



Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Active Recruitment Statistics - Vacancies at 30 June 2023

Contents

	Page
Introduction and Background	2
Key Points	2
Overall Vacancies	3
by Staff Group	4
by Regional HSC Trust	6
by Other HSC Organisations	6
By Pay Band	7
Notes and Definitions	8
Quality Assessment	9

Introduction and Background

This bulletin presents statistics on vacancies actively being recruited in Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland as at 30 June 2023. Statistics by staff group and HSC organisation are presented throughout.

All data used in this bulletin have been gathered from Recruitment Shared Services in the Business Services Organisation (BSO), HSC Trusts and regional HSC organisations. To ensure that the Department's information is accurate, high data quality standards need to be achieved and maintained by all HSC organisations.

The data presented in this bulletin is a measure of active recruitment to both permanent and temporary positions. Users should note that the figures do not indicate a measure of posts that are unfilled by permanent or fixed-term staff. Due to fluctuations in the data, caution should be taken when considering point-in-time comparisons.

The data accompanying this bulletin are available of the [Department of Health](#) website.

Key Points

- At 30 June 2023, there were 7,183 vacancies actively being recruited across Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland, equating to a vacancy rate of 8.5%.
- The highest number of vacancies actively being recruited across HSC was in the Registered Nursing & Midwifery staff group, with 1,807. This staff group made up 25.2% of all HSC vacancies in recruitment.
- The Social Services staff group had the highest vacancy rate, at 10.0% (1,439 vacancies).
- Of the five regional HSC Trusts, the Belfast HSC Trust had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited (1,968 vacancies).
- The annual percentage change in vacancies was greatest in the South Eastern HSC Trust with an increase of 21.5%, followed by Northern (+12.8%), Belfast (+10.8%) and Western (+7.1%) HSC Trusts. In contrast, there has been a decrease in the number of vacancies in Southern HSC Trust since June 2022 (-4.6%).

Contact

For further information regarding this statistical bulletin, please contact:

Information & Analysis Directorate,
Department of Health,
Room 11, Annex 2, Castle Buildings,
Stormont Estate,
Belfast, BT4 3SQ

Telephone: 028 9052 2493
E-mail: [Workforce Statistics](#)

This bulletin presents the Quarterly Vacancies Statistics in a new format which will be subject to ongoing development. As such, we would appreciate any comments or feedback which can be sent to the responsible statistician, Joanne Hughes, at the e-mail address above.

Vacancy definition: A vacancy is any position that is currently with the recruitment team and being actively recruited to. This will include those going through pre-employment checks, up to the point of a start date being agreed. Once a start date has been agreed with both parties (i.e. manager and applicant) this will no longer be classed as a vacancy. Vacancies that are on hold by managers are not included.

$$\text{Vacancy Rate} = \frac{\text{Vacancies actively being recruited}}{\text{Active posts}^* + \text{vacancies actively being recruited}}$$

