

# Evidence Brief: Workforce challenges and solutions

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## Evidence Brief: Workforce challenges and solutions

Produced by the HEE Knowledge Management team Evidence Briefs offer a quick overview of the published reports, research, and evidence on a workforce-related topic.

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# Reports

## Key policy documents

### [NHS People Plan](#)

Source: NHS

Publication date: July 2020

The [People Plan 2020/21: action for us all](#), published at the end of July 2020 along with [Our People Promise](#), built on the [interim People Plan](#) to set out a range of actions to deliver this. These are organised around four pillars:

- looking after our people – with quality health and wellbeing support for everyone
- belonging in the NHS – with a particular focus on tackling the discrimination that some staff face
- new ways of working and delivering care – making effective use of the full range of our people's skills and experience
- growing for the future – how we recruit and keep our people, and welcome back colleagues who want to return.

### [NHS Long Term Plan](#)

Source: NHS

Publication date: January 2019

The NHS Long Term Plan was developed in partnership with those who know the NHS best – frontline health and care staff, patients and their families and other experts.

## Ageing workforce

### [Supporting an ageing medical workforce](#)

Source: British Medical Association (BMA)

Publication date: 2019

The UK workforce is ageing and so are NHS staff. The UK's ageing population is growing, and this demographic shift is shaping the UK labour market. As older workers will constitute a growing proportion of the available workforce, employers must adapt to accommodate their needs. As the fifth largest employer in the world, the NHS's workforce is also ageing.<sup>1</sup> Forty seven percent of NHS staff are now aged 45 or over and the average age is 43. This is predicted to rise over the coming years.<sup>2</sup>

### [The ageing workforce: checklist to assess organisational readiness](#)

Source: NHS Working Longer Group

Publication date: 2015

The NHS Working Longer Group (WLG) has produced this readiness checklist to help you assess how age aware your organisation currently is and to help you action plan for the future. It is a stage in the continuous improvement cycle which should be repeated regularly to track improvements and continue action planning for success.

## Burnout

### [Beating burnout in the NHS](#)

Source: NHS Employers

Publication date: 9<sup>th</sup> August 2022

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Burnout in the NHS is more prevalent than ever. NHS trusts must address this to ensure staff wellbeing and high-quality patient care is sustain

### Workforce burnout and resilience in the NHS and social care

Source: Health and Social Care Select Committee

Publication date: May 2021

Against a context of workforce shortages, funding pressures and reconfiguration of services, concerns about the morale of the NHS and social care workforce are not new. Even before the pandemic, one third of the doctors who responded to a survey published by the BMJ in January 2020 were described as burned out, with those in emergency medicine and general practice most impacted.<sup>1</sup> In June 2019, the predecessor Health and Social Care Committee held a one-off evidence session<sup>2</sup> with Baroness Harding on the Interim People Plan,<sup>3</sup> intended to complement the NHS Long Term Plan and focus on the challenges specific to the health service workforce. Key proposals included making the NHS the 'best place to work' and improving leadership culture. In July 2020 We are the NHS: People Plan for 2020/21 – action for us all<sup>4</sup> was published, along with Our NHS People Promise,<sup>5</sup> with further detail expected after that Autumn's Spending Review.

## Brexit

### Brexit and the Health & Social Care workforce in the UK

Author(s): Dolton et al.

Source: National Institute of Economic and Social Research

Publication date: 6th November 2018

The UK's H&SC workforce is under considerable strain to provide services for an ageing population with increasingly complex needs. While many of the problems supplying new recruits into the sector pre-date the 2016 Brexit referendum, the

vote to leave the European Union (EU) has added another layer of challenge and uncertainty for planning this future workforce. This report examines recent trends in the UK's H&SC workforce and the critical role of EEA nationals within it. This is a vital issue because the vote to leave the EU and ongoing uncertainty regarding any deal between the UK and EU, will undoubtedly impact on their decision whether or not to stay with significant implications for the sector. It can also impact the decision of EEA nationals to move to the UK in the future.

## Covid-19 and the pandemic

### Recover, reward, renew: a post-pandemic plan for the healthcare workforce

Author(s): Patel et al.

Source: Institute for Public Policy Research

Publication date: March 2021

One year since the Covid-19 pandemic took hold, the political narrative has become one of recovery, for the health system as much as for the economy. But what does 'build back better' really mean for an exhausted and over-stretched healthcare workforce?

