



Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Active Recruitment Statistics - Vacancies at 31 March 2024

Published 22nd May 2024

Contents

| | Page |
|-----------------------------|------|
| Introduction and Background | 2 |
| Key Points | 2 |
| Overall Vacancies | 3 |
| by Staff Group | 4 |
| by Regional HSC Trust | 8 |
| by Other HSC Organisations | 9 |
| By Pay Band | 10 |
| Key Data Tables | 11 |
| Notes and Definitions | 14 |
| Quality Assessment | 15 |

Introduction and Background

This bulletin presents statistics on vacancies actively being recruited in Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland as at 31 March 2024. 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 31 March 2024, there were 5,380 vacancies actively being recruited across Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland, equating to a vacancy rate of 6.4%.
- The highest number of vacancies actively being recruited across HSC was in the Social Services staff group, with 1,381. This staff group made up 25.7% of all HSC vacancies in recruitment.
- The Social Services staff group had the highest vacancy rate, at 9.6% (1,381 vacancies).
- Of the five regional HSC Trusts, the Belfast HSC Trust had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited (1,536 vacancies).
- The annual percentage change in vacancies was greatest in the Northern HSC Trust with a decrease of 42.8%, followed by Western (32.5%), Belfast (25.0%), Southern (21.6%), and South Eastern (18.8%) HSC Trusts.

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Active Recruitment 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.

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

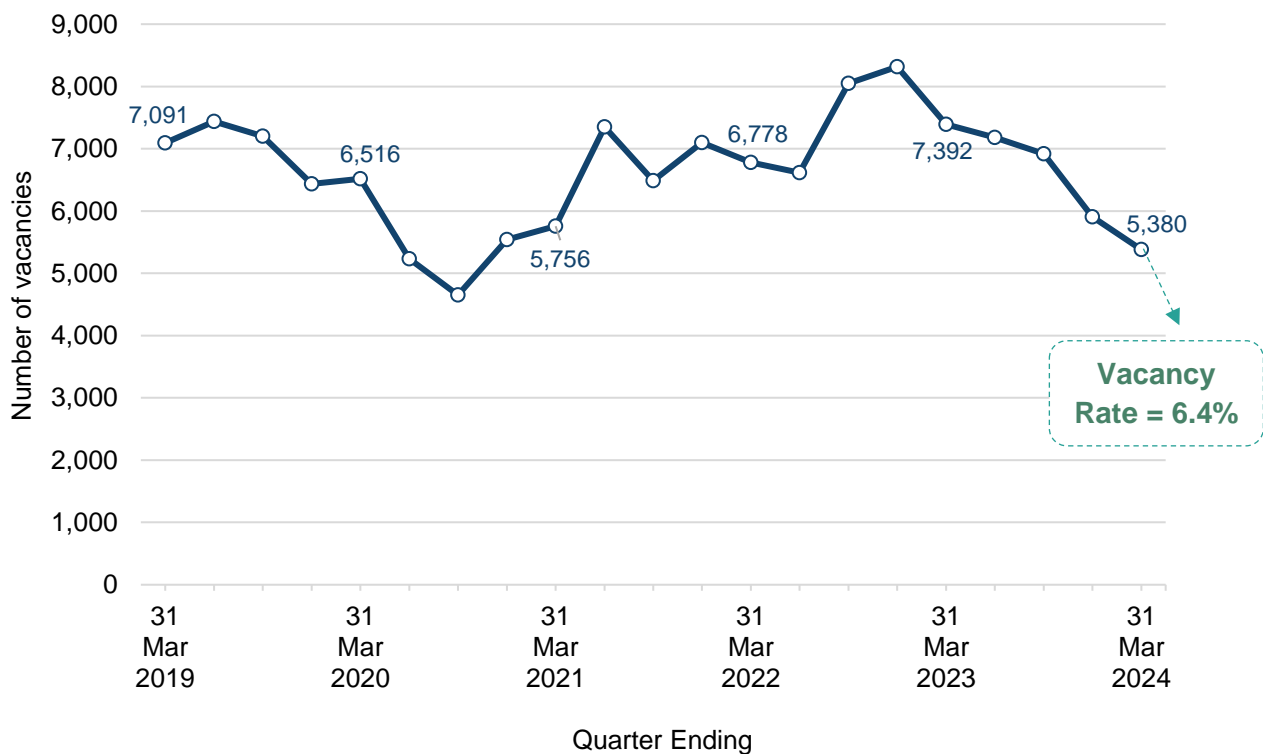
* Includes HSC domiciliary care active staff in posts. This will not match with active staff in post figures published in the HSC Quarterly Workforce Statistics bulletin which excludes domiciliary care active staff in posts.

