

GP practice workforce in Wales, as at 31 March 2020 (experimental statistics)

2 July 2020
SFR 70/2020

The purpose of this release is to provide timely statistics on the number of GPs and other staff working in general practices across Wales.

The main source of data used is the [Wales National Workforce Reporting System](#). This is the first time data has been sourced from this system and been subject to the full validation processes by NHS Shared Services Partnership and NHS Digital. Statistics from this source are in their infancy, therefore this release is classed as [Experimental Statistics](#).

Data will be extracted from this new source at the end of every quarter (March, June, September, December) and it is planned that statistics will be published around 3 months after the reference date, subject to resourcing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

All data for 2020 included in this release refers to a snapshot of data extracted at 31 March and data for all previous years refers to 30 September unless otherwise stated.

As data for 2020 refers to a different date than previous years, and is sourced from a different data collection system, caution is advised when making comparisons over time.

Main points

In Wales, as at 31 March 2020, there were 404 active GP practices with:

- 1,962 GP practitioners (includes partners, providers and salaried GPs but excludes registrars, retainers and locums).
- 293 GP registrars (trainees on GP speciality training programme, currently placed in a GP practice).
- 16 GP retainers (a GP practitioner on the GP retainer scheme, only able to practice a maximum of 4 clinical sessions a week).
- 782 GP locums registered to practice in Wales (no data available on the actual number currently working).
- 1,409 registered nurses.
- 1,114 direct patient care staff.
- 5,142 administrative or other non-clinical practice staff.

About this release

The main source of data is the Wales National Workforce Reporting System (WNWRS) which has replaced the Exeter payment system as the main source for GP workforce statistics.

Data is also sourced from the Medical Performers List (for locums), the NHS Electronic Staff Record (for registrars), Intrepid (for F2 trainees) and NWIS (for active GP practices).

This release includes analysis of headcounts by staff group with additional analysis of staff characteristics such as age, gender and ethnicity.

The number of [staff directly employed by the NHS](#) is published on our website too.

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Data quality statement

A [GP workforce statistical release](#) was published in April, based on a reference date of 29 February 2020. This data was extracted from the new Welsh National Workforce Reporting System early (ahead of the first planned extraction on 31 March 2020) and was published to provide an estimate of the number of people working in general practices at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the data extracted from the system was of good quality on the whole, data needed to be estimated for 28 practices in Wales. Therefore, data from the February extract is not included in this release but will continue to be available on the Welsh Government website.

In previous years the main source of data for GP workforce statistics was the General Medical Services (GMS) census, which was largely generated from the Exeter (GP payments) system. Following several years of data quality issues, [highlighted in previous statistical releases](#), it was decided that a new data collection system was required and the [Wales National Workforce Reporting System](#) (WNWRS) was developed and has now been implemented. Due to a delay in the implementation of the WNWRS, no data is available for 2019.

The WNWRS provides a secure web based tool developed to capture information on staff working in general practices. A version of this system has been used by practices in England for some years and is supported by NHS Digital. In Wales, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) have implemented the WNWRS, with support from NHS Digital.

In broad terms, the system works by practice managers inputting details of their staff onto the system, confirming the details every quarter. Data is then extracted on the last day of each quarter (March, June, September, December) and NHS Digital validate this data. NWSSP also perform additional validations to improve data quality before anonymised data are shared with Welsh Government statisticians to validate further and produce these official statistics.

Through the new processes and additional validation processes, data captured by the WNWRS should be more reliable than the previous source, and that will enable us to better understand the primary care workforce demographic in Wales, allowing more effective workforce planning. However, this is dependent on practices supplying robust data through the system. For the March 2020 extract, 2 out of the 404 active practices did not supply data or did not confirm their data was up-to-date in the WNWRS. These practices did supply initial data through an Excel spreadsheet in late 2019, which was used to pre-populate the WNWRS before the system went live for practices. Therefore the data provided in the initial spreadsheet has been used for these two practices. Note that both practices reported that there were no GP practitioners at the practice, but there were wider practice staff reported. At the time of reporting, the practices may have been using GP locums rather than GP practitioners. Note this does not affect data on registrars which is sourced from a different data collection system. A list of practice which did not supply or confirm their data is listed in the Annex.

This is the first time data has been sourced from the WNWRS and been subject to the full validation processes by NHS Shared Services Partnership and NHS Digital, therefore this release is classed as [Experimental Statistics](#).

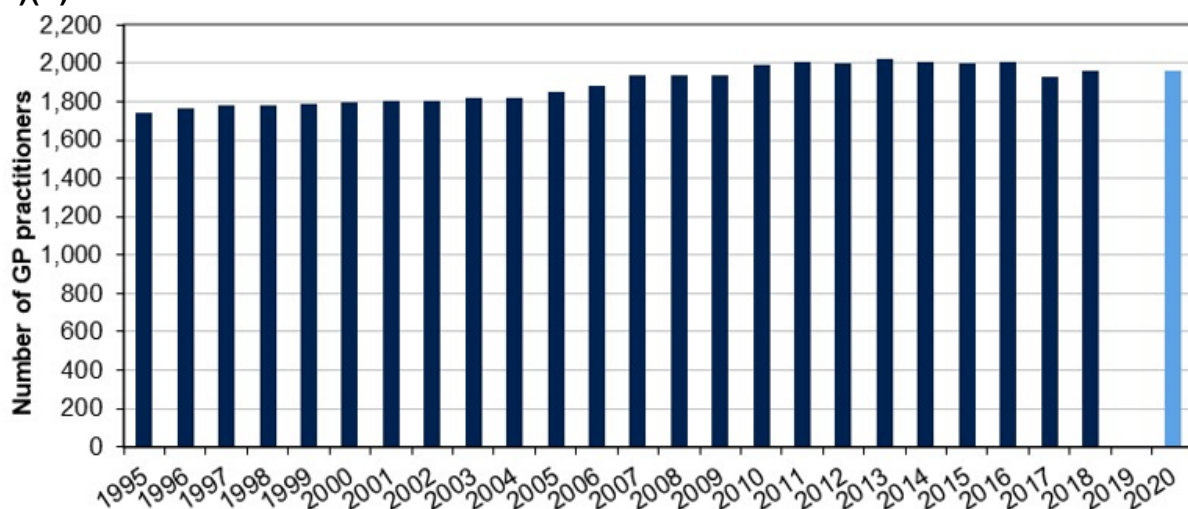
Data from other sources supplement the data from WNWRS, these include:

- Medical Performers List (MPL), which is used to count the number of locum GPs who are registered to work in Wales. Note that locum coverage is not recorded consistently on WNWRS, so there are no current data sources that count the number of locums actually providing GP sessions in Wales at a point in time. In future periods, it is intended that locum data will be sourced from the [All Wales Locum Register](#).
- NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR), which is used to count registrar GPs. From 2015 onwards, all members of the GP speciality training programme are employed by NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) which is hosted by Velindre University NHS Trust. Therefore trainees are recorded on ESR, which is also used as the primary source for our [Staff directly employed by the NHS in Wales](#) statistical release. The registrars counted in this GP workforce statistical release are those who are on GP practice placements at the time of data extraction, and not those who are on the programme but are on hospital based placements at the time of data extraction.
- Intrepid, the system used to monitor Foundation Year 2 doctors (F2) on placement in general practices. These are doctors with a full General Medical Council (GMC) registration, but are not registrars and are not specifically training to be a GP.
- The [Welsh Reference Data Service](#) at NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS) which provides the definitive list of active GP practices in Wales.