### Covid-19 and the health and care workforce: supporting our greatest asset

Source: NHS Reset and NHS Confederation

Publication date: September 2020

Health and care staff and the teams they form are the fundamental component of how the nation delivers healthcare. Over the last six months, colleagues across all parts of the health system have mobilised resources, deployed creativity, worked at pace and applied learning to ensure the immediate challenges presented by the pandemic were managed. In responding to the pandemic, we have seen the commitment, professionalism and compassion of staff shine through.

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Sacrifices have been made by many, and public support has been both uplifting and humbling. This needs to be harnessed in collective efforts to improve people's experience of work and to build the workforce of the future.

### [Covid-19 and its impact on the NHS workforce](#)

Source: Royal College of Physicians

Publication date: 5th April 2020

A survey of RCP fellows and members conducted this week has clearly demonstrated the impact that COVID-19 has had on the NHS workforce.

The survey, carried out over 24 hours, asked respondents whether they were currently taking time off from their normal work schedule or had taken time off recently, if they were able to access testing for COVID-19, and if they were able to access the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).

## Cost of living

### [The cost of caring: poverty and deprivation among residential care workers in the UK](#)

Author(s): Allen et al.

Source: Health Foundation

Publication date: October 2022

Broader policy action is also needed to improve living conditions and reduce the burden of poverty on the nation's health – including investment in housing, education and training, and social security. Government has recently provided considerable support to help people cope with soaring energy bills. But without further targeted support for poorer households, life will get even harder for social care workers in the UK.

### [Rising living costs: the impact on NHS, staff and patients](#)

Source: NHS Providers

Publication date: September 2022

Inflation is eroding the NHS funding settlement, creating cost pressures for trusts, particularly for fuel, energy and consumables. However this briefing, based on a survey of trust leaders, focuses deliberately on the impact of the rising cost of living on NHS staff, and the patients and communities they support. The response rate to our survey of trust leaders was 54% with representation across acute, mental health, ambulance and community sectors, all showing a high level of concern about the effect the cost of living is having on NHS staff and patients alike.

### [Cost of living and the impact on nursing labour outcomes in NHS acute trusts](#)

Author(s): Propper et al.

Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS)

Publication date: 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021

This report examines the effect that variation in the cost of living has on the labour supply of existing nurses in NHS acute trusts.

## Culture

### [Supporting our staff: a toolkit to promote culture of civility and respect](#)

Source: NHS

Publication date: 2021

Bullying and harassment have no place in the NHS. The NHS Constitution provides the framework for the principles and values of the NHS in England. The NHS People Plan reminds us to ensure that staff must feel valued, supported and empowered to carry out their work. Therefore, we must address levels of bullying and create compassionate and inclusive cultures which has implications for staff health & wellbeing, staff engagement and ultimately patient care.

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### Bullying and harassment report: Policy, research and recommendations

Source: BMA

Publication date: 2018

BMA policy recommendations on how to reduce bullying and harassment and create a more positive culture in the NHS and medical profession. This bullying and harassment report, launched at our conference in November 2018, is a reflection of what we have learned and what needs to happen across the profession. It sets out key issues that need addressing, and recommendations for change.

## Diversity and Inclusion

### Sexual orientation and gender identity in the medical profession

Author(s): GLADD and British Medical Association

Publication date: November 2022

This report has found that fewer than half (46 per cent) of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer respondents feel able to be open about their sexual orientation where they work or study. The report, based on 2,490 responses from doctors across the UK, suggests a medical workforce that still suffers from and engages in persistent negative stereotypes, derogatory language and social exclusion. It makes several recommendations around improving medical curricula, better training, increasing the visibility of LGBTQ+ role models and enabling dialogue and space to learn.

### Shattered hopes: black and minority ethnic leaders' experiences of breaking the glass ceiling in the NHS

Source: NHS Confederation

Publication date: 17th June 2022

Reflections on the lived experience of senior black and minority ethnic leaders in the NHS.

### NHS Disabled Staff experiences during Covid-19

Source: NHS Employers

This report outlines the working experiences of NHS disabled staff during the first wave of the pandemic, access the key findings and recommendations.

