioning and organisation of these services are also included here.

**Table 7. Estimated number of adult social services filled posts by service group, 2012 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

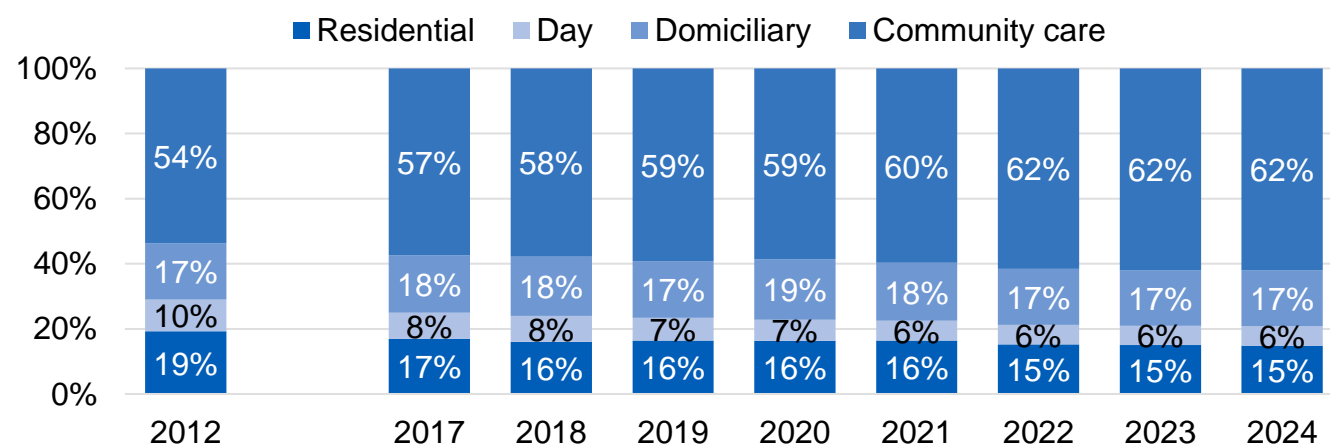
Year	All services	Residential	Day	Domiciliary	Community care
2012	150,600	29,000	14,700	26,000	80,900
2013	140,700	26,000	15,300	25,300	74,000
2014	130,100	25,500	13,200	23,700	67,700
2015	120,100	22,300	11,300	21,900	64,600
2016	112,800	19,000	9,600	21,300	63,000
2017	109,200	18,400	8,800	19,200	62,800
2018	112,100	18,000	8,900	20,500	64,800
2019	113,200	18,600	7,900	19,800	67,000
2020	114,100	18,600	7,500	21,100	66,900
2021	115,100	18,800	7,000	20,500	68,700
2022	113,900	17,300	6,900	19,700	70,100
2023	117,400	17,600	7,000	19,900	72,900
2024	119,900	17,800	7,200	20,600	74,300

Since 2012 the number of filled posts in day care services has more than halved (51%, or 7,500 filled posts). Filled posts in residential services fell by two fifths (39%). Filled posts in domiciliary and community care service groups also decreased between 2012 and 2024 but by a smaller proportion. In 2016 there were more filled posts in local authority domiciliary than residential services for the first time, this is a pattern that has continued to 2024.

Between 2023 and 2024, the change in the number of filled posts in each service group within local authorities varied. All groups have increased in size; domiciliary and day services increased by 3%, community care and by 2% and residential by 1%. The proportion of the workforce across each of the four service groups has remained the same since 2022/23, as shown in Chart 5 below.

**Chart 5. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts by service group, 2012 and 2016 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



## 2. Employment overview





This section covers employment status and zero-hours contract information for local authority adult social services staff. Understanding employment information is useful because it provides insight into the employment practices used in the adult social care sector.

**87%**

employed on a permanent contract

■ Full-time ■ Part-time

62%



38%



**5%**

employed on a zero-hours contract

## Key findings

- The majority (87%) of the workforce in adult social services departments in 2024 were employed on permanent contracts (104,100 filled posts).
- 12% of the regulated professions workforce were indirectly employed (agency, bank/pool or other contracts). One in ten social worker and occupational therapist filled posts were filled by agency workers.
- Nearly two in three (62%) adult social service staff in local authorities worked full-time hours (74,500 filled posts) and 38% worked part-time (45,300 filled posts).
- 5% of workers in adult social services departments were employed on a zero-hours contract in 2024 (7,500 filled posts). This is the same as recorded in 2023.
- In 2024, the majority of workers employed on a zero-hours contract were in residential services (38%) and community care (37%).

## 2.1 Employment status

The majority (92%) of the 119,900 adult social services filled posts in 2024 were permanent and temporary roles (directly employed by the local authority). Most posts (87%) were filled by workers on permanent contracts (104,100 filled posts), with a further 5% of filled posts filled by those working on a temporary basis (5,700 filled posts). The remaining 8% (10,100 filled posts) were filled by workers indirectly employed by local authorities (defined as agency, bank or pool, or 'other' contract types). Chart 6 below shows that the proportion of staff employed on different contract types has remained at similar levels over time.

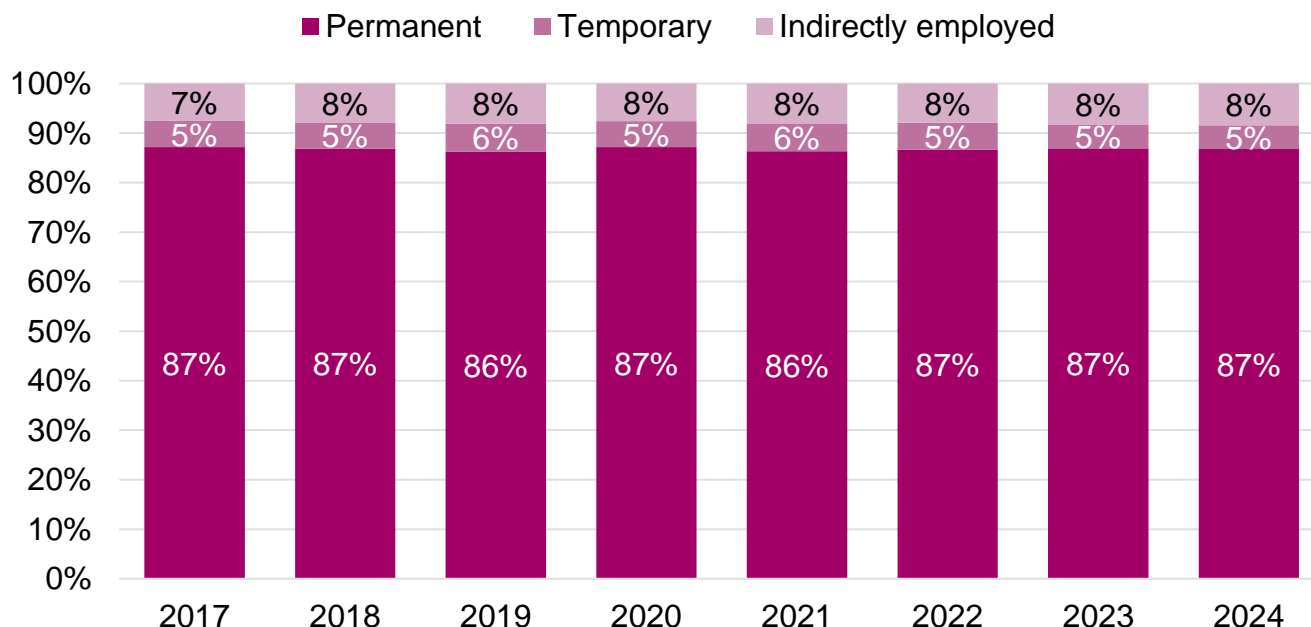
It should be noted that these figures refer to a snapshot in time. Therefore, these estimates should be interpreted as an indication of the average number of the above types of worker being utilised at any one time. The total number of workers used throughout the year that are indirectly employed will be higher.

The employment status of the workforce has remained relatively stable between 2017 and 2024, as shown in Chart 6. While the employment status proportions of the workforce has remained the same, between 2023 and 2024 there was an increase of 2,500 adult social

services filled posts in local authorities. This was predominantly driven by an increase in workers employed on permanent contracts (up 2,000, or 2%). The number of filled posts for temporary workers also increased (up 150 filled posts, 3%) as well as agency and bank/pool staff (up 275 and 125 filled posts, or 6% and 3% respectively) over the period.

**Chart 6. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts by employment status, 2017 to 2024**

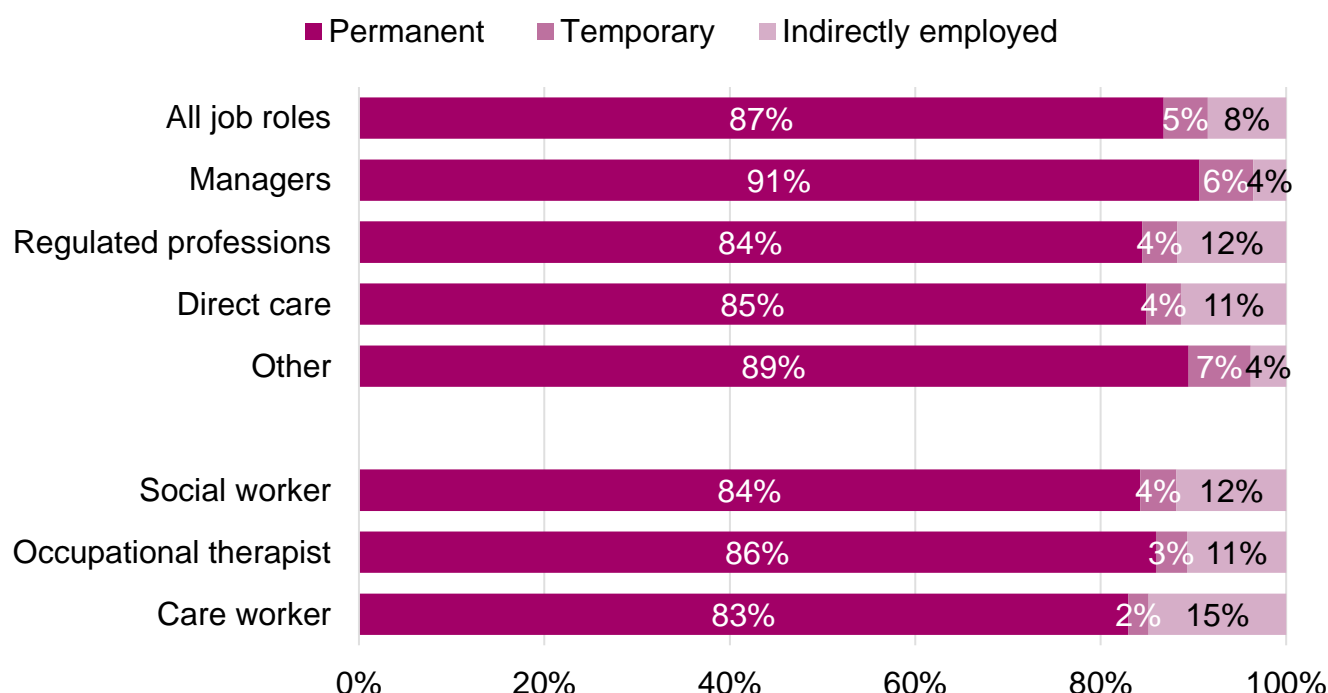
Source: Skills for Care estimates



In terms of job role groups, employment status type varied slightly, as seen in Chart 7 below. Notably, a higher proportion of permanent workers were seen in managers roles (91%), which is unchanged from 2023. Key selected job roles within the local authority adult social services workforce are shown in the chart below (social workers, occupational therapists and care workers).

