



Department
of Health &
Social Care



The Approved Mental Health Professional Workforce in the adult social care sector

November, 2019

Foreword

View from the Chief Social Workers, Mark Harvey, Fran Leddra and MH social work lead Mark Trewin

'We are delighted to have for the second year such rich workforce data of our Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) workforce. Having this information helps us understanding the workforce, demographic characteristics and retention rates of our AMHP workforce and helps us plan to provide the best mental health support to the people that need it. We now have clear information to consider what actions the sector will need to take to ensure we have the right number and right people in place to undertake this essential role, both now and in the years ahead. This information will also be very useful to our colleagues who are working on the Mental Health Act Review white paper preparations and who understand the vital role of the AMHP in delivering aspects of the proposed legislation.

We know that detention rates are increasing and AMHPs are dealing with increased challenges in local systems as they support people and fulfil their roles. This highly trained and skilled workforce has had to adapt to the changing contexts as the prevalence of mental ill health episodes are still increasing. AMHPs are core to the application of the Mental Health Act bringing independence and scrutiny to enable the best outcomes, striving to develop options within the persons home and community rather than hospital.

The mental health workforce still has challenges ahead, as detention rates of people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds remain disproportionately high. This data will help us plan for a workforce that reflects our population, rich in difference and diversity.

The data also helps in the succession planning of our mental health services, ensuring that Social Workers continue to train as AMHP's.

None of this would be possible without the excellent collaborative working between the Department of Health and Social Care, Skills for Care, the Approved Mental Health Professionals Leads network and of course the local authorities who responded to the data request through their NMDS-SC returns. Thank you for your work.

Introduction

Skills for Care, as the leading source of adult social care workforce intelligence, helps to create a skilled, valued and better-led adult social care workforce. We provide the practical tools and support to help adult social care organisations in England recruit, retain, develop and lead their workforce. We work with employers and related services to ensure dignity and respect are at the heart of service delivery.

This report presents data collected via a dedicated Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP) leads survey, as at October 2019. Skills for Care conducts this survey on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Care and the Approved Mental Health Professionals Leads Network. Information includes estimated of AMHPs, employer type and delivery of the AMHP role. This report also includes data on social workers from local authorities collected via the National Minimum Dataset for Social Care (NMDS-SC) as at September 2018.

Since 2017 we have carried out this survey, it has provided important information for the Department of Health and the AMHP Leads Network to better understand this key role. The survey provides data on the overall number of AMHPs and intelligence about their role and working patterns. The findings from this survey have been used along with data collected by the NMDS-SC on the characteristics of individual social workers.

An AMHP is a registered professional (social worker, nurse, occupational therapist or psychologist) who has undertaken additional training, approved by the Secretary of State and regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council, to carry out specific duties under the Mental Health Act 1983. In addition, the AMHP will have been approved by a local social services authority to act on its behalf in carrying out these duties.

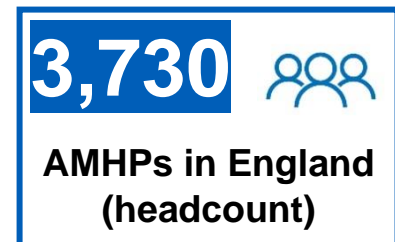
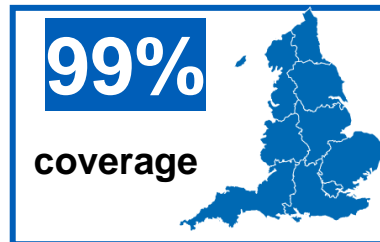
AMHPs are (amongst other duties) responsible for setting up and coordinating assessments under the Mental Health Act and, if necessary, making applications to detain (“section”) people in hospital for assessment and treatment of their mental health needs.

This year the survey was completed by 99% of local authorities in England (148 out of 150). The results of this survey, and data from the NMDS-SC, enables Skills for Care, the Department of Health and Social Care, the Approved Mental Health Professionals Leads Network and other stakeholders to have clear, robust workforce intelligence and to better understand this key role. This information is vital to help improve the planning and quality of social care services, which will improve outcomes for people who use these services, both now and in the future.

Findings from the AMHP Survey

Overview of findings from the AMHP survey, 2019

- The survey found that 94% of AMHPs were Social Workers.
- The majority of AMHPs were employed in the local authority sector (80%) 16% were employed in the NHS and 4% agency and freelance.
- Around two thirds (67%) of AMHPs combine their role with another role while around one in five AMHPs solely perform the role of an AMHP (22%). The remaining 11% were not primarily working as an AMHP or regularly as an AMHP.
- The survey showed that 14% of AMHPs only work out-of-hours, for example in emergency duty teams.



