



Department
of Health &
Social Care

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Jeremy Hunt MP
Chair of the Health and Social Care Committee,
House of Commons,
London,
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29 March 2022

Dear Jeremy,

In this letter we are responding to two points raised by the cancer services expert panel. The first point concerned staff retention, while the second point was a request to provide workforce growth figures by regions rather than, as we presented in our evidence, across the country.

Staff Retention

Phil Carver from Health Education England (HEE), in response to a question from the Expert Panel, said that alongside the good work that HEE had been doing to increase the size of the cancer workforce, individual employers need to be able to retain their staff as well; and that individual employers would be aware of which locations, services and staff groups would be most affected by staff retention issues.

Whilst individual employers will know their own situation through their internal processes, there is limited data at national and regional level in that it does not break down to the level of granularity. The data we have provided below is as follows:

Table 1: NHS Hospital Trust Vacancy Numbers and Rates as at Dec 2017-2021

Table 2a: Total NHS Hospital Trust Vacancy Numbers and Rates as at Dec 2018-2021

Table 2b: Registered Nursing NHS Hospital Trust Vacancy Numbers and Rates as at Dec 2018-2021

Table 2c: Medical NHS Hospital Trust Vacancy Numbers and Rates as at Dec 2018-2021

Table 3: Annual Leaver Rates for Consultants in NHS Hospital Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups, Years to September 2010 to September 2021, by Region

NHS Digital publish quarterly data on vacancies in NHS Hospital Trusts. This is information collected by NHS England and can be found at the following link:

<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/nhs-vacancies-survey>

It is only published for a) total, b) registered nursing and c) medical vacancies. We are unable therefore to identify specific professions within the mental health workforce, or the mental health workforce itself. Generally, rates which were depressed during the pandemic are returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Table One: NHS Hospital Trust Vacancy Numbers and Rates as at Dec 2017-2021

	2017/18 Q3	2018/19 Q3	2019/20 Q3	2020/21 Q3	2021/22 Q3
Total Vacancies	101,567	100,986	99,924	89,144	110,192
Total Vacancy rate	8.7%	8.5%	8.1%	7.0%	8.3%
Nursing Vacancies	35,934	39,686	38,736	36,277	39,652
Nursing Vacancy rate	10.2%	11.1%	10.7%	9.7%	10.3%
Medical Vacancies	9,738	8,989	8,876	6,954	8,158
Medical Vacancy rate	7.9%	7.1%	6.7%	5.1%	5.8%

Tables 2a, 2b and 2c show the data broken down by regions. This is only available from 2018 onwards due to the change in the way the NHS reported regional data.

Table 2a: Total NHS Hospital Trust Vacancy Numbers and Rates as at Dec 2018-2021

Region	2018/19 Q3 (Dec-18)	2019/20 Q3 (Dec-19)	2020/21 Q3 (Dec-20)	2021/22 Q3 (Dec-21)
East of England Total	12,163	11,781	9,886	10,920
East of England Rate	10.7%	10.1%	8.2%	8.7%
London Total	23,019	23,151	20,115	26,421
London Rate	11.0%	10.7%	8.9%	11.1%
Midlands Total	18,774	19,670	17,807	21,367
Midlands Rate	8.5%	8.6%	7.5%	8.6%
North East and Yorkshire Total	11,182	10,994	10,015	13,837
North East and Yorkshire Rate	5.7%	5.5%	4.8%	6.4%
North West Total	12,922	12,301	12,083	13,445
North West Rate	7.2%	6.7%	6.3%	6.8%
South East Total	15,534	14,683	13,374	15,930
South East Rate	9.8%	8.9%	7.8%	8.8%
South West Total	7,393	7,344	5,864	8,273
South West Rate	6.7%	6.4%	4.9%	6.6%
England Total	100,986	99,924	89,144	110,192
England Rate	8.5%	8.1%	7.0%	8.3%

Table 2b: Registered Nursing NHS Hospital Trust Vacancy Numbers and Rates as at Dec 2018-2021

Region	2018/19 Q3 (Dec-18)	2019/20 Q3 (Dec-19)	2020/21 Q3 (Dec-20)	2021/22 Q3 (Dec-21)
East of England Total	4,001	3,642	3,325	3,792
East of England Rate	12.0%	10.7%	9.5%	10.3%
London Total	9,161	9,358	8,417	9,564
London Rate	13.5%	13.6%	11.9%	13.0%
Midlands Total	7,549	7,810	7,559	7,892
Midlands Rate	11.4%	11.5%	10.8%	11.0%
North East and Yorkshire Total	4,619	4,729	4,402	5,095
North East and Yorkshire Rate	8.1%	8.2%	7.4%	8.4%
North West Total	5,214	5,079	4,521	4,754
North West Rate	9.6%	9.2%	8.1%	8.2%
South East Total	6,061	5,263	5,764	5,897
South East Rate	13.0%	11.1%	11.6%	11.3%
South West Total	3,082	2,855	2,288	2,659
South West Rate	10.0%	9.0%	7.1%	7.9%
England Total	39,686	38,736	36,277	39,652
England Rate	11.1%	10.7%	9.7%	10.3%