**Chart 7. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts by employment status, job role group and selected job roles, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



## 2.2 Working time

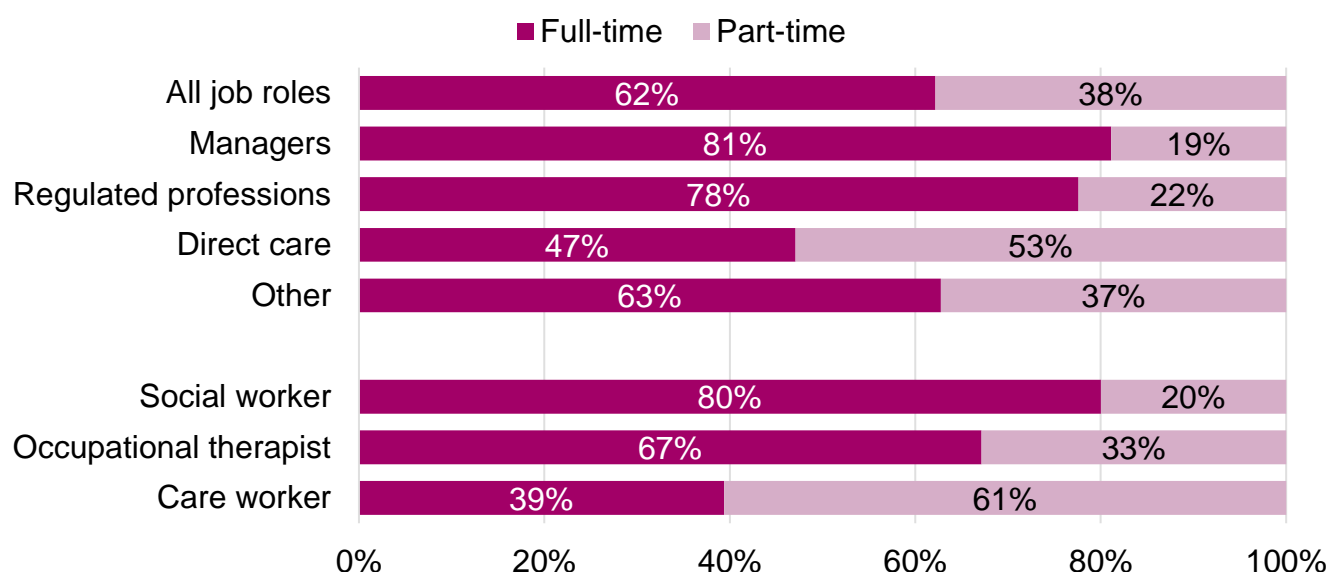
Nearly two in three of the adult social services workforce in local authorities (62%) worked full-time hours (32 or more hours per week) in 2024. This equated to 74,500 filled posts. The remaining 38% worked part-time (0.5 to 31.5 hours per week), accounting for 45,300 filled posts.

The proportion of adult social care staff working either full-time or part-time hours varied across different job roles. Chart 8 below shows that managers had the highest proportion of workers working full-time hours (81%) while staff in direct care roles had the highest proportion of part-time hours (53%). Care workers are notable with the lowest proportion of full-time filled posts (39%) which is likely due to the typical shift patterns of this role.

Between 2023 and 2024 the proportion of staff in local authority adult social services departments working full-time hours increased from 61% to 62%. This increase was also seen more broadly across adult social care, in the local authority and independent sectors in 2022/23 and 2023/24. For these two sectors the proportion of the workforce working full-time increased from 56% in 2022/23 to 59% in 2023/24. International recruitment contributed to this increase in the independent sector due to visa requirements.

**Chart 8. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts working full-time or part-time hours by job role group and selected job roles, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



## 2.3 Zero-hours contracts

A zero-hours contract is a contract type where the employer is not obliged to provide any minimum working hours. For some workers, a zero-hours contract can lead to challenges around financial planning and feelings of job insecurity. For others, the flexibility can appeal.

In 2024, across all job roles there were 6,500 (5%) adult social services filled posts in local authorities were employed on a zero-hours contract. This is the same as recorded in 2023.

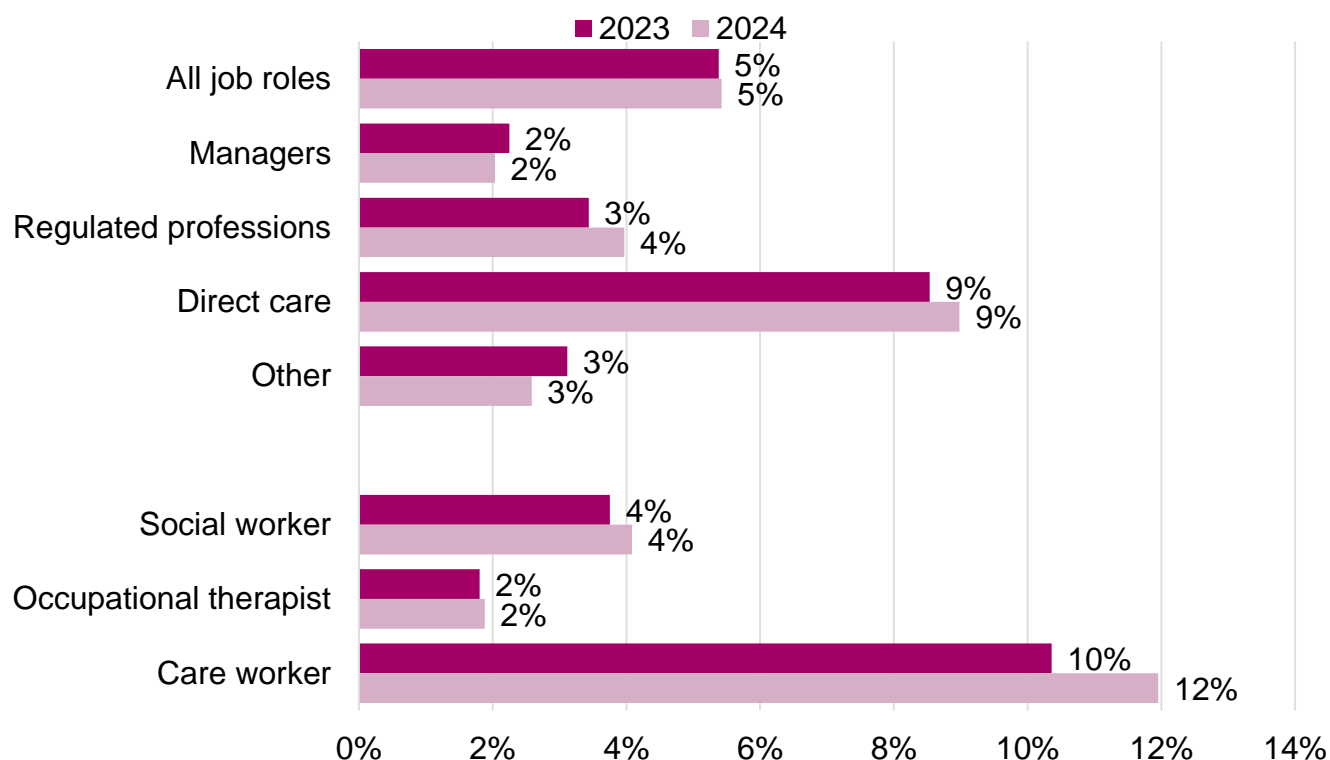
There has been a slight increase in the proportion of staff employed on a zero-hours contract in the regulated professions and direct care job role groups between 2023 and 2024. Chart 9 below shows the proportion of workers in regulated professions employed on a zero-hours contract increased by 0.5 percentage points and direct care by 0.4 percentage points.

The proportion of workers in the managers and 'other' job role group employed on a zero-hours contract slightly decreased between 2023 and 2024. The proportion of managers decreased by 0.2 percentage points and the 'other' job role group decreased of 0.5 percentage points.

Since 2021 the number of social worker filled posts employed on a zero-hours contract increased by 100 (13%). The number of social worker filled posts employed on a zero-hours contract has risen year-on-year, for more detailed information, please see our [Headline social worker](#) report.

**Chart 9. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts employed on a zero-hours contract by job role group and selected job roles, 2023 and 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



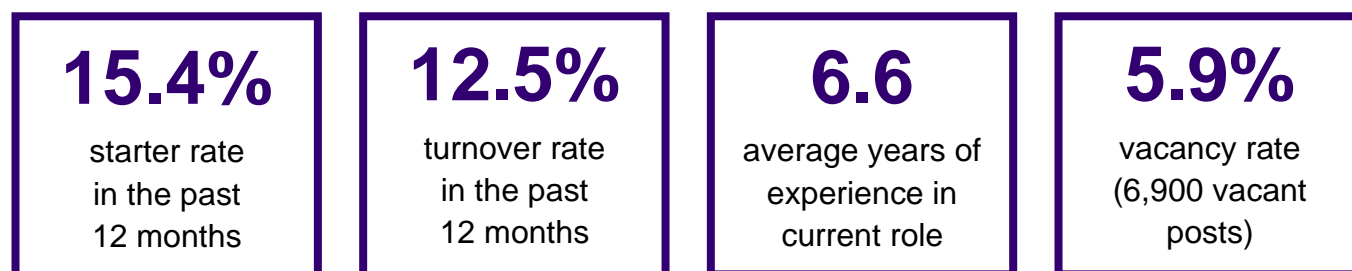
The use of zero-hours contracts within adult social services departments in local authorities is considerably lower than within the independent sector where 21% of all job roles were zero-hours contracts in 2023/24.

[‘The state of adult social care sector and workforce in England’](#) report found that in 2023/24, workers on zero-hours contracts were more likely to be employed in domiciliary care services. Across all sectors of adult social care, 37% of all workers in domiciliary care services were employed on zero-hours contracts at that time. However, as at September 2024, only 8% of local authority sector staff in domiciliary care services were employed on a zero-hours contract.

## 3. Recruitment and retention



This section covers information about starters, leavers, vacant posts, experience in role and average sickness for adult social services staff in local authorities.



## Key findings

- The starter rate for all job roles in 2024 was 15.4%, down from 16.2% in 2023. Of those new starters from October 2023 to September 2024, workers in regulated professions roles had the highest starter rate (17.0%).
- Between 2023 and 2024, the turnover rate of staff in adult social services departments in local authorities fell from 13.0% to 12.5%, indicating increased retention within the workforce.
- The vacancy rate has consistently decreased from a peak of 8.1% as at September 2022 to 7.2% at September 2023 and again to 5.9% as at September 2024. This is a decrease of around 2,400 vacant posts over the two-year period.
- The average number of sickness days lost was 10.8 per employee; this equates to approximately 1.2 million days lost due to sickness in the previous 12 months.

The high-quality workforce intelligence that we collect and analyse is key to understanding recruitment and retention issues. This workforce intelligence helps to keep recruitment and retention at the forefront of social care debates, providing statistical, rather than just anecdotal, evidence. It's also been used to develop [resources to support recruitment](#) within the sector.

## 3.1 Starter and turnover rates

In 2024 there were 16,900 starters in adult social services departments in local authorities, equivalent to a starter rate of 15.4%. This includes those workers that were new to their role in the previous 12 months, all new roles within adult social care services department teams, or roles in services which were newly opened within the past year. The number of starters has decreased by 450 since 2023, despite the number of filled posts increasing by 2,500 between September 2023 and September 2024.

Starter rates were higher amongst regulated professions (17.0%) and 'other' job roles (17.9%). However, the starter rate for direct care roles was lower at 15.4% and the care worker starter rate was 15.1%.

The turnover rate in 2024 was 12.5% (13,700 leavers) which includes leavers from local authority adult social care services department teams or services which were in operation as at



September 2024. Local authorities also reported that there were an additional 1,200 leavers which were employed by teams or services that closed between September 2023 and September 2024.