1.1 Introduction

A short survey designed by the DHSC and the AMHP Leads Network was distributed via the AMHP Leads Network to all local authorities in England. The survey collected data from 148 out of 150 local authorities, a 99% return rate compared to a 92% return rate last year. For this survey, Rutland was included with Leicestershire and the Isles of Scilly were included with Cornwall¹.

The raw data from the 148 local authorities showed an overall number of 3,698 AMHPs **approved** by local authorities. Skills for Care's modelled estimate for the overall number of approved AMHPs in England was 3,730, (this refers to headcount rather than full time equivalent (FTE)). This compares to an estimate of 3,900 last year, a reduction of roughly 4%.

In order to estimate the number of AMHPs in each of the two missing local authorities, Skills for Care modelled the relationship between the number of social workers² and the number of AMHPs per local authority (taken from the survey data). This provided an estimate of the number of AMHPs in the missing local authorities to arrive at an overall rounded figure of 3,730.

1.2 AMHP comparison 2018 to 2019

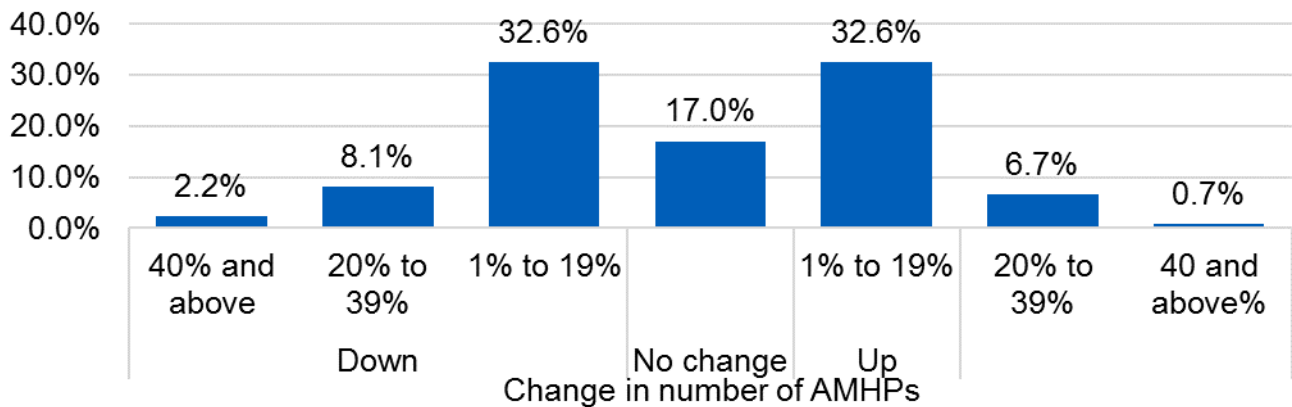
There were 135 local authorities that responded to the survey in both 2018 and 2019. Of these, 17% had the same number of AMHP's in both years, 40% showed an increase and 43% showed a decrease.

Local authorities that showed a decrease tended to be larger than those that showed an increase. Of these 135 local authorities, in 2019 there were around 3,470 qualified AMHPs, a decrease of roughly 4% (140) since 2018.

¹ These local authorities operate as a shared service

² Using data from the NMDS-SC as at September 2018.

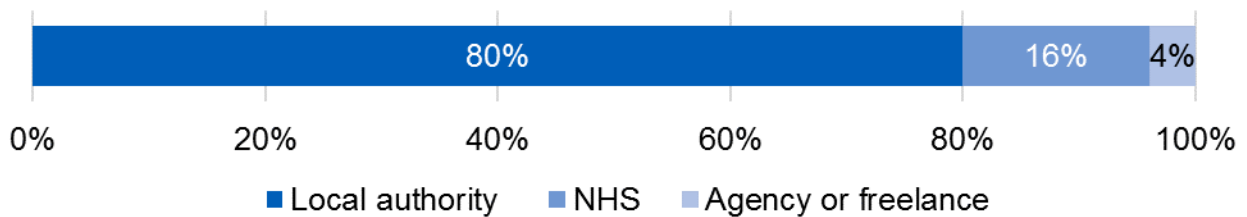
Chart 1. Change in the number of AMHPs per local authority between 2018 and 2019.
 Source. AMHP survey October 2019



1.3 Findings from the AMHPs Survey

The survey showed that the majority of AMHPs were employed by the local authority (80%), compared to 16% who were employed by the NHS and the remaining 4% who were agency or freelance workers. Although the majority of AMHPs are employed by the local authority, in each region there are a small number of local authority areas that had a much higher proportion of AMHPs employed by the NHS.