Table 2c: Medical NHS Hospital Trust Vacancy Numbers and Rates as at Dec 2018-2021

Region	2018/19 Q3 (Dec-18)	2019/20 Q3 (Dec-19)	2020/21 Q3 (Dec-20)	2021/22 Q3 (Dec-21)
East of England Total	1,231	1,228	1,033	981
East of England Rate	9.9%	9.4%	7.6%	7.1%
London Total	1,815	1,662	1,192	1,463
London Rate	6.6%	5.8%	4.0%	4.9%
Midlands Total	1,987	1,978	1,842	2,202
Midlands Rate	9.3%	8.8%	7.8%	9.0%
North East and Yorkshire Total	1,004	991	861	1,051
North East and Yorkshire Rate	5.2%	5.0%	4.2%	4.8%

North West Total	1,226	1,246	1,006	1,056
North West Rate	7.4%	7.2%	5.6%	5.7%
South East Total	1,241	1,308	837	950
South East Rate	7.1%	7.2%	4.4%	4.7%
South West Total	485	462	183	456
South West Rate	4.0%	3.7%	1.4%	3.6%
England Total	8,989	8,876	6,954	8,158
England Rate	7.1%	6.7%	5.1%	5.8%

Leaver Rates:

NHS Digital publish headcount leaver rates for staff from NHS Hospital Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups. This can be broken down to show medical consultants but is not published at specialty level.

Table 3: Annual Leaver Rates for Consultants in NHS Hospital Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups, Years to September 2010 to September 2021, by Region

NHSE Region Name	Sep t 2009 to Sep t 2010	Sep t 2010 to Sep t 2011	Sep t 2011 to Sep t 2012	Sep t 2012 to Sep t 2013	Sep t 2013 to Sep t 2014	Sep t 2014 to Sep t 2015	Sep t 2015 to Sep t 2016	Sep t 2016 to Sep t 2017	Sep t 2017 to Sep t 2018	Sep t 2018 to Sep t 2019	Sep t 2019 to Sep t 2020	Sep t 2020 to Sep t 2021
London	6.1%	6.4%	6.1%	6.7%	6.3%	5.9%	6.0%	6.5%	6.2%	6.3%	6.0%	6.1%
South West	5.4%	5.1%	6.6%	6.0%	6.3%	5.0%	5.7%	4.8%	5.7%	5.7%	5.5%	6.1%
South East	4.8%	6.0%	6.5%	6.8%	8.1%	6.0%	5.8%	5.8%	6.0%	5.6%	5.2%	5.1%
Midlands	5.4%	5.3%	5.3%	6.7%	6.1%	5.9%	5.3%	5.7%	5.4%	5.2%	5.0%	5.3%
East of England	5.6%	6.6%	6.0%	7.5%	6.5%	6.4%	6.2%	6.1%	5.2%	5.4%	4.8%	5.1%
North West	4.9%	5.9%	5.6%	6.7%	6.0%	5.9%	6.0%	5.6%	5.8%	5.6%	5.4%	5.2%
North East and Yorkshire	5.3%	6.2%	5.1%	6.2%	6.2%	5.5%	5.7%	5.3%	5.0%	5.7%	4.5%	5.1%
England	5.4%	6.0%	5.8%	6.6%	6.5%	5.8%	5.8%	5.7%	5.7%	5.7%	5.2%	5.4%

Regional breakdown of staff in post changes for the cancer workforce between 2016-21

The Panel also asked for a breakdown of a table provided in the original evidence. The tables below show annual staff in post and total workforce growth between 2016-21 for

each occupation by region. Methodology changes have been applied from 2020 onwards, as per those made to national figures previously submitted. These regional figures have been extracted from current ESR data which has 'settled' over time due to changes made by organisations. As a result, there are some small differences between previously circulated national figures (which are static) and the totals calculated below. The data we have provided below is as follows:¹

Table 1.1: Histopathology Workforce growth by region, 2016-2021

Table 1.2: Clinical and Medical Oncology Workforce growth by region 2016-2021

Table 1.3: Clinical Radiology Workforce growth by region 2016-2021

Table 1.4: Gastroenterology Workforce growth by region 2016-2021

Table 1.5: Diagnostic Radiography Workforce growth by region 2016-2021

Table 1.6: Therapeutic Radiography Workforce growth by region 2016-2021

	Histopathology							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total Workforce Growth (FTE)	Total Workforce Growth %
SW	111	112	108	114	121	122	11	10%
SE	175	176	169	171	177	183	8	5%
NW	176	163	173	174	181	195	19	11%
NEY	175	172	180	192	202	208	32	19%
Mid	187	184	186	185	204	204	17	9%
Lond	233	233	235	256	234	227	-5	-2%
EoE	134	138	137	141	151	152	18	14%
Total	1,190	1,178	1,187	1,233	1,270	1,291	101	8%