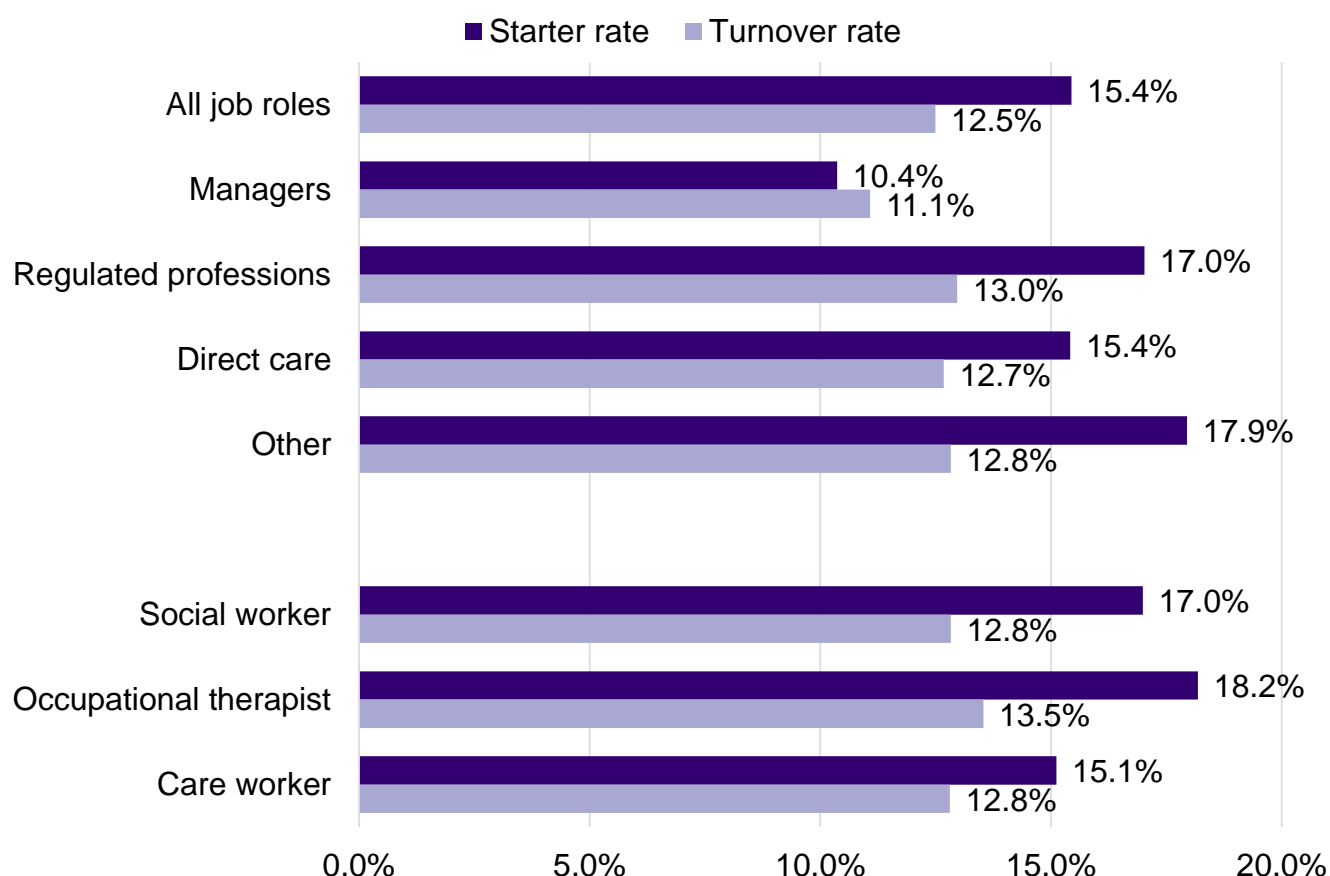
Regulated professions had the highest turnover rate (13.0%), workers in direct care roles had a similar rate of 12.7%. Managers had the lowest turnover rate (11.1%) indicating that there are good levels of retention for these roles in local authority adult social services departments.

Chart 10 compares starter and turnover rates in local authorities by job role group and selected job roles in 2024. Starter rates were higher than turnover rates for all job role groups except the managers job role group, where the turnover rate (11.1%) was 0.7 percentage points higher than the starter rate (10.4%).

Of the selected job roles analysed, occupational therapists had both the highest starter rate as at September 2024 (18.2% or 600 starters) and the highest turnover rate (13.5% or 425 leavers).

#### **Chart 10. Estimated starter and turnover rates in adult social services departments by job role group and selected job role, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

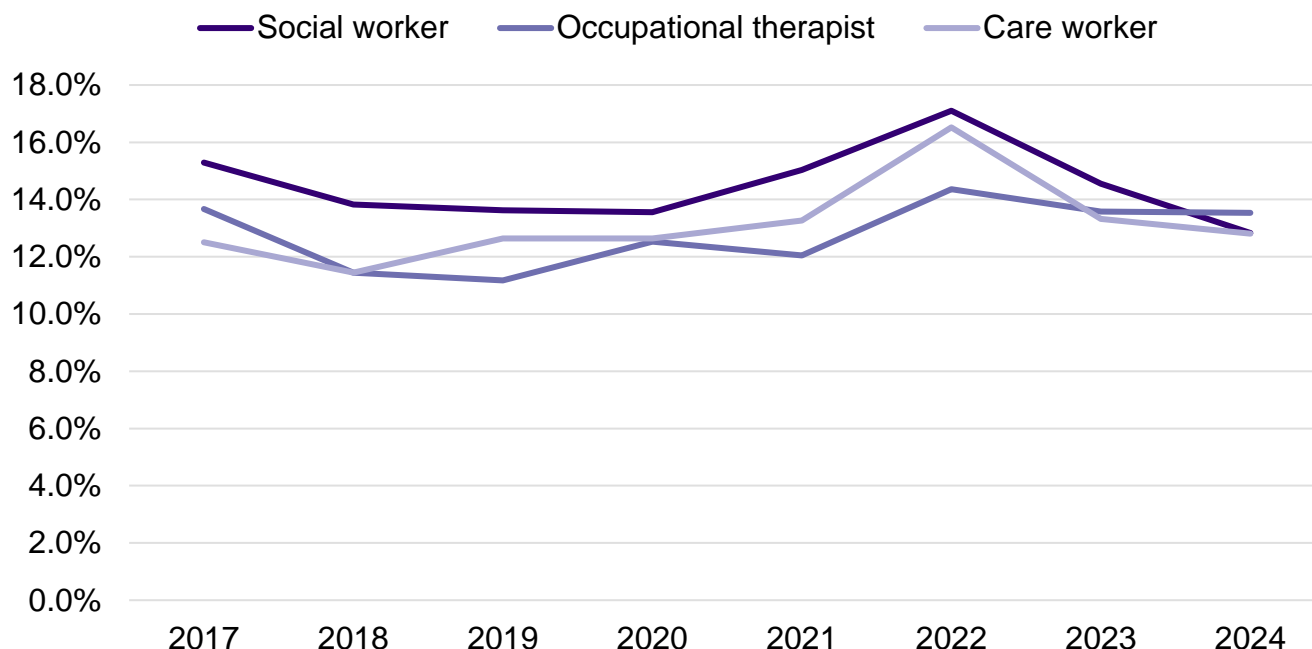


In 2024 turnover rates were lower across all job roles analysed in this report, compared to those previously seen in 2023, as show in Chart 11. This suggests fewer people are leaving their

roles, indicating higher levels of retention, which has contributed to the increase in filled posts over the period.

### Chart 11. Estimated turnover rates in adult social services departments by selected job role, 2017 to 2024

Source: Skills for Care estimates



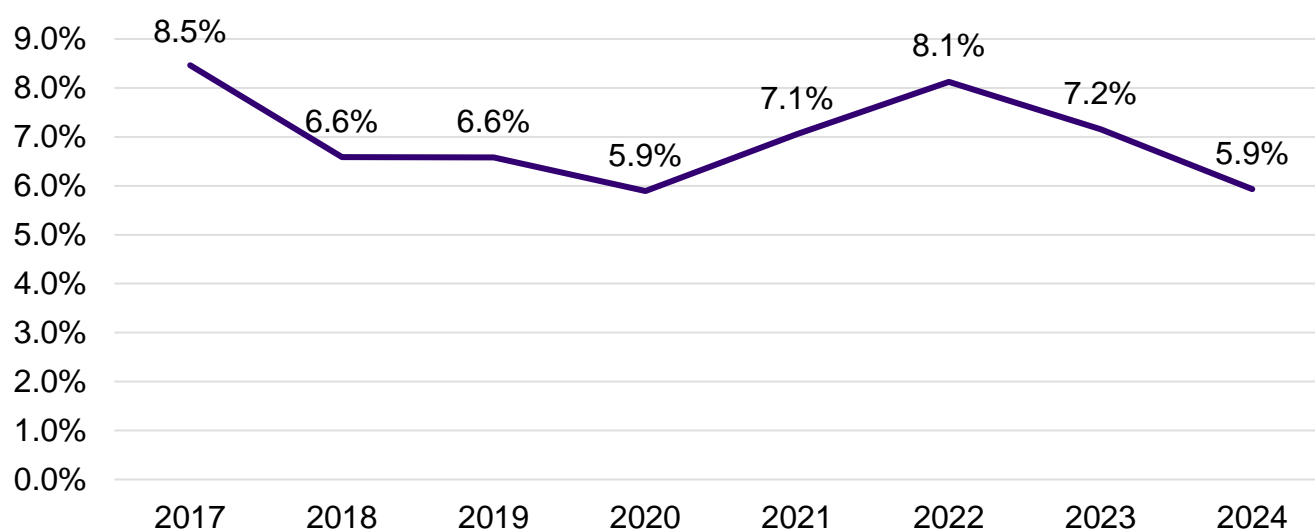
In general, the turnover rates for staff within social care departments in local authorities are much lower than rates in the independent social care sector. As at March 2024, the turnover rate in the independent sector was 25.8%, 13.3 percentage points higher than the local authority sector at September 2024. Further analysis of this can be found in the latest [‘The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England’](#) report.

## 3.2 Vacancy rates

There were 6,900 vacant posts in adult social services departments within local authorities as at September 2024, a decrease of 1,400 from September 2023. This equates to a vacancy rate of 5.9% in September 2024, a decrease from 7.2% in September 2023 and 8.1% in 2022 as shown in the chart below.

