

**NHS Scotland**  
**National Primary Care Workforce Planning**  
**Survey 2007**

**Results for NHS Borders**

**Final version, 7th March 2008**

nGMS OD/HR workforce planning subgroup

This report was produced by members of the ISD Scotland Primary Medical Services team on behalf of the nGMS OD/HR workforce planning subgroup. Members of this subgroup, as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008, are:

Linda Bunney	NHS Dumfries & Galloway
Chris Carron	NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
Kerry Chalmers	Scottish Government Health Department Workforce Planning Division
Julie Kidd	ISD Scotland
Ian Mackie	Glasgow LMC
Mary Mitchell	NHS Education for Scotland
Duncan Miller	NHS Lothian
Nan O'Hara	Practice Nurse
John Rankin	SGPC
Nic Zappia (Chair)	NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde (chair)

## **Contents**

<b>Introduction:</b>	Survey design and process
<b>Results Section 1:</b>	Response Rates and Practice Staff Summary
<b>Results Section 2:</b>	Breakdown by Gender, Age group, Full-time/Part-time
<b>Results Section 3:</b>	Vacancies, Retirals and Sessional GPs
<b>Appendix A:</b>	Tables showing the numbers related to the charts in Section2
<b>Appendix B:</b>	Copy of the survey form

-----

## **Introduction**

### **Survey Overview**

In recent years there has been a dearth of information available in Scotland about general practice staffing profiles, patterns of full time/part time working and anticipated retirements, with resultant difficulties in national workforce planning for this area of healthcare. The National Primary Care Workforce Planning Survey was developed as a means to address something of this gap in information availability. The survey structure and process was devised by representatives from NHS Boards, the Scottish Government Workforce Planning Division, The Scottish GP's Committee (SGPC), Local Medical Committees (LMCs), NHS Education for Scotland (NES) and ISD Scotland (the national information Services organisation for NHS Scotland). Piloted in 2006, the survey was repeated in slightly revised form in 2007. This report is based on data returned by general practices for 2007.

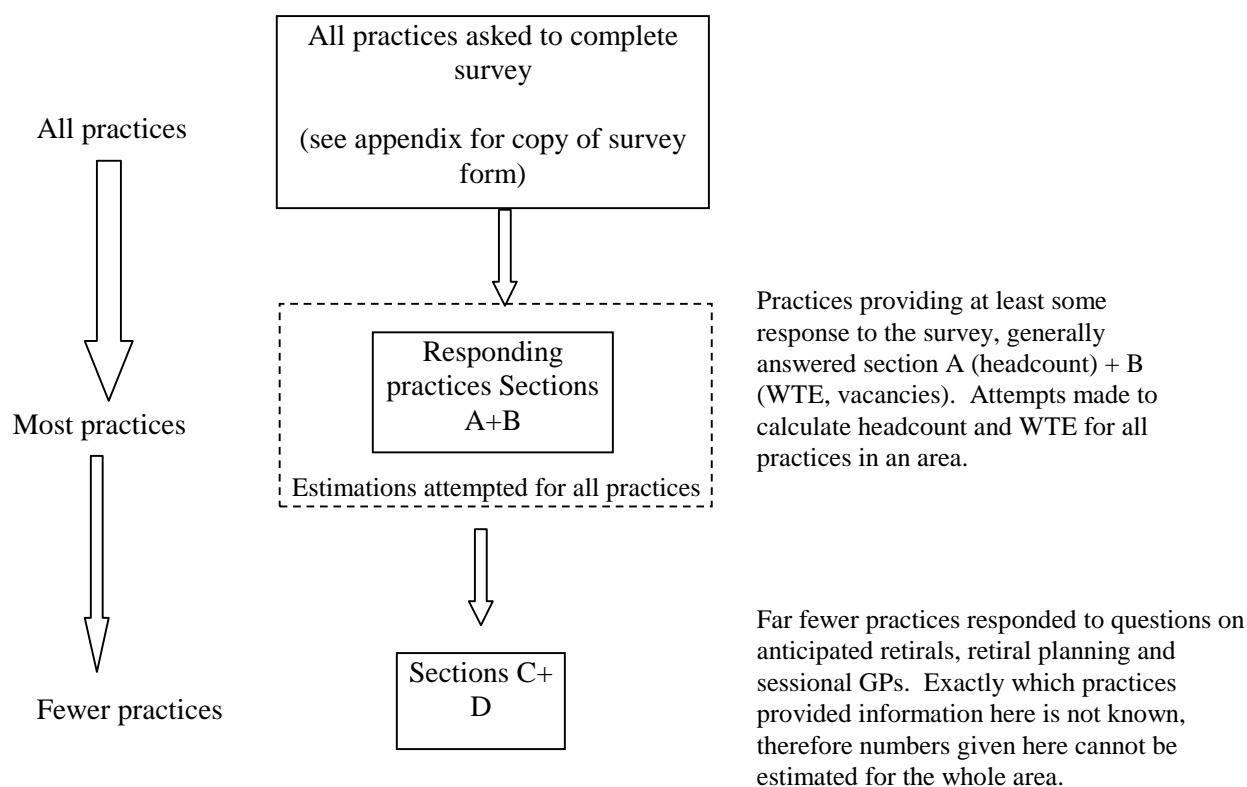
### **Survey content, process and responses**

