



Care homes with nursing services in the adult social care sector

2024/25

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Introduction

Key findings

290,000
filled posts

4,186
CQC-regulated
locations

10%
employed on a
zero-hours
contract

4.7%
vacancy rate

This summary report accompanies '[The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England, 2025](#)' report and focuses on the workforce employed in care homes with nursing services that are regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). All care homes with nursing providing personal care must be regulated by the CQC.

For comparison, we have included analysis of CQC-regulated care only homes and of domiciliary care services. Domiciliary care in this summary is defined those services that provide care to individuals in their own home. Those services must be CQC-regulated by law and are defined in this report as CQC non-residential services.

The information in this summary is derived from the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS); independent sector information shown in this report was collected between April 2024 and March 2025, and local authority information was collected as at September 2024. Information relating to individuals employing their own staff (personal assistants) are not included in this summary. As at March 2025, over half of CQC-regulated locations were recorded in the ASC-WDS (54.4%) and in CQC care homes with nursing this figure 58.1%.

Within the ASC-WDS, coverage of the CQC-regulated workforce varied by sector, service, job role and geographical area. To produce our analysis we create annual workforce estimates, enabling us to accurately describe the size and characteristics of the whole adult social care workforce. You can read about our [methodology](#) for creating these and find [data download Excel files](#) with further breakdowns of these on our website.

Skills for Care is an official statistics producer. This means that all official statistics produced by Skills for Care's Workforce Intelligence team will include oversight from the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) (OSR), ensuring that we follow the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). Our Workforce Intelligence analysts are committed to the Code as well as the three pillars of trustworthiness, quality and value. See our website for our full [statement](#).

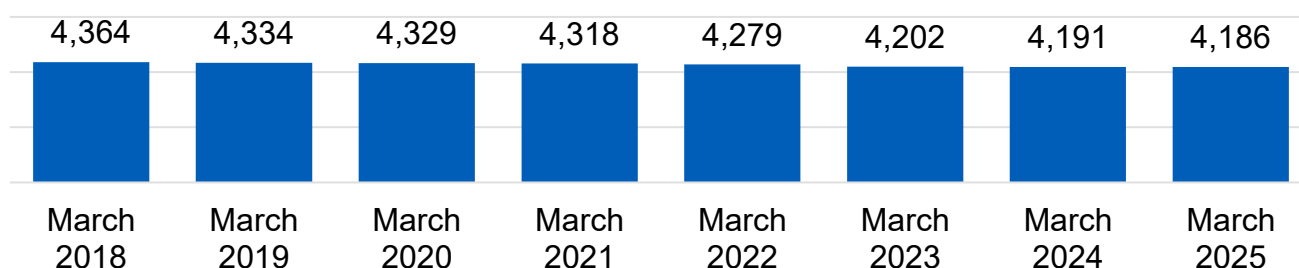
Further information about the workforce employed in CQC care homes with nursing can be found in the [data visualisation](#) that also accompanies the full report. The visualisation can be filtered by service and job role and shows analysis of all variables collected in the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS).

1. Size and structure

As at March 2025, there were 4,186 locations regulated by the CQC to provide care homes with nursing services. This is a decrease from 4,364 in 2018 (178 or 4%). During this same period, the number of CQC care homes without nursing decreased by 8% and the number of CQC non-residential services increased by 72%, showing a growing trend of people receiving care in their own homes.