Table 1.1: Histopathology Workforce growth by region 2016 - 2021

	Clinical and Medical Oncology							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total Workforce Growth (FTE)	Total Workforce Growth %
SW	119	120	127	126	141	146	26	22%
SE	169	181	182	185	189	196	27	16%
NW	135	133	135	139	148	161	27	20%
NEY	159	165	170	176	177	187	27	17%
Mid	154	163	173	174	191	194	39	25%
Lond	186	207	231	255	261	278	91	49%
EoE	133	132	138	141	149	153	20	15%
Total	1,056	1,102	1,156	1,196	1,256	1,313	258	24%

Table 1.2: Clinical and Medical Oncology Workforce growth by region 2016 - 2021

¹ Corrected tables have been sent from the Department and published as written evidence on the Health and Social Care Committee website [here](#)

	Clinical Radiology							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total Workforce Growth (FTE)	Total Workforce Growth %
SW	259	283	302	306	332	335	77	30%
SE	594	619	653	686	715	747	152	26%
NW	456	461	477	490	529	575	119	26%
NEY	414	430	435	449	466	480	65	16%
Mid	407	416	419	436	464	494	87	21%
Lond	417	419	442	458	461	493	77	18%
EoE	286	291	310	318	327	338	52	18%
Total	2,834	2,920	3,038	3,142	3,295	3,462	628	22%

Table 1.3: Clinical Radiology Workforce growth by region 2016 - 2021

	Gastroenterology							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total Workforce Growth (FTE)	Total Workforce Growth %
SW	116	118	131	134	146	154	38	33%
SE	130	141	158	174	180	194	64	49%
NW	150	162	179	185	194	204	54	36%
NEY	162	176	194	198	210	218	56	34%
Mid	202	211	215	234	248	265	64	32%
Lond	217	230	241	253	275	289	72	33%
EoE	98	105	110	118	120	131	33	33%
Total	1,075	1,143	1,229	1,295	1,372	1,456	380	35%

Table 1.4: Gastroenterology Workforce growth by region 2016 - 2021

	Diagnostic Radiography							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total Workforce Growth (FTE)	Total Workforce Growth %
SW	1,352	1,400	1,453	1,507	1,442	1,520	169	12%
SE	2,279	2,434	2,518	2,630	2,120	2,199	-80	-4%
NW	2,279	2,382	2,536	2,611	2,385	2,422	142	6%
NEY	2,368	2,432	2,540	2,582	2,590	2,708	340	14%
Mid	2,149	2,226	2,249	2,296	2,627	2,804	655	30%
Lond	1,860	1,884	1,937	2,024	2,770	2,902	1,043	56%
EoE	1,291	1,293	1,322	1,359	1,516	1,559	268	21%
Total	13,577	14,052	14,555	15,009	15,450	16,114	2,537	19%

Table 1.5: Diagnostic Radiography Workforce growth by region 2016 - 2021

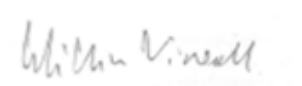
	Therapeutic Radiography							
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total Workforce Growth (FTE)	Total Workforce Growth %
SW	322	340	346	346	333	334	12	4%
SE	414	423	457	452	523	486	73	18%
NW	468	469	471	483	448	461	-6	-1%
NEY	376	381	383	406	410	419	43	12%
Mid	335	341	370	401	487	505	170	51%
Lond	455	477	487	458	500	522	68	15%
EoE	266	289	286	301	376	364	97	36%
Total	2,636	2,722	2,801	2,846	3,077	3,092	456	17%

Table 1.6: Therapeutic Radiography Workforce growth by region 2016 - 2021

The NHS People Plan, published 2020, focuses on retaining NHS staff by helping organisations to provide ongoing support to NHS staff, to improve their health and wellbeing. It sets out a comprehensive range of actions - for employers, as well as for NHS England and Improvement and Health Education England - to improve NHS staff working experience. This includes a much stronger focus on staff health and wellbeing, more support for flexible working, and a renewed commitment to tackling inequality. The NHS People Promise accompanied the July 2020 publication and sets out the pledges for everyone working within the NHS build a more compassionate and inclusive culture to improve the experience for all staff.

The NHS Retention Programme is continuously seeking to understand why staff leave, resulting in targeted interventions to support staff to stay whilst keeping them well. I would like to reiterate how proud we are that the Cancer Workforce Plan, which committed to the expansion of capacity and skills by 2021, has not only been met, but that the overall growth ambition target of 4,126 for this period has been exceeded by 226.

Yours ever,



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