The main sections of the 2007 survey sought information on headcounts and whole time equivalent (WTE) status of different staff groups working within general practice. Headcounts were split by gender and age group. Further, smaller sections sought information on anticipated retirements, planning for GP retirements, and the employment of sessional GPs. A copy of the survey form sent out to practices is available in Appendix B of this report.

All Scottish general practices with registered patients were asked via their LMCs to participate in the survey. Not included in this survey are other primary medical services with no registered patients, for example Board-run Out of Hours services. Individual practice responses were collated by LMCs, who then aggregated the data to CHP/CHCP level. Results at CHP/CHCP level were returned to ISD for further collation, analysis and reporting.

Overall, a high proportion of practices returned a form to their LMC, although the rate of response varied between areas. Additionally, some questions were responded to more fully than others, summarised in Figure A below, and this in turn has an impact on what it has been possible to include in this report. Nonetheless, the results of this survey are expected to prove useful to those involved in workforce planning at national and/or sub-national levels.

**Figure A:** Availability of information from the survey



## Presentation of Results

The majority of figures provided in this report are the actual data from responding practices only. Information accompanying each table or chart indicates the numbers of practices to which the figures relate. Where possible, estimated figures for the entire group of practices in a particular Board or Region, or for Scotland as a whole, have been presented. This was made possible by the fact that as part of the survey process the LMCs returned to ISD data on the collective size of the populations served by the responding practices, relative to the population for the whole group of practices in each area. In some cases an estimated figure is not shown because either the number of responses has been too low, the actual reported numbers are too small or when compared with other sources of information the estimated figures are not as expected.

*Throughout the report, figures in grey italics are not the actual values, they have been estimated using the reported figures and this should be taken into consideration when using them.*

Section 2 shows the breakdown of practice staff by gender, age and full-time/part-time status in chart format. Percentages have been displayed in these charts and are based on the actual survey responses for that area (e.g. NHS Board). The questions in the survey providing these results were the best recorded, but the response rate does vary between areas within the region. The board level response rate is tabulated in Section 1, Table 1.1. Assuming the range of practices that responded has similar characteristics and workforce profiles to those that didn't respond, the tables and charts for each CHP and Board should be fairly representative of the whole CHP and Board. In the case of smaller Boards or lower response rates, this assumption may no longer apply.

The latter questions in the survey have been used to populate Section 3 of this report. With the exception of the vacancies information, these questions are in the format of a yes/no answer with further information expected in each following table. It was observed that this section was answered by fewer practices than were recorded to have taken part in the whole survey. For this reason, each table states the number of practices that completed that particular question. Details of which practices responded to these sections is unavailable, therefore we don't know the population of responding practices or how representative they are of the area. Combined with the low responses, the actual numbers have been shown, rather than percentages or estimates. These numbers may or may not be useful to form a pattern of what could be happening in a given area.