Chart 1. Number of CQC-regulated care homes with nursing locations, 2018 to 2025

Source: CQC Care Directory

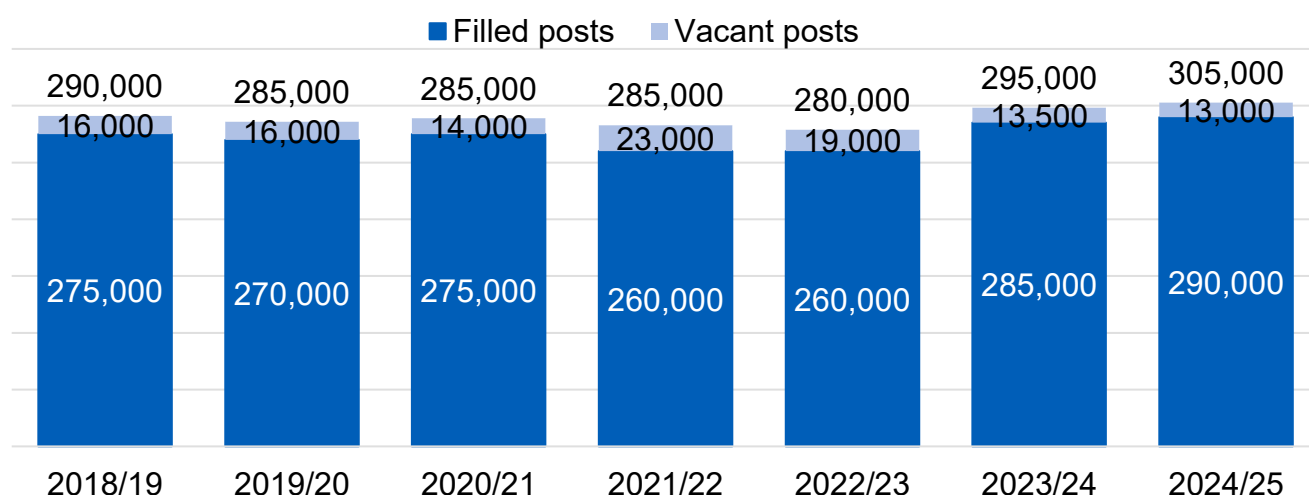


We track the number of CQC-regulated locations in England as well as the estimated number of filled posts in the independent sector on a monthly basis. Visit our [website](#) for more information.

In 2024/25, CQC care homes with nursing had an estimated workforce of 290,000 filled posts across England and 13,000 vacant posts, making a total of 305,000 posts in the local authority and independent sectors. Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the number of filled posts in CQC care homes with nursing had increased by 8,200 (3%), while the number of vacant posts decreased by 550 (4%).

Chart 2. Estimated number of adult social care posts in CQC care homes with nursing (local authority and independent sector only), in England, 2018/19 to 2024/25

Source: Skills for Care estimates



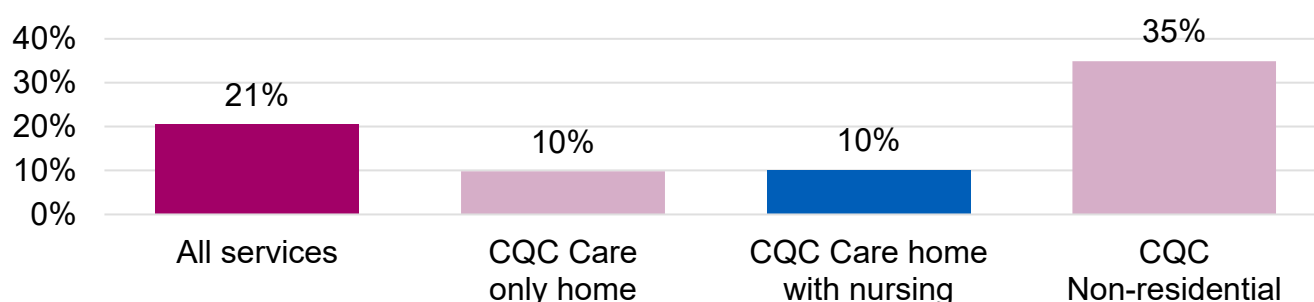
2. Employment overview

There were an estimated 174,000 direct care providing filled posts in CQC care homes with nursing, 12,000 managers, 34,000 regulated profession filled posts and 71,000 other filled posts including ancillary non-care-providing roles.