### Attracting, supporting and retaining a diverse NHS workforce

Author(s): Hemmings et al.

Source: Nuffield Trust

Publication date: November 2021

The NHS in England employs some 1.5 million people (Rolewicz and Palmer, 2021). This equates to around 1 in 19 of the total workforce in England. The work that the NHS does would not be possible without the critical contribution of a broad diversity of people, covering different genders, ethnicities, disabilities, religions, national origins, sexual orientations, ages and other characteristics. However, there appears to be scope for the NHS to become a more inclusive, diverse and equitable workforce at every level. Across an array of characteristics – including ethnicity, disability, gender and religion – some groups are under-represented in certain NHS careers. For instance, men account for only 1 in 9 (12%) of the nursing and health visitor workforce whereas women account for little more than a third of medical consultants (38%) (NHS Digital, 2021b).

### How to recruit and support disabled staff in the NHS

Source: NHS Employers

Publication date: 2nd August 2021

A toolkit to help NHS organisations encourage and support disabled applicants to apply for roles in the NHS and retain them.

### Workforce race inequalities and inclusion in NHS Providers

Author(s): Ross et al.

Source: The King's Fund

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Publication date: 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020

The NHS has one of the most ethnically diverse workforces in the public sector. However, year after year, ethnic minority staff<sup>1</sup> report worse experiences in terms of their lives and careers, when compared with white staff and people from an ethnic minority background are under-represented in senior positions in the NHS.

### [NHS workforce race equality: a case for diverse boards](#)

Source: NHS England

Publication date: March 2018

This report highlights the importance of inclusive boards in the NHS and provides guidance on working towards creating inclusive cultures.

## Flexible working

### [Job crafting and flexible working in general practice](#)

Author(s): Bevan et al.

Source: Institute for Employment Studies

Publication date: October 2022

This study explores how six GP practices across the UK have approached the challenges of designing and implementing flexible work designs and job crafting to meet the increase in patient demands and ensure that individual staff needs and the wider practice can be balanced.

### [Flexible working: toolkit for individuals and line managers](#)

Source: NHS England

Publication date: July 2022

NHS England have created two flexible working guides, in collaboration with Timewise and NHS Staff Council.

### [Flexible working scenarios](#)

Source: NHS Employers/ The NHS Staff Council

Publication date: 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022

The NHS Staff Council has developed a range of scenarios to help employers embed the new contractual flexible working provisions.

### [Workforce Flexibility in the NHS](#)

Source: NHS Providers

Publication date: October 2020

This briefing focuses specifically on NHS workforce flexibilities and innovations. It has been directly informed by trust leaders, drawn from the conclusions of a roundtable discussion held in July, which focused on changes to workforce management during the first peak of COVID-19 in England. This briefing explores and makes recommendations on six key areas of change:

1. staff wellbeing
2. flexibility in staff deployment and roles
3. cross-organisational working and regulation
4. technology
5. making use of new roles
6. funding.

### [How to embed flexible working for nurses](#)

Source: NHS Employers

Publication date: 3rd August 2020

A guide on flexible working for the nursing workforce.

### [Flexible working in the NHS: the case for action \(how designing roles flexibly will help the NHS find and keep talented staff\)](#)

Source: Timewise

Publication date: 2018

The staffing crisis in the NHS has the organisation close to breaking point. Large numbers of staff are leaving, with many citing work-life balance as the primary reason. Recruitment is proving challenging, vacancies remain unfilled, and agency

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costs are spiralling as a result. Yet, while flexible working is central to tackling these issues, there is no clear definition of what flexible working means within the NHS. Furthermore, the organisation tends to operate on a request-response model, in which flexibility is seen as a problem to be accommodated, rather than a way to meet the nonwork needs of all staff. The variety of roles and ways of working adds further complexity, with different solutions needed for shift-based working.

### Leadership

#### [Connected Leadership: a unique learning community for ICS leaders](#)

Source: NHS Confederation

Publication date: 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022

A new leadership development programme that will build community, ignite collaboration, spread innovation and grow networks.