Overall Vacancies

At 31 March 2024, there were 5,380 vacancies actively being recruited across Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland. This equated to a vacancy rate of 6.4%.

The total number of vacancies under active recruitment at 31 March 2024 is 27.2% lower than at 31 March 2023 (7,392) and 24.1% lower than at 31 March 2019 (7,091).

Figure 1: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, 31 March 2019 – 31 March 2024



Staff Group

Latest Position (31 March 2024)

Figure 2 below shows the proportion of vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2024 for each staff group. Of the 5,380 vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2024, the Social Services staff group made up the highest proportion, at 25.7% (1,381 vacancies). The second highest proportion of vacancies was in the Registered Nursing & Midwifery staff group, at 21.0% (1,129 vacancies), and a further 8.6% (465 vacancies) were in the Nursing & Midwifery Support staff group.

The Medical & Dental staff group made up 6.0% (323 vacancies) of all HSC vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2024. Almost three fifths (56.7%) of these vacancies were at consultant grade (183 vacancies).

Figure 2: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, by Staff Group at 31 March 2024

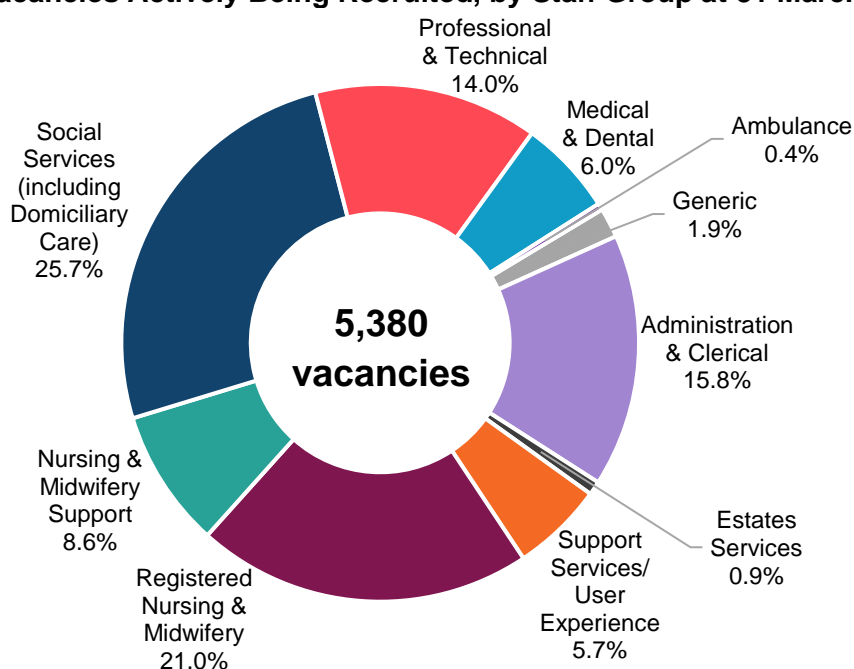


Table 1 below presents the number and proportion of vacancies actively being recruited in some sub staff groups and professions at 31 March 2024.

Table 1: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Sub Staff Group / Profession, 31 March 2024

| Sub Staff Group / Profession | Number of vacancies | Percentage of all HSC vacancies |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Allied Health Professionals * | 355 | 6.6% |
| Social Workers | 497 | 9.2% |
| Social Care staff (including domiciliary care) | 884 | 16.4% |
| Registered Nurses | 1,070 | 19.9% |
| Registered Midwives | 59 | 1.1% |

* Includes physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech & language therapists, podiatrists, dietitians, orthoptists, radiographers (who are all part of the Professional & Technical staff group in Figure 2), and paramedics (who are part of the Ambulance group in Figure 2).