Around 10% of the CQC care homes with nursing workforce were employed on a zero-hours contract, this was higher for care workers, at 12%. Across all filled posts the CQC care homes with nursing workforce had a similar reliance on zero-hours contracts to CQC care homes without nursing (10%), and less reliance than CQC non-residential services (35%). The proportion of CQC care homes with nursing workers employed on a zero-hours contract has increased by one percentage point since 2023/24.

Chart 3. Estimated proportion of workers employed on a zero-hours contract by main care service (local authority and independent sectors only), 2024/25

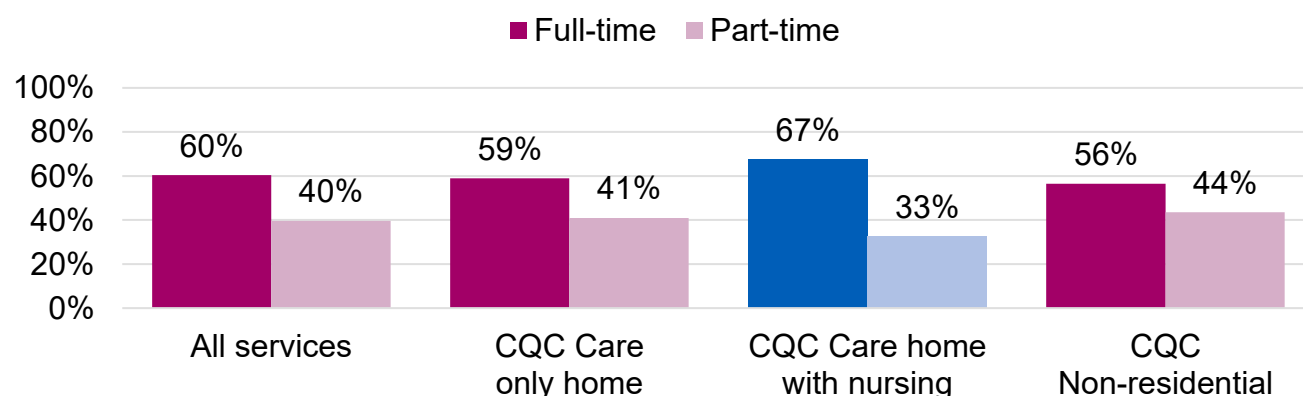
Source: Skills for Care estimates



Over two thirds of staff in CQC care homes with nursing were employed on a full-time basis (67%) and 33% were employed part-time. In addition, 90% were employed on permanent contracts while <1% were employed on temporary contracts. 10% were indirectly employed, that is staff employed on bank, pool, agency and/or other contract types

Chart 4. Estimated full-time/part-time status of the adult social care workforce by main care service (local authority and independent sectors only), 2024/25

Source: Skills for Care estimates



3. Recruitment and retention

The turnover rate among staff in CQC care homes with nursing was 29.7%, which was higher than that of CQC non-residential services (23.7%) and CQC care homes without nursing (22.3%). This equates to an estimated 78,000 workers leaving their role in the previous 12 months. Registered nurses in these care homes had a turnover rate of 33.2% (9,200 leavers).