#### [Leadership and leadership development in health care: the evidence base](#)

Source: Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management; Center for Creative Leadership and the King's Fund

Publication date: 2015

The key challenge facing all NHS organisations is to nurture cultures that ensure the delivery of continuously improving high quality, safe and compassionate healthcare. Leadership is the most influential factor in shaping organisational culture and so ensuring the necessary leadership behaviours, strategies and qualities are developed is fundamental. What do we really know about leadership of health services? The Faculty of Medical Leadership and Management (FMLM), The King's Fund and the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) share a commitment to evidence-based approaches to developing leadership and collectively initiated a review of the evidence by a team

including clinicians, managers, psychologists, practitioners and project managers. This document summarises the evidence emerging from that review. The summary describes key messages from the review in relation to leadership at different levels of analysis: it includes a description of the leadership task and the most effective leadership behaviours at individual, team, board and national levels.

### New roles

#### [Evaluating the introduction of the Nursing Associate Role in Health and Social Care: Interim report](#)

Source: NIHR and King's College London

Publication date: September 2020

The NHS People Plan (NHS 2020)<sup>1</sup> highlights the growing number of routes to joining the nursing workforce. One story featured in the Plan is that of a Nursing Associate working in Leeds (p45). This report focuses on how Nursing Associates, qualifying in early 2019, are being deployed across England by NHS and social care employers. It follows on from the Traverse review of the two-year training programme undertaken by the first 2,000 Trainee Nursing Associates (TNA). In general, this report explores whether and how the national policy objectives underpinning the introduction of Nursing Associates (NA) are being met, and the extent to which the consequences of the role are sensitive to the interests of various stakeholders – NAs themselves, their colleagues and services users/patients - and different contingencies such as care setting or locality.

#### [Principles for effective working: doctors and the Medical Associate Professions working together](#)

Source: British Medical Association (BMA)

Publication date: 2020

This document outlines a range of principles that can help to improve the ways that doctors and MAPs work together and



identifies possible solutions to some of the common problems that have arisen with the introduction of MAPs.

### Introduction of Nursing Associates – Year 2 Evaluation report

Source: Health Education England and Traverse

Publication date: October 2019

The independent evaluation aimed to generate learning and evidence, which can be shared with programme stakeholders and used within the life of the programme to improve and refine the delivery, as well as an overall assessment of the first two years of the programme. The evaluation methodology focused on the first two waves of trainees who took part on the learning programme. It combined: 1. Early, mid-point and end-point online surveys completed by trainees and a mid-point online survey of line managers. 2. Three rounds of deep dive visits to test sites to speak to trainees, patients, supervisors and other local stakeholders. 3. Analysis of key programme data such as recruitment and attrition data. 4. Attending and inputting at Communities of Practice meetings that were attended by a representative nursing associate from each test site partnership.

## Pay

### Where next for nurses' pay?

Author(s): Buchan et al.

Source: Health Foundation

Publication date: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022

- The gruelling effects of the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis have accelerated the need to review the current approach to NHS nurse pay determination, to ensure it can be fit for purpose as part of an overall NHS workforce strategy.
- This analysis looks at the impact of high inflation and other factors affecting nurse pay, assessing the potential implications for the 2022 NHS Pay Review Body recommendations on nurses' earnings.

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Secondly, we consider the extent to which the current pay determination system could be improved to meet NHS nurse workforce priorities.

### Placed at a premium? The use of recruitment and retention pay supplements to address staffing shortfall

Author(s): Rolewicz and Palmer

Source: Nuffield Trust

Publication date: June 2022

Regional variation in NHS staffing levels can lead to inequalities in health outcomes, care quality and people's ability to access services. Our new analysis explores supplementary payments (also known as recruitment and retention premia), which have been used by NHS organisations across England over the last few decades and present an opportunity to ensure a fairer distribution of staff. They can be designed to attract or keep staff working in certain services, locations or specialties.

## Pensions

### Research into the impact of pensions tax in the NHS

Author(s): First Actuarial

Source: NHS Employers

Publication date: 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022

An independent research report into the impact of the annual allowance on workforce supply, staff costs and ultimately patient care.