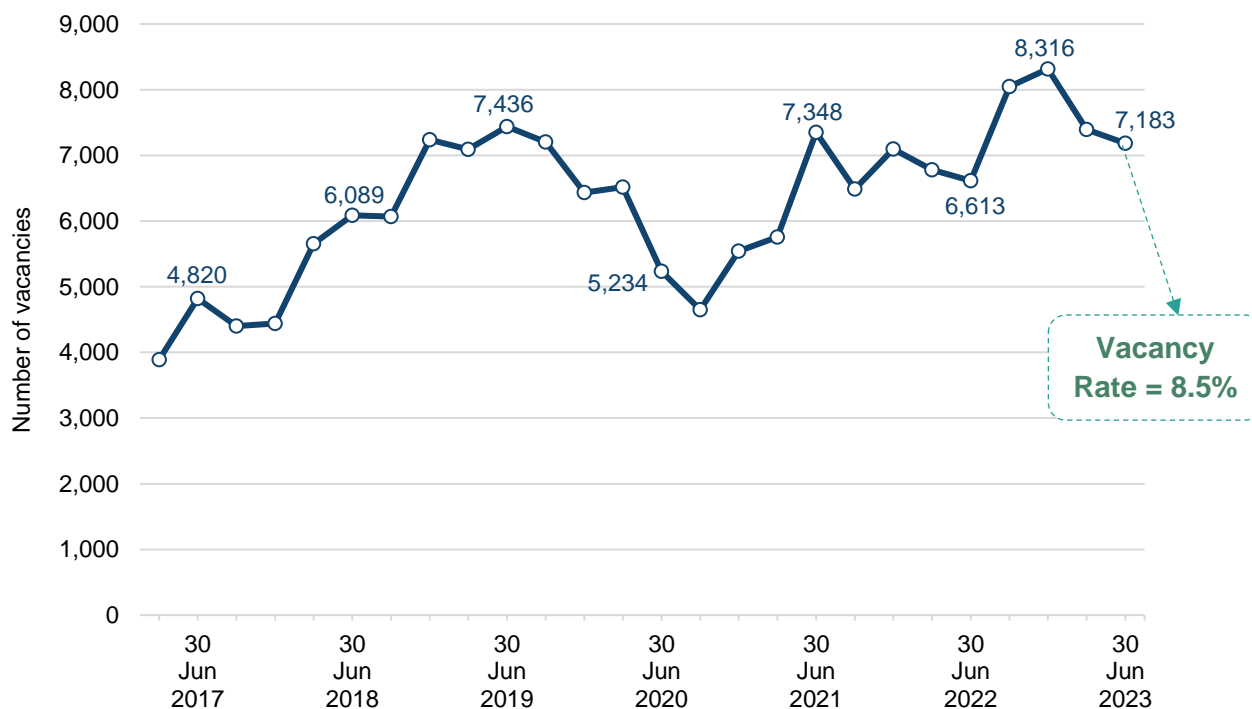
* Includes HSC domiciliary care active posts. This will not match with active post figures published in the HSC Quarterly Workforce Statistics bulletin which excludes domiciliary care active posts.

Overall Vacancies

At 30 June 2023, there were 7,183 vacancies actively being recruited across Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland. This equated to a vacancy rate of 8.5% and was a decrease of 1,133 vacancies since the series high point in December 2022 (8,316) - see Figure 1.

The total number of vacancies under active recruitment in June 2023 is 8.6% higher than June 2022 and 18.0% higher than June 2018.

Figure 1: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, March 2017 – June 2023



Staff Group

Figure 2 below shows the proportion of vacancies actively being recruited at 30 June 2023 for each staff group. Of the 7,183 vacancies actively being recruited at 30 June 2023, the Registered Nursing & Midwifery staff group made up the highest proportion, at 25.2% (1,807 vacancies), and a further 7.9% (570 vacancies) were in the Nursing & Midwifery Support staff group. The second highest proportion of vacancies was in the Social Services staff group, at 20.0% (1,439 vacancies).

The Medical & Dental staff group made up 5.9% (425 vacancies) of all HSC vacancies actively being recruited at 30 June 2023. Half of these vacancies were at consultant grade (212 vacancies).

Figure 2: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, by Staff Group at June 2023