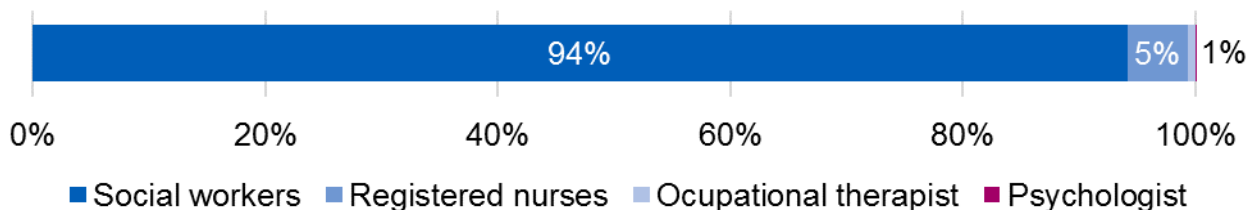
Chart 2. Proportion of AMHPs by employer
 Source. AMHP survey October 2019



The majority of people fulfilling the AMHP role were social workers.

The survey found that 94% of AMHPs were Social Workers, with the other 5% being registered nurses along with less than 1% occupational therapists and one psychologist. Over half (56%) of the local authorities had AMHPs that were all social workers, this means no AMHPs from these local authorities were from nursing, occupational therapy or psychology professions.

Chart 3. Proportion of AMHPs by profession
 Source. AMHP survey October 2019

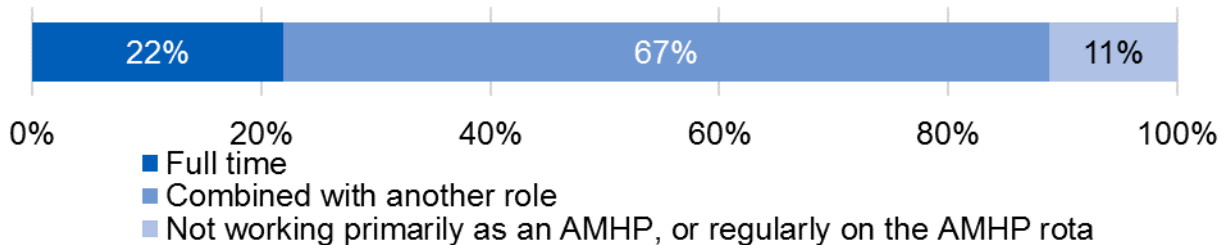


The majority of AMHPs combine their AMHP role with a substantive role.

Around two thirds (67%) of AMHPs combine their role with another role while around one in five AMHPs solely perform the role of an AMHP (22%). The remaining 11% were not primarily working as an AMHP or regularly as an AMHP. **Therefore, of the overall 3,730 AMHPs, around 410 were not regularly performing the role.**

Chart 4. Proportion of AMHPs by status of role

Source. AMHP survey October 2019

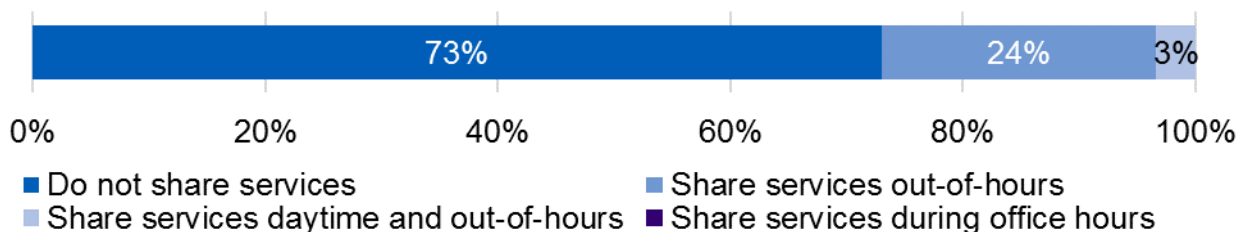


Around 1 in 7 AMHPs only work out-of-hours.

The survey showed that 14% of AMHPs only work out-of-hours, for example in emergency duty teams. This proportion varied from 6% in the South East to 22% in the North East. The survey also asked local authorities whether they shared their daytime and/or out-of-hours AMHP service with any other authority. Of the 148 local authorities that responded 73% of authorities did not share services, 24% shared out-of-hours services while 3% of authorities shared both daytime and out-of-hours services. None only shared daytime services without also sharing out of hours services.