Of the sub staff groups and professions listed above in table 1, Registered Nursing vacancies comprised the largest proportion of all HSCNI vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2024, at almost one fifth (19.9%, 1,070 vacancies). Almost one in ten vacancies in active recruitment (9.2%) were in the Social Work profession (497 vacancies), and one in fifteen (6.6%) were in the Allied Health Professional sub staff group (355 vacancies).

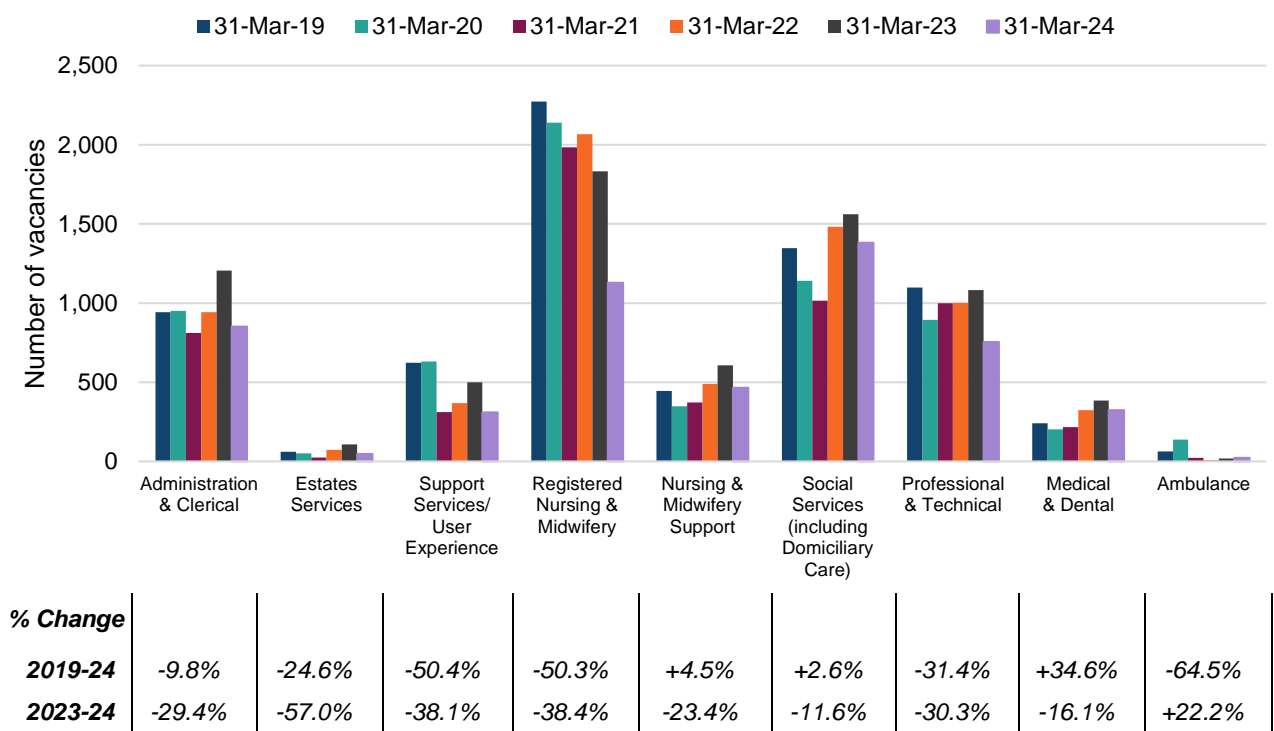
Comparison Over Time

Figure 3 below shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March over the last five years, in each staff group.

All staff groups, with the exception of Ambulance, reported a decrease in vacancies actively being recruited since 31 March 2023. The largest change in the number of vacancies since 31 March 2023 was in the Registered Nursing and Midwifery staff group, which reported a decrease of 704 vacancies (38.4%). The Administration & Clerical and Professional & Technical staff groups also reported large decreases in vacancies since 31 March 2023, 354 vacancies (29.4%) and 328 vacancies (30.3%) respectively.