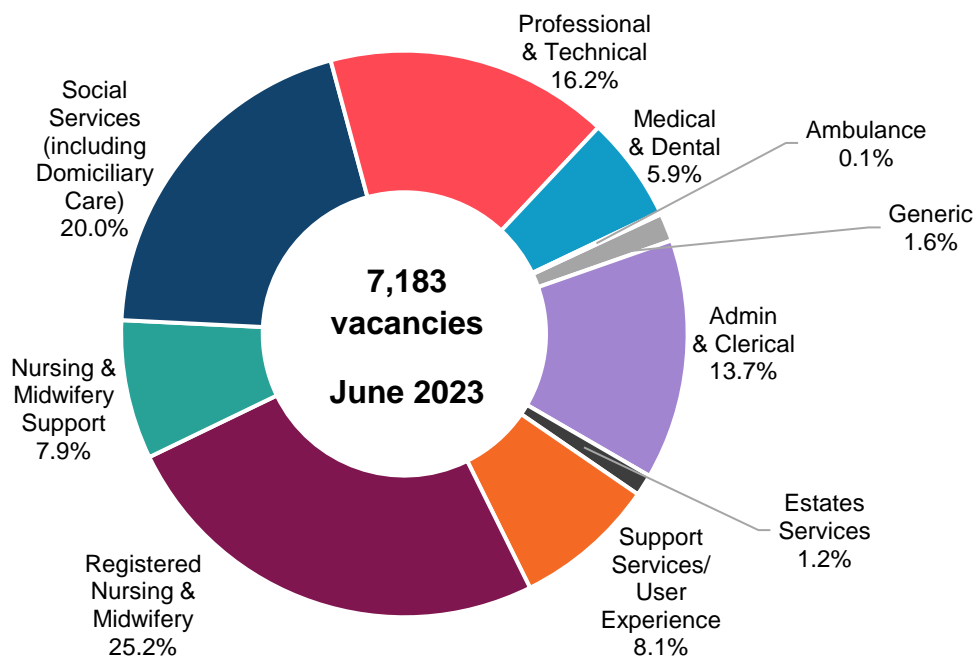


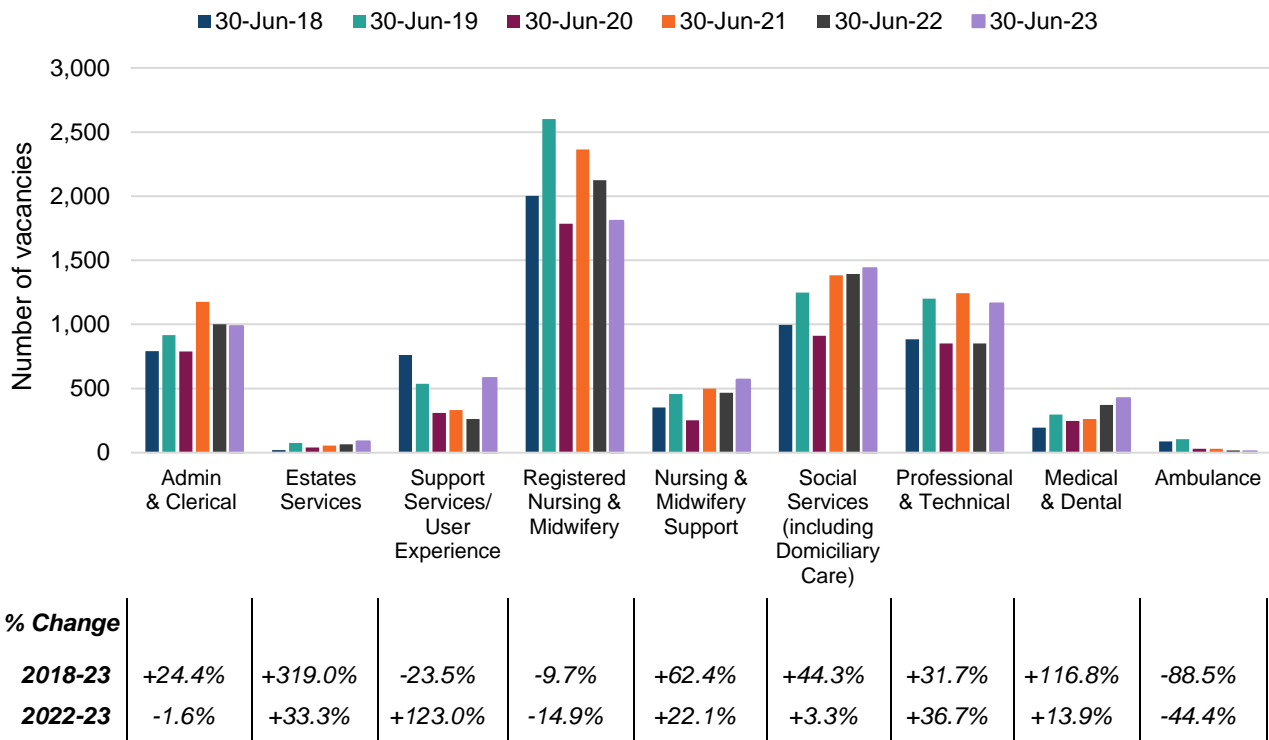
Figure 3 overleaf shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited at 30 June over the last five years, in each staff group.

The largest change in the number of vacancies actively being recruited since June 2022 was in the Support Services staff group, which has seen an increase of 321 vacancies (123.0%). The Registered Nursing and Midwifery staff group seen the largest decrease in vacancies since June 2022 (-317 vacancies, -14.9%).

In the last five years, the Social Services staff group has seen the largest increase in the number of vacancies actively being recruited. Since June 2018, this staff group has seen an increase of 442 vacancies (44.3%). The largest percentage change in vacancies since June 2018 was in Estates Services, which has seen an increase of 319.0% (+67 vacancies). Medical & Dental has also seen a large percentage increase in vacancies since June 2018 (+116.8%, +229 vacancies).