## Section 1: Response Rates and Practice Staff Summary

Table 1.1 shows the proportion of the CHP and Board population represented by the responding practices. For many of the following graphs, unless otherwise stated, the results are based on the responders only and hence percentages rather than absolute numbers are shown.

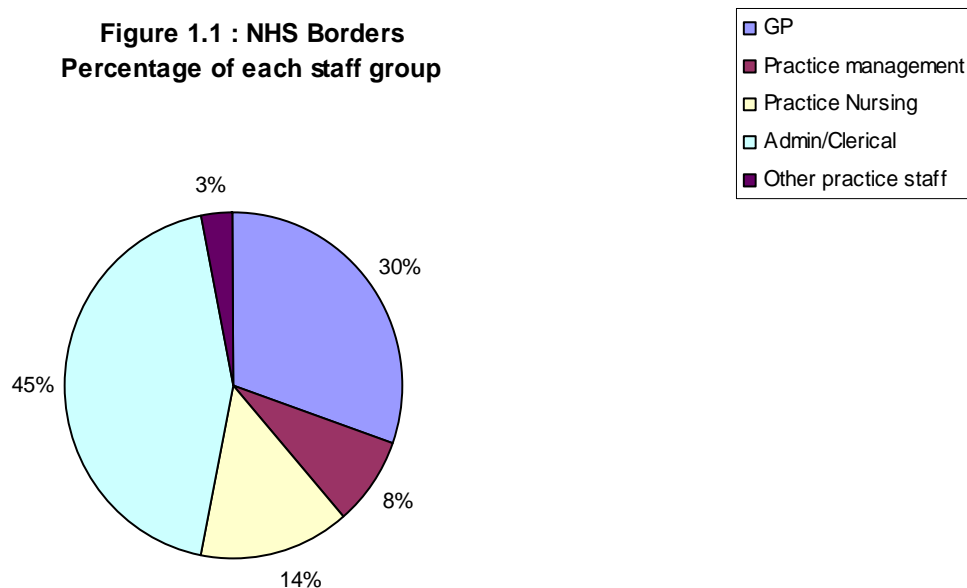
**Table 1.1 Response Rates**

Area	No. of practices asked to participate	No. of practices included in submission	Responses from % of practices	Responses from % of population
Borders	24	15	63%	72%
<b>NHS Borders</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>72%</b>

Note: Board totals are based on aggregations of CHPs, therefore where CHPs and Boards are not co-terminous, this will have an impact on Board figures.

### GP Practice Staff groups

Figure 1.1 shows the practice staff breakdown into staff groups.



Admin & Clerical staff account for the highest proportion of practice staff, with the next largest group being GPs.

## **NHS Borders workforce summary**

Table 1.2 shows the headcount and the whole time equivalent for each staff group, based on the survey responses.

In some areas, where the staff numbers are large enough and the population response rate is high enough to reduce any error rate, the headcount and WTE has been estimated for the whole board. The population response rate, shown in table 1.1, has been used to extrapolate the actual numbers collected from the survey.

Estimated headcount for total area (NHS board) =  $\frac{\text{headcount recorded by survey responses}}{\text{practice population response rate}}$

The estimated figures expected in the table below may be blank for the following reasons:

1. The number of staff in a particular staff group is too small to attempt an estimate (<20).
2. The responses are from too few practices to allow a fair representation of the greater area.
3. The estimated headcount of GPs from the survey results differ by more than 10% from the published figures of GPs at Board and CHP level as at September 2006 ([www.isdscotland.org/GPpracs&pops](http://www.isdscotland.org/GPpracs&pops)). Where this happens this suggests that the responding practices may not be adequately representative of the whole area in terms of their staff to population ratio.

Estimates for staff groups other than GPs have been provided subject to the GP estimates meeting the tolerance requirements outlined in point 3 above. This assumes that staff to population ratios for non-GPs are also adequately captured in the data from the responding practices, relative to the NHS board area as a whole.

It is not possible to provide reliable estimates for NHS Borders.