### NHS workforce and pension taxation crisis

Source: British Medical Association (BMA)

Publication date: June 2022

Since 2018, the BMA has argued that the Annual Allowance (AA) is completely unsuited to defined benefit schemes such as the NHS and called for the AA to be scrapped in defined benefit schemes, something that had been supported by the Treasury's

own advisers, the Office for Tax Simplification. However, the Government, did not agree and instead raised the taper thresholds to £200,000 and £240,000. The BMA was clear at the time, and ever since, that whilst this approach does mitigate some of the issues around the taper, it is not an effective solution, as the unfair interactions between pension taxation and the NHS pension scheme regulations remain – and crucially this does nothing to affect the punitive effects of the general annual allowance nor the lifetime allowance. Not only has the raise in taper thresholds not fixed the problem but the situation has reached now reached a further crisis point due to the combination of the levels of stress and burnout across the NHS, the McCloud judgement, the freezing of the lifetime allowance in 2021 and the rapid rise in inflation (Consumer Price Index, CPI) and a flaw in the Finance Act such that it is no longer operating as originally intended (i.e. measuring pension growth above inflation).

### Social care

#### [System on a cliff edge: addressing challenges in social care capacity](#)

Source: NHS Confederation

Publication date: 28<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Government urged to take action on the social care workforce crisis or risk putting the care and safety of patients in the NHS in jeopardy.

#### [Recruitment and retention in adult social care: a qualitative study](#)

Source: Migration Advisory Committee

Publication date: June 2022

The adult social care sector has experienced major challenges related to the recruitment and retention of staff for many years. These have been acutely felt in the last few years in the wake

of events such as COVID-19 and Brexit, with vacancy rates in the sector reported to have risen sharply in the last year<sup>1</sup>. These challenges put pressures on the sector, its workers, and users, with care providers increasingly having to rely on expensive agency staff and feeling forced to turn down new clients<sup>2</sup>. In July 2021, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) was commissioned by the Minister of Future Borders and Immigration to undertake an independent review of adult social care and how these challenges might be addressed<sup>3</sup>. The specific objective of the commission was to understand the impact that the ending of Freedom of Movement between the UK and EEA in January 2021 has had on the sector, and particularly how it has impacted:

- The adult social care workforce, such as skills shortages
- Visa options for migrant care workers
- Long-term consequences for workforce recruitment, training and employment terms and conditions

#### [Unfair to care: understanding the social care pay gap and how to close it](#)

Source: Community Integrated Care

Publication date: 2021

In our report - 'Unfair To Care: Understanding The Social Care Pay Gap and How To Close It' - we provide empirical evidence that frontline carers receive an unfair deal in comparison to other publicly-funded roles and we break the stereotype that social care is a 'low-skilled' sector. This groundbreaking research demonstrates the true financial value of a frontline care worker. Illustrating that many frontline social care workers would be paid 39% more - nearly £7000 per year - in equivalent positions within the NHS, local authorities and other public funded industries, the roots of the social care crisis are laid bare. This is an issue that affects not only the entire care sector but society at large too. It can only be changed with progressive

reform and focus from central government. Social care is funded by local authorities who are stretched to breaking point. These same challenges, in turn, are passed on to care providers, families and the people we support. Change is needed. We hope that this research gives fresh impetus to support this.

### Shortages, Supply, Recruitment and Retention

#### [RCP view on the NHS workforce: short- and medium-term solutions](#)

Source: Royal College of Physicians

Publication date: October 2022

This policy paper outlines how staffing shortages are the biggest barrier to meeting demand for care and delivering health care sustainably in the long term. It describes how a long-term plan for increasing staffing numbers, including expanding medical school places, is needed to put the NHS workforce back on a sustainable footing, restore timely access to care and protect patient safety. But given the urgency of the situation, the RCP has set out a range of short- and medium-term solutions that will make a difference now, from affordable childcare and flexible working to overseas recruitment and a new 'retire and return' deal for consultants.

#### [NHS workforce projections 2022](#)

Author(s): Shembavnekar et al.

Source: Health Foundation

Publication date: July 2022

- This report provides the REAL Centre's projections of future NHS workforce supply and demand in England, up to 2030/31.
- At an overarching level, our supply and demand projections cover the NHS Hospital and Community Health Service (HCHS) and general practice workforce in

England. Our in-depth analysis focuses on two staff groups: registered nurses (across all sectors but focusing on the HCHS), and general practice patient care staff (including GPs and general practice nurses). Together these groups account for nearly 3 in 10 of the 1.4 million full-time equivalent (FTE) NHS staff in England.