In the last five years, the largest decrease in the number of vacancies actively being recruited was in the Registered Nursing & Midwifery staff group (1,143 vacancies, 50.3%). The largest percentage change in vacancies since 31 March 2019 was in the Ambulance staff group, which reported a decrease of 64.5% (40 vacancies). The Medical & Dental staff group has however reported the largest percentage increase since 31 March 2019 (83 vacancies, 34.6%).

Figure 3: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, by Staff Group[#], 31 March 2019 – 31 March 2024



[#] Excludes vacancies coded as generic roles.

Table 2 overleaf presents the change in vacancies actively being recruited in some sub staff groups and professions in the last year and the last five years.

Table 2: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Sub Staff Group / Profession, 31 March 2019 – 31 March 2024

| Sub Staff Group / Profession | % Change 2019-24 | | % Change 2023-24 | |
|--|------------------|------------|------------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Allied Health Professionals * | -277 | -43.8% | -169 | -32.3% |
| Social Workers | -11 | -2.2% | -26 | -5.0% |
| Social Care staff (including domiciliary care) | +46 | +5.5% | -155 | -14.9% |
| Registered Nurses | -1,091 | -50.5% | -657 | -38.0% |
| Registered Midwives | -52 | -46.8% | -47 | -44.3% |

* Includes physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech & language therapists, podiatrists, dietitians, orthoptists, radiographers (who are all part of the Professional & Technical staff group in Figure 3), and paramedics (who are part of the Ambulance group in Figure 3).

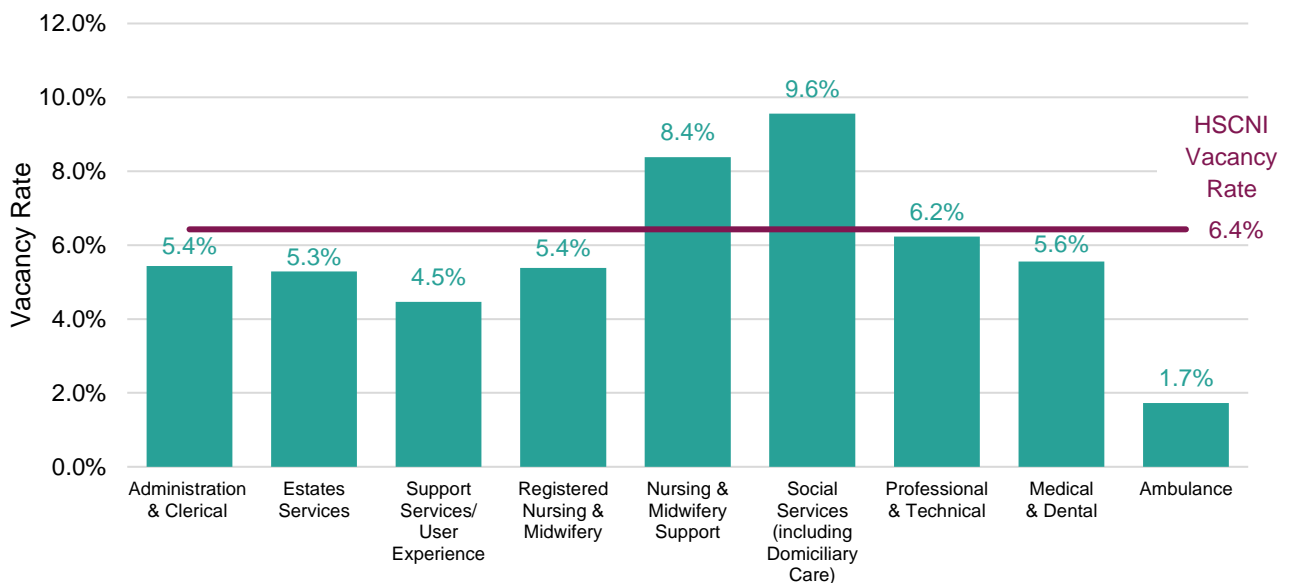
Of the sub staff groups and professions listed above in table 2, all reported a decrease in vacancies actively being recruited since 31 March 2023. The largest percentage decrease was in the Registered Midwife profession which reported a reduction of 44.3% (47 vacancies), while the smallest percentage decrease was in the Social Work profession which reported a decrease of 5.0% (26 vacancies).