**Chart 12. Estimated vacancy rate in adult social services departments, 2017 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



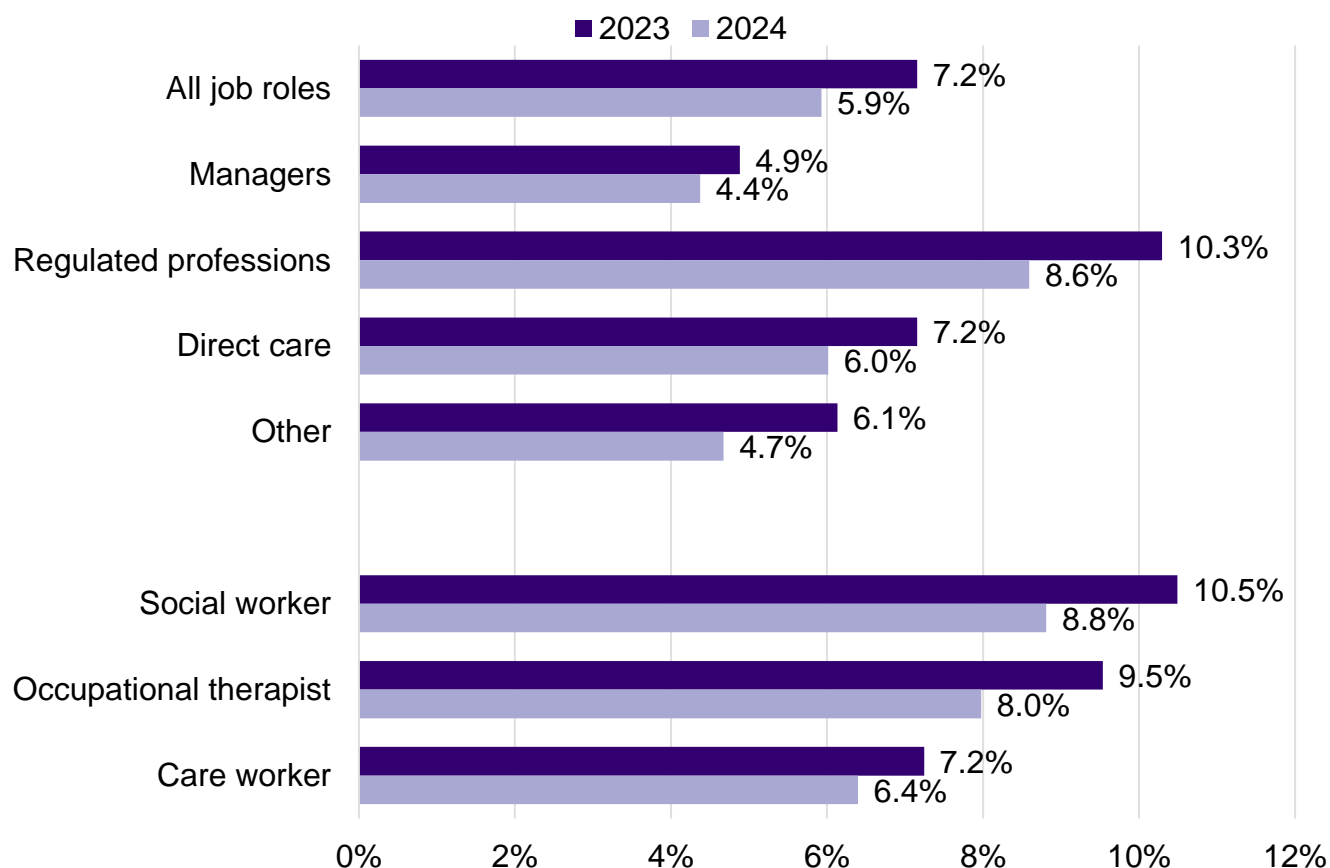
As at September 2024, all job role groups saw a decrease in vacancy rates. Chart 13 below shows that regulated professions saw the biggest decrease from 10.3% to 8.6% between 2023 and 2024 (or 325 vacant posts). However, this group still had the highest vacancy rate in 2024. Managers had the lowest vacancy rate (4.4%) which remained at a similar level to the previous year (4.9%), indicating an adequate or good supply of people taking these roles.

Vacancy rates across the whole adult social care sector have been decreasing since 2022; the independent sector in particular continues to see falling vacancy rates, from 10.7% in 2022, to 9.9% in 2023 and 8.1% in 2024. For more information about vacancy rates across the adult social care sector, visit our [website](#).

In the independent sector in March 2024, staff in direct care roles had the highest vacancy rate at 9.3%. This was reflected in the vacancy rates for care workers, at 10.0%. Regulated professions also had a higher vacancy rate of 8.3%. The majority of the independent sector regulated professions workforce are regulated nurses; social workers and occupational therapists in 2023/24 were nearly all employed by local authorities. We have therefore not included independent sector comparisons for social workers and occupational therapists due to a lack of comparable data.

**Chart 13. Estimated vacancy rates in adult social services departments by job role group and selected job role, 2023 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



As at September 2024, care workers account for nearly a quarter (24%) of the workforce employed in local authority adult social services departments. The vacancy rate for care workers in adult social services departments in September 2022 was 9.2%, the highest ever recorded for this job role. However, in September 2023 the vacancy rate had fallen to 7.2% and again decreased in September 2024 to 6.4%. For further details of care worker vacancy trends, please see Table T6.2 (Number of vacant posts by local area and year) of the accompanying [reference tables](#).

This decrease may be in part be due to international recruitment, after the care worker job role was added to the Shortage Occupation List in February 2022. For more information on how international recruitment has impacted the local authority sector, see the [International recruitment](#) section of this report. Alternatively, a full analysis of the impact of international recruitment across the whole of the adult social care workforce in 2023/24 can be found on the [Workforce Intelligence website](#).

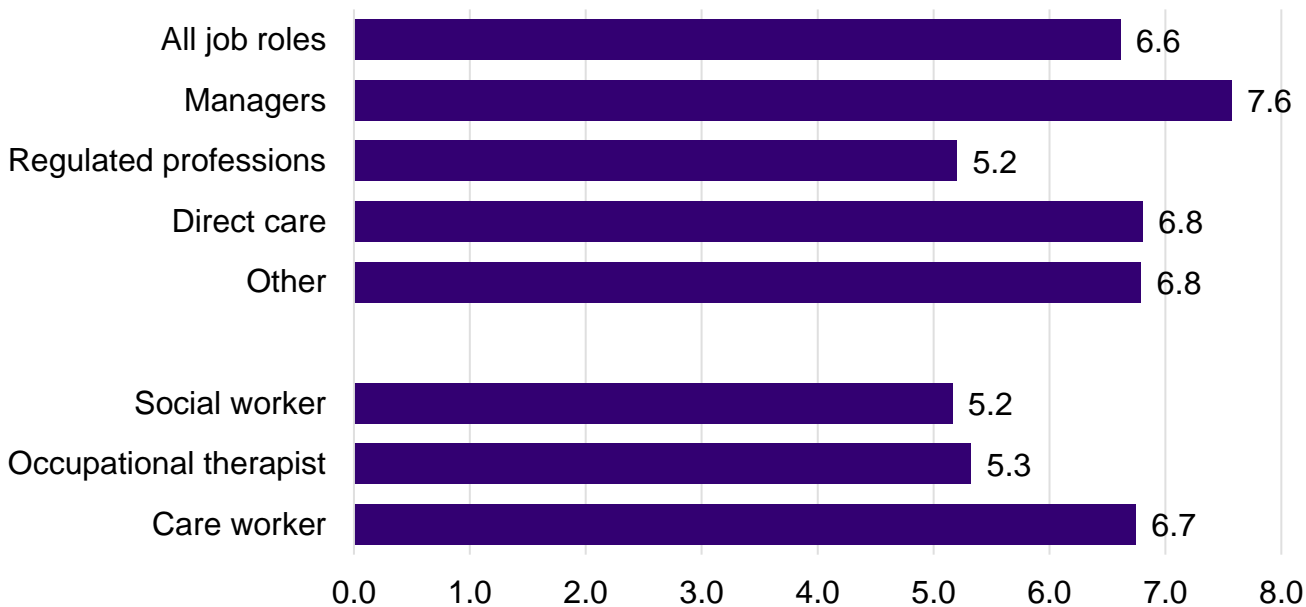
### 3.3 Experience in role

A further indication of good retention rates is the average experience of a worker in their role, that is the length of time they have been employed in a specific post. The more experience a worker has then the more skills and knowledge are retained by the employer. In 2024, the average worker in adult social services departments in local authorities in England was 6.6 years. This is a decrease from 2023 when the average was 7.0 years.

Experience in role varied between job role groups, with managers having the highest levels of experience (7.6 years) while staff in regulated professions roles had the lowest levels of experience with 5.2 years. Lower levels of experience in role can also be linked to a higher reliance on agency staff for particular job roles, as outlined in Section 2.1.

**Chart 14. Estimated average experience in role (in years) of adult social services filled posts by job role group and selected job roles, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

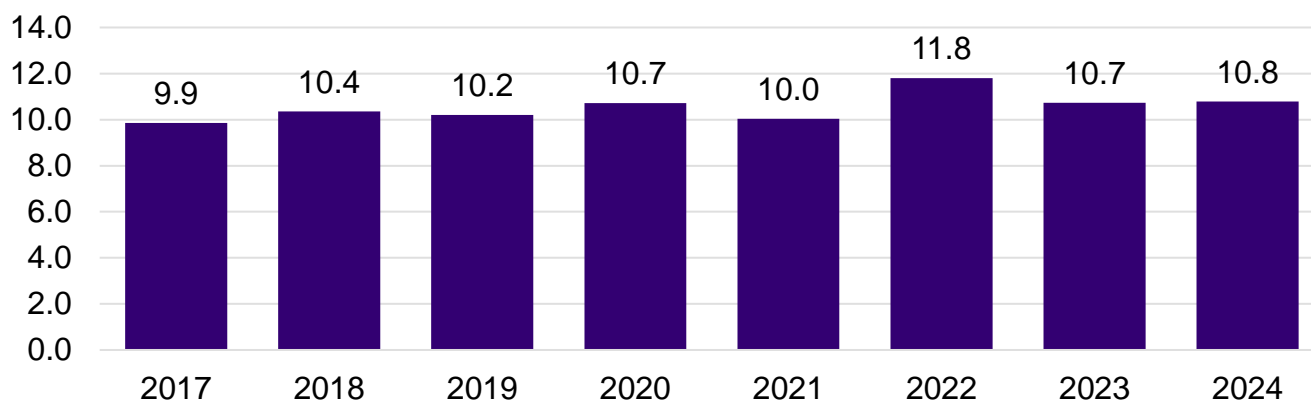


### 3.4 Average sickness days

The average (mean) number of sickness days for the 109,700 directly employed (permanent and temporary contracted workers only) adult social services staff in local authorities across all job roles was 10.8 days as at September 2024. This is an increase of 0.1 days from 2023 but still lower than the peak average sickness in as at September 2022 (11.8 days) as shown in Chart 15.

**Chart 15. Estimated mean number of sickness days of adult social services employees, 2017 to 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



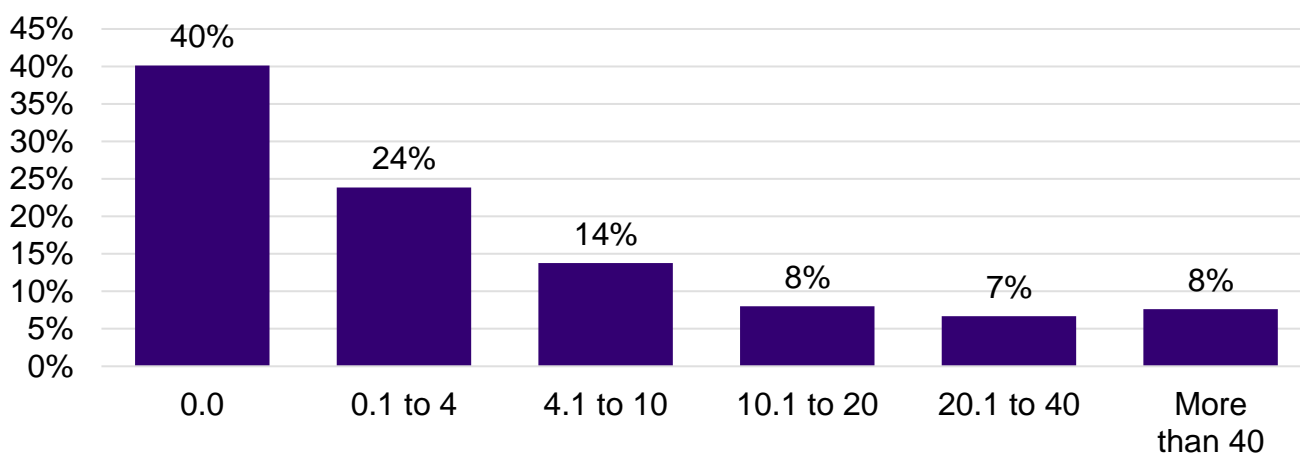
In 2024 workers in direct care job roles had the highest number of sickness days with an average of 13.3 days. Managers had fewer sickness days on average, at 8.1 days.

The average (mean) number of sickness days for workers in adult social services in local authorities in September 2024 was relatively high at 10.8 days, compared to the independent sector (4.9 days mean average number of sickness days in March 2024). This may reflect differing working terms and conditions between the two sectors. The 10.8 mean average days of sickness in local authorities in 2024 equates to just under 1.2 million estimated days lost to sickness in the year.