The WNWRS also has a reporting module where practices and health boards will be able to see their own data and some aggregated data. Data will be added to this on the same day as the official statistics are published. Note that there may be slight differences between data that is viewable on the WNWRS reporting module and the official statistics. This is because additional validations may happen after data is extracted which may not be fed back into the WNWRS until the following reporting period.

GP practitioner trends

Chart 1: Unique headcount - number of GP practitioners in Welsh general practices (a)(b)



Source: WNWRS, GMS census

- (a) Snapshots taken at 31 March for 2020, 1 October for 2009 and prior to 2000, and 30 September for every other year. No data available for 2019.
- (b) Comparisons across years should be treated with caution due to changes in methodology. Data in light blue refers to WNWRS, data in dark blue refers to GMS Census. See [data quality statement](#) and [key quality information](#).

A GP practitioner includes partners, providers and salaried GPs. It does not include GP locums, retainers and registrars. These are unique counts, if a GP practitioner works in multiple GP practices they are only counted once. See [key quality information](#) for more information.

Summary: The number of GP practitioners in Wales gradually increased from under 1,800 in the mid-1990s to around 2,000 in 2010. Since then the number of GP practitioners has remained largely stable, with small year-to-year changes. Note that while we are counting the same defined group of people in each year, data from 2020 is taken at a different point in the year to all previous years and collected from a different source. Therefore we can make comparisons over time but users should exercise caution when doing so because any changes may be attributed to the different methods for data collection, and/or seasonality in the data.

Latest data: At 31 March 2020, the number of GP practitioners in Wales was 1,962.

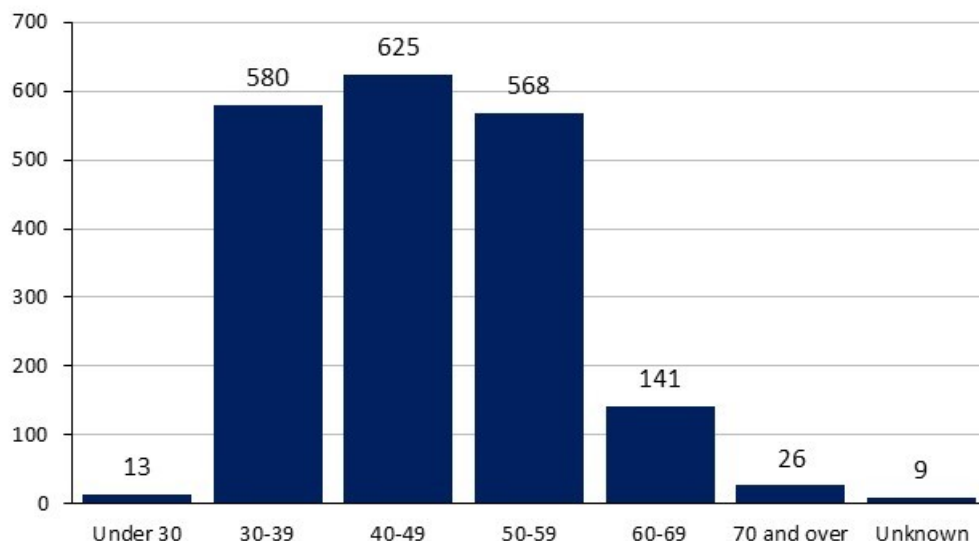
Change since previous time period: There were 2 fewer GP practitioners than at 30 September 2018.

10 year change: There were 47 (or 2.3%) fewer GP practitioners at 31 March 2020 than at 30 September 2011

Change since first year of data: There were 221 (or 12.7%) more GP practitioners at 31 March 2020 than at 1 October 1995.

GP practitioner by age

Chart 2: Unique headcounts - GP practitioners by 10 year age bands, all Wales

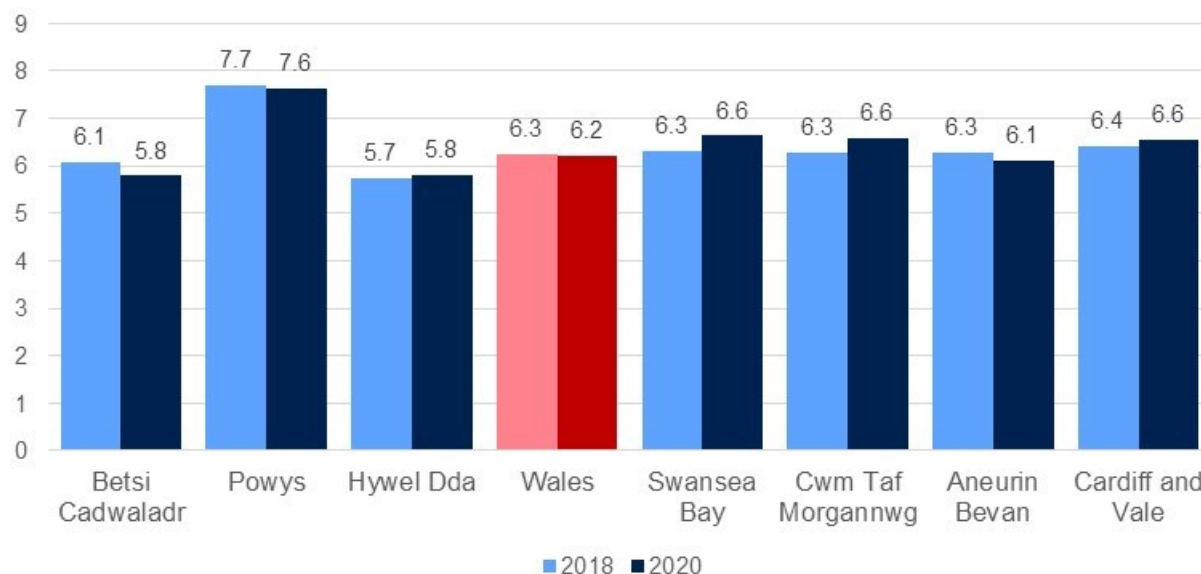


Source: WNWRS

Summary: Chart 2 shows the distribution of GP practitioners by age bands. The large majority of GP Practitioners are aged between 30 and 59 (90.8%), with 26 (or 1.3%) aged 70 or over.