The largest decrease in vacancies actively being recruited in the last five years for the sub staff groups and professions listed above in table 2, was in the Registered Nursing profession, which reported a reduction of over half (50.5%, 1,091 vacancies). The Social Care staff group, however, reported an increase of 5.5% (46 vacancies) between 31 March 2019 and 31 March 2024.

Vacancy Rate

Figure 4 below shows the vacancy rates at 31 March 2024 in each staff group. The Social Services staff group had the highest vacancy rate, at 9.6%, while the Ambulance staff group had the lowest vacancy rate (1.7%).

Figure 4: HSCNI Vacancy Rate, by Staff Group# at 31 March 2024



Excludes vacancies coded as generic roles.

All staff groups, with the exception of Ambulance, reported a decrease in vacancy rates since 31 March 2023, the most notable being the Estates Services staff group which reported a decrease in the vacancy rate from 11.7% (31 March 2023) to 5.3% (31 March 2024).

Table 3 below presents the vacancy rates at 31 March 2024 in some sub staff groups and professions.

Table 3: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Sub Staff Group / Profession, 31 March 2024

| Sub Staff Group / Profession | Vacancy Rate |
|--|---------------------|
| Allied Health Professionals * | 5.7% |
| Social Workers | 9.3% |
| Social Care staff (including domiciliary care) | 9.7% |
| Registered Nurses | 5.5% |
| Registered Midwives # | 4.3% |

* Includes physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech & language therapists, podiatrists, dietitians, orthoptists, radiographers (who are all part of the Professional & Technical staff group in Figure 4), and paramedics (who are part of the Ambulance group in Figure 4).

Vacancy rate calculated based on staff in post figures which contain a small number of HSC staff who were graded as student midwives.

Of the sub staff groups and professions listed above in table 3, the Social Care staff group had the highest vacancy rate, at 9.7%. The Allied Health Professional staff group had a vacancy rate of 5.7%, while the Registered Nursing profession had a vacancy rate of 5.5%.

Regional HSC Trust

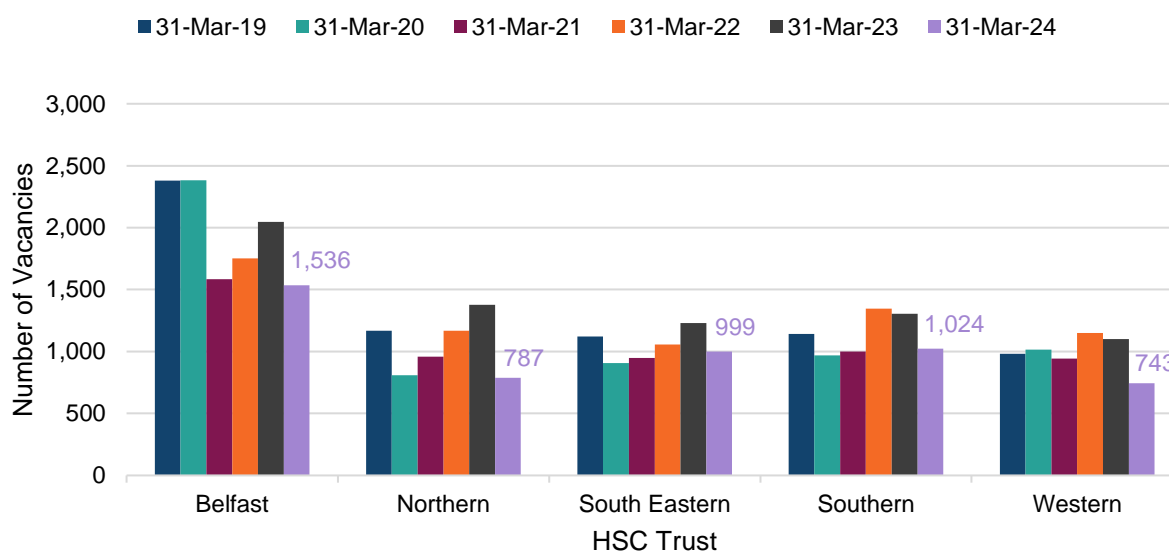
Figure 5 below shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited in each regional HSC Trust at 31 March over the last five years.