It is important to note, as shown in Chart 16, that two in five workers (40%) had no sickness days and nearly two thirds of workers (64%) had four or fewer sickness days in the previous 12 months. 8% of workers had over 40 sickness days, and particularly high numbers of sickness days can have an impact on the overall mean.

**Chart 16. Estimated distribution of sickness days of adult social services employees, 2024**

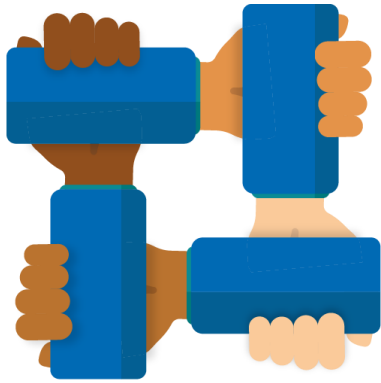
Source: Skills for Care estimates



In addition to collecting information on average sickness, local authorities were asked if they pay care workers more than Statutory Sick Pay if they cannot work because of illness. This is not part of the mandatory criteria, but data from the ASC-WDS showed that as at September 2024, of the 114 local authorities that responded, 84 (74%) said that they do pay care workers more than Statutory Sick Pay.

The latest available [sickness absence data for the overall UK employment and labour market population](#) includes data to 2022. The average number of days lost through sickness absence per worker in the labour market population in 2022 was 5.7 days. This shows that workers in adult social services departments in local authorities took on average 5 more days sickness compared to other sectors.

## 4. Demographics





This section contains detailed demographics information about local authority adult social services staff in 2024 including gender, age and ethnicity.



## Key Findings

- The proportion of male workers in the adult social services departments in local authorities increased from 18% in 2023 to 19% in 2024. The 'other' job role group had the largest proportion of male workers (24%).
- Workers with a white ethnic background made up 79% of the adult social care workforce, compared to 81% of the [population of England](#). Workers with an Asian/ Asian British ethnicity made up 6% of the workforce and 10% of the population. Workers with a Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British ethnicity made up 11% of the workforce compared to 4% of the population.
- The average age of adult social services staff in local authorities as at September 2024 was 47.6 years. This was 4.3 years older than the average adult social care worker in the independent sector as at March 2024 (43.3 years).

## 4.1 Gender

In 2020 the gender question was changed in the ASC-WDS from 'gender' to 'gender identity' and the option of 'other' was added alongside 'male', 'female' and 'I don't know'. In 2024, around 25 filled posts (0.02%) across adult social services in local authorities were recorded as having 'other' gender identity.

It is important to note that our data is reported by employers (local authorities), not the workers themselves and this may result in an underestimation of people with a gender identity other than male and female recorded. The following detailed analysis includes 'male' and 'female' gender identities only. The 'other' gender identity responses are not included in the detailed analysis because the national base is very low, and we are still understanding its representativeness.

As at September 2024, of the 119,900 filled posts in adult social services filled posts in local authorities 81% of workers were female and 19% were male. Since September 2023 the number of male workers has increased by 1 percentage point: this is the first time that 19% of the adult social services workforce have been male since 2015. This increase in male workers

has also been seen in the independent sector where 21% of the workforce were male, as at March 2024.

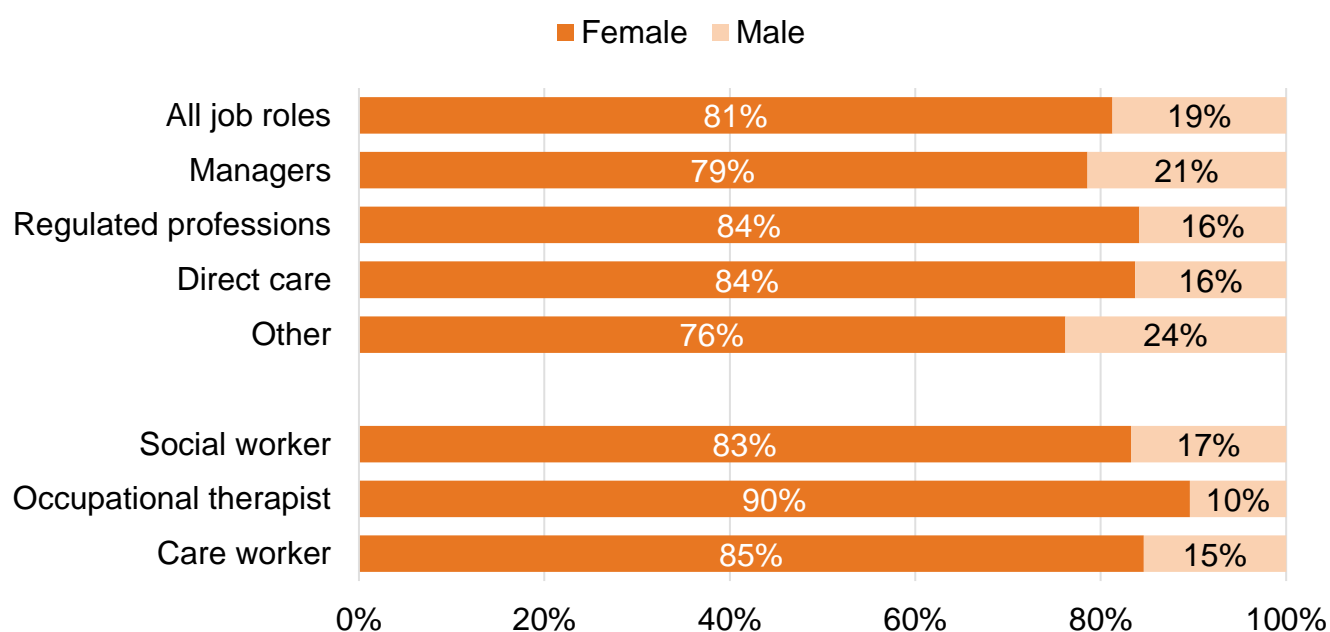
International recruitment could be a cause for the increase in the proportion of male workers within adult social services departments. As outlined in the [International recruitment](#) section of this report, the data collection at this time is limited and prevents a complete analysis of this part of the workforce. However, of those non-British workers we can identify as at September 2024, 22% were male.

In the independent sector, the increase in male staff in across adult social care has largely been driven by international recruitment of workers into direct care roles in the UK. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024, 29% of internationally recruited care worker and senior care worker roles were male, compared to just 15% of domestically recruited care workers and 17% of domestically recruited senior care workers. For more information, visit our [website](#).

Chart 17 shows that the proportion of female workers was highest in the regulated professions and direct care job role groups (both 84%). The majority of occupational therapists were female workers (90%) but there was a lower proportion of females in social worker roles (83%). The other job role group had the highest proportion of male workers (24%), followed by managers at 21%.

#### **Chart 17. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts by gender (where known) by job role group and selected job roles, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



The proportion of male and female workers in all the job roles analysed here saw minimal change between 2023 and 2024, apart from care workers. In 2023, 14% of care workers were male but this increased to 15% in 2024. As discussed above, this is likely linked to an increase

in international recruitment of care workers over the period as typically this group of workers has a higher proportion of males than domestically recruited care workers.

## 4.2 Age

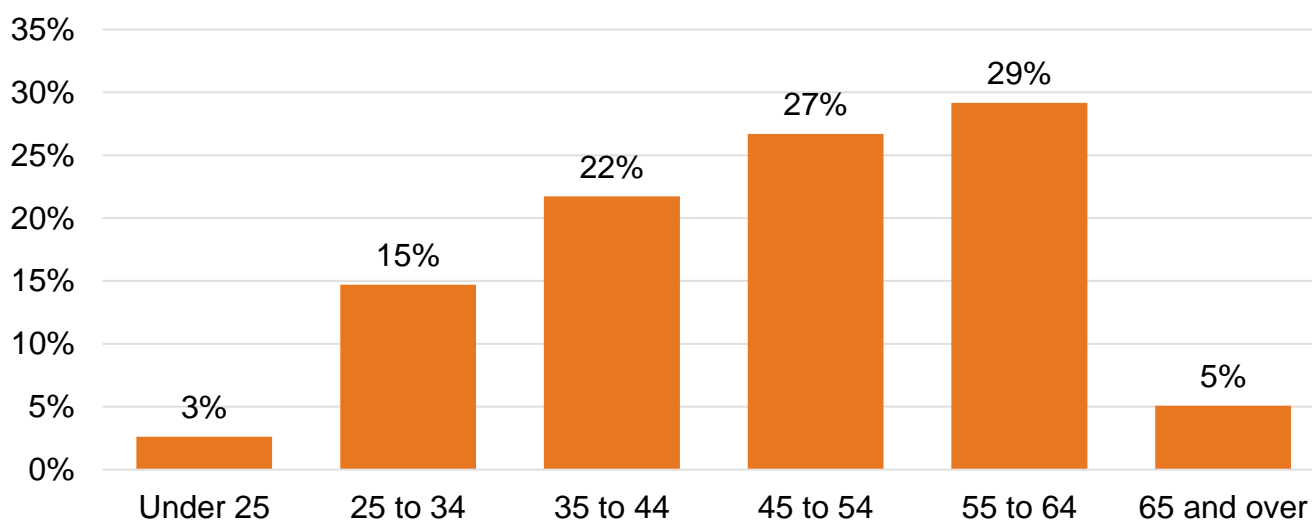
The mean age of workers in local authority adult social services filled posts in 2024 was 47.6 years. The average age was the same in 2023 and it has been at a similar level since 2014, when the average age first increased to over 47 years (from 46.9 years to 47.2 years).

The average age of workers in adult social services filled posts varied slightly by job role group. Managers and workers in direct care roles had the highest average age of 48.6 years. Workers in regulated professions had the lowest average age of 45.1 years.

Chart 18 shows the age distribution of all workers in adult social services filled posts in local authorities at September 2024. Very few filled posts (3%) were filled by workers aged under 25. Nearly two thirds of the adult social services filled posts in local authorities (61%) were filled by workers aged 45 or over and a third (34%) by workers aged 55 or over. From a workforce planning point of view, workers aged 50 and over could retire within the next ten to fifteen years.

### Chart 18. Estimated proportion of local authority adult social services filled posts by age band, 2024

Source: Skills for Care estimates



Local authority adult social services workers are older, on average, than workers in the independent sector. In 2024 the average age for independent sector workers was 43.3 years, 4.3 years less than the average for local authority sector workers. The average age of workers in the independent sector decreased between 2023 and 2024, from 44.1 years to 43.3 years. This drop in age can be attributed to a large increase in international recruitment within the independent sector, with those workers coming from overseas typically being younger than workers who were recruited domestically.