The number of Registered Nursing & Midwifery vacancies under active recruitment has fluctuated over the last 5 years. The current level (1,807 vacancies) is 14.9% lower than the position in June 2022 and 9.7% lower than the position 5 years ago (June 2018).

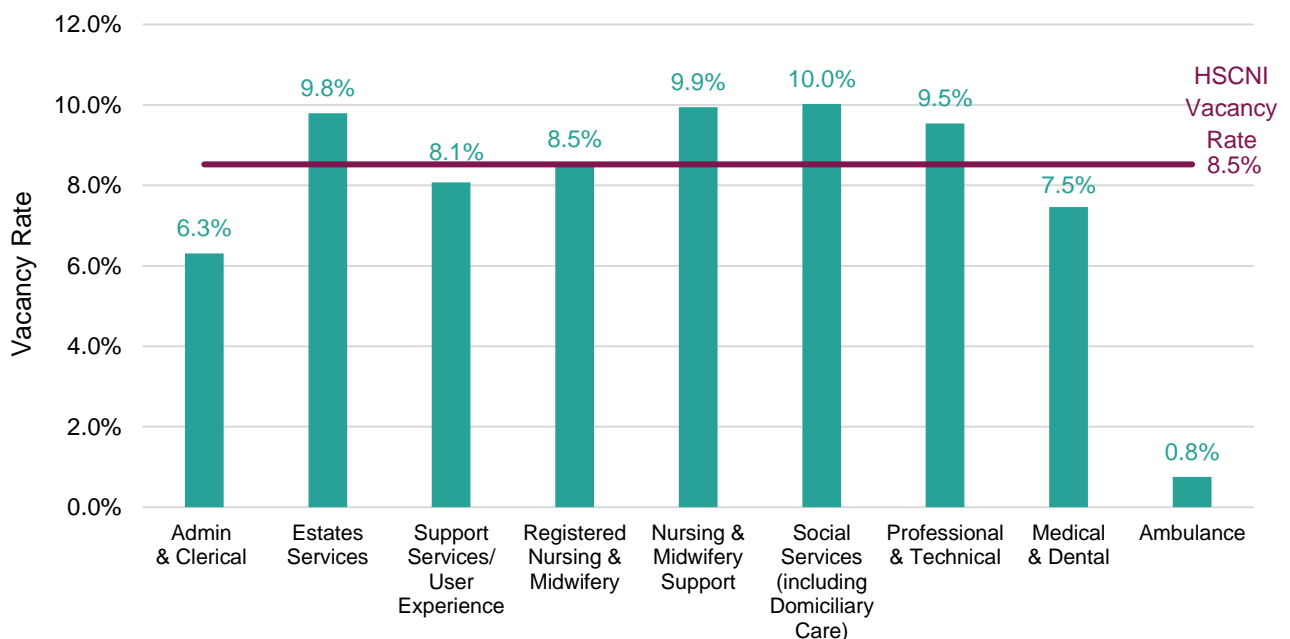
Figure 3: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, by Staff Group[#], June 2018 – June 2023



Excludes vacancies coded as generic roles.

Figure 4 below shows the vacancy rates at 30 June 2023 in each staff group. The Social Services staff group had the highest vacancy rate, at 10.0%, followed by Nursing & Midwifery Support (9.9%), Estates Services (9.8%) and Professional & Technical (9.5%). Registered Nursing & Midwifery had a vacancy rate of 8.5% while Medical & Dental had a rate of 7.5%. The lowest vacancy rate at 30 June 2023 was in the Ambulance staff group (0.8%).

Figure 4: HSCNI Vacancy Rate, by Staff Group[#] at June 2023



Excludes vacancies coded as generic roles.