**Table 1.2 Workforce summary of the Board**

<b>NHS Borders</b>		Responses from		Estimated for the total	
		72% of the board population		board population	
<b>Staff Group</b>		<b>Headcount</b>	<b>WTE<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Headcount<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>WTE<sup>1,2</sup></b>
GPs	Total	70	43.3	-	-
	Performer (Partner)	60	38.7	-	-
	Performer salaried	2	0.8	-	-
	Performer trainee	2	0.0	-	-
	Performer registrar	6	3.9	-	-
Practice Management	Practice Manager	19	14.9	-	-
Practice Nursing	Registered Practice Nurse	29	15.2	-	-
	Health Care/Primary Care Assistants	4	1.8	-	-
Admin/Clerical	General Clerical Staff	101	65.1	-	-
Other	Phlebotomist	2	0.7	-	-
	Allied Health Professional	0	0.0	-	-
	Counsellor	1	0.0	-	-
	Other	4	0.5	-	-

Note: 1. Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) = [no. of sessions]/9 for GPs or [no. of hrs]/37 for other staff groups (number of sessions/ number of hours worked is collected from the survey alongside headcount).

2. Estimates of headcount and WTE have been rounded to the nearest 5.

## Section 2: Staff Breakdown by Gender, Age, Full-time/Part-time status

The charts in this section show percentages rather than absolute numbers and are based on the actual responses from that CHP. See table 1.1 for the population response rates. These responses may or may not be representative of the complete CHP or Board.

The numbers used in creating all charts in section 2 below are included as tables in appendix A.

Figure 2.1 shows the percentage of staff belonging to each age group for each staff group within the CHP.

**Figure 2.1 : Borders CHP**  
**Percentage of staff within each age group by staff group**

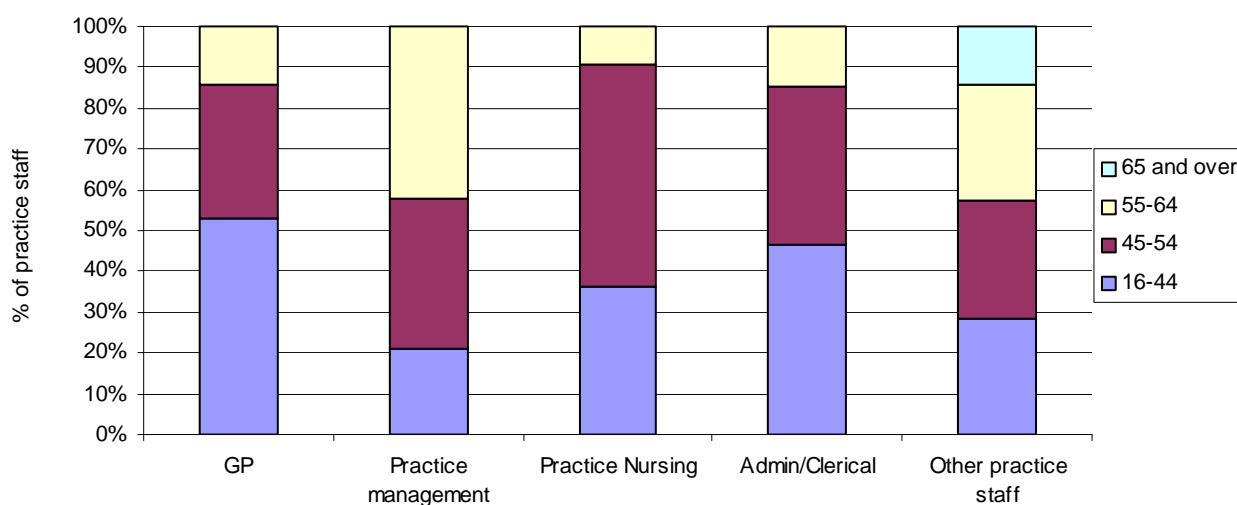
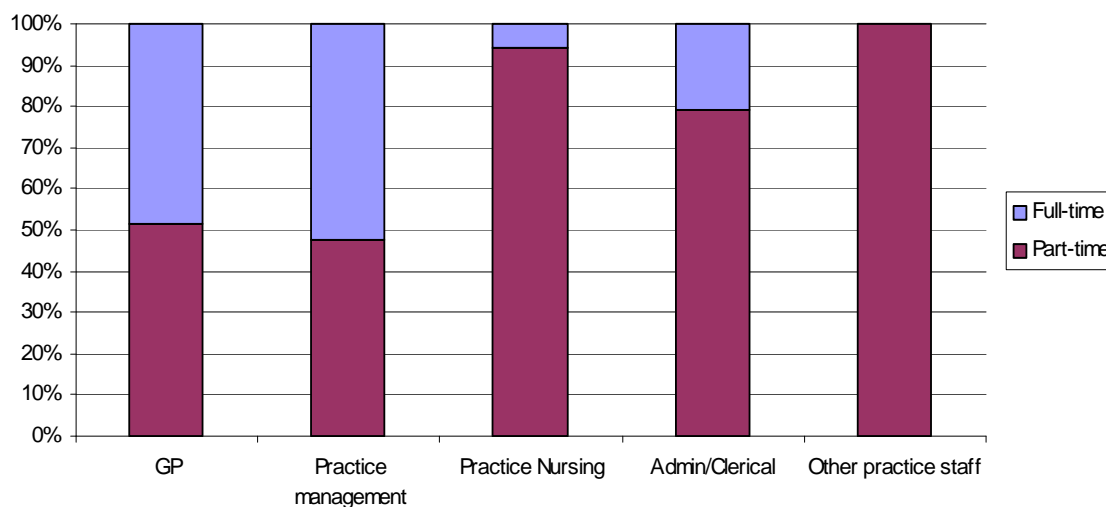