The Belfast HSC Trust had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2024 (1,536), a decrease of 511 vacancies since 31 March 2023.

All regional HSC Trusts reported a decrease in vacancies between 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2024, with the largest annual percentage decrease in the Northern HSC Trust (42.8%), followed by Western (32.5%), Belfast (25.0%), Southern (21.6%), and South Eastern (18.8%) HSC Trusts.

Between 31 March 2019 and 31 March 2024, the number of vacancies actively being recruited decreased in all regional HSC Trusts. During this period, the largest percentage decrease was reported by the Belfast HSC Trust, with 843 fewer vacancies actively being recruited (35.4%), whilst the smallest percentage decrease was reported by the Southern HSC Trust (118 fewer vacancies, 10.3%).

Figure 5: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Regional HSC Trust, 31 March 2019 – 31 March 2024



| % Change | Belfast | Northern | South Eastern | Southern | Western |
|----------------|---------|----------|---------------|----------|---------|
| 2019-24 | -35.4% | -32.6% | -10.9% | -10.3% | -24.4% |
| 2023-24 | -25.0% | -42.8% | -18.8% | -21.6% | -32.5% |

Other HSC Organisations

Figure 6 below shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2024 in each of the other HSC organisations. At 31 March 2024, the Business Services Organisation (BSO) had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited (168), 60 more vacancies actively being recruited (55.6%) when compared with the position five years ago.

Figure 6: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Other HSC Organisation, 31 March 2024 and Change Over Time

| | | % Change | |
|--|-----|----------|---------|
| | | 2019-24 | 2023-24 |
| Business Services Organisation | 168 | +55.6% | -13.4% |
| NI Ambulance Service | 51 | -32.9% | +75.9% |
| Public Health Agency | 27 | -27.0% | 0.0% |
| Strategic Planning & Performance Group | 16 | -56.8% | -42.9% |
| NI Blood Transfusion Service | 10 | -44.4% | -41.2% |
| NI Medical & Dental Training Agency | 6 | +200.0% | -45.5% |
| Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority | 3 | -57.1% | -57.1% |
| NI Social Care Council | 3 | -62.5% | -57.1% |
| NI Practice & Education Council | 3 | - | -40.0% |
| Patient Client Council | 2 | 0.0% | -50.0% |
| Children's Court Guardian Agency for NI ^ | 2 | -33.3% | 0.0% |

^ 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 31 March 2024 by Agenda for Change (AfC) pay band group. For the first time in this publication series, Band 5 active vacancies have been separately identified.

At 31 March 2024, over two fifths (43.0%) of all vacancies actively being recruited in HSCNI were at AfC pay bands 2-4, over one quarter (27.5%) were at AfC pay bands 6-7, and almost one fifth (19.3%) were at AfC pay band 5.

Figure 7: HSCNI Vacancies by AfC Pay Band Group, 31 March 2024

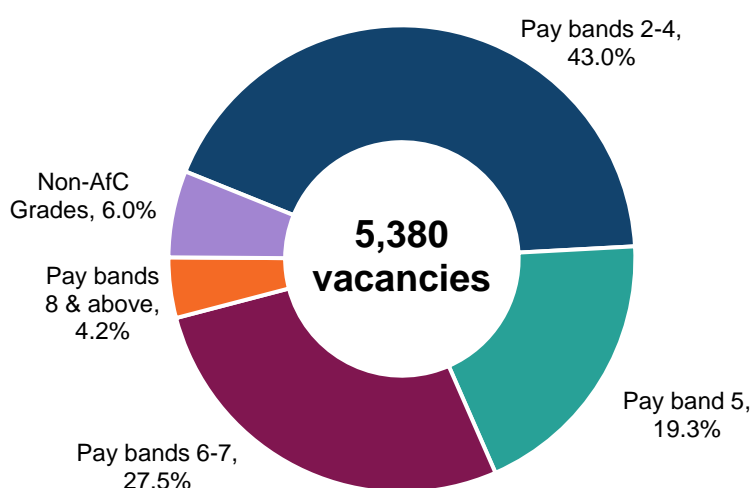


Table 4 below presents the percentage breakdown of vacancies actively being recruited in each staff group by pay band groups.