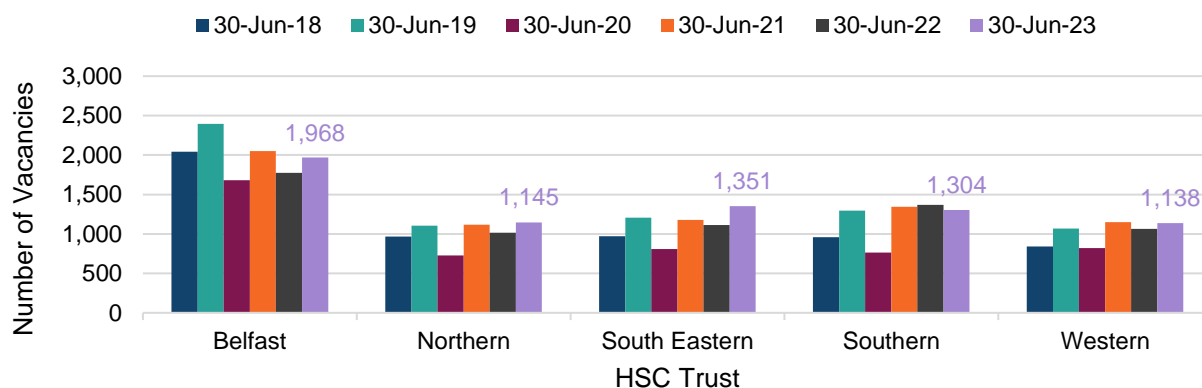
Regional HSC Trust

Figure 5 below shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited in each regional HSC Trust at 30 June over the last 5 years.

At 1,968, the Belfast HSC Trust had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited, an increase of 192 vacancies since June 2022. The annual percentage change in vacancies was greatest in the South Eastern HSC Trust with an increase of 21.5%, followed by Northern (+12.8%), Belfast (+10.8%) and Western (+7.1%) HSC Trusts. In contrast, there has been a decrease in the number of vacancies in Southern HSC Trust since June 2022 (-4.6%).

Four of the five regional HSC Trusts have seen an increase in the number of vacancies actively being recruited to compared with the position five years ago. The South Eastern HSC Trust has seen the largest increase, with an additional 381 vacancies actively being recruited to (+39.3%) since June 2018. The Belfast HSC Trust has however seen a decrease in vacancies since June 2018, a reduction of 73 vacancies (-3.6%).

Figure 5: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Regional HSC Trust, June 2018 – June 2023

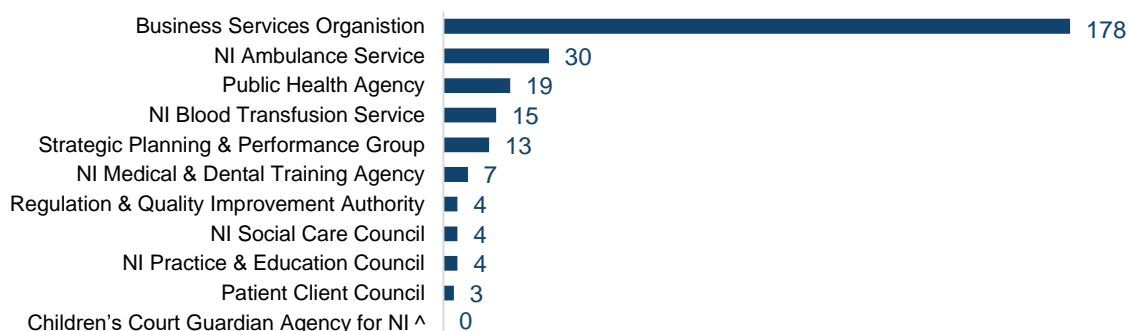


% Change	Belfast	Northern	South Eastern	Southern	Western
2018-23	-3.6%	+18.5%	+39.3%	+36.1%	+35.6%
2022-23	+10.8%	+12.8%	+21.5%	-4.6%	+7.1%

Other HSC Organisations

Figure 6 below shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited at 30 June 2023 in each of the other HSC organisations. The Business Services Organisation (BSO) had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited (178).

Figure 6: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Other HSC Organisation, June 2023



^ Formerly known as the Northern Ireland Agency for Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA).

Pay Band

Figure 7 below shows the breakdown of HSCNI vacancies actively being recruited at 30 June 2023 by Agenda for Change (AfC) pay band group. At 30 June 2023, almost half (49%) of all vacancies actively being recruited in HSCNI were at AfC pay bands 5-7, and approximately two fifths (42%) were at AfC pay bands 2-4.