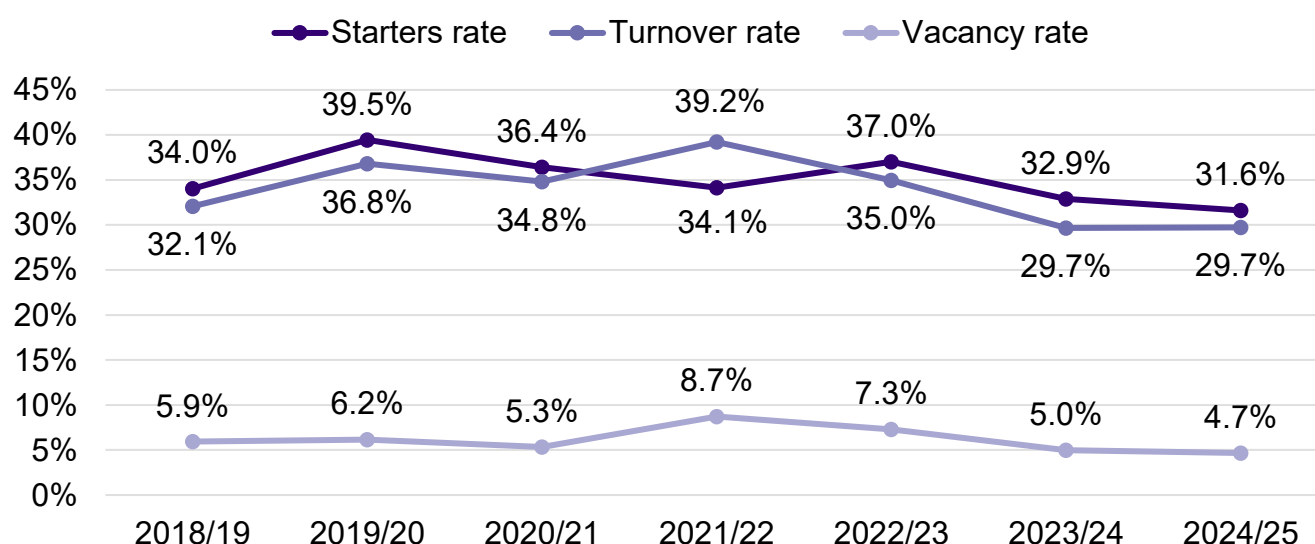
The starters rate in CQC care homes with nursing services has generally been higher than the turnover rate over time, which highlights a growing workforce. Over half of the workforce were recruited from within adult social care (52%). This means that although the high turnover rate results in employers going through the recruitment process, with its associated costs, the skills and experience of many workers are retained by the sector.

A post may become vacant due to a worker leaving their job, but a vacancy may also be created to grow the existing workforce. The vacancy rate in CQC care homes with nursing services increased sharply in 2021/22 during the COVID-19 period, to a peak of 8.7%, but has decreased each year since down to 4.7% in 2024/25.

To see changes in the starter, turnover and vacancy rates in the independent sector on a monthly basis, see our [recruitment and retention tracker](#).

Chart 5. Estimated starter, turnover and vacancy rate trends in CQC care homes with nursing (local authority and independent sectors only), 2018/19 to 2024/25

Source: Skills for Care estimates



The workforce had an average of 9.6 years of experience working in social care and 4.6 in their current role. The CQC care homes with nursing workforce typically had more experience working in the adult social care sector compared to workers in CQC non-residential services (9.2 years) as well workers from CQC care homes without nursing (8.2 years).

4. Demographics

All variables analysed in this section have been impacted by the increase in workers being recruited from overseas. Our analysis shows that people recruited internationally have different demographics and employment characteristics to the rest of the workforce. For example, they are more likely to be male and are typically younger.

78% of workers in CQC care homes with nursing identified as female. The proportion of workers identifying as male increased for the third consecutive year and reached 22% in 2024/25.