Table 4: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Staff Group and Pay Band Group, 31 March 2024

| Staff Group | Pay bands 2-4 | Pay band 5 | Pay bands 6-7 | Pay bands 8 & above | Non-AfC Grades | Vacancies |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|
| Generic | 5.0% | 25.0% | 59.0% | 11.0% | 0.0% | 100 |
| Administration & Clerical | 66.5% | 12.3% | 14.3% | 6.8% | 0.0% | 851 |
| Estates Services | 43.5% | 23.9% | 19.6% | 13.0% | 0.0% | 46 |
| Support Services/User Experience | 95.8% | 1.3% | 2.6% | 0.3% | 0.0% | 309 |
| Registered Nursing & Midwifery | 0.0% | 57.1% | 38.5% | 4.3% | 0.0% | 1,129 |
| Nursing & Midwifery Support | 100.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 465 |
| Social Services (incl. Dom. Care) | 58.4% | 5.5% | 33.9% | 2.2% | 0.0% | 1,381 |
| Professional & Technical | 20.7% | 20.7% | 49.5% | 9.2% | 0.0% | 754 |
| Medical & Dental | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 100.0% | 323 |
| Ambulance | 4.5% | 72.7% | 22.7% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 22 |
| Total | 43.0% | 19.3% | 27.5% | 4.2% | 6.0% | 5,380 |

Annex 1: Key Data Tables

Additional data tables can be found in the NI HSC Active Recruitment Tables Excel file at the following link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/staff-vacancies>

Table A1: HSC Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Staff Group & Pay Band Group, at 31 March 2024

| Staff Group | Bands 2-4 | Band 5 | Bands 6-7 | Bands 8 & above | Non-AFC Grades | Total |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Generic | 5 | 25 | 59 | 11 | [z] | 100 |
| Administration & Clerical | 566 | 105 | 122 | 58 | [z] | 851 |
| Estates Services | 20 | 11 | 9 | 6 | [z] | 46 |
| Support Services/User Experience | 296 | 4 | 8 | 1 | [z] | 309 |
| Registered Nursing & Midwifery | 0 | 645 | 435 | 49 | [z] | 1,129 |
| Nursing & Midwifery Support | 465 | 0 | 0 | 0 | [z] | 465 |
| Social Services (incl. Domiciliary Care) | 806 | 76 | 468 | 31 | [z] | 1,381 |
| Professional & Technical | 156 | 156 | 373 | 69 | [z] | 754 |
| Medical & Dental | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 323 | 323 |
| Ambulance | 1 | 16 | 5 | 0 | [z] | 22 |
| Total | 2,315 | 1,038 | 1,479 | 225 | 323 | 5,380 |

[z] Not applicable

Table A2: HSC Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Profession & Pay Band Group, at 31 March 2024