Figure 7: HSCNI Vacancies by AfC Pay Band Group, June 2023

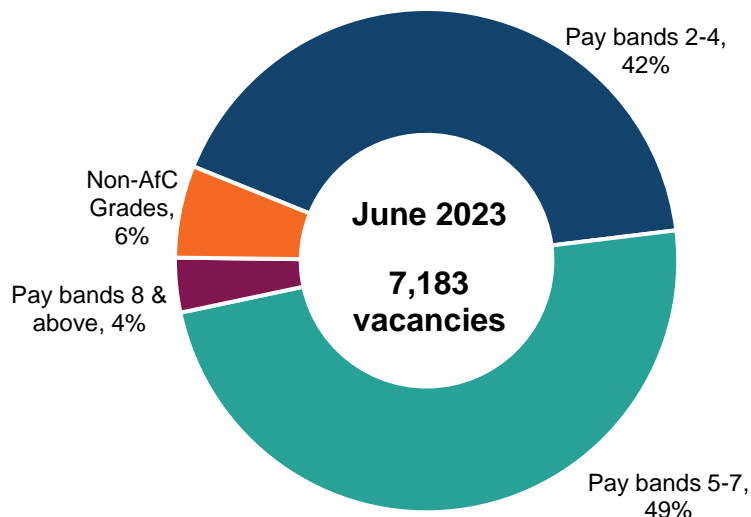


Table 1 below presents the percentage breakdown of vacancies actively being recruited in each staff group by pay band groups.

Table 1: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Staff Group and Pay Band Group, June 2023

Staff Group	Pay bands 2-4	Pay bands 5-7	Pay bands 8 & above	Non-AfC Grades	Vacancies	Total
Generic	4%	89%	8%	0%	114	100%
Administration & Clerical	70%	25%	5%	0%	985	100%
Estates Services	53%	42%	5%	0%	88	100%
Support Services/User Experience	99%	1%	0%	0%	582	100%
Registered Nursing & Midwifery	0%	97%	3%	0%	1,807	100%
Nursing & Midwifery Support	100%	0%	0%	0%	570	100%
Social Services (incl. Domiciliary Care)	61%	37%	2%	0%	1,439	100%
Professional & Technical	21%	69%	9%	0%	1,163	100%
Medical & Dental	0%	0%	0%	100%	425	100%
Ambulance	10%	90%	0%	0%	10	100%
Total	42%	49%	4%	6%	7,183	100%

Notes

The data included in this bulletin represents the number of vacancies actively being recruited and does not indicate the whole time equivalent (WTE) for these positions. The data includes both permanent and temporary positions. These figures do not indicate a measure of posts that are unfilled by permanent or fixed-term staff, and do not include posts not actively being recruited to at the specific point in time, including those outside the bounds of the definition e.g. those that have not reached recruitment stage yet.

Due to fluctuations in the data, caution should be taken when considering point-in-time comparisons.

These figures have not been assessed for seasonal adjustment and have not been seasonally adjusted.

The information presented in this bulletin is based on data obtained from Recruitment Shared Services within the Business Support Organisation (BSO), and from the HSC Organisations listed below:

Belfast HSC Trust
Northern HSC Trust
South Eastern HSC Trust
Southern HSC Trust
Western HSC Trust
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service

Former HSC Board staff have undertaken their functions from 1 April 2022 as part of the Department of Health's newly formed Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG). For consistency purposes, vacancies actively being recruited in SPPG are included in this bulletin, and noted as SPPG.

The Northern Ireland Agency for Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA) has been renamed to the Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland. This change is effective from 6th March 2023.

Definitions

Vacancy: A vacancy is any position that is currently with the recruitment team and being actively recruited to. This will include those going through pre-employment checks, up to the point of a start date being agreed. Once a start date has been agreed with both parties (i.e. manager and applicant) this will no longer be classed as a vacancy. Vacancies that are on hold by managers are not included.

Vacancy Rate: The number of vacancies as a proportion of all posts (see formula below).

$$\text{Vacancy Rate} = \frac{\text{Vacancies actively being recruited}}{\text{Active posts}^* + \text{vacancies actively being recruited}}$$

** Includes HSC domiciliary care active posts. This will not match with active post figures published in the HSC Quarterly Workforce Statistics bulletin which excludes domiciliary care active posts.*

HSC: Umbrella term for all Health and Social Care NI Organisations

Quality Assessment

Relevance

This publication provides a summary of HSC vacancies actively being recruited by broad staff groups and HSC organisation. The publication also includes HSC active recruitment trends. The publication meets the needs of users in terms of trends in active recruitment increases or decreases and the volume of active recruitment in staff groupings.

