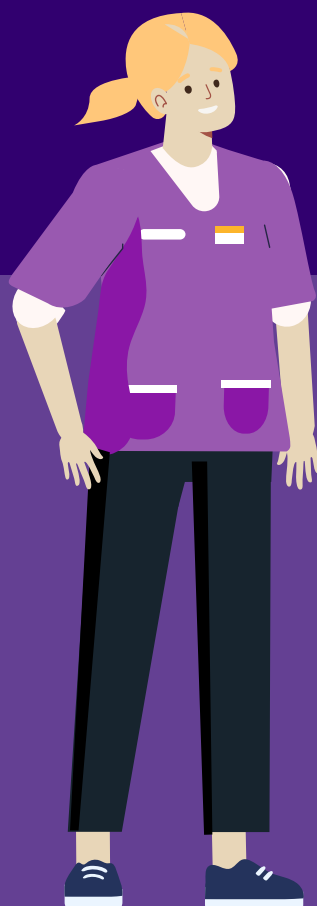


The NMC register Wales mid-year update

1 April - 30 September 2023



Welcome to our mid-year report on the NMC register and what it tells us about the nursing and midwifery workforce in Wales.

Our unique data provide the definitive account of how many professionals are eligible to practise in the country, how many are joining and leaving the workforce, where in the world they were educated, their demographic characteristics and more.

The big picture

There are now a record **40,127** nursing and midwifery professionals in Wales on our register. That's **908** (2.3 percent) more than just six months ago, and **4,134** (11.5 percent) more than five years ago. This is encouraging given the well-publicised pressure on health and care services at a time of rising demand for care.

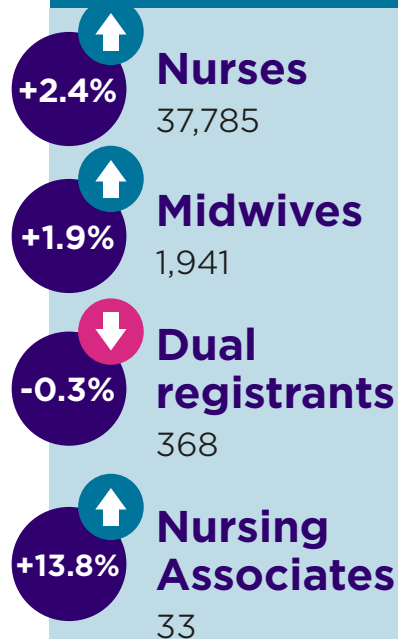
There are now a total **37,785 nurses**. The number of nursing professionals in Wales is gradually increasing across all four fields of nursing, with the largest proportional growth among children's nurses – **3.1 percent** in the last six months.

There are **1,941 midwives**, and **368 dual registrants** (both nurses and midwives). A handful of nursing associates* living in Wales are also eligible to practise in England only.

40,127
professionals on
the register in
Wales



In the last six months



*The nursing associate role was introduced in 2019. Nursing associates may live in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales, but can only practise in this role in England.

Strong recruitment and steady retention underpin the growth we're seeing in Wales and across the rest of the UK. A total of **1,179** people in Wales joined the register for the first time in the six months to September (18.1 percent more than the **998 joiners** in the same period last year). There were **724 leavers**, which is more than the **700** who left in 2022, but this is an equivalent proportion of the register.

Strong rate of domestic recruitment

Of these joiners, **1,037** were educated in the UK, compared to **925** in the same period last year – an increase of **12.1 percent**. It's also a **46.7 percent** rise compared to five years ago (707), indicating a steady upward trend in domestic recruitment.

International recruitment also gaining pace

International recruitment in Wales is low compared to the wider UK picture, but there is still a notable rise. The number of international joiners has almost doubled from **73** in the first half of last year to **142** in the six months to September 2023. That's also **six times higher** than five years ago (21). And the true figure will be even higher because professionals aren't required to give us a UK address in order to join the register. Professionals can help us to further enhance the value of our data by giving us their UK address as soon as they have one which they can do through [NMC Online](#).

As with the rest of the UK, India is the single largest source of international recruitment in Wales (41.5 percent of all international joiners since April), just as it is across the rest of the UK. But unlike the UK as a whole, professionals educated in the Philippines continue to represent the largest overall cohort of those in Wales who are on the register, at **33.6 percent**.

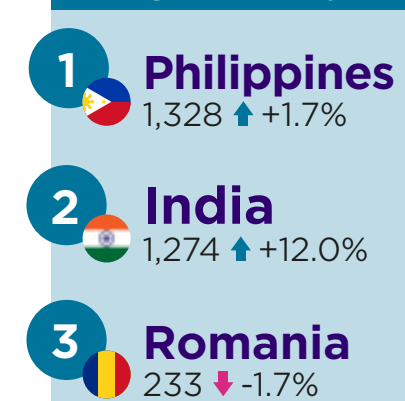
In the last six months, compared to the same period last year



As of September 2023:



Top countries of education and change, since April



On a more cautionary note, **19 professionals** in Wales who were educated in Ghana, a 'red list' country from which active recruitment isn't permitted, have joined the register since April – a relatively low number but a significant jump compared to two Ghana-educated joiners in the same period in 2022.*