Chart 5. Proportion of local authorities that share AMHP services

Source. AMHP survey October 2019



Findings from the NMDS-SC

Overview of NMDS-SC social workers and qualified AMHPs 2018

- Skills for Care estimate that of those qualified as an AMHP 32% were aged 55 and over compared to 22% of social workers
- Almost two thirds (63%) of those qualified as an AMHP had ten or more years experience in the social care sector
- 80% of all social workers remained in their job and local authority between 2017 and 2018

£38,100

**Average FTE salary
of AMHPs**

32%

**AMHPs aged 55 and
over**

63%

**AMHPs have 10
years or more
experience in sector**

2.1 Introduction

The National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) is an online workforce data collection system for the adult social care sector. We manage the NMDS-SC on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Care.

The Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS) is the new name for the updated National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) service. The NMDS-SC had been collecting information about social care providers and their staff since 2006. The NMDS-SC was dated in its look and feel but had performed well and provided Skills for Care and the Government with high quality workforce and sector intelligence, to help shape and inform the sector for 13 years.

The ASC-WDS will maintain equally high standards by giving our users an improved experience and ensuring that our service reflects the needs of our users, whilst delivering the level of data and intelligence that the data set has been created to collect. For more information about the ASC-WDS please see

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforceintelligence

At the time of data collection, the data set was called NMDS-SC so that is how it is referred to within this report.

The NMDS-SC collects information on the size and structure of the whole adult social care sector, including the types of care services that are provided, and a detailed picture of the workforce, including retention, demographics, pay rates and qualifications, both by job role and employment status.

This chapter focuses on social workers and AMHPs, as collected in the NMDS-SC. Social workers are shown along side AMHPs because the survey, detailed in the previous chapter, show that 94% of AMHPs are social workers.

Within the NMDS-SC, Skills for Care were able to identify 968 workers employed within local authorities that held an AMHP qualification. We have used these records to identify some of the key characteristics of AMHPs. Also given that we know roughly 94% of AMHPs are social workers, we have compared their data to that of all local authority employed social workers to provide some context.

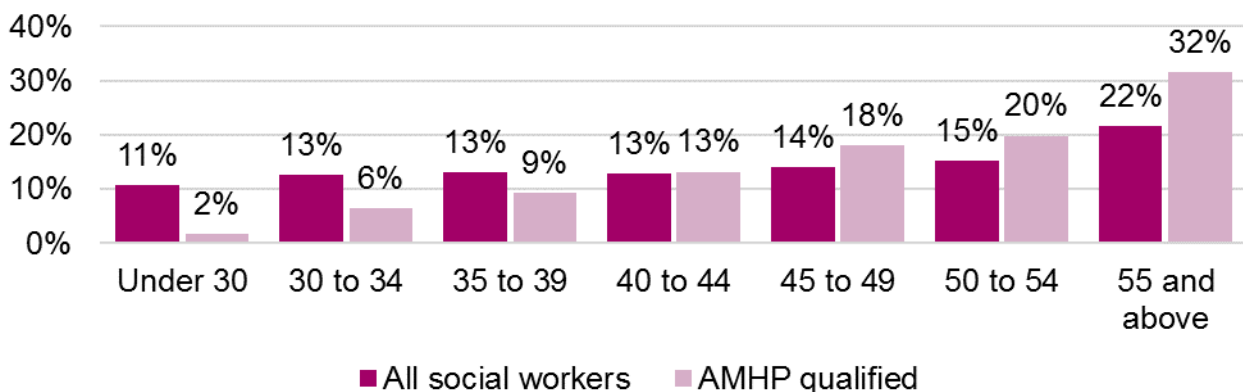
2.2 AMHP Demographics

2.2.1 Age

The NMDS-SC showed that around 22% of social workers were aged 55 and above, and this proportion is higher for those qualified as an AMHP (32%). From a workforce planning perspective this group may retire within the next ten years. The NMDS-SC also showed there were notably fewer qualified AMHPs under 40 compared to social workers. The average age of a social work graduate was 31 in 2017/18³, which indicates that social workers may progress to becoming an AMHP later in their career.