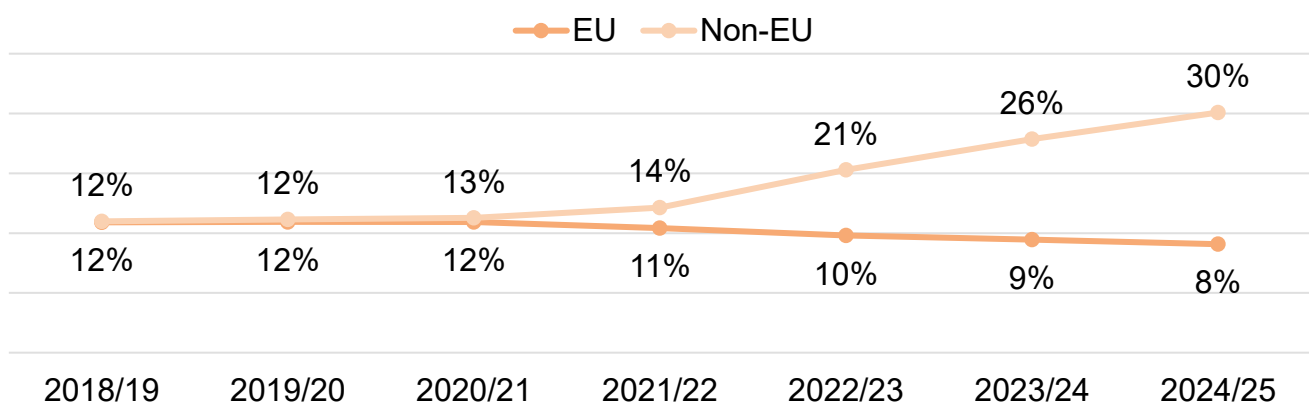
The average age of workers in CQC care homes with nursing was 43.3, this was similar for CQC non-residential services (42.9) and CQC care homes without nursing (43.4). Around 25% of the workforce were aged 55 and over in 2024/25.

The majority of the workforce in CQC care homes with nursing were of British nationality (62%), while 30% were of a non-EU nationality and 8% an EU nationality. This was similar for CQC non-residential services, where 64% of the workforce were British but lower than CQC care only homes, where 73% were British.

The chart below shows that over time the proportion of non-EU workers has increased, which is linked to the increase of international recruitment. For further insight into international recruitment over time in the independent sector, see our [quarterly tracker](#).

Chart 6. Estimated proportion of workers of a non-EU and EU nationality in CQC care homes with nursing (local authority and independent sectors only), 2018/19 to 2024/25

Source: Skills for Care estimates



The adult social care workforce is ethnically diverse; three-fifths of workers in CQC care homes with nursing were people of a White ethnicity (60%), while 16% were people of a Black, African, Caribbean or Black British ethnicity and over one in five were people of an Asian or Asian British ethnicity (21%). Around 2% of the workforce were people of mixed or multiple ethnicities while another 2% were people of ethnicities not listed above (other ethnicity).

5. Pay

Across the adult social care workforce, pay varies by job role as well as by sector, main care service and geography area. This summary focusses on independent sector care worker pay in CQC care homes with nursing only; care workers make up 50% of the independent sector CQC care home with nursing workforce. To see pay information for other job roles, services or sectors please see the green pay pages of 'The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England' [data visualisation](#).

Our pay analysis shows pay in both nominal and real term amounts.