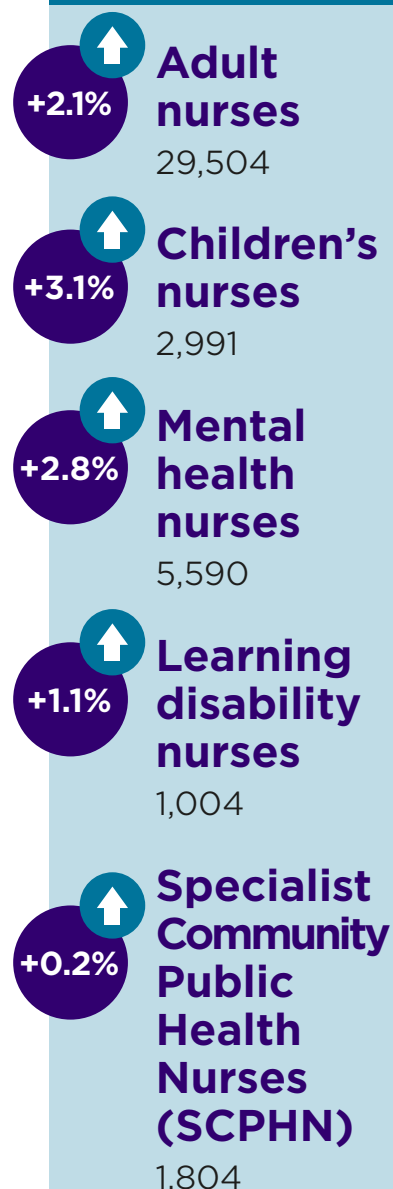
We know that people from across the world want to come and work in UK health and care. At the same time, we're calling on all employers and agencies across health and care in Wales to be mindful of the UK Government's code of practice for international recruitment of health and social care personnel, so as not to undermine health systems in countries with the most pressing workforce challenges.

Steady retention rate welcome

There will always be a level of turnover of the register as professionals retire, or in some cases leave the register early, often citing workplace factors. We therefore welcome the steady retention rate we're seeing in Wales – the number of leavers in the past six months being equivalent to **1.8 percent** of the register (**also 1.8 percent in the six months to September 2022** and 1.9 percent in the same period five years ago).

A continued focus on retaining skilled, knowledgeable people in their profession, will support the sustainable growth of the workforce. Our recent [**Spotlight on Nursing and Midwifery report**](#) highlights some areas for further improvement. For example, more consistent delivery of 'preceptorship' programmes that welcome and integrate new professionals into their new teams and workplaces.

In the last six months



*The [**Department of Health and Social Care's code of practice for international recruitment of health and social care personnel**](#) prohibits active recruitment from 'red list' countries designated by the World Health Organisation. The code does not prevent individual health workers from 'red list' countries seeking employment independently, but employers should not be actively recruiting from those countries.

The changing profile of professionals on the register in Wales

As international recruitment gathers pace, we're seeing a slow but steady change in the ethnic profile of professionals in Wales on the register. Our data shows that, in September, **11.5 percent** of professionals in Wales were from Black and minority ethnic background. That's compared to **11 percent** six months ago, and nine percent in September 2018.

New joiners also tend to be in the younger age ranges, therefore the strong recruitment we've seen since April has shifted the overall age profile of the workforce in Wales. The total proportion aged 21-40 is now **38.5 percent**, which compares to **37.6 percent** just six months ago, and **33.6 percent** in September 2018.

Improving the quality of our data

We hope these key insights, together with our **comprehensive data tables**, will support workforce planning in Wales, ensuring the most effective delivery of services that people and communities across the country rely on for their health and wellbeing.

If you have questions about our data or ideas for how we might improve the usefulness of this report, **[please get in touch](#)**.



Andrea Sutcliffe,
Chief Executive and Registrar

45 years, 1 month

average age of
professionals
in Wales

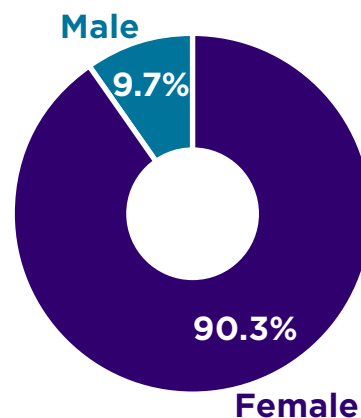


11.5%

of register in
Wales from Black
and minority ethnic
backgrounds.
In 2018, **9.0%** of
register in Wales
from Black and
minority ethnic
backgrounds.



Gender split of the register



We shouldn't forget that behind our data are dedicated professionals who provide safe, effective and kind care to people everyday. We're grateful for everything they do for the public and communities they serve.



What we do

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery practice that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the independent regulator of more than 808,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.



Our core role is to **regulate**. First, we promote high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England. Second, we maintain the register of professionals eligible to practise. Third, we investigate concerns about nurses, midwives and nursing associates – something that affects a tiny minority of professionals each year. We believe in giving professionals the chance to address concerns, but we'll always take action when needed.

To regulate well, we **support** our professions and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout people's careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address new challenges. We also support people involved in our investigations, and we're increasing our visibility so people feel engaged and empowered to shape our work.

Regulating and supporting our professions allows us to **influence** health and social care. We share intelligence from our regulatory activities and work with our partners to support workforce planning and sector-wide decision making. We use our voice to speak up for a healthy and inclusive working environment for our professions.

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The nursing and midwifery regulator for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
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