

A black and white photograph of a care home interior. A younger woman in a leopard-print top is smiling and assisting an elderly woman with a walker. The elderly woman is wearing a shawl and looking towards the camera. The room has armchairs, a coffee table with a glass and a newspaper, and a decorative wall piece.

Using data and evidence to be the leading source of adult social care workforce intelligence

Statement of commitment to the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics

January 2022, v1

Introduction

This statement aims to inform users of how we, the Skills for Care 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 for the Local Authority sector and workforce report and all other [Workforce Intelligence publications](#).

We are applying the code to help us produce analytical outputs that are high quality, useful for supporting decisions, and well respected. This will support our journey to becoming an official statistics producer.



Skills for Care is an independent organisation with the aim of developing the adult social care workforce to be well-led, highly skilled and valued. We work as a delivery partner for the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), as well as closely with related services within the sector, and have been collecting information about social care providers and their staff since 2006.

Our expertise comes from the workforce intelligence that we collect in the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS) and from our experience of analysing and interpreting social care data. This workforce intelligence expertise is at the centre of everything we do at Skills for Care.

We provide the sector with neutral and evidence-based information about workforce characteristics, issues and trends such as demographics, pay, vacancies and staff turnover. We also respond to information gaps, news and changing government policy. For example, information about how living wage and the COVID-19 pandemic affect the adult social care sector.

01 Trustworthiness



Trustworthiness: confidence in the people and organisations that produce statistics and data

Skills for Care offers [practical, impartial support that is non-partisan](#). One of Skills for Care's core values is to use our [data and insight](#) to provide a solid evidence base about the adult social care workforce and to understand trends. We provide intelligence and robust data to help empower the sector to make plans for change based on [facts](#).

The Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set (ASC-WDS) is an online data collection service and the [leading source of workforce information](#) for the adult social care sector in England. The ASC-WDS collects information about workforce characteristics, such as demographics, pay, vacancies and staff turnover. It also enables the analysis of issues and trends. It holds information on over 19,000 care providing locations and 620,000 workers.

The ASC-WDS has passed the [government digital standards](#) Alpha, Beta and, in 2021, the Live assessment. This is evidence that the system has proper governance, has a user centric design, the data is [secure, managed and meets legislation](#). Information about data security, regulation of data, user rights etc. can be found on the ASC-WDS [privacy notice](#) for workers. Information about storing data, data protection legislation, GDPR and DPA can be found in the [terms and conditions](#).

Most of the Workforce Intelligence Analysts are [Accredited Researchers](#), certified with the ONS safe researcher programme, meaning we work to the standard of the 'five safes' making it a priority to keep these at the forefront of our minds when conducting research, analysis, storing and sharing any research or data.

We always make sure that our research and outputs are [appropriate, trustworthy](#) and there is no risk of misuse or a confidentially breach. When creating outputs, we always adhere to [statistical disclosure controls](#), for example

- we do not create data based on, or publish, low bases
- we do not disclose data about individuals
- our outputs are clearly labelled
- outputs have suitable interpretation
- where applicable we provide a description of the analysis and contextual information
- we provide an appropriate level of detail for the user.

An estimated publication date is put on our website a year in advance for all the workforce intelligence publications and interactive data visualisations.

02 Quality



Quality: data and methods that produce assured statistics

Skills for Care publishes data about the adult social care sector and workforce, almost all our workforce intelligence publications, including statistics for the Local Authority sector and workforce report are based on workforce estimates created using data from the ASC-WDS.

The ASC-WDS was **designed for the collection and reporting** of adult social care information. All definitions were created with, and are regularly reviewed by, users and subject matter experts to ensure they are an **accurate reflection of the sector and are clear and unambiguous**.

The Workforce intelligence team uses the information collected in the ASC-WDS to create estimates for the size of the whole adult social care sector and characteristics of the workforce. Our methodology allows the analysis to represent all adult social care workers, even if the ASC-WDS has uneven levels of data coverage.

Several methods are used to quality assure the data. Applicable data is **validated** at the point of entry into the ASC-WDS and data from large organisations and local authority employers is **checked and approved**. When we start creating workforce estimates we use rigorous **data quality checks** which mean data limitations are minimised. Our methodologies, published for **transparency**, have been peer reviewed by **universities and an independent statistician**. If the methodology is improved from the previous year, then historical trend data is retrospectively updated to ensure any trends we show are 'real' and not the result of methodological changes.

The Workforce Intelligence website has information about 'what we collect, coverage, methodology, integrity and data quality' of the ASC-WDS data and subsequent workforce estimates. Limitations of methods, data quality issues and inconsistencies with external datasets are explained to users at the point of data interpretation in written reports, within tooltips on data visualisations and within a notes box when presenting data in Excel. We use **plain English** and have the users' interest at the heart of all our published work.

Throughout the year the team **maintain and refresh our understanding** of the use and potential use of the statistics and data, and therefore can keep up with best practice and principles.

We have **lessons learnt** sessions after every publication to see where improvements to process or methodology can be made.

03 Value



Value: statistics that support society's needs for information

We publish information in several formats, aiming to cater for as wide of an audience as possible, all publications are presented in a **clear and unambiguous** way with key findings and are **free for all to download** from the Skills for Care website.

Written reports provide plain English **insight and interpretation** of the charts, maps or tables presented. Where possible we **add value** via linking data and outcomes to projects and initiatives across Skills for Care. We publish interactive visualisations that show the data in an easy-to-understand format, with the ability to download a PDF or PowerPoint presentation. The interactive visualisations are used to support all reports and most workforce topic areas that are covered on our website.

We also publish anonymised and aggregated analysis files in CSV, giving the ability to perform some statistical analysis. User guides are provided to accompany these more complex analysis files.

Users are at the centre of all the workforce intelligence publications and to ensure that they are **fit-for-purpose** and provide a **necessary level of detail** we use user research. We user test with stakeholders, users of the data and internal subject matter experts. This is done in several ways;

- Firstly, when writing publications, we **talk to the audience** about what they liked and didn't like about previous versions.
- We collect ideas and test hypothesis to ensure that we remain up to date with the sector.
- We user test our website and interactive visualisations to ensure they have clear navigation, plain English text, clear messages and are easy to understand.

We **iterate and improve** all the workforce intelligence publications annually, based on user research and feedback ready for the next publication.

We review download information and press coverage to check our **reach** and talk to users of publications to ask for feedback and how our information has made an **impact**.

We aim to **increase awareness** of our workforce intelligence via the extensive Skills for Care channels, including social media, websites, our network of locality managers based throughout England, and from talking with, and learning from, employers.

We are constantly looking to **innovate and improve**. We're currently exploring using data engineering techniques to **increase the timeliness and efficiency** of our statistics and exploring the use of data science models to increase precision and trend analysis.

Email analysis@skillsforcare.org.uk

Website www.skillsforcare.org.uk/workforceintelligence