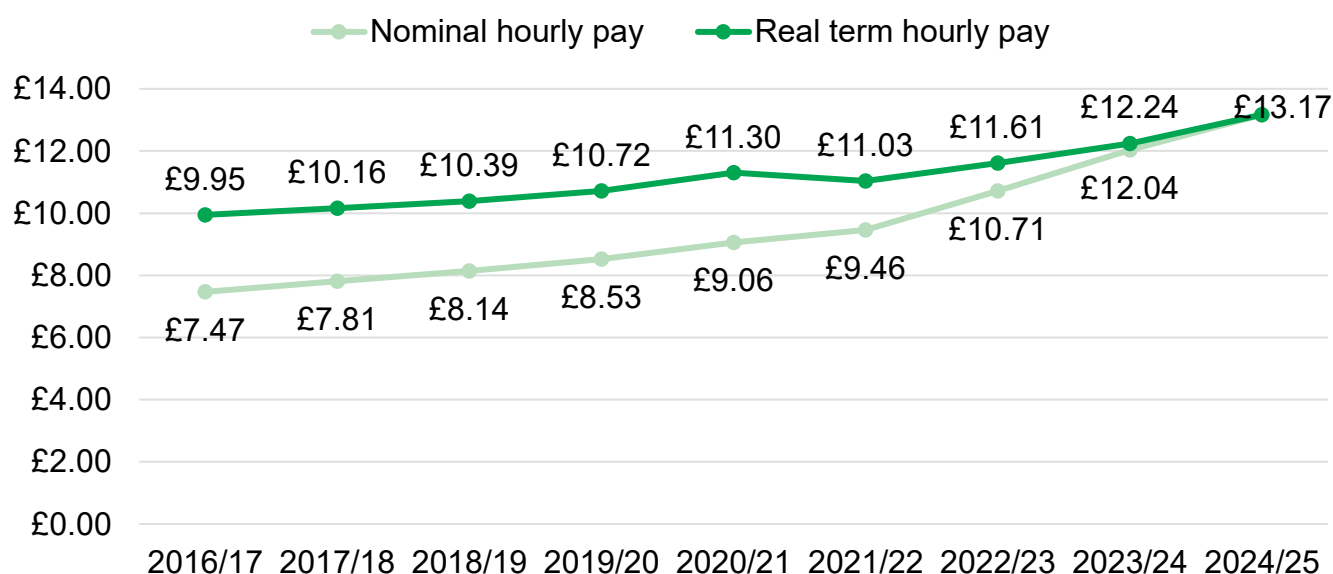
- **'Nominal'** pay shows the actual pay rates as they were at the time.
- **'Real term'** means that historical pay rates have been adjusted to take inflation into account and have been calculated using the [Consumers Price Index](#) (the official measure of inflation of consumer prices in the UK) and expressed in prices as at March 2025.

The [National Living Wage](#) (NLW) was first introduced on 1 April 2016 at £7.20 per hour for workers aged 25 and over. Over time the age threshold has been reduced and at the time of data collection of this report, the NLW was £11.44 per hour for workers aged 21 and over.

The chart below shows the nominal and real term pay trends for average mean hourly pay for independent sector care workers in CQC care homes with nursing. Between 2016/17 and 2024/25 nominal pay has increased by £4.60 (62%) while real term pay has increased faster than inflation, by £2.12 (21%).

Chart 7. Estimated mean nominal and real term hourly pay of care workers in CQC care homes with nursing (independent sector only), 2016/17 to 2024/25

Source: Skills for Care estimates

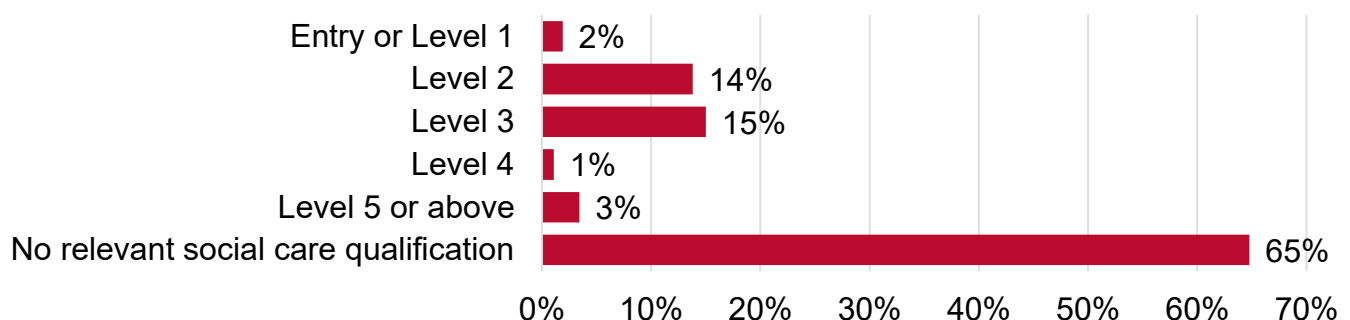


6. Qualifications

Around 35% of the workforce in CQC care homes with nursing held a qualification relevant to social care. This excludes staff in regulated professions who must be qualified to perform their roles (e.g. social workers, registered nurses or occupational therapists).