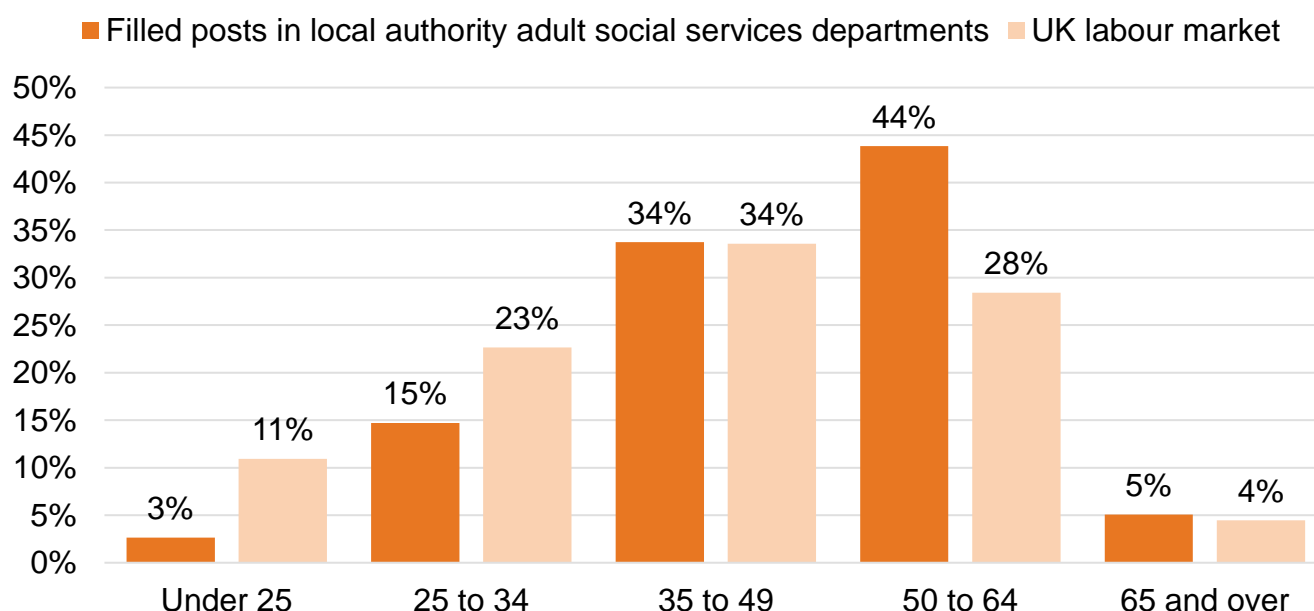
In comparison, [NHS workforce statistics](#) reported as at September 2024 a higher proportion of their workers were aged under 45 years (5% under 25, 25% aged 25 to 34, and 25% aged 35 to 44). There were fewer NHS workers in the older age groups compared to adult social services filled posts in local authorities (23% aged 45 to 54, 18% aged 55 to 64, and 3% aged 65 and over). This shows that the NHS on average has a younger workforce than adult social services departments in local authorities.

Chart 19 compares the age of workers in adult social services filled posts in local authorities to the [UK labour market population of people in work](#). Figures for the labour market in 'England only' were not available. The chart shows that workers in adult social services filled posts in local authorities are older than those from the labour market population. Nearly half (49%) of the local authority workers were aged 50 and over compared to just 32% of the labour market.

A smaller proportion of the workforce in adult social services departments were aged under 25 (3%) compared to same age band in the wider UK labour market (11%). Staff aged 25 to 34 accounted for 15% of the workforce in adult social services departments, compared to 23% in the labour market. For staff aged 35 to 49 accounted for the same proportion of the workforce in adult social services departments compared the labour market (34%), suggesting that by this age staff are more likely to take up roles in adult social services.

#### Chart 19. Comparison of estimated age of workers in adult social services filled posts against labour market by age bands, 2024

Source: Skills for Care estimates, ONS UK labour market population figures



### 4.3 Ethnicity

The majority (79%) of the adult social services filled posts within local authorities in 2024 were carried out by workers with a white ethnic background. This is a decrease from 81% in 2023.

Across all job roles 2% of the workforce had a mixed ethnicity/ multiple ethnic group, 6% had an Asian/ Asian British ethnicity, 11% of the adult social services workforce had a Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British ethnicity, and 1% had an 'other' ethnic background.

As mentioned in the [International recruitment](#) section of this report, there are internationally recruited workers within the adult social services workforce in local authorities. Of those workers we can identify as being recruited internationally, 50% had a white ethnic background. This is a much lower proportion compared to the workforce in adult social services departments as a whole.

**Table 8. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts by ethnicity, job role group and selected job roles, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

Job role	White	Mixed/ multiple ethnic groups	Asian/ Asian British	Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	Other
<b>All job roles</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Managers	85%	2%	5%	7%	1%
Regulated professions	71%	3%	7%	18%	1%
Social worker	69%	3%	7%	20%	1%
Occupational therapist	84%	3%	5%	8%	0%
Direct care	79%	2%	6%	12%	1%
Care worker	76%	2%	6%	14%	1%
Other	83%	2%	7%	7%	1%

As shown in

Table 8 above, in 2024 the regulated professions job role group was the most ethnically diverse with 71% of filled posts filled by a worker with a white ethnic background.

Regulated professions also had the highest proportion of Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British ethnicity workers (18%). This is particularly true of social worker filled posts which saw 20% of workers with a Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British ethnicity.

In comparison, managers had the least diverse workforce with 7% of workers having a Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British ethnicity, 5% had an Asian/ Asian British ethnicity, 2% had a Mixed ethnicity/ Multiple ethnic group and 1% had an Other ethnic background.

In 2024 the ethnic diversity of the adult social services workforce in local authorities in England varied between regions. In the North East 96% of the workforce had a white ethnic background, while in London 41% of workers had a white ethnic background.

The ethnicity of workers in the wider population also varied across regions (as reported in the [2021 census](#)). Table 9 shows that in general, the ethnicity of workers in adult social service filled posts in local authorities reflected that of the wider population.

However, as at September 2024 there was a lower proportion of workers in adult social services filled posts with an Asian/ Asian British ethnicity (6%), compared to the general population in 2021 (10%). Conversely, there was a higher proportion of workers in adult social services filled posts with a Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British ethnicity (11%) compared to the general population (4%).

**Table 9. Estimated proportion of adult social services filled posts by ethnicity and region, compared to the wider general population, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates, Census 2021

Region	White	Mixed/ multiple ethnic groups	Asian/ Asian British	Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	Other
Adult social services workforce in local authorities					
<b>England</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>1%</b>
Eastern	78%	2%	5%	13%	1%
East Midlands	84%	2%	6%	7%	1%
London	41%	4%	13%	41%	2%
North East	96%	1%	1%	1%	0%
North West	87%	1%	5%	6%	0%
South East	82%	2%	7%	8%	1%
South West	91%	2%	2%	5%	0%
West Midlands	75%	2%	10%	13%	0%
Yorkshire and the Humber	87%	2%	6%	5%	1%
General population					
<b>England</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>2%</b>
Eastern	86%	3%	6%	3%	1%
East Midlands	86%	2%	8%	3%	1%
London	54%	6%	21%	14%	6%
North East	93%	1%	4%	1%	1%
North West	86%	2%	8%	2%	1%
South East	86%	3%	7%	2%	1%
South West	93%	2%	3%	1%	1%
West Midlands	77%	3%	13%	5%	2%
Yorkshire and the Humber	85%	2%	9%	2%	1%

### 4.3.1 Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard

Skills for Care has developed the [Social Care Workforce Race Equality Standard \(SC-WRES\)](#) which is an improvement programme that has been designed for local authorities on their journey to race equity. It comprises of nine indicators which organisations can use to measure the experiences of people from minoritised ethnic backgrounds, develop action plans from the findings and make improvements.

Local authorities are asked to collect and submit data annually, for nine key areas that may highlight differences in experiences of people from ethnic minority backgrounds. The indicators listed below allow organisations to compare staff experience across issues including bullying, harassment, and learning and development.

#### The nine key indicators:

- Pay bands
- Appointed from short list
- Disciplinary process
- Fitness-to-practice
- Funded non-mandatory continuous professional development
- Harassment, bullying or abuse from service users, relatives or the public
- Harassment, bullying or abuse from colleagues and managers
- Turnover of directly employed staff
- Senior management membership

In March 2024 Skills for Care published the [SC-WRES 2023 report](#) which highlighted the differences in experience of workers from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background between September and November 2023. The annual data SC-WRES collection took place again in autumn 2024 and an updated report including the new findings will be published in May 2025.

# 5. Pay





This section contains pay information about local authority adult social services staff in **September 2024** including mean average full-time equivalent (FTE) annual pay, nominal pay trends and real terms pay trends.

<b>£95,700</b> senior management mean FTE pay	<b>£43,000</b> social worker mean FTE pay	<b>£26,100</b> care worker mean FTE pay	<b>£24,800</b> ancillary staff mean FTE pay
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## Key findings

- Senior management had the highest mean average full-time equivalent (FTE) annual salary in adult social services departments as at September 2024, at £95,700. Ancillary staff had the lowest, at £24,800.
- All job roles saw a rise in their nominal salary between 2023 and 2024. This was notable among direct care roles with senior care worker pay increasing by 6.4%, care worker pay by 9.0% and support and outreach staff pay by 7.6%.
- However, in real terms (adjusting for inflation) between 2016 and 2024 workers in many roles saw their pay decrease. This included staff in social worker and occupational therapist roles, both down by 5.3% over the period.
- The support worker job role was new to the data collection in September 2024 and workers in these filled posts accounted for 3% of the workforce in adult social services departments. The average FTE annual salary for this role was £24,900.

The ASC-WDS collects pay data for both annual and hourly rates. It also collects information about workers' contracted hours and usual hours worked for both agency and zero-hours contracted staff. The information in this section shows full-time equivalent (FTE) average salaries. Pay data was converted into FTE annual salaries using an average working week of 37 hours (the full-time equivalent). Hourly pay data was also converted into annual salaries, based on the full-time equivalent. Converting pay in this way allows for the pay of full-time and part-time workers to be compared.

Comparisons to pay information in previous years always refers to the data as at September of that year (when the annual data collection takes place). **Trends go back to 2016**, as this marks the change from the National Minimum Wage to the National Living Wage (NLW). Please note that at the time of this data collection, September 2024, the NLW was £11.44.

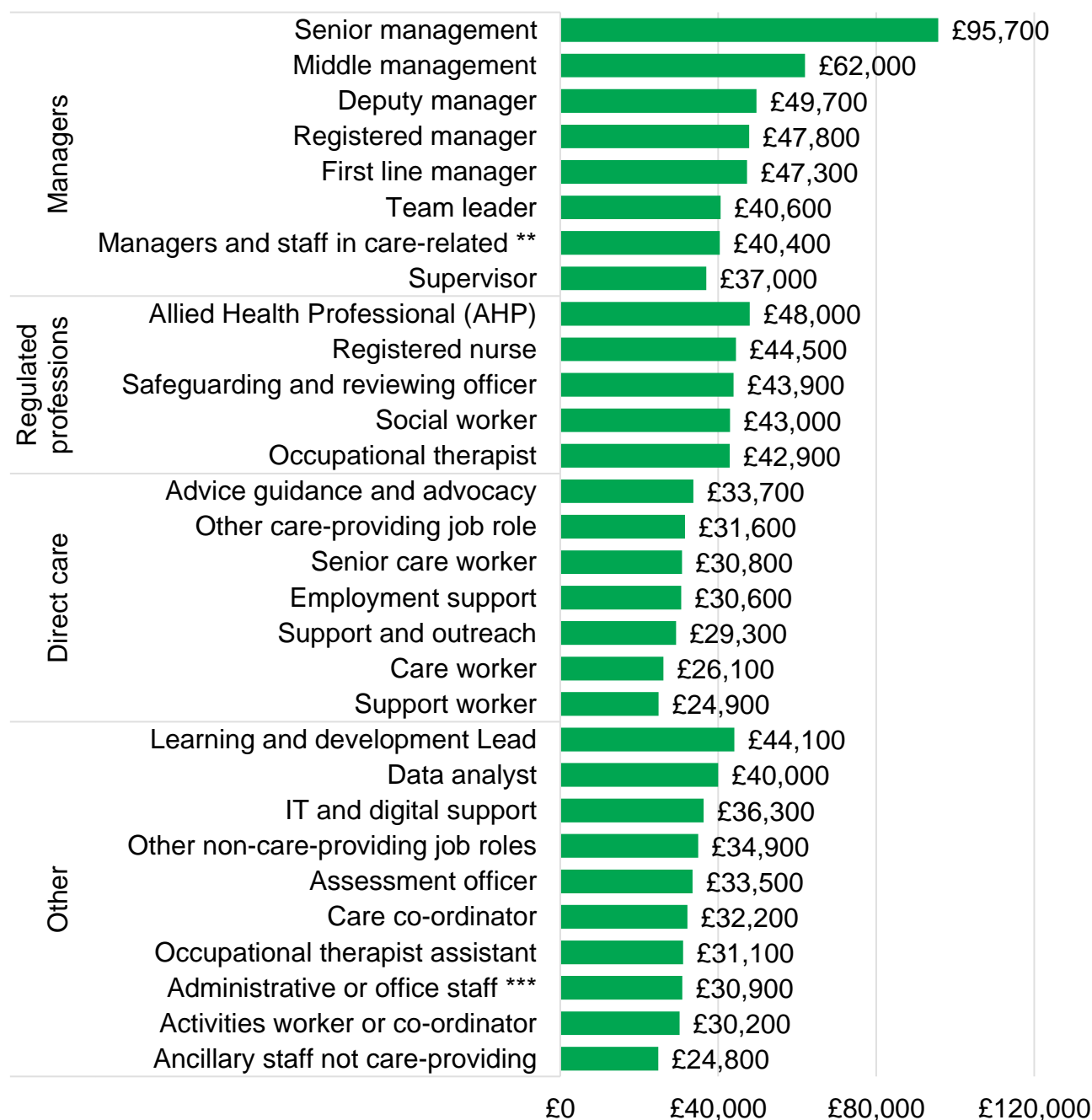
## 5.1 Average (mean) full-time equivalent (FTE) annual pay

FTE salaries vary across different job roles in adult social services departments in local authorities. Senior management roles were the highest paid of all job roles with an average FTE

annual salary of £95,700 (up £4,600 or 5.0% since September 2023) and ancillary staff were the lowest paid with an average FTE annual salary of £24,800 (up £2,400 or 10.5% since September 2023). Support workers had the second lowest average FTE annual salary at £24,900 (this job role was new to the data collection in 2024, so no year-on-year comparison is available).