GP practitioners per 10,000 population

Chart 3: GP practitioners per 10,000 population by local health board (a)



Source: WNWRS, GMS census, Mid-year population estimates ONS

(a) 2020 based on latest available mid-year estimate (2019); 2018 data based on 2018 mid-year estimate

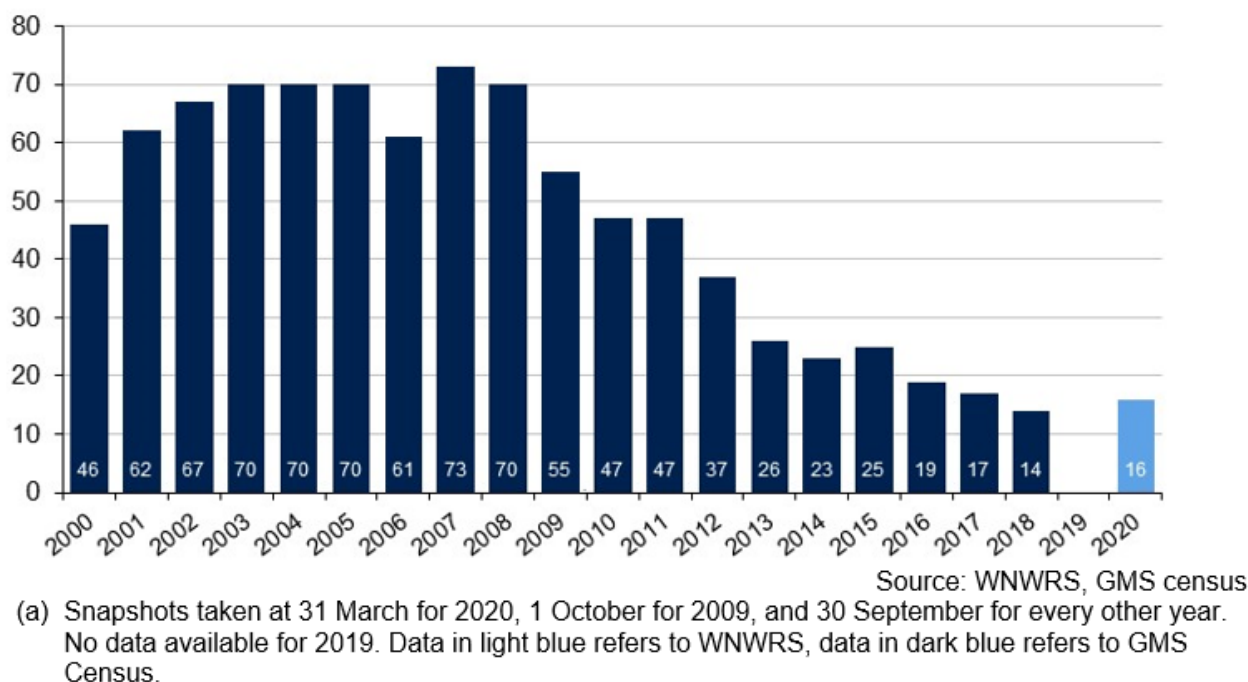
Summary: The number of GP practitioners per 10,000 population is relatively consistent across all health boards, with little variation between 30 September 2018 and 31 March 2020.

At 31 March 2020, Powys had the greatest number of GP practitioners per 10,000 population at 7.6, while Betsi Cadwaladr and Hywel Dda had the lowest at 5.8.

GP retainers

A GP retainer is a registered GP Practitioner who has entered the GP Retainer Scheme who may only work up to 4 clinical sessions per week in practice. See [key quality information](#) for detailed explanation.

Chart 4: Unique headcount - number of GP retainers in Welsh general practices (a)



Summary: There has been a downward trend in the number of GP retainers in Wales over the long term.

Latest data: At 31 March 2020, the number of GP retainers in Wales was 16.

Change since previous time period: There were two more GP retainers than at 30 September 2018.

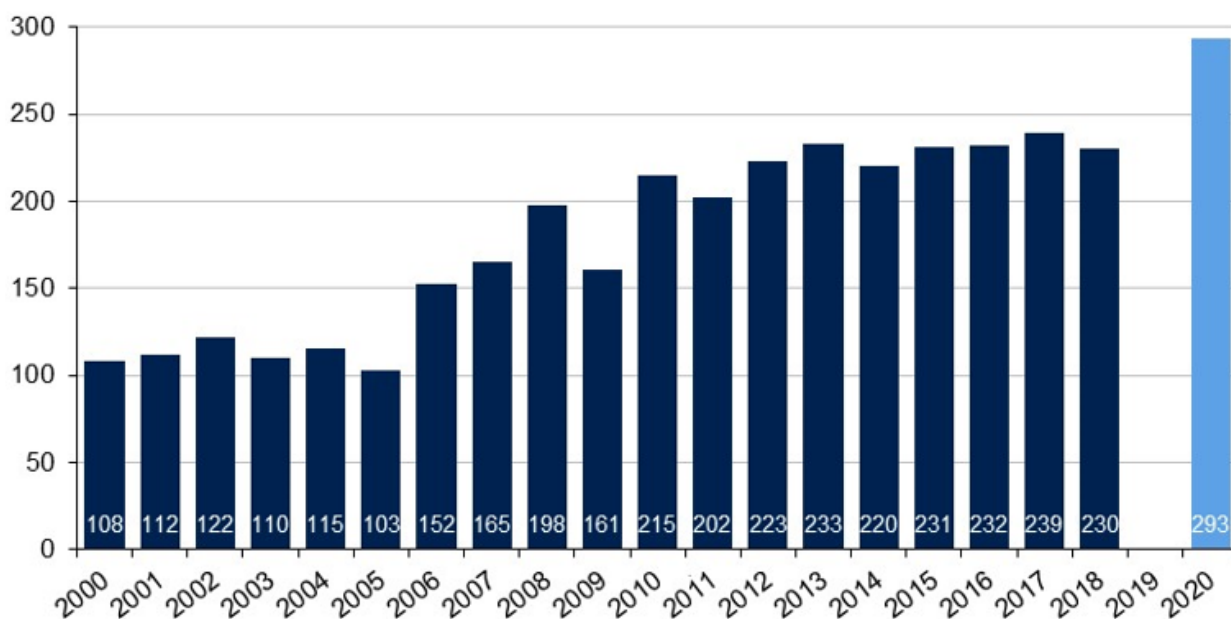
10 year change: There were 31 (or 66.0%) fewer GP retainers at 31 March 2020 than at 30 September 2011

Change since first year of data: There were 30 (or 65.2 %) fewer GP retainers at 31 March 2020 than at 30 September 2000.

GP registrars

A GP registrar or GP trainee is a qualified doctor who is training to become a GP through a period of working and training in a practice. See [key quality information](#) for detailed explanation.

Chart 5: Unique headcount - number of GP registrars placed in general practice (a)



Source: WNWRS, GMS census

(a) Snapshots taken at 31 March for 2020, 1 October for 2009, and 30 September for every other year. No data available for 2019. Data in light blue refers to WNWRS, data in dark blue refers to GMS Census.

Summary: Over the long term, the number of GP registrars in Wales has increased reaching a peak in the latest time period (March 2020) at just under 300.

Latest data: At 31 March 2020, the number of GP registrars in Wales was 293.

Change since previous time period: There were 63 (or 27.4%) more GP registrars than at 30 September 2018.

10 year change: There were 91 (or 45.0%) more GP registrars at 31 March 2020 than at 30 September 2011

Change since first year of data: There were 185 (or 171.3%) more GP registrars at 31 March 2020 than at 30 September 2000.

Note: Historically GP trainees spent 18 months in hospitals, and 18 months in GP practices, but the training model in Wales is currently changing to 12 months in hospital, and 24 months in general practices. At the time of data extraction some, but not all training schemes in Wales have moved to the new model; this may explain part of the large increase in registrars in March 2020. Also note that March 2020 data is sourced from the NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR), with data prior to this sourced from GMS Census, therefore users should exercise caution when making comparisons over time.

F2 doctors

An F2 doctor is a doctor with a full GMC registration in their second year of postgraduate medical training. They would typically undertake clinical work under supervision when on placement at GP practices.