Chart 8. Estimated highest social care qualification level of the adult social care workforce in CQC care homes with nursing (local authority and independent sectors only, excluding regulated professions), 2024/25

Source: Skills for Care estimates

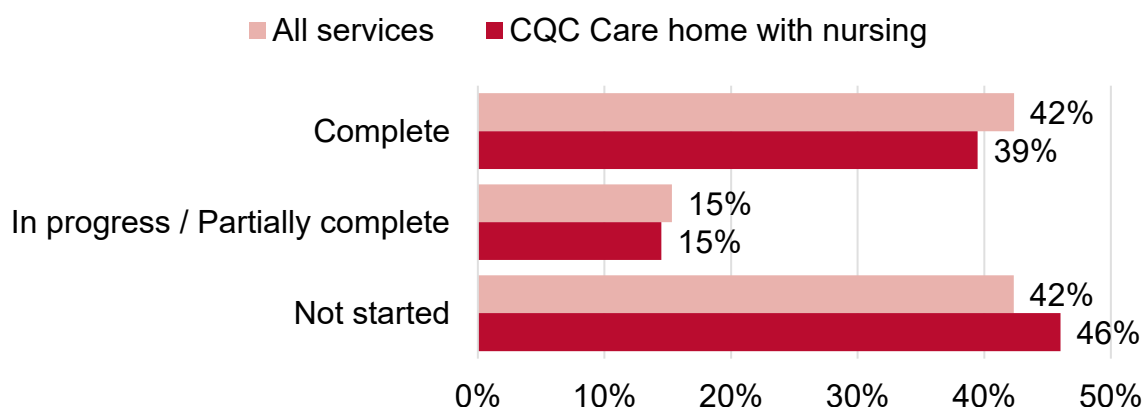


Different job roles require workers to be qualified at different levels. In CQC care homes with nursing, 38% of direct care workers were qualified at Level 2 or above and 32% of managers in were qualified at Level 5 or above.

As well as qualifications, if a worker is 'new to care' their employer should consider using the [Care Certificate standards](#) to form part of a robust induction programme. The 16 standards define the knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of specific job roles in the health and social care sectors. The standards are typically undertaken by direct care providing workers but are open to all job roles in adult social care.

Chart 9. Estimated Care Certificate standards status of all adult social care roles in CQC care homes with nursing (local authority and independent sectors only), 2024/25

Source: Skills for Care estimates



Further resources

As a producer of official statistics, 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. This section provides an overview of some of the reports and resources published by our Workforce Intelligence team. To access these reports and visualisations, please refer to the relevant pages on our [Workforce Intelligence website](#).

National information

This summary accompanies our flagship publication: [The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England](#). This detailed report analyses the size and structure of the workforce, as well as key workforce characteristics and additional analysis on international recruitment and factors affecting turnover and CQC ratings. There is also a data visualisation, which can be filtered by service and shows further information alongside this summary report.

Regional and local information

We have several data visualisations and written reports which provide an annual overview of adult social care services and the workforce in each region, local authority area and NHS ICB area. We have visualisations showing one area at a time, and visualisations that show variable comparisons amongst regional and local areas. Our area summary reports detail the workforce characteristics within that area, with additional insights.

Trackers

We publish [tracking information](#) about the adult social care workforce on a monthly and quarterly basis. These trackers do not use weighted estimates (as shown in our other annual reports) but do give a good indication of moving trends through the year. Trackers are available for recruitment and retention, filled posts and international recruitment.

Commission our services

Skills for Care are producers of official statistics and our Workforce Intelligence team are the experts in adult social care workforce insight. The data we collect in the ASC-WDS gives an unrivalled overview of the adult social care workforce in England. Beyond the wealth of information already available publicly on our website, you can [commission the services](#) of the team to produce bespoke reports and analysis for your organisation or area.

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](#).

We welcome feedback from our users and are happy to respond to queries regarding any of the information outlined in this summary report. Contact us at analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk.

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