- Our high-level analysis points to an overall workforce supply-demand gap of around 103,000 FTE across the NHS HCHS and general practice in 2021/22 (around 7% of estimated FTE workforce demand). This gap is projected to increase to around 179,000 FTE by 2024/25 before declining gradually to a still substantial 156,000 FTE in 2030/31 (around 9% of projected demand).
- This report raises significant questions about general practice workforce supply. In all scenarios, we project a persistent shortfall of FTE GPs and general practice nurses. In the pessimistic case, the GP supply-demand gap grows to around 18,900 FTE by 2030/31 – nearly 1 in 2 GP posts (48%) based on projected demand.
- While the government appears to be on track to meet its 50,000 nurses target by 2023/24, this would still leave the NHS short of around 38,000 FTE HCHS and general practice nurses relative to projected demand in 2023/24. In the longer term, in the current policy scenario the NHS is projected to have a persisting shortfall of around 36,700 FTE nurses in 2030/31.

#### [Inspire, attract, and recruit toolkit: resources and guidance to support your workforce supply](#)

Source: NHS Employers

Publication date: 17<sup>th</sup> June 2022

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This resource has been developed for NHS HR professionals, recruitment teams and managers to help inspire, attract and recruit your future workforce.

### Recruiting, retaining and sustaining the NHS Workforce

Source: NHS Providers

Publication date: November 2021

The NHS is at a crossroads and that means its workforce is too. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has presented the biggest challenge in the history of the service, requiring staff to work at increased risk and in vastly different ways. This overhaul in priorities and ways of working, coupled with growing service demand and a care backlog requiring the NHS to run just to stand still, has led to understandably high rates of staff burnout, early retirement, and sickness absence. [48% of trust leaders](#) report having seen these effects on staff in their organisations. But, as vast as these challenges are, there are also opportunities for change and improvement. Trusts across the country are continuing to push themselves to do the best for their staff, with innovative and future-facing approaches to workforce planning, management, and deployment. This report aims to collate best practice examples in these areas, identifying the common enablers and obstacles so that other organisations can consider this in their own work. It also gives an overview of the national context behind initiatives to recruit, retain, and sustain NHS staff.

### Building the NHS nursing workforce in England

Author(s): Buchan et al.

Source: The Health Foundation

Publication date: December 2020

In November 2019 we published *Falling short: the NHS workforce challenge*,<sup>1</sup> our annual detailed assessment of the NHS workforce in England. The report highlighted that staff shortages had become more pronounced compared with

previous years, and were increasing the risk of service delivery being compromised. In particular, the report highlighted the shortfall in registered nurses. Modest growth in NHS nurse numbers had not kept pace with demand and nursing vacancies had increased to almost 44,000 in the first quarter of 2019/20, equivalent to 12% of the nursing workforce.

### The NHS nursing workforce

Source: National Audit Office

Publication date: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Nurses are critical to the delivery of health and social care services, working across hospitals, community services, care homes and primary care. In 2019, around 519,000 people in England were registered to practise as a nurse, while the NHS employed 320,000 nurses in hospital and community services, making up about a quarter of all NHS staff. In January 2019, the NHS Long Term Plan acknowledged the need to increase staff numbers, noting that the biggest shortfalls were in nursing. The NHS set up the People Plan programme to decide how it would secure the workforce it needed to meet its future service commitments. In this report, we define workforce planning as the analysis and plans required to ensure that the NHS has the number and type of staff it needs, now and in the future.

### Falling short: the NHS workforce challenge

Author(s): Buchan et al.

Source: The Health Foundation

Publication date: November 2019

This is the fourth annual NHS workforce trends report published by the Health Foundation. In it, we analyse the changes in the size and composition of the NHS workforce in England in the context of long-term trends, policy priorities and future projected need. The key findings are as follows.

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### Closing the gap: key areas for action on the health and social care workforce

Author(s): Beech et al.

Source: The Health Foundation; The King's Fund and Nuffield Trust

Publication date: 21<sup>st</sup> March 2019

Staffing is the make-or-break issue for the NHS in England. Workforce shortages are already having a direct impact on patient care and staff experience. Urgent action is now required to avoid a vicious cycle of growing shortages and declining quality. The workforce implementation plan to be published later this year presents a pivotal opportunity to do this.