Summary: Data for March 2020 is sourced from Intrepid – the Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) junior doctor training information database.

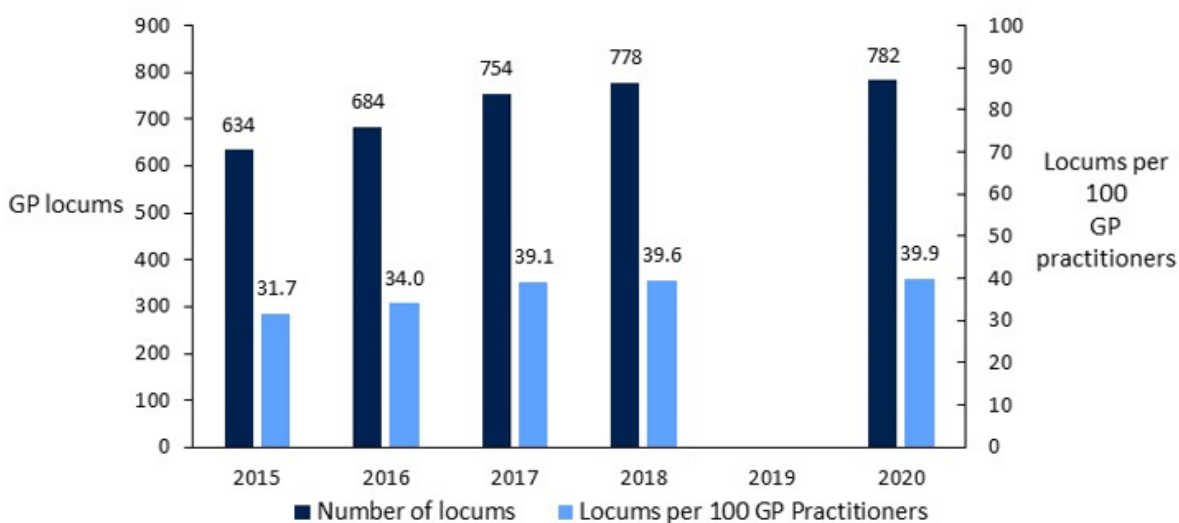
Latest data: At 31 March 2020, there were 29 F2 doctors on placement at GP practices in Wales.

GP locums

A GP locum is a GP who deputises temporarily at a GP practice and is paid through the practice, usually to cover for an absent GP practitioner. Such cover should last for no more than 6 months.

The data is sourced from the Medical Performers List (MPL), which lists all GPs able to practice in Wales and is maintained by the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership. Just because a GP locum is registered on the Medical Performers List does not mean that they are currently providing GP services in Wales, so the data in Chart 6 refers to the number of GP locums registered to practise in Wales. The data relates to snapshots taken at 31 March for 2020 and 30 September for all previous years.

Chart 6: GP locums unique headcount and per 100 GP practitioners (a)



Source: Medical Performers List

(a) Snapshots taken at 31 March for 2020, 30 September for every other year. No data available for 2019.

Summary: In recent years there has been a clear shift in GPs choosing to register on the Medical Performers List with GP locum as their primary staff role; the number of GP locums has increased every year since the first data were available in 2015.

Latest data: There were 782 GP locums registered to practise in Wales at 31 March 2020, 39.9 per every 100 GP practitioners.

Change since previous time period: There were 4 (or 0.5%) more GP locums registered in Wales than at 30 September 2018. This is equivalent to an increase of 0.2 locums per 100 GP practitioners over the year.

Change since first year of data: There were 148 (or 23.3%) more GP locums registered in Wales than at 30 September 2015. This is equivalent to an increase of 8.1 GP locums per 100 GP practitioners over the five years.

Note: The counts are for those GPs who register their primary job type as a locum on the Medical Performers List. That means that if a GP registered themselves as a different primary job type but also performed work as a locum, they would not be included on this list.

It is intended that the All Wales Locum Register will provide additional data on GP locums in future periods which will be used to monitor the activity levels of locum GPs in Welsh general practices.

Note the figures exclude any locum who is on the Medical Performers List with a suspended license, or if they joined after the snapshot date (i.e. 31 March in 2020).

Wider practice staff

To deliver primary care services, GPs work closely with their practice staff including nurses, pharmacists, managers, administrators and others involved in direct patient care. This section provides data on the number of staff employed in other job types within GP practices.

Note that this section includes data for two practices that did not confirm their data before the data extraction date (31 March 2020). Data for these practices has been estimated using initial data supplied in late 2019 that was used to pre-populate the WNWRS.

A list of practices which did not confirm their data before the extraction date is provided in the [Annex](#).

Chart 7: Headcount of wider practice staff in Wales (a)



Source: WNWRS, GMS census

(a) Data for 2020 refers to 31 March, data for all other years refers to 30 September. No data available for 2019. Data in light blue refers to WNWRS, data in dark blue refers to GMS Census.

Summary: Since data was collected in 2013, there has been a general upward trend in the number of wider practice staff over time. The number of practice staff at health board level, tends to reflect the size of the populations they serve.

Latest Data: At 31 March 2020, there were 7,611 wider practice staff employed in Welsh general practices.

Change since previous time period: There were 106 (or 1.4%) more wider practice staff in Wales than in 2018.

Change since first year of data: There were 341 (or 4.7%) more wider practice staff in Wales than in 2013.

Note: Data from 2013 to 2018 is sourced from GMS census, while data for March 2020 onwards is sourced from WNWRS. The change in source may have resulted in greater coverage so caution is advised when analysing data over time. Further to this, data from WNWRS provides unique staff counts; this means if one person is employed in multiple roles, they are only counted once in this total. However data from GMS census is not a unique count, so staff who were employed in multiple roles would have been counted multiple times in the counts.

Table 1: Wider practice staff in Wales by staff group and role, 31 March 2020 (a) (b)

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Nurses | 1,409 |
| Practice Nurse | 950 |
| Advanced Nurse Practitioner | 258 |
| Extended Role Practice Nurse | 160 |
| Nurse Specialist | 42 |
| Trainee Nurse | 5 |
| Nursing Partner | 3 |
| Nurse Dispenser | * |
| Direct Patient Care | 1,114 |
| Health Care Assistant | 566 |
| Dispenser | 214 |
| Pharmacist | 114 |
| Phlebotomist | 94 |
| Pharmacy Technician | 37 |
| Other | 29 |
| Paramedic | 22 |
| Physician Associate | 16 |
| Physiotherapist | 11 |
| Apprentice - Health Care Assistant | 8 |
| Therapist- Counsellor | 5 |
| Therapist- Occupational Therapist | 3 |
| Therapist- Other | * |
| Admin/Non-clinical | 5,142 |
| Receptionist | 2,918 |
| Other | 1,058 |
| Manager | 600 |
| Medical Secretary | 434 |
| Estates and Ancillary | 66 |
| Apprentice | 23 |
| Senior Manager | 20 |
| Management Partner | 17 |
| Telephonist | 15 |

Source: WNWRS

(a) Figures are unique counts. So a person who has more than one contract in the same staff group/role has been counted once in that group/role. However, a person who has a contract in more than one staff group/role would appear once against each group/role. Therefore the staff group figures are not the sum of the staff roles.