**Chart 20. Estimated mean average full-time equivalent (FTE) annual pay of adult social services filled posts by job role\*, September 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



\* Only job roles with 100 or more filled posts are shown here

\*\* Managers and staff in care-related but not care-providing roles

\*\*\* Administrative or office staff not care-providing

## 5.2 Nominal pay trends

**‘Nominal’ pay is the actual FTE annual pay rates as they were at the time of data collection.** These have not been adjusted for inflation (for adjusted pay rates see Section 5.3).

All the listed job roles in Table 10 below show the nominal increase in pay for selected job roles in adult social services departments in local authorities. All roles received a nominal pay increase in pay between September 2023 and September 2024. Ancillary staff received the highest proportional nominal increase in pay since September 2023, increasing by 10.5% (or £2,400). Staff in supervisor roles saw one of the lowest proportional nominal increase of 5.8%, (£1,100).

The National Living Wage (NLW) was introduced at an hourly pay rate of £7.20 per hour on 1 April 2016 for workers aged 25 and over. Over time this has increased and in 2021 the age threshold was reduced to 23 years. From 1 April 2024 the age threshold was reduced again to 21 years. As at September 2024, less than 1% of the filled posts in adult social services departments in local authorities were filled by staff aged under 20 years old. Therefore, the majority of the workforce were entitled to at least the NLW (£11.44 at the time of data collection).

Between 2016 and 2024, all job roles shown in Table 10 saw a nominal pay increase. Ancillary staff again had the biggest percentage increase (up 47.5% or £8,000), followed by care workers (up 39.1% or £7,300). Senior manager roles again had the smallest increase in nominal pay over the period (up 24.7%), but in terms of monetary value their pay increased the most over the period (up £18,900).

**Table 10. Estimated mean full-time equivalent (FTE) annual nominal pay of adult social services filled posts by year and selected job role, September 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

Job role	2016	Year		Percentage change	
		2023	2024	16 - 24	23 - 24
<b>Managers</b>					
Senior manager	£76,800	£91,200	£95,700	24.7%	5.0%
Supervisor	£27,200	£35,900	£37,000	36.1%	3.0%
Managers in non care-providing roles	£31,800	£38,200	£40,400	27.3%	5.8%
<b>Regulated professions</b>					
Social worker	£34,200	£41,500	£43,000	25.6%	3.7%
Occupational therapist	£34,200	£41,100	£42,900	25.7%	4.5%
<b>Direct Care</b>					
Senior care worker	£23,900	£28,900	£30,800	28.5%	6.4%
Care worker	£18,700	£23,900	£26,100	39.1%	9.0%
Support and outreach	£22,200	£27,200	£29,300	32.0%	7.6%
<b>Other</b>					
Administrative non care-providing	£23,200	£29,100	£30,900	33.2%	6.5%
Ancillary staff not care-providing	£16,800	£22,400	£24,800	47.5%	10.5%

## 5.3 Real terms pay trends

**‘Real terms’ pay means that pay rates have been adjusted to take inflation into account.**

Real terms pay rates in this report have been calculated using the ONS [Consumer Price Index](#) (CPI), expressed in prices as at September 2024. The CPI is the official measure of inflation of consumer prices in the UK.

Between September 2023 and September 2024 all job roles analysed in Table 11 (below) saw an increase in pay in real terms. The largest increase in real terms pay was for ancillary staff, who saw their real term average FTE annual pay increase by £2,000 (8.7%). Staff in supervisor roles saw the smallest decrease in real terms pay between 2023 and 2024, increasing by £500 (1.3%).

The rate of inflation rose rapidly during 2022, peaking at 11.1% in October 2022. It remained high until March 2023, then fell to 6.7% in September 2023. The rate of inflation has continued to decrease and had fallen to 1.7% at the time of data collection for this report in September 2024. It is important to keep this fluctuation in the CPI inflation rate in mind when looking at the trend in annual pay in real terms.

In real terms between September 2016 and September 2024, six of the job roles analysed in Table 11 showed a decrease in their FTE annual pay. Senior manager roles showed the largest decrease, down 6.1% over this period. Ancillary staff however had an increase in FTE annual pay in real terms (up 11.1%). This is due to the large nominal pay increases for this job role,

influenced by the increasing NLW, which were higher than the rate of inflation over the period. A similar trend can be seen for other lower paying roles such as care worker.

**Table 11. Estimated mean full-time equivalent (FTE) annual real terms pay of adult social services filled posts by year and selected job role, September 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

Job role	Year			Percentage change	
	2016	2023	2024	16-24	23-24
<b>Managers</b>					
Senior manager	£101,900	£92,700	£95,700	-6.1%	3.3%
Supervisor	£36,100	£36,500	£37,000	2.5%	1.3%
Managers in non care-providing roles	£42,200	£38,800	£40,400	-4.1%	4.1%
<b>Regulated professions</b>					
Social worker	£45,500	£42,200	£43,000	-5.3%	2.0%
Occupational therapist	£45,400	£41,800	£42,900	-5.3%	2.8%
<b>Direct care</b>					
Senior care worker	£31,800	£29,400	£30,800	-3.2%	4.6%
Care worker	£24,900	£24,300	£26,100	4.8%	7.2%
Support and outreach	£29,500	£27,700	£29,300	-0.6%	5.8%
<b>Other</b>					
Administrative non care-providing	£30,800	£29,500	£30,900	0.3%	4.7%
Ancillary staff not care-providing	£22,300	£22,800	£24,800	11.1%	8.7%

## 6. Qualifications



This section includes information about the qualifications of the workforce in local authority adult social services departments. We believe that it's important that staff are equipped with the right skills and knowledge to provide high quality care and support. Investing in learning and development also supports staff retention.

**52%**

of workers held a relevant social care qualification

**31%**

of managers held a Level 5 and above qualification

**47%**

of direct care staff held a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification

## Key findings

- Over half (52%) of staff in adult social services departments held a relevant social care qualification<sup>5</sup>.
- Nearly two in three (61%) of managers held a social care qualification, with 31% holding a social care qualification at Level 5 and above.
- A similar proportion of direct care staff held a social care qualification (59%). 53% of care workers held a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification and 20% of senior care workers held a qualification at Level 4 and above.

Within adult social care there are many different job roles, and the training and qualifications required for these roles varies accordingly. Some roles do not have fixed qualification requirements, but there are desired levels of qualification and experience. Staff in regulated professions (social workers, registered nurses or occupational therapists) must be qualified in order to perform their role; therefore these workers have not been included in analysis of this section.

Excluding workers in regulated professions, there were 96,300 filled posts in local authority adult social services departments in 2024. Of those, 52% held a relevant social care qualification (50,000 filled posts). This is an increase from 51% in 2023.

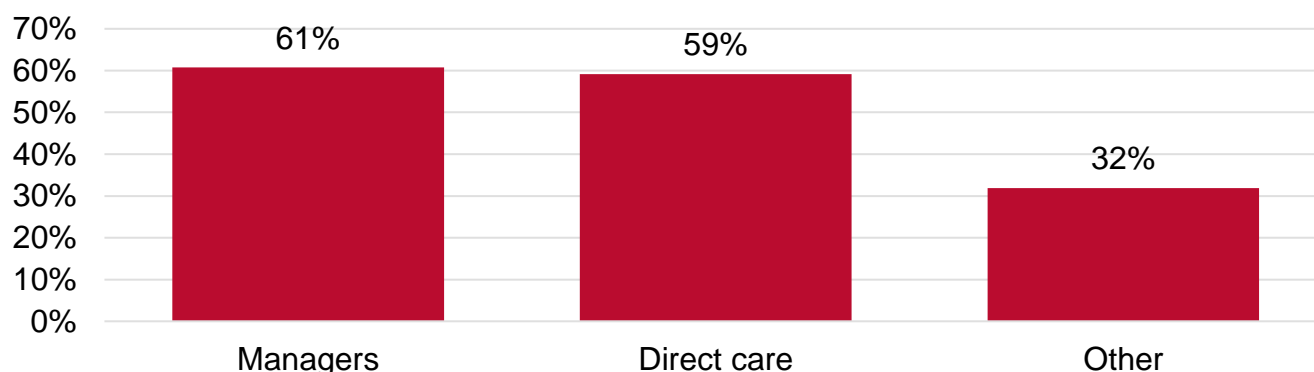
The proportion of staff with a relevant social care qualification varied across job roles within the adult social services departments of local authorities. Chart 21 (below) shows that 61% of managers held a relevant social care qualification and 59% of workers in direct care roles.

Only one in three (32%) staff working in 'other' roles, for example in administration or ancillary roles, held a relevant social care qualification. However, it should be noted that these workers may not require a specific qualification relating to social care.

<sup>5</sup> This excludes staff in regulated professions roles, as they must be qualified to do their job.