In this joint report with the Nuffield Trust and the Health Foundation, we set out a series of policy actions that, evidence suggests, should be at the heart of the workforce implementation plan. We focus on nursing and general practice, where the workforce problems are particularly severe. There are no silver bullets, but these are high-impact policy actions which, if properly funded and well implemented across the NHS, would over time create a sustainable model for general practice and help to eliminate nursing shortages. They will require investment of an extra £900 million per year by 2023/24 into the budget of Health Education England.

### A critical moment: NHS staffing trends, retention and attrition

Author(s): Buchan et al.

Source: The Health Foundation

Publication date: February 2019

This is the third annual NHS workforce trends report published by the Health Foundation. Analysis of the NHS staff profile and trends in England in 2018 largely confirms the trends identified in our 2016 and 2017 reports, and shows an ongoing deterioration for some key staff groups.

### Fund our future nurses

Source: Royal College of Nursing (RCN)

Publication date: November 2018

This report provides costed alternatives for higher education funding in England to encourage more people to study nursing.

### Time to care: securing a future for the hospital workforce in the UK

Source: Deloitte

Publication date: February 2018

There is widespread acknowledgement across the UK of the growing mismatch between demand for hospital care and the supply of staff and other resources to meet that demand. The hospital pay bill is the single biggest investment in health care. Getting the hospital workforce policy right is crucial to the sustainability of high quality health care. However, ensuring that there are enough hospital beds and staff to meet the health care needs of the population is a key challenge in every country, and is a particularly high profile issue in the UK. This report examines the scale and complexity of the workforce challenges facing UK hospitals. It analyses national health datasets on hospital activity and outcomes and synthesises existing research on workforce planning, recruitment, retention, education and training. It also draws on insights derived from a UK cut of our unique survey of doctors and nurses working in hospitals across Europe and interviews with health care leaders across the UK.

## System working

### Integrated workforce thinking across systems: practical solutions to support integrated care systems (ICSs)

Source: NHS Employers

Publication date: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022

This guide has been written to support employers in integrated workforce thinking, in line with delivering the ICS strategy.

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### [Sharing talent: lessons from collaborative healthcare staff banks](#)

Source: NHS Professionals

Publication date: July 2022

The 2022 Health and Care Bill establishes the foundations for a new era of co-operation and collaboration across place-based healthcare systems. It places Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) on a statutory footing with a clear mandate to integrate care, improve population health and reduce inequalities. This new environment offers considerable scope for providers to collaborate on workforce recruitment, deployment and development in a way that optimises the effective utilisation of people and skills and better enables consistently safe and effective healthcare across systems. It also supports innovation in tackling some of the biggest workforce challenges we face at the present time.

### [Working differently together: progressing a one workforce approach – Multidisciplinary team toolkit](#)

Source: Health Education England

Publication date: October 2021

This toolkit is a step-by-step guide to help progress a one workforce approach across health and care organisations and ICSs. In this context, 'one workforce' is intended to be indicative of a workforce drawn from a range of health and social care disciplines, working seamlessly as a productive, multi-functional team across clinical pathways, for the benefit of patients/service users.

### [Inclusive recruitment: supporting economic recovery](#)

Source: NHS Employers

Publication date: 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

This briefing highlights the economic impact of COVID-19 and the role the NHS can play in supporting local recovery.

### [A place to work: system approaches to workforce challenges in the NHS](#)

Source: NHS Providers

Publication date: December 2019

In many sustainability and transformation partnerships (STPs) and integrated care systems (ICSs), strong relationships are borne out of the recognition of shared motivation to improve patient care, grow the workforce and make best use of resources in a challenging financial climate. System leaders taking forward this work describe coming together around a shared aim, and recognising that organisations have commonalities which leaders can rally around to develop joined-up workforce solutions – across recruitment and retention, training, and skills gaps. System working can help address workforce challenges but this will require a significant shift in how the NHS operates, transforming culture to make close working and cross-boundary relationships part of the day-to-day business of frontline staff, as well as getting leaders from across the system together to engage in joint strategic planning.

## Wellbeing, work-life balance and working life

### [Voicing the concerns of the Public Health workforce on wellbeing and work-life balance: a brief policy response](#)

Source: Royal Society for Public Health

Publication date: October 2022

The public health workforce is under enormous stress. Covid-19 exacerbated the already high workload, and increasing demand for their services made them work longer hours, suffer from a lack of work-life balance, and feel burned out.