(b) Values greater than 0 but less than 3 have been suppressed to avoid disclosure.

Summary: The majority of staff employed in nursing roles were practice nurses (950), the largest staff role of direct patient care staff was health care assistant (566), while receptionist was the largest number of any staff role (2,918).

Gender

Table 2: Staff groups by gender, 31 March 2020 (a) (b)

| Gender | GP Practitioner | | GP Registrar | | Nurses | | Direct Patient Care | | Admin/non-clinical | |
|---------------|-----------------|------|--------------|------|--------|------|---------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| Male | 852 | 43.4 | 98 | 33.4 | 39 | 2.8 | 94 | 8.6 | 221 | 4.4 |
| Female | 1,110 | 56.6 | 195 | 66.6 | 1,332 | 97.2 | 998 | 91.4 | 4,795 | 95.6 |
| Other/Unknown | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 38 | 2.7 | 22 | 2.0 | 126 | 2.5 |
| All | 1,962 | | 293 | | 1,409 | | 1,114 | | 5,142 | |

Source: WNWRS, ESR

(a) Where a person has more than one contract, there were instances of their gender being recorded inconsistently between the different records. These records were adjusted by Welsh Government following advice from NHS Shared Services Partnership to ensure consistency; however adjustments may not have been confirmed by practices.

(b) The percentages for male and female exclude 'other/unknown' from the denominator.

Summary: The majority of the GP practice workforce in Wales are female; this is particularly the case for the wider practice staff groups, which have relatively few male staff.

Ethnicity

Table 3a: Staff groups by aggregated ethnic group, 31 March 2020 (a) (b) (c) (d) (e)

| Ethnicity | GP Practitioner | | GP Registrar | | Nurses | | Direct Patient Care | | Admin/non-clinical | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------|--------------|------|--------|------|---------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| White | 1,452 | 85.1 | 141 | 83.9 | 1,212 | 99.0 | 960 | 98.6 | 4,416 | 98.1 |
| Ethnic Minority Background | 255 | 14.9 | 27 | 16.1 | 12 | 1.0 | 14 | 1.4 | 86 | 1.9 |
| Not stated/Unknown | 255 | 13.0 | 125 | 42.7 | 185 | 13.1 | 140 | 12.6 | 640 | 12.4 |
| | 1,962 | | 293 | | 1,409 | | 1,114 | | 5,142 | |

Source: WNWRS, ESR

Table 3b: Staff groups by broader ethnic group, 31 March 2020 (a) (b) (c) (d) (e)

| Ethnicity | GP Practitioner | | Direct Patient Care | | Admin/non-clinical | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------|---------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| White | 1,452 | 85.1 | 960 | 98.6 | 4,416 | 98.1 |
| Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group | 11 | 0.6 | 3 | 0.3 | 23 | 0.5 |
| Asian or Asian British | 193 | 11.3 | 5 | 0.5 | 46 | 1.0 |
| Black or Black British | 11 | 0.6 | 3 | 0.3 | 8 | 0.2 |
| Other Ethnic Groups | 40 | 2.3 | 3 | 0.3 | 9 | 0.2 |
| Not stated/Unknown | 255 | 13.0 | 140 | 12.6 | 640 | 12.4 |
| | 1,962 | | 1,114 | | 5,142 | |

Source: WNWRS

(a) Where a person has more than one contract, there were instances of their ethnicity being recorded inconsistently between the different records. These records were adjusted by Welsh Government following advice from NHS Shared Services Partnership to ensure consistency, however adjustments may not have been confirmed by practices.

(b) Table 3b provides a more detailed breakdown by ethnicity; however GP registrars and nurses are not included due to small counts in some ethnic groups.

(c) The percentages for the known ethnicity groups exclude 'not stated/unknown' from the denominator.

(d) Figures for GP registrars should be treated with caution due to a high proportion of missing data.

(e) A breakdown of the ethnicity groupings is shown in Table 10 in the annex.

Summary: The majority of the GP practice workforce in Wales are from a white ethnic group. In particular, wider practice staff groups have a relatively small proportion of staff of ethnic minority background. For GP practitioners, of those of ethnic minority background, most are from an Asian or Asian British ethnicity (11.3 per cent of all GP practitioners).

Welsh language

Table 4a: Welsh reading skills by staff group, 31 March 2020 (a) (b) (c) (d)

| | GP Practitioners | | GP Registrars | | Nurses | | Direct Patient Care | | Admin/non-clinical | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------|---------------|------|--------|------|---------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| No Skills | 1,495 | 87.7 | 70 | 64.2 | 1,044 | 87.7 | 793 | 85.0 | 3,864 | 89.8 |
| 1 - Entry | 48 | 2.8 | 21 | 19.3 | 47 | 3.9 | 30 | 3.2 | 132 | 3.1 |
| 2 - Foundation | 5 | 0.3 | * | * | 7 | 0.6 | 9 | 1.0 | 27 | 0.6 |
| 3 - Intermediate | 20 | 1.2 | * | * | 11 | 0.9 | 20 | 2.1 | 64 | 1.5 |
| 4 - Higher | 27 | 1.6 | * | * | 23 | 1.9 | 19 | 2.0 | 75 | 1.7 |
| 5 - Proficiency | 110 | 6.5 | 11 | 10.1 | 58 | 4.9 | 62 | 6.6 | 140 | 3.3 |
| <i>Any Welsh reading skills</i> | 210 | 12.3 | 39 | 35.8 | 146 | 12.3 | 140 | 15.0 | 438 | 10.2 |
| Unknown | 257 | 13.1 | 184 | 62.8 | 219 | 15.5 | 181 | 16.2 | 840 | 16.3 |
| | 1,962 | | 293 | | 1,409 | | 1,114 | | 5,142 | |

Source: WNWRS, ESR

Table 4b: Welsh writing skills by staff group, 31 March 2020 (a) (b) (c) (d)

| | GP Practitioners | | GP Registrars | | Nurses | | Direct Patient Care | | Admin/non-clinical | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------|---------------|------|--------|------|---------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| No Skills | 1,502 | 88.0 | 71 | 65.1 | 1,052 | 88.4 | 800 | 85.8 | 3,892 | 90.4 |
| 1 - Entry | 45 | 2.6 | 20 | 18.3 | 43 | 3.6 | 26 | 2.8 | 116 | 2.7 |
| 2 - Foundation | 6 | 0.4 | * | * | 8 | 0.7 | 8 | 0.9 | 23 | 0.5 |
| 3 - Intermediate | 17 | 1.0 | * | * | 11 | 0.9 | 34 | 3.6 | 94 | 2.2 |
| 4 - Higher | 28 | 1.6 | * | * | 25 | 2.1 | 15 | 1.6 | 51 | 1.2 |
| 5 - Proficiency | 108 | 6.3 | 10 | 9.2 | 51 | 4.3 | 49 | 5.3 | 127 | 3.0 |
| <i>Any Welsh writing skills</i> | 204 | 12.0 | 38 | 34.9 | 138 | 11.6 | 132 | 14.2 | 411 | 9.6 |
| Unknown | 256 | 13.0 | 184 | 62.8 | 219 | 15.5 | 182 | 16.3 | 839 | 16.3 |
| | 1,962 | | 293 | | 1,409 | | 1,114 | | 5,142 | |

