

NHS Scotland
National Primary Care Workforce
Planning Survey 2007

Results for NHS Highland

Final version, 7th March 2008

nGMS OD/HR workforce planning subgroup

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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.

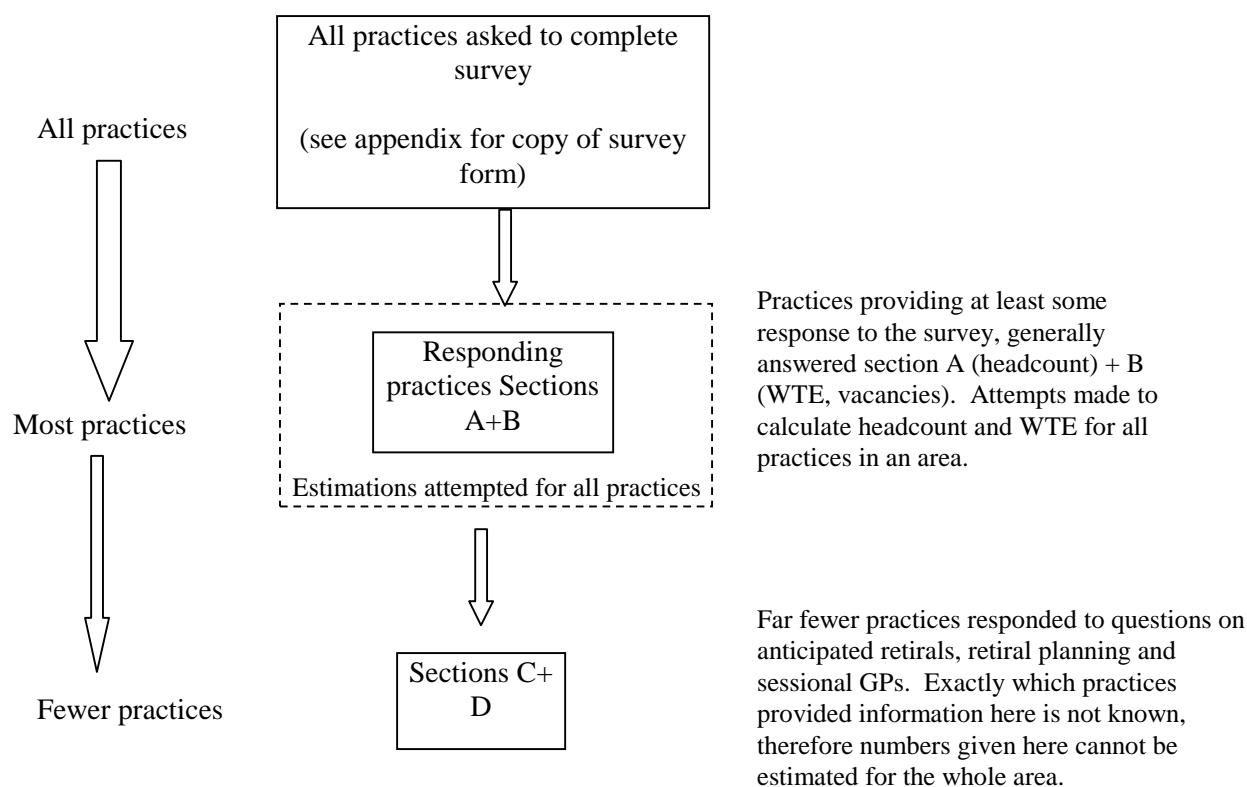
Survey content, process and responses

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.