Accuracy and Reliability

The data is sourced from the recording of each HSC organisation's requisition requests on the HSC e-recruit system. Each HSC organisation is responsible for the data in their requisition requests. Regular reporting and sharing of trends helps the data quality discussion. Figures are an accurate summary of recruitment data at a point in time, as per the definition detailed in the publication. Due to the processing time of a vacancy through the HSC e-recruit system, this may have an impact on figures, causing delays in data peaks and troughs.

Once the figures are prepared for publication in excel format, internal quality assurance is carried out by Information and Analysis Directorate (IAD). The report is drafted and the figures in tabular and chart form are inserted into the report; at this point, further internal quality assurance is carried out by IAD to ensure the report matches the excel file.

Validation

IAD do not have the ability to verify aggregate data returns. However some general quality checks for missing data, changes and trends are monitored, any anomalies are checked and can be followed up as appropriate with HSC organisations or the regional recruitment group.

Error

HSC organisations are responsible for their own data and occasionally variance in recording practices can result in inconsistent data patterns across the region. The system is primarily designed for the recruiting of staff, and whilst recruitment (advert) specifications will be accurate, reporting capabilities are sometimes limited and rely on the accurate coding and categorisation of data for analytical purposes.

Revisions

IAD is committed to clarity around data revisions. As soon as possible after IAD ascertain that a correction to published data is necessary, all electronic documents containing the affected statistics on the DoH website will be updated and clearly marked with caveats and footnotes to detail any amendments. If the correction to the published data is minor, the necessary changes will be made by IAD without an announcement.

Timeliness and Punctuality

IAD request this data from HSC organisations on a quarterly basis using a defined data template. A data definition of HSC active vacancies in recruitment was agreed with the regional HSC recruitment leads.

Data is requested from Recruitment Shared Services within BSO and other HSC Trusts/organisations within 1 week of quarter end. Data is usually returned to IAD within approximately 4 weeks, with publication of the data in this bulletin approximately 3 weeks later i.e. 8 weeks after quarter end.

Normal procedure is that twelve months advance notice of publications is given in the [IAD Statistical Releases Calendar](#) on the DoH website. In the majority of cases, the target publication deadlines are met. However, in the event of a change to a pre-announced release date, the delay is announced, explained and updated regularly.

Accessibility and Clarity

The PDF report is accessible on the DoH Internet site via the Statistics section provided by Information and Analysis Directorate, and can be found under [staff vacancies](#).

The PDF report is published alongside MS Excel and CSV versions of data tables. The 24 hour pre-release list is published also. The report is not yet fully accessible for those using assistive technology.

Coherence and Comparability

IAD are not aware of other published data sources of active recruitment data based on the regionally agreed definition detailed in the publication. HSC organisations are of course able to produce their own analysis of their own organisation only.

The data categories as presented in the report are comparable each quarter. Where data categorisation changes, this is noted.

Trade-offs between Output Quality Components

None

Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions

The publications are primarily used by those linked to health services and we take on board any feedback given. We sometimes get requests for lower level data than is published however prior experience of collating too much data (that was frequently unused) has influenced the current template of published information. Where the case for a particular breakdown is presented, it is considered and actioned where found appropriate. Some criticism is received from those that think we should be working to a different definition of vacancies, however for consistency and given the steer from recruitment leads on the definition, we have kept the collection as posts actively being recruited to. If any other outputs were to be developed, they would have to be presented as a different publication.

The publication will be used for a range of purposes by researchers and other users such as the NI Assembly and the DoH. IAD will ensure that the publication remains relevant to users' needs by taking on comments and feedback regularly.

User feedback is invited in this publication. Readers are provided with contact details for the relevant statistician. We gain awareness of users of our data from ad hoc requests for information.

Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden

The publication represents a secondary use of the data and therefore adds no additional burden on health service organisations. The data are obtained from administrative systems within Northern Ireland.

Confidentiality, Transparency and Security

Aggregate data is supplied on HSC active recruitment by staff group and AfC pay level group where applicable.

Data obtained from Recruitment Shared Services and HSC Trusts/organisations does contain some personal information but only aggregate information is published.

The Code of Practice for Statistics is adhered to from data collection to publishing.

DoH's 'Statistical Policy Statement on Confidentiality' can be found in the [Statistics Charter](#).