Source: WNWRS, ESR

Table 4c: Welsh speaking skills by staff group, 31 March 2020 (a) (b) (c) (d)

| | GP Practitioners | | GP Registrars | | Nurses | | Direct Patient Care | | Admin/non-clinical | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------|---------------|------|--------|------|---------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % | Number | % |
| No Skills | 1,485 | 87.0 | 87 | 63.5 | 1,033 | 86.8 | 781 | 83.8 | 3,827 | 88.9 |
| 1 - Entry | 51 | 3.0 | 25 | 18.2 | 51 | 4.3 | 36 | 3.9 | 143 | 3.3 |
| 2 - Foundation | 9 | 0.5 | * | * | 5 | 0.4 | 8 | 0.9 | 28 | 0.7 |
| 3 - Intermediate | 18 | 1.1 | * | * | 10 | 0.8 | 7 | 0.8 | 36 | 0.8 |
| 4 - Higher | 25 | 1.5 | * | * | 20 | 1.7 | 18 | 1.9 | 64 | 1.5 |
| 5 - Proficiency | 119 | 7.0 | 15 | 10.9 | 71 | 6.0 | 82 | 8.8 | 208 | 4.8 |
| <i>Any Welsh speaking skills</i> | 222 | 13.0 | 50 | 36.5 | 157 | 13.2 | 151 | 16.2 | 479 | 11.1 |
| Unknown | 255 | 13.0 | 156 | 53.2 | 219 | 15.5 | 182 | 16.3 | 836 | 16.3 |
| | 1,962 | | 293 | | 1,409 | | 1,114 | | 5,142 | |

Source: WNWRS, ESR

(a) Where a person has more than one contract, there were instances of their Welsh language data being recorded inconsistently between the different records. To ensure consistency, these records were adjusted by Welsh Government via the following approach: where a record is unknown and the other is known, the known data is used; if both are known but different, the higher proficiency is used. However adjustments have not been confirmed by practices.

(b) The percentages for the Welsh language categories exclude 'unknown' from the denominator.

(c) Values greater than 0 but less than 3 have been suppressed to avoid disclosure.

(d) Figures for GP registrars should be treated with caution due to a high proportion of missing data.

Summary: 13.0% of GP practitioners have some Welsh speaking skill, with 7.0% reporting that they are proficient in speaking Welsh. Welsh language skills vary between the wider practice workforce with 16.2% of direct patient care staff having some Welsh speaking skills compared to 11.1% of the administrative and non-clinical staff.

Key quality information

General medical practitioner definitions:

A general practice is an organisation which offers primary care medical services by a qualified general medical practitioner who is able to prescribe medicine where patients can be registered and held on a list. For the purpose of this release the term general practice refers to main surgeries only and excludes prisons, army bases, education establishments, specialist care centres and walk in centres.

A GP practitioner includes GP providers and salaried GPs only (i.e. excludes GP locums, GP registrars, and GP retainers).

A GP provider is a practitioner who has entered into a contract with a local health board to provide services to patients.

Salaried GPs work within partnerships and are generally remunerated by salary. This also includes GP returners. Returner is an old name for those GPs on what is now the induction and refresher training.

A GP registrar or GP trainee is a qualified doctor who is training to become a GP through a period of working and training in a practice. Historically, in Wales the training programme consisted of 18 months in approved hospital posts and 18 months in general practice as a GP Trainee; this is in the process of changing to 12 months in hospital posts and 24 months in general practice. At the time of publication, some health boards have made the change but not all. All the Specialty Training Schemes in Wales offer the opportunity to undertake the complete training programme as a 3-year scheme.

A GP retainer is a registered GP practitioner who has entered the GP Retainer Scheme. This is designed to help keep doctors working in general practice, and usually applies to GPs who are either approaching retirement or who require greater flexibility in their work in general practice. A retainer may only work up to 4 clinical sessions per week in practice.

A GP locum is a GP who deputises temporarily at a practice, usually to cover for an absent GP practitioner. Such cover should last for no more than 6 months.

An F2 doctor is a doctor with a full GMC registration in their second year of postgraduate medical training. They have completed their first foundation year and will be rotating through three specialties. They would typically undertake clinical work under supervision but they are not training to be a GP.

A partnership is a financial arrangement between two or more bodies of which one must be a practitioner.

General Medical Services (GMS) is the contract by which most GPs are employed.

General practice staff definitions

Nurses: all staff who are registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), specifically all staff recorded under these staff roles: practice nurse, advanced nurse practitioner, nurse specialist, extended role practice nurse, nursing partner, trainee nurse and nurse dispenser.

Direct patient care: typically includes anyone who is directly involved in delivering patient care but who is not a nurse or GP. This includes staff recorded with the specific staff roles of: health care assistant, dispenser, pharmacy technician, paramedic, occupational therapist, pharmacist, phlebotomist, counsellor, physiotherapist, physician associate, apprentice health care assistant, other therapist, and other direct patient care.

Administrative: anyone who is involved in the administration or organisation of the practice. This includes staff with the specific roles of management partner, receptionist, apprentice, manager, medical secretary, telephonist, estates and ancillary, senior manager and other admin.

Data sources

Various data sources have been used to produce the statistics in this release. The data source is stated in each section of the statistical release.

Welsh National Workforce Reporting System (WNWRS)

This is the first time data has been sourced from WNWRS and been subject to the full validation processes by NHS Shared Services Partnership and NHS Digital. This is now the primary source for most GP practice workforce data (from March 2020 onwards).

The WNWRS provides a secure web based tool developed to capture information on staff working in general practices. A version of this system has been used by practices in England for some years and is supported by NHS Digital. In Wales, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) have implemented the WNWRS, with support from NHS Digital.

In broad terms, the system works by practice managers inputting details of their staff onto the system, confirming the details every quarter. Data is then extracted on the last day of each quarter (March, June, September, December) and NHS Digital validate this data. NWSSP also perform additional validations to improve data quality before anonymised data are shared with Welsh Government statisticians to validate further and produce these official statistics.

This is the main source for data on GP practitioners, retainers and all practice staff.

Further details are provided in the [data quality statement](#).

GMS census

The main source of historic GP workforce data is the GMS which was produced by NHS Digital using the Exeter/NHAIS database. This database is a computerised payment system of general medical practitioners who are in contract with local health boards. WNWRS has replaced the GMS Census as the main source of GP workforce data and the last GMS census data refers to September 2018.

Raw data from the Exeter payment system has also been used to validate WNWRS data and will be routinely used to for validation purposes in future periods.

Medical Performers List

All GPs need to be registered to the Medical Performers List (MPL) before they are allowed to practice in Wales. When a GP registers, they are asked to input their primary job role and this is used to count the number of GP locums who are registered to practice in Wales. Historically it has been used to calculate the number of GPs who are able to speak Welsh, before more robust data on Welsh language skills was collected in WNWRS.

NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership maintains the Medical Performers List, and it is also used to validate workforce data supplied through WNWRS.

Electronic Staff Record (ESR)

ESR is the workforce tool used by the NHS to support the delivery of national workforce policy and strategy. It provides NHS organisations with a range of tools that facilitate effective workforce management and planning. All staff employed by the NHS should have an ESR record and is the source for registrar data from March 2020 onwards.