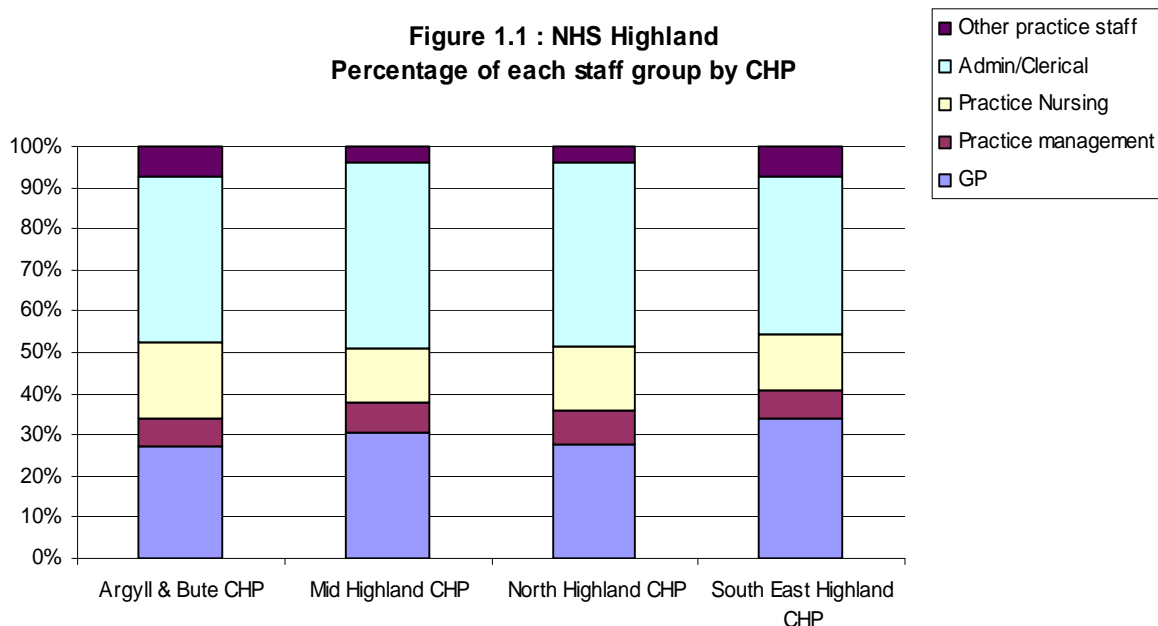
Table 1.1 Response Rates

Area	No. of practices asked to participate	No. of practices included in submission	Responses from % of practices	Responses from % of population
Argyll & Bute	34	11	32%	37%
Mid Highland	34	16	47%	54%
North Highland	17	9	53%	55%
South East Highland	18	11	61%	52%
NHS Highland	103	47	46%	49%

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. The apportionment is similar across each CHP.

NHS Highland 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). 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.

Table 1.2 Workforce summary of the Board

Staff Group		Responses from 49% of the board population		Estimated for the total board population	
		Headcount	WTE¹	Headcount²	WTE^{1,2}
GPs	Total	207	155.6	425	320
	Performer (Partner)	155	120.2	320	245
	Performer salaried	29	18.3	-	-
	Performer retaineer	8	2.3	-	-
	Performer registrar	15	14.8	-	-
Practice Management	Practice Manager	48	36.8	100	75
Practice Nursing	Registered Practice Nurse	82	46.0	170	95
	Health Care/Primary Care Assistants	18	8.0	-	-
Admin/Clerical	General Clerical Staff	286	193.8	585	400
Other	Phlebotomist	8	1.0	-	-
	Allied Health Professional	5	1.2	-	-
	Counsellor	5	2.2	-	-
	Other	19	7.4	-	-

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.

Figures 2.1 show the percentage of staff belonging to each age group for each staff group. This is shown separately for each CHP.

Figure 2.1.1 : Argyll & Bute CHP
Percentage of staff within each age group by staff group

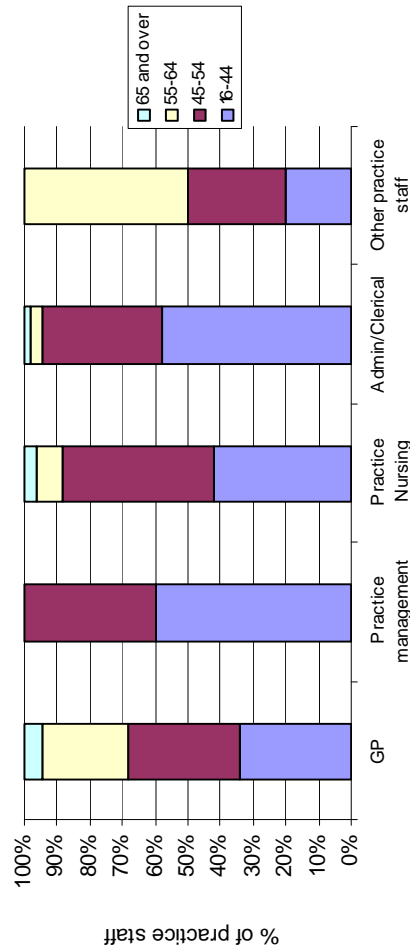


Figure 2.1.2 : Mid Highland CHP
Percentage of staff within each age group by staff group

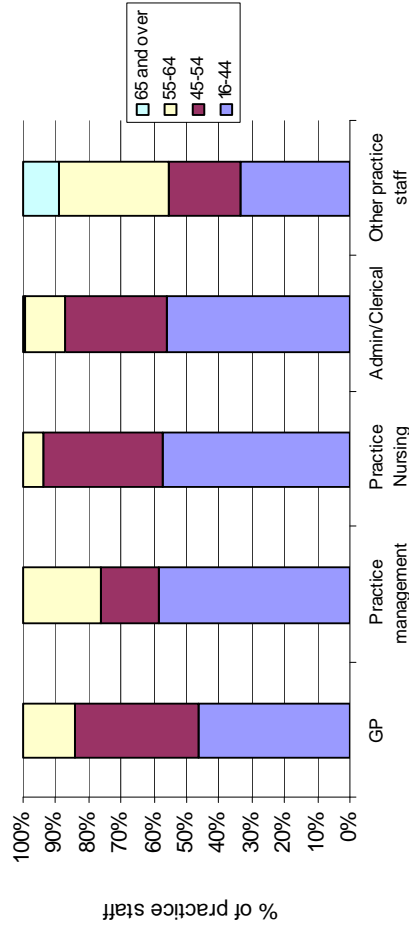