Chart 6. Proportion of social workers and qualified AMHPs by age group

Source. NMDS-SC September 2018

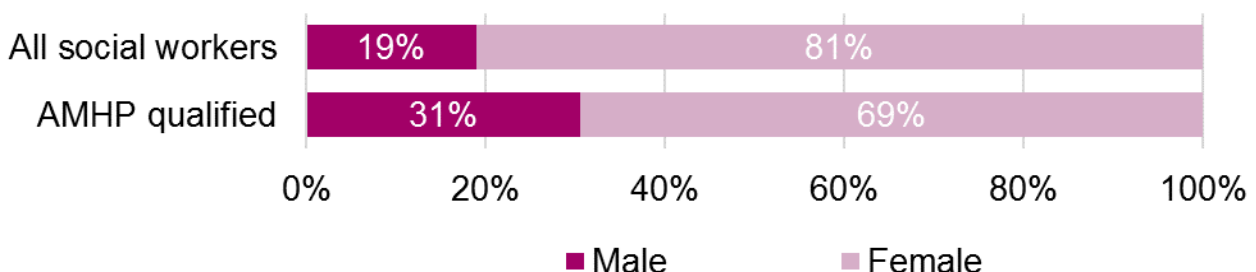


2.2.2 Gender

The majority of social workers and AMHPs were female (81% and 69% respectively), however, AMHPs were more likely to be male than social workers. Across England 19% of social workers were male, this rises to 31% for those qualified as an AMHP.

Chart 7. Proportion of social workers and qualified AMHPs by gender

Source. NMDS-SC September 2018



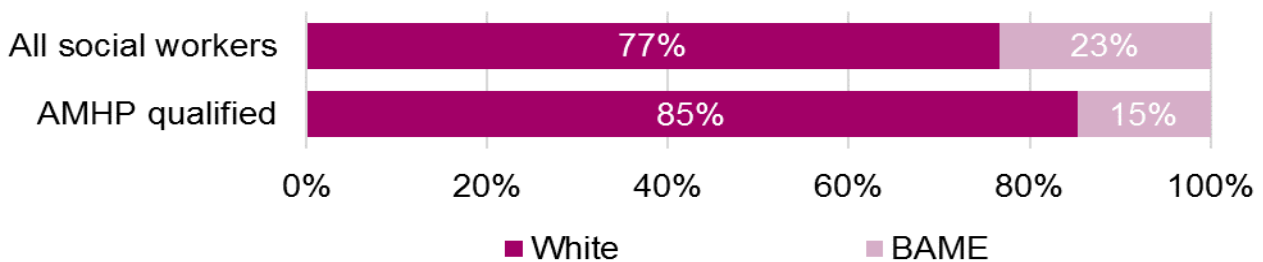
³ Source: Social worker education 2017/18 Available at <http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/W/socialwork>

2.2.3 Ethnicity

The NMDS-SC showed that 76% of social workers were of white ethnicity and 23% were from black and ethnic minority (BAME) backgrounds. Social workers qualified to perform as an AMHP were less ethnically diverse (15% BAME) than social workers overall. The proportion of social workers with a BAME background varied across regions. In London, the proportion of BAME social workers was 56% and 51% for AMHPs, however in the North East this was 5% and 4% respectively. The East Midlands had the largest difference in BAME ethnicity between all social workers (21%) and AMHPs (12%).

Chart 8. Proportion of social workers and qualified AMHPs by ethnicity

Source. NMDS-SC September 2018



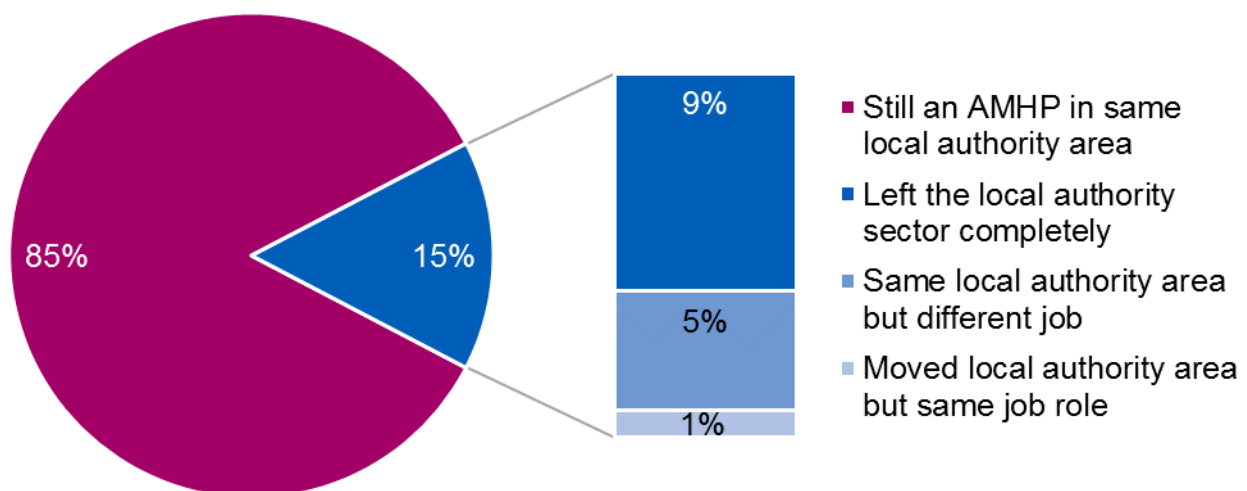
2.3 AMHP retention

To get an understanding of workforce retention, we tracked social workers between September 2017 and September 2018. This method used a unique anonymous identifier for each person and includes 798 AMHPs from the NMDS-SC.