All members of the GP speciality training programme are employed by Velindre University NHS Trust and are therefore present on ESR. The registrars counted in this statistical release are those who are on GP practice placements at the time of data extraction, and not those who are on the programme but are on hospital based placements at the time of data extraction.

Intrepid

NHS Shared Services Partnership access the system which is used to monitor Foundation Year 2 doctors (F2) on placement in general practices. These are doctors with a full General Medical Council (GMC) registration, but are not registrars and are not specifically training to be a GP.

NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS)

All practices which open, close or merge in Wales need to be recorded by the Welsh Reference Data Service at NWIS. This is the definitive source of active practices in Wales. Data for March 2020 refers to only the practices which were active at that date on the list of practices provided by the Welsh Reference Data Service.

Coverage

Wales National Workforce Reporting System (WNWRS)

All active practices in Wales are registered on the WNWRS so data should be captured from all general practices in Wales. However, this is dependent on practices supplying their information through the system. In March 2020, 2 out of the 404 active practices did not supply data or did not confirm their data was up-to-date in the WNWRS. These practices did supply initial data through an Excel spreadsheet in late 2019, which was used to pre-populate the WNWRS before the system went live for practices. Therefore the data provided in the initial spreadsheet has been used for these two practices. Note that both practices reported that there were no GP practitioners at the practice, but there were wider practice staff reported. At the time of reporting, the practices may have been using GP locums rather than GP practitioners. Note this does not affect data on registrars which is sourced from a different data collection system. It is hoped as WNWRS becomes more established 100% of practices will supply valid and confirmed data through the system.

GMS census

The GMS census is used for historical data. This was a full census of GP practitioners carried out as at 30 September in 2018 and each year prior. Only practitioners whose 'responsible local health board' is within Wales have been included.

Medical Performers List (MPL)

The MPL covers all GPs licensed to practice in Wales, and is used to count GP locums in this release. The list relies on the primary job role being provided by the GP, so if a GP works multiple roles, they would only be recorded under one of them. Therefore, the number of GPs available for locum work in Wales may be undercounted in the MPL. However, as the MPL typically relies on a GP informing NHS Shared Services Partnership of any changes in their circumstances, the list is not always a timely reflection of the number of GPs available to work in Wales.

Better quality data on locums and their activity should be sourced from the [All Wales Locum Register](#) in future periods.

Other sources

All other sources used in this release, including the Electronic Staff Record, Intrepid and the Welsh Reference Data Service in NWIS have 100% coverage of the relevant data items used in this release.

Accuracy

Extensive quality assurance has been performed on data extracted from WNWRS.

Some of the quality assurance steps include:

- Checking GMC numbers in WNWRS against the GMC register to ensure the number provided is valid. If numbers are invalid NHS Shared Services Partnership have contacted the practice to obtain the correct number, or verified it using the Medical Performers List.

Any GP recorded in WNWRS but did not have a valid GMC number after these steps has been removed.

- Counts provided are for unique staff unless otherwise stated. That is, if a GP works at multiple practices, they would only be counted once in Wales-level totals. If a GP works in two different health boards, they would be counted in both health boards, but only once in the Wales-level totals.
- Checks are performed against data from the previous period. Any data items which appear inconsistent since the previous period have been checked with the practice.
- Checking that a GP with the same GMC number does not appear simultaneously across the WNWRS, ESR and Intrepid data sources.
- Where a person has more than one contract but with characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity, Welsh language) recorded inconsistently between the different records, these were adjusted by Welsh Government following advice from NHS Shared Services Partnership to ensure consistency. For Welsh language data, Welsh Government ensured consistency by following the approach: where a record is unknown and the other is known, the known data is used; if both are known but different, the higher proficiency is used. However, adjustments may not have been confirmed by practices.
- Staff who appear to have duplicated records are removed. Typically these are staff with the same National Insurance or registration number, employed in the same practice, in the same staff role.
- Any data for practices which were not active at the extraction date have been removed.
- Any data supplied through WNWRS where the GP has been recorded as a locum is not counted, as locum coverage in the WNWRS is not recorded on a consistent basis.
- Various checks and follow ups are applied for specific data items, including:
 - Checking date of births are within a set range
 - Staff role is completed and not blank
 - Staff joining after or being terminated before the extraction date are excluded.
- NHS Shared Services Partnership also extensively contacted GP practices to ensure data supplied was accurate and in correct formats.
- Checking that any practice with 0 GP practitioners are valid.

A full quality report will be published as soon as is practicable.

Timeliness and punctuality

Data is published as soon as practicable after being received by Welsh Government.

This report was published 3 months after data had been extracted from the WNWRS; previous data from the GMS Census was typically published around 6 months after the reference date.

Going forward, it is planned that data will be published from the WNWRS quarterly, around 3-4 months after the reference period. In future statistical updates, data for the reference periods 31 December, 31 March and 30 June may be published as [StatsWales](#) data tables, with a short headline summary. A full annual statistical release with more in-depth analysis may be retained for the 30 September reference data. These plans are subject to adequate resourcing being available during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Comparability and coherence

The latest data published on GPs practitioners, retainers and wider practice staff is sourced from a new system which is different to the GMS census which provided data for previous years. It is also taken at a different point in time to all other previous data, therefore users are advised to be cautious when analysing the data over time. Any differences may be explained by the different data collection processes or reference periods.

The WNWRS is based on the same system used by NHS Digital to monitor the GP workforce in England, so GP workforce data is collected on a consistent basis. However, NHS Digital use some estimation methods in England which are not necessary to be applied in Wales, so there are some subtle differences in the way statistics are produced from similar source data.

Data on GP Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) is collected through the WNWRS and it is intended that this will be published in future publications. It has not been published in this report as there has not been time to adequately validate this data. WTE data from the previous 5 GMS census was not published as it was not of sufficient quality and consistency.

The WNWRS also has a reporting module where practices and health boards will be able to see their own data and some aggregated data. Data will be added to this on the same day as the official statistics are published. Note that there may be slight differences between data that is viewable on the WNWRS reporting module and the official statistics. This is because additional validations may happen after data is extracted which may not be fed back into the WNWRS until the following reporting period.

Revisions

The majority of the data used in the release is a snapshot taken at a single point in time from administrative systems. All statistics in this report can be regarded as final and not subject to further revision or update.

Accessing and clarity

The data informing the analysis in this report is published in the annex and as an Excel spreadsheet. The data will be added to [StatsWales](#) (a free-to-use open data platform that allows visitors to view, create and download tables) as soon as is practicable.

This statistical release has been pre-announced and then published on the [Statistics and Research website](#).

Relevance

What are the potential uses of these statistics?

These statistics will be used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are:

- advice to Ministers
- to inform workforce planning decisions
- to inform debate in the Welsh Parliament and beyond
- to make publically available data on GP services in Wales

Who are the key potential users of this data?

These statistics will be useful both within and outside the Welsh Government. Some of the key potential users are:

- ministers and the Members Research Service in the Welsh Parliament
- local health boards
- local authorities
- primary care clusters
- GP practices
- The department for Health and Social Services in the Welsh Government
- other areas of the Welsh Government
- National Health Service (e.g. Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW))
- Public Health Wales
- the research community
- students, academics and universities
- individual citizens and private companies.

The statistics may also be useful for other UK governments:

- Northern Ireland Executive's Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
- Scottish Government
- Department of Health in England

UK comparisons

The other UK countries also publish counts of GPs. Users should be aware of differences in definitions, methodologies and data collections.