| Profession | Bands 2-4 | Band 5 | Bands 6-7 | Bands 8 & above | Non-AFC Grades | Total |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Generic | 5 | 25 | 59 | 11 | [z] | 100 |
| Administration & Clerical | 566 | 105 | 122 | 58 | [z] | 851 |
| Estates Services Staff | 20 | 11 | 9 | 6 | [z] | 46 |
| Support Services/User Experience | 296 | 4 | 8 | 1 | [z] | 309 |
| Health Visitors | [z] | 0 | 15 | 1 | [z] | 16 |
| District Nurses | [z] | 0 | 13 | 4 | [z] | 17 |
| Paediatric Nurses | [z] | 59 | 18 | 3 | [z] | 80 |
| Mental Health Nurses | [z] | 115 | 66 | 3 | [z] | 184 |
| Learning Disability Nurses | [z] | 32 | 16 | 0 | [z] | 48 |
| All Other Registered Nurses | [z] | 438 | 251 | 36 | [z] | 725 |
| Registered Midwives | [z] | 1 | 56 | 2 | [z] | 59 |
| Nurse Support | 464 | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 464 |
| Midwifery Support | 1 | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 1 |
| Social Workers | [z] | 16 | 455 | 26 | [z] | 497 |
| Social Care Workers | 253 | 40 | 3 | 0 | [z] | 296 |
| Domiciliary Care Workers | 372 | 3 | 0 | 0 | [z] | 375 |
| Other Social Services staff | 181 | 17 | 10 | 5 | [z] | 213 |
| Physiotherapists | [z] | 28 | 68 | 7 | [z] | 103 |
| Occupational Therapists | [z] | 21 | 64 | 4 | [z] | 89 |
| Speech & Language Therapists | [z] | 5 | 25 | 3 | [z] | 33 |
| Podiatrists | [z] | 7 | 10 | 0 | [z] | 17 |
| Dietitians | [z] | 11 | 19 | 0 | [z] | 30 |
| Orthoptists | [z] | 0 | 2 | 0 | [z] | 2 |
| Radiographers | [z] | 30 | 43 | 4 | [z] | 77 |
| Pharmacists | [z] | 22 | 62 | 11 | [z] | 95 |
| Clinical Psychology | 3 | 2 | 23 | 20 | [z] | 48 |
| Pharmacy Technician / Pharmacy Support | 54 | 18 | 1 | 0 | [z] | 73 |
| Scientist/ Scientist Support/ Medical Tech. Officer/ Ass. Tech. Officer | 45 | 2 | 29 | 13 | [z] | 89 |
| Other Professional & Technical staff | 54 | 10 | 27 | 7 | [z] | 98 |
| Consultant | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 166 | 166 |
| Locum Consultant | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 17 | 17 |
| SAS Doctor (Specialist Doc/Ass. Specialist/Staff Grade/Specialty Doc) | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 55 | 55 |
| Docs in training (core trainees/spec. registrars/foundation docs) [note 1] | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 8 | 8 |
| Other Doctor | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 77 | 77 |
| Dental Officer | [z] | [z] | [z] | [z] | 0 | 0 |
| HCPC Registered Paramedic | [z] | 0 | 4 | 0 | [z] | 4 |
| Emergency Medical Technician | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 | [z] | 16 |
| Ambulance Officer | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | [z] | 0 |
| Patient Care Services | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | [z] | 1 |
| Control Officer | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | [z] | 1 |
| Control Assistant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | [z] | 0 |
| Total | 2,315 | 1,038 | 1,479 | 225 | 323 | 5,380 |

[z] Not applicable

Note 1: Relates to Trust local recruitment only and not training programme enrolment.

Table A3: HSC Vacancy Rates by Staff Group, at 31 March 2024

| Staff Group | Vacancy Rate |
|--|---------------------|
| Administration & Clerical | 5.4% |
| Estates Services Staff | 5.3% |
| Support Services/User Experience | 4.5% |
| Registered Nursing & Midwifery | 5.4% |
| Nursing & Midwifery Support | 8.4% |
| Social Services (including domiciliary care) | 9.6% |
| Professional & Technical Staff | 6.2% |
| Medical & Dental staff | 5.6% |
| Ambulance staff | 1.7% |
| Total | 6.4% |

Table A4: HSC Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by HSC Organisation, at 31 March 2024

| HSC Organisation | Vacancies |
|---|------------------|
| Belfast HSC Trust | 1,536 |
| Northern HSC Trust | 787 |
| South Eastern HSC Trust | 999 |
| Southern HSC Trust | 1,024 |
| Western HSC Trust | 743 |
| NI Ambulance Service HSC Trust | 51 |
| Business Services Organisation (BSO) | 168 |
| Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG) [note 2] | 16 |
| Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland (CCGANI) [note 3] | 2 |
| NI Social Care Council (NISCC) | 3 |
| NI Patient & Education Council (NIPEC) | 3 |
| Public Health Agency (PHA) | 27 |
| Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) | 3 |
| NI Blood Transfusion Service (NIBTS) | 10 |
| NI Medical & Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA) | 6 |
| Patient Client Council (PCC) | 2 |
| Total | 5,380 |

Note 2: 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 these data tables, and noted as SPPG.

Note 3: The Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland (CCGANI) was formerly known as the Northern Ireland Agency for Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA).

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

Active Recruitment 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.

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

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

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