**Chart 21. Estimated proportion of the adult social services workforce with a relevant social care qualification by job role group (excluding regulated professions), 2024**

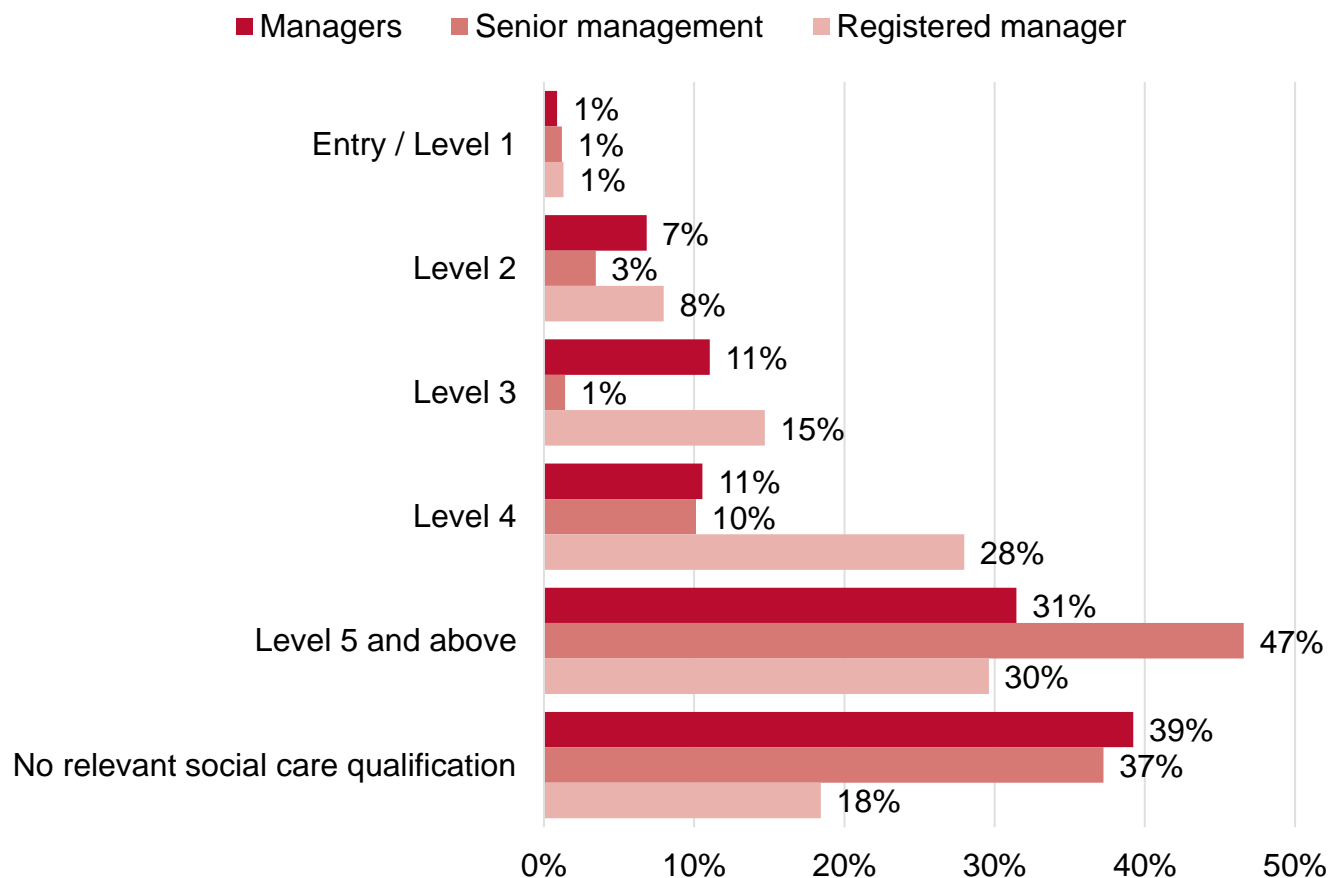
Source: Skills for Care estimates



As part of the annual data collection, local authorities are asked to provide the highest level of qualification of their staff. Chart 22 shows that among managers in adult social services departments, nearly one in three (31%) held a Level 5 qualification or above. This was higher among senior management staff (47%), while 58% of registered managers held a Level 4 or higher qualification in social care.

**Chart 22. Estimated proportion of adult social services workers in the managers job role group and selected job roles by highest level of social care qualification, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates

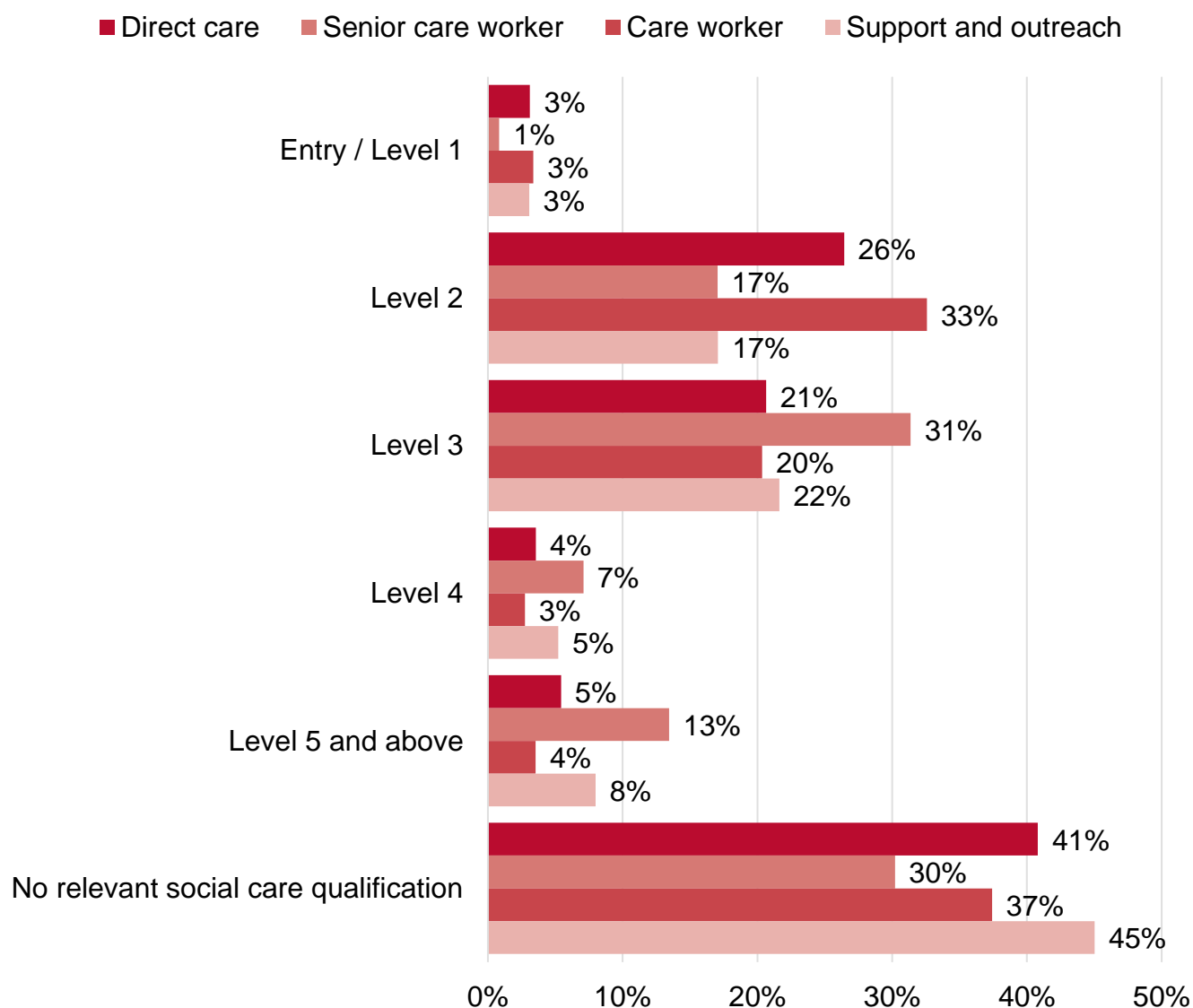




In general, workers in direct care roles are qualified to a lower level than managers. In 2024, 59% of direct care staff in local authority adult social services departments held a relevant social care qualification. Senior care workers held higher levels of qualifications; 52% of staff in this role held a Level 3 qualification or above. Meanwhile care workers had a higher proportion of staff at Level 2 (33%).

**Chart 23. Estimated proportion of adult social services workers in the direct care job role group and selected job roles by highest level of social care qualification, 2024**

Source: Skills for Care estimates



# Further resources

We provide outstanding workforce intelligence which the Government, strategic bodies, employers, and individuals rely upon to help them make decisions that will improve outcomes for the people who use care services.

To accompany this report, we have published a data visualisation and 'The workforce employed by adult services departments in England – reference tables' excel file. This file includes further information and trends of the areas covered in chapters of this report split by region, local authority, service and job role. To access this information, visit our [website](#).

The ASC-WDS is recognised as the leading source of workforce intelligence for adult social care in England. We're grateful to all the employers who have completed ASC-WDS data. Without their contributions, this workforce intelligence wouldn't be possible. For similar information on the adult social care workforce in the other UK nations please see:

- Scotland – [Scottish Social Services Council \(SSSC\)](#)
- Wales – [Social Care Wales](#)
- Northern Ireland – [Northern Ireland Social Care Council \(NISCC\)](#)

## Our workforce intelligence publications

Listed here are some of the key reports and topic areas that we have published using information from the ASC-WDS. To access these, please refer to the relevant pages on our [Workforce Intelligence website](#).

### **The size and structure of the adult social care sector and workforce in England**

This report provides estimates of the number of organisations and establishments involved in providing or organising adult social care, as well as the size and structure of the workforce, including people and filled posts estimates, trend data, and future projections.

To access this information, visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/sizeandstructure](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/sizeandstructure)

Latest version, July 2024. Updated information is due in June 2025.

### **The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England**

This report and accompanying documents provides estimates from 'The size and structure of the adult social care sector and workforce in England' report, as well as detailed estimates of workforce characteristics including: employment overview, recruitment and retention, workforce demographics, pay, qualification and training, future projections and international recruitment. We also analyse the factors affecting staff turnover across the sector.

To access this information, visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/stateof](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/stateof)

Latest version, October 2024. Updated information is due in October 2025.

## Regional information

We have data visualisations and written reports which provide an annual overview of adult social care services and the workforce in each region. We have two data visualisations that show regional information: one looks at one region at a time, the other looks at key variables and compares the nine regions. Alongside these data visualisations are written summaries.

To access this information, visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/regional-information](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/regional-information)

Latest version, October 2024. Updated information is due October 2025.

## Local area information

There are seven pages of local area information on our website. These are split by either local authority area or NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) geography area.

- Individual areas: we have one report looking at the workforce in each local authority area or ICB area, one at a time.
- Our comparison reports compare key variables across local areas or ICB areas.
- Each local authority area and ICB area has a written summary report, summarising the workforce statistics.
- Our 'My ICB area (MH and LD&A)' report shows the latest information from the ASC-WDS for the mental health and learning disability and/or autism workforces, split into ICB areas.

To access this information, visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/local-information](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/local-information)

Latest versions, October 2024. Updated information is due in October 2025.

## Key topic areas

We also produce information on popular topic areas. Each topic includes a summary of the workforce information available, and signposts to other relevant resources.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ▪ Monthly tracking of key metrics              | ▪ Nurses in social care                                |
| ▪ Apprenticeships                              | ▪ Occupational therapists                              |
| ▪ Factors affecting turnover                   | ▪ Registered managers                                  |
| ▪ Individual employers and personal assistants | ▪ Social work  |
| ▪ Learning disability and/or autism workforce  | ▪ Workforce nationality and international recruitment. |

To access these topic pages, visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Topics](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Topics)

## Our values

Skills for Care is guided by core values. Throughout everything we do, we're inclusive, motivated, passionate, ambitious, collaborative and trustworthy. For more information about the Skills for Care strategy, our vision, mission, values and plan to achieve our mission, visit [our website](#).

All analysts leading on the production of this report are certified statisticians, meaning we work to the standard of the 'five safes'. We always make sure that our research and outputs are appropriate and trustworthy, and that there's no risk of misuse or confidentiality breach. When creating outputs, we always adhere to statistical disclosure controls.

As a Workforce Intelligence team, we:

- help people to understand what's already available without commissioning our services and what options are available
- aren't selling the data, we're selling our analysis and sector expertise
- carry out bespoke work in particular areas that we can't cover in general outputs
- have a 'good for the sector' aim on all projects we work on
- channel any money we earn straight back into the sector.

In 2023 Skills for Care became an official statistics provider, having been added to the [Official Statistics Order 2023](#). We, Skills for Care's Workforce Intelligence team, are committed to the three pillars of trustworthiness, quality and value, as well as the principles of the Code of Practice for Statistics. Please see our website for our full [statement](#).

User engagement is important to us and we welcome any feedback on the collection of this data and the findings of this report, as well as the accompanying reference tables and data visualisation on our website. To contact us, please use one of the options below.



For more information about the services listed above, to be kept up to date with Workforce Intelligence news or please get in touch via the following routes:

**Email:** [analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk)

**X (Twitter):** [@SfC\\_Data](#) or [@skillsforcare](#)

**Website:** [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/contactWI](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/contactWI)



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