### [Fronting up to the problems: what can be done to improve the wellbeing of NHS staff?](#)

## Evidence Brief: Workforce challenges and solutions

Author(s): Edwards and Cowper

Publication date: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Source: Nuffield Trust

The NHS is not in a place where it can lose staff, but many workers in the health service have faced almost unimaginable difficulties during the pandemic. How worried should we be about NHS staff health and wellbeing? Nigel Edwards and Andy Cowper look at how bad the situation is and what can be done to improve things.

### [NHS Staff wellbeing: why investing in organisational and management practices makes business sense: a rapid evidence review and economic analysis](#)

Author(s): Daniels et al.

Source: IPPO (The International Public Policy Observatory)

Publication date: June 2022

This report makes the business case for investing in the wellbeing of NHS staff. It includes a narrative review of data on the current state of the mental health and wellbeing of NHS staff showing that nearly half of staff reported feeling unwell as a result of work-related stress in the most recent survey, that sickness absence had increased, and that there are high vacancy and turnover rates in some Trusts. Research also shows that patient care can be affected by poor healthcare staff wellbeing.

### [Health and wellbeing of the adult social care workforce](#)

Source: Department of Health and Social Care

Publication date: May 2022

Advice for those working in adult social care on managing your mental health and how employers can take care of the wellbeing of their staff.

### [Enhancing Junior Doctors' Working Lives](#)

Source: Health Education England

Publication date: 2022

This year's Enhancing Junior Doctors' Working Lives report, the sixth progress report to be published, is a summary of achievements over the past year. The report is a useful resource for doctors and educators and helps NHS Trusts and practices see how the system is working to support doctors.

### [Caring for doctors, caring for patients](#)

Author(s): West and Coia

Source: GMC

Publication date: April 2021

Medicine is a tough job, but we make it far harder than it should be by neglecting the simple basics in caring for doctors' wellbeing. The wellbeing of doctors is vital because there is abundant evidence that workplace stress in healthcare organisations affects quality of care for patients as well as doctors' own health<sup>1-5</sup>. In two studies, researchers found that doctors with high levels of burnout had between 45% and 63% higher odds of making a major medical error in the following three months, compared with those who had low levels<sup>6</sup>.

### [Creating a health and wellbeing culture](#)

Source: NHS England

Publication date: 2021

Many factors influence the health and wellbeing of our diverse NHS people and teams. Some of these, such as physical and mental health, are well understood. However, there are other factors such as relationships, management skills and the environment that we work in, that are fundamental to healthy people who are able to provide world class health care to our patients. This resource aims to provide the evidence base and inspiration for change for all these components of health and wellbeing.

## Evidence Brief: Workforce challenges and solutions

the issues that junior doctors face, while taking a broad view of the challenges confronting the wider NHS workforce and identifying areas of improvement.

### \*Help accessing articles of papers

Where a report/ journal article or resource is freely available the link has been provided. If an NHS OpenAthens account is required this has been indicated. It has also been highlighted if only the abstract is available. If you do not have an OpenAthens account you can self-register here.

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### Workforce Stress and the Supportive Organisation: a framework for improvement through reflection, curiosity and change

Source: Health Education England and the National Workforce Skills Development Unit

Publication date: April 2019

One of the biggest challenges facing the NHS is workforce resilience, capacity and wellbeing. Key issues such as recruitment and retention of staff are reflected in publications such as the Health Education England draft health and care workforce strategy; 'Facing the Facts, Shaping the Future'. With this in mind Health Education England commissioned the National Workforce Skills Development Unit (the Unit) to bring together an expert reference group to think differently about the problems facing the NHS workforce.

### Caring for the mental health of the medical workforce

Source: British Medical Association

Publication: date: 2019

This report provides a summary of findings from a large-scale survey into doctors' and medical students' mental health. The survey, which was open to BMA members and non-members across the UK, received over 4,300 responses. Four in 10 respondents reported currently experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, burnout, stress, emotional distress or a mental health condition that is impacting on their work/training/study.

### Supporting health and wellbeing at work

Source: BMA

Publication date: October 2018

Our 'Supporting health and wellbeing' report is based on evidence from a BMA member survey looking into doctors' experiences with occupational support services. It focuses on