The majority (85%) of AMHPs remained in post at the same local authority. The remaining 15% represent those who changed their circumstances. These changes include; leaving the local authority sector entirely (9%), staying in the same local authority area but changing job role (5%), moving to a different local authority area as a social worker (<1%).

Chart 9. Tracking AMHPs between 2017 and 2018

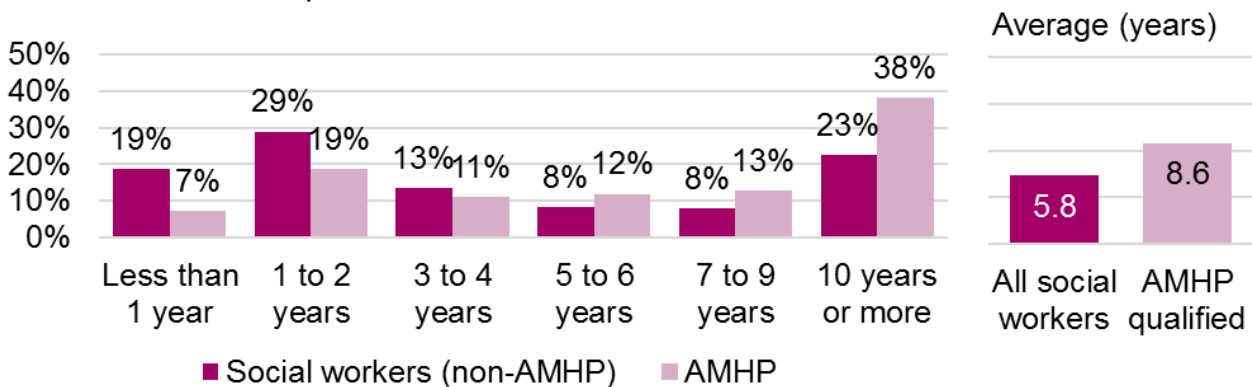
Source: NMDS-SC September 2017 and September 2018



2.4 Experience in current role

NMDS-SC data also allows us to look at how long social workers have been performing their current role. The data shows that those who hold an AMHP qualification are slightly more experienced and have generally been in post for a longer time. The average experience in current role for an AMHP is 8.6 years compared to 5.8 years for all social workers. Of those with an AMHP qualification, 38% had ten years or more experience, compared to 23% of those without the AMHP qualification. The main reason for this trend is that only social workers with at least two years post-qualification experience can embark on AMHP training.

Chart 10. Proportion of social workers and qualified AMHPs by experience in role*
 Source. NMDS-SC September 2018

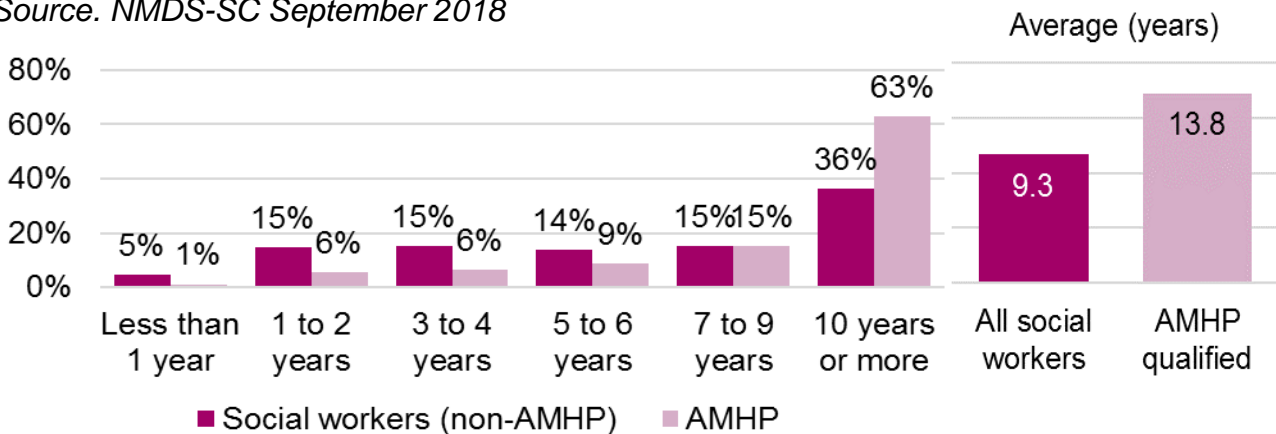


*Those with less than two years in their current role in may have been trained as an AMHP in a previous role.