England, NHS Digital

[General Practice Data Hub](#)

[GP Primary Care & Workforce Data Report](#)

Scotland

ISD Scotland

[GPs and Other Practice Workforce](#)

[General Practice Data Tables](#)

Northern Ireland

[General Medical Statistics](#)

[GPs, Practices and Registered Patients \(administrative geographies\)](#)

[GP Registrations](#)

Related links

Official statistics for the number of serving UK Armed Forces personnel and civilian personnel with a Defence Medical Services (DMS) registration can be accessed on the [Ministry of Defence Website](#).

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

The document is available at: <https://gov.wales/general-practice-workforce>

Next update

September 2020 (provisional – subject to resource allocation changes in response to COVID-19)

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.healthinfo@gov.wales.

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Annex

Table 5: Number of GPs by type and local health boards at 31 March 2020 (a) (b)

| Local health board | Number of GP practitioners (excluding locums, GP Registrars and GP Retainers) | | | GP Registrars | GP | |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| | Partner/ Senior Partner | Provider/ Salaried | Total | | Retainers | GP Locums |
| Betsi Cadwaladr University | 316 | 89 | 405 | 55 | 4 | 205 |
| Powys Teaching | 78 | 23 | 101 | 7 | 0 | 53 |
| Hywel Dda University | 170 | 55 | 225 | 39 | * | 84 |
| Swansea Bay University | 207 | 52 | 259 | 48 | * | 131 |
| Cwm Taf Morgannwg University | 208 | 88 | 296 | 59 | 0 | 58 |
| Aneurin Bevan University | 278 | 85 | 363 | 38 | * | 144 |
| Cardiff and Vale University | 236 | 92 | 328 | 47 | 8 | 107 |
| Wales | 1,483 | 480 | 1,962 | 293 | 16 | 782 |

Source: WNWRS

(a) Figures are unique counts. So a person who has more than one contract in the same LHB has been counted once in that LHB. However, a person who has a contract in more than one LHB would appear once against each LHB. Therefore the figures cannot be summed by LHB. Similarly, a person who has more than one contract in the same GP practitioner role has been counted once in that role, but a person who has a contract in more than one role would appear once against each role (the GP practitioner total figure is not the sum of the individual GP practitioner roles).

(b) Values greater than 0 but less than 3 have been suppressed to avoid disclosure.

Table 6: Number of GPs by type, 2006 onwards

| | <u>2006</u> | <u>2007</u> | <u>2008</u> | <u>2009</u> | <u>2010</u> | <u>2011</u> | <u>2012</u> | <u>2013</u> | <u>2014</u> | <u>2015</u> | <u>2016</u> | <u>2017</u> | <u>2018</u> | <u>2019</u> | <u>2020</u> |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| GP practitioners | 1,882 | 1,936 | 1,940 | 1,940 | 1,991 | 2,009 | 1,997 | 2,026 | 2,006 | 1,997 | 2,009 | 1,926 | 1,964 | - | 1,962 |
| GP registrars | 152 | 165 | 198 | 161 | 215 | 202 | 223 | 233 | 220 | 231 | 232 | 239 | 230 | - | 293 |
| GP retainers | 61 | 73 | 70 | 55 | 47 | 47 | 37 | 26 | 23 | 25 | 19 | 17 | 14 | - | 16 |
| GP locums | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 634 | 684 | 754 | 778 | - | 782 |

Source: WNWRS, GMS census, Medical Performers list

Table 7: Wider practice staff by staff group and health board, 31 March 2020

| <u>Local health board</u> | <u>Direct Patient</u> | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| | <u>Nurses</u> | <u>Care</u> | <u>Admin/non-clinical</u> |
| Betsi Cadwaladr University | 382 | 311 | 1,186 |
| Powys Teaching | 84 | 120 | 266 |
| Hywel Dda University | 216 | 151 | 663 |
| Swansea Bay University | 149 | 90 | 602 |
| Cwm Taf Morgannwg University | 153 | 145 | 649 |
| Aneurin Bevan University | 259 | 228 | 1,002 |
| Cardiff and Vale University | 182 | 82 | 799 |
| Wales | 1,409 | 1,114 | 5,142 |

Source: WNWRS

Note: Figures are unique staff counts; this means if one person is employed multiple times in one local health board (LHB) (or staff group), they are only counted once (but if the person is also employed in another LHB or staff group, then they would be counted once in each LHB or staff group). Therefore figures cannot be summed by LHB.

Table 8: Wider practice staff by staff group, 2013 onwards (a)

| | <u>2013</u> | <u>2014</u> | <u>2015</u> | <u>2016</u> | <u>2017</u> | <u>2018</u> | <u>2019</u> | <u>2020</u> |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Non-GP staff | 7,270 | 7,192 | 7,379 | 7,341 | 7,299 | 7,505 | - | 7,611 |
| Nurses | 1,296 | 1,288 | 1,287 | 1,327 | 1,312 | 1,338 | - | 1,409 |
| Direct patient care | 885 | 900 | 909 | 955 | 990 | 1,038 | - | 1,114 |
| Admin/non-clinical/other | 5,089 | 5,004 | 5,183 | 5,059 | 4,997 | 5,129 | - | 5,142 |

Source: WNWRS, GMS census

(a) Data from 2013 to 2018 is sourced from GMS census, while data for March 2020 onwards is sourced from WNWRS. The change in source may have resulted in greater coverage so caution is advised when analysing data over time. Data from WNWRS provides unique staff counts. Therefore, if one person is employed multiple times in one staff group, they are only counted once in that staff group (but if the person is also employed in another staff group, then they would be counted once in each staff group). However data from GMS census is not a unique count, therefore staff who were employed multiple times would have been counted multiple times in the counts. Therefore figures cannot be summed by staff group.

Table 9: Practices with unconfirmed data in WNWRS

| | W code | Practice Name | Practice Address | | | Postcode | Health board |
|--|---------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Some initial test data submitted | W91006 | Pen Y Maes Health Centre | Beech Street | Summerhill | Wrexham | LL11 4UF | Betsi Cadwaladr |
| before WNWRS was operational | W91054 | Borras Park Surgery | Borras Park Road | | Wrexham | LL12 7TH | Betsi Cadwaladr |
| but practice did not confirm their data | | | | | | | |

Note that these practices supplied data for wider practice staff only.

Table 10: Ethnicity groupings

| Aggregated ethnic group | Broader ethnic group | Individual ethnic group |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| White | White | Other White background |
| White | White | White - British |
| White | White | White Irish |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group | Mixed White / Asian |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group | Mixed White / Black African |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group | Mixed White / Black Caribbean |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group | Other Mixed background |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Asian or Asian British | Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Asian or Asian British | Asian or Asian British - Indian |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Asian or Asian British | Asian or Asian British - Pakistani |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Asian or Asian British | Chinese |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Asian or Asian British | Other Asian background |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Black or Black British | Black or Black British - African |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Black or Black British | Black or Black British - Caribbean |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Black or Black British | Other Black background |
| Ethnic Minority Background | Other Ethnic Groups | Other ethnic group |
| Not stated/unknown | Not stated/Unknown | Not Stated |
| Not stated/unknown | Not stated/Unknown | Unknown |