Figure 2.2 shows the percentage of full-time and part-time staff within each staff group for the CHP. Note that these particular figures do not differentiate between different extents of part time working, e.g. 80% contracts versus half time contracts.

**Figure 2.2 : Borders CHP**  
**Percentage of full-time/part-time staff by staff group**

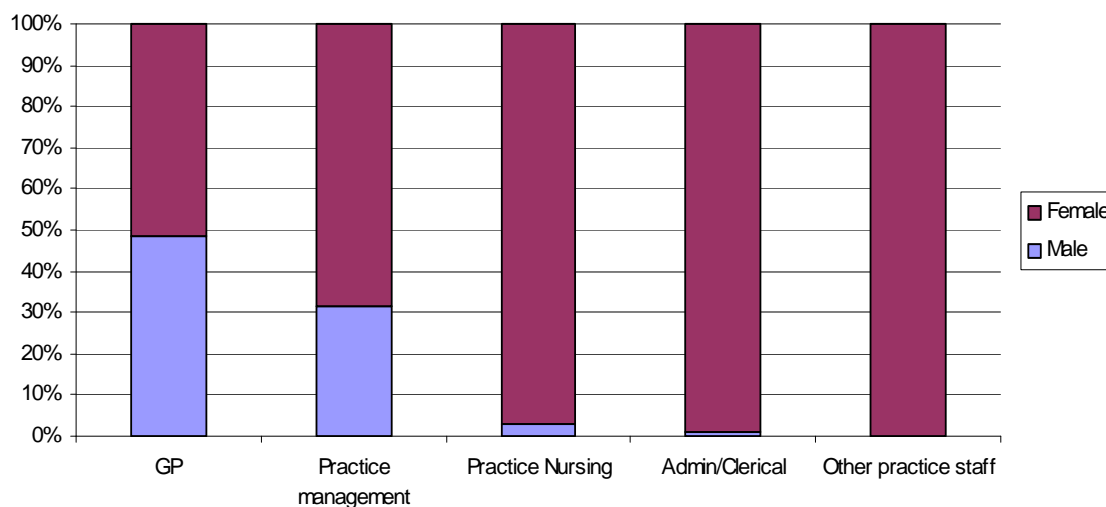


The proportions of full-time and part-time staff are fairly even for both GPs and practice managers within Borders CHP. Practice nursing, admin & clerical and other practice staff are more likely to be employed as part-time.

Figure 2.3 shows the percentage of staff of each gender within each staff group.

GPs have a relatively even gender split within the CHP but all other staff groups are predominantly female.

**Figure 2.3 : Borders CHP**  
**Percentage of male and female staff by staff group**



### Section 3: Vacancies, Retirals and Sessional GPs

At this point it is once again stressed that there is no guarantee that each practice submitting a response completed every field on the survey form. Overall, responses became less complete in the lower sections (C&D) of the form.

Table 3.1 shows the number of vacancies recorded for each staff group. This is shown as both headcount and whole time equivalent. Vacancy figures requested in section B may also have been affected by declining completeness in response as per the sections on retirals and sessional GPs. For example, if the exact situation regarding vacancies were unknown, or this field was simply forgotten about, it may have been left blank and there is no means of knowing if this happened. Overall, we can assume the vacancies stated below are the minimum number of vacancies for that proportion of the Board that responded.

There are no reported vacancies within Borders CHP.

#### Table 3.1 : Reported Vacancies

Up to 63% of practices responded, relating to up to 72% of the Boards population.

Staff group	Headcount	WTE <sup>1</sup>
GP	0	0.0
Practice Manager	0	0.0
Practice Nurse	0	0.0
Admin/Clerical	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0

1 Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) = (no. of sessions)/9 for GPs or (no. of hrs)/37 for other staff groups.

Note: The remaining tables were based on questions where there was a yes/no option followed by a request for more specific information. In some areas there may be a reduced practice response rate for these questions (i.e. lower than that stated in Table 1.1).

Therefore, within each of the following tables, the number of practices that responded is shown (this number is also shown as a percentage of all practices within that Board). Please note, that as we cannot distinguish which practices responded to these specific questions, we do not know the population of the whole area that these figures relate to.

**Table 3.2.1 : Staff due to retire in the next 5 years**

**NHS Borders**

15 (63%) practices within the board responded to this particular question

10 (42%) practices responded “yes” that they have staff due to retire in next 5 years

<b>Staff Group</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>No of hours</b>	<b>No of sessions</b>	<b>WTE</b>	<b>% staff due to retire<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>% staff at retiral age<sup>2</sup></b>
GP	9	N/A	61	6.8	13%	6%
Practice Manager	7	210	N/A	5.7	37%	32%
Practice Nurse	3	45.5	N/A	1.2	9%	9%
Admin/Clerical	16	419.75	N/A	11.3	16%	15%
Other	2	32	N/A	0.9	29%	43%

1 % of staff due to retire = (staff recorded as due to retire) / (total staff recorded in this survey).

2 % of staff at retiral age = (staff in this survey recorded to be male and currently aged 60 and over or female and currently aged 55 or over) / (total staff recorded in this survey). For each staff group, these figures are taken from Section A and B of the survey, the response rate for which is shown in table 1.1.

N/A - not applicable

The percentage of GPs known to be retiring in the next 5 years is higher than the expected percentage, based on the standard retiral age. This is also true for practice managers, whereas the proportions of practice nurse and admin/clerical staff is the same as or close to the expected retiral figure. The proportion of ‘other’ staff known to be retiring is less than expected.

Since the introduction of the new GP contract, it is possible for ISD to analyse the age profile of retiring GPs in recent years. This could be looked into and provided on request if interested. Please see link [www.isdscotland.org/general\\_practice](http://www.isdscotland.org/general_practice) for latest contact information.

Table 3.2.2 shows that, although based on partial data, of those GPs planning to retire in the next 5 years, it is likely they will be replaced by another GP. None of the responding practices seem to be considering a combination of GPs and nurses as replacements.

**Table 3.2.2: Replacement of GP's due to retire in next 5 years**

**NHS Borders**

Information<sup>1</sup> from 5 practices planning to replace GPs with another GP or a nurse

<b>Staff Group</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Number of Hours</b>	<b>Number of Sessions</b>	<b>WTE<sup>2</sup></b>
Another GP	6	N/A	47	5.2
Nurse	0	0	N/A	0.0

<sup>1</sup> This is equivalent to 21% of the 24 practices within the board.

<sup>2</sup> WTE = (no. of sessions)/9 for GPs or (no. of hrs)/37 for other staff groups.

N/A - not applicable

**Practices employing sessional GPs**

2 (8%) practices within this Board provided at least some response to the question “Does your practice employ sessional GPs, excluding salaried GPs?”

2 (8%) practices within this Board responded “yes” they did employ sessional GPs.

The number of sessions worked by sessional GPs at these responding practices between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2007 was recorded as 370.

Many practices stated sick leave and maternity cover as reasons for higher than normal use of sessional GPs, so this number may be inflated and would be unpredictable to apply to future years usage.

The numbers recorded on usage of sessional GPs are based on a very low response to this question. The practices responding may or may not be representative of the whole board and therefore great care should be taken if using these numbers as they may give a false picture of usage throughout the whole board.

## Appendix A : Tables showing the numbers related to the charts in Section 2

**Table 2.1**  
**Practice staff by age group**

CHP Staff group	Number					Percentage				
	16-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	All ages	16-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	
<b>Borders CHP</b>										
GP	37	23	10	0	70	52.9%	32.9%	14.3%	0.0%	
Practice management	4	7	8	0	19	21.1%	36.8%	42.1%	0.0%	
Practice Nursing	12	18	3	0	33	36.4%	54.5%	9.1%	0.0%	
Admin/Clerical	47	39	15	0	101	46.5%	38.6%	14.9%	0.0%	
Other practice staff	2	2	2	1	7	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	14.3%	
All Staff groups	102	89	38	1	230	44.3%	38.7%	16.5%	0.4%	

**Table 2.2**  
**Practice staff by Gender**

CHP Staff group	Number		Percentage	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Borders CHP</b>				
GP	34	36	48.6%	51.4%
Practice management	6	13	31.6%	68.4%
Practice Nursing	1	32	3.0%	97.0%
Admin/Clerical	1	100	1.0%	99.0%
Other practice staff	0	7	0.0%	100.0%
All Staff groups	42	188	18.3%	81.7%

**Table 2.3**  
**Practice staff by full-time/part-time status**

CHP Staff group	Number			Percentage		
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	
<b>Borders CHP</b>						
GP		34	36	70	48.6%	51.4%
Practice management		10	9	19	52.6%	47.4%
Practice Nursing		2	31	33	6.1%	93.9%
Admin/Clerical		21	80	101	20.8%	79.2%
Other practice staff		0	7	7	0.0%	100.0%
All Staff groups		67	163	230	29.1%	70.9%



Section B - Full-time/Part-time breakdown		(Please refer to guidance notes section B)			Total Hours/Sessions worked per week	
Staff Group	Occupation	Full-time	Part-time	TOTAL	Hours	Sessions
GPs	Performer (Partner)			0		
	Performer salaried			0		
	Performer retaineed			0		
	Performer registrar			0		
	Vacancies			0		
Practice Management	Practice Manager			0		
	Vacancies			0		
Practice Nursing	Registered Practice Nurse			0		
	Health Care/Primary Care Assistants			0		
	Vacancies			0		
	General Clerical Staff			0		
Admin/Clerical	Vacancies			0		
	Phlebotomist			0		
Other	Allied Health Professional			0		
	Counsellor			0		
	Other			0		
	Vacancies			0		

**Section C - Retirals** (Please refer to guidance notes section C)

Does the practice have any staff due to retire in the next 5 years? Please select "Yes" or "No" in the box (or, if filling in a printed form, circle your response here)

Please select

If yes, please enter the numbers and total hours/sessions worked per week for each staff group

Staff Group	No of staff	No of hours	No of sessions
GP			
Practice Manager			
Practice Nurse			
Admin/Clerical			
Other			

Please select

If your practice has indicated one or more GP retirals do you intend to replace them?  
Select "Yes", "No" or "Not applicable" in the box

If yes, how do you intend to replace them? (If you are unsure, please answer to the best of your current knowledge)

Staff Group	No of staff	No of hours	No of sessions
Another GP			
Nurse			

**Section D - Sessional GPs** (Please refer to guidance notes section D)

Please select

Does your practice employ sessional GPs? (exclude salaried GPs)  
Select "Yes" or "No" in the box

If yes, please enter the total number of sessions worked in the past year here

**Section E - Additional Information**

Please enter any relevant supporting information here