2.5 Experience in sector

Chart 11 shows that social workers with an AMHP qualification had more experience in the adult social care sector, on average, than social workers in general. The average experience in sector for an AMHP is 13.8 years compared to 9.3 years for all social workers. The largest difference was in '10 or more years experience group where 63% of AMHPs have this level of experience compared to 36% of social workers. Again, this suggests that social workers can progress to becoming AMHPs later in their career.

Chart 11. Proportion of social workers and qualified AMHPs by experience in sector
 Source. NMDS-SC September 2018



2.6 Pay

Across England, the average pay for a social worker with an AMHP qualification was £38,100, which was 11.8% higher than the £34,100 for all social workers. As the chart and table below shows, this pattern was consistent across all regions, with the West Midlands having the greatest uplift of £5,900 (18%) and London showing the lowest uplift of £700 (2%). Uplift represents the difference in average FTE salary between those with and without the AMHP qualification.

Chart 12. Average FTE salary of social workers and qualified AMHPs by region

Source. NMDS-SC September 2018

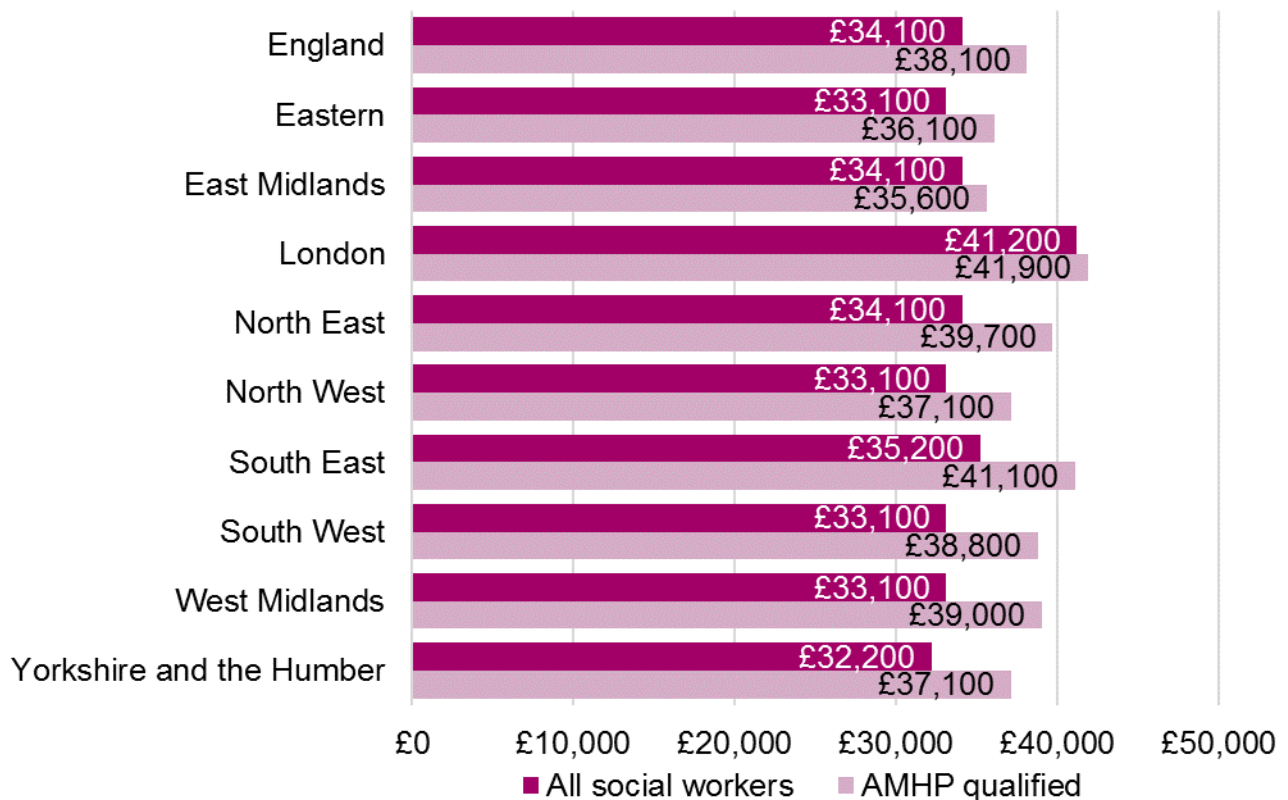


Table 1. Average uplift in salary from social worker to AMHP by region

Source. NMDS-SC September 2018

Region	Average uplift in salary from social worker to AMHP	Average uplift in salary from social worker to AMHP (%)
England	£4,000	12%
Eastern	£3,000	9%
East Midlands	£1,400	4%
London	£700	2%
North East	£5,600	16%
North West	£4,000	12%
South East	£5,900	17%
South West	£5,700	17%
West Midlands	£5,900	18%
Yorkshire and the Humber	£4,900	15%

Across England, the average FTE salary of social workers increased by £3,100 (9%) from £34,300 to £37,400 for AMHPs with 7 to 9 years experience in sector. This pattern was similar for those with 10 years or more experience who had an average FTE salary increase of £2,800 (8%), from £36,200 to £39,000. This demonstrates that becoming an AMHP represents a career progression opportunity even for experience social workers.

Chart 13. Average FTE salary of social workers and AMHPs by experience in sector

Source. NMDS-SC September 2018

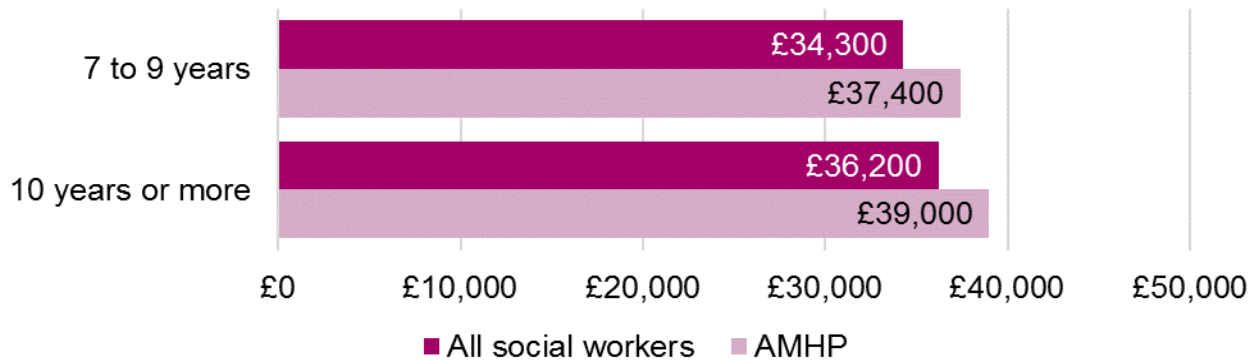


Table 2. Average uplift in salary from social worker to AMHP by experience in sector

Source. NMDS-SC September 2018

Experience in sector	Average uplift in salary from social worker to AMHP	Average uplift in salary from social worker to AMHP (%)
7 to 9 years	£3,100	9%
10 years or more	£2,800	8%

Further resources

Skills for Care provides outstanding workforce intelligence relied upon by the Government, strategic bodies, employers and individuals to help them make decisions that will improve outcomes for the people who use care services. The ASC Workforce Data Set (ASCWDS) is recognised as the leading source of workforce intelligence for adult social care. This chapter provides an overview of some of the reports and resources published by our Workforce Intelligence team.

Workforce intelligence publications

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

This report uses data from the NMDS-SC to explore characteristics of the adult social care sector, including demographic information, recruitment and retention issues, pay rates and qualification and training information. This report also includes information about workforce trends between 2012/13 and 2017/18, including turnover rates, vacancy rates, zero-hours contracts and pay rates. To access this report please visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/stateof.
Latest version, September 2019

Regional reports

These nine regional reports provide an annual overview of adult social care services and the workforce in each region. Each of these nine reports examines regional findings in light of the findings for England as a whole, which are presented in this report. To access these, please visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/regionalreports. *Latest version, December 2019*

Local authority area reports

This collection of summary reports gives an overview of the adult social care sector and workforce in each of the 152 local authority areas in England. They are accompanied by two interactive visualisations which look at individual areas in greater detail. To access these reports, please visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/lasummaries. *Latest version, December 2019*

Keeping informed



For a bespoke analysis of workforce information at a local level or to answer any specific questions you have about the adult social care workforce please contact: analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk. To be kept up to date with Workforce Intelligence news please join our mailing list by registering with us and selecting 'Workforce Intelligence publications'. You can also follow us on Twitter @Sfc_NMDS_SC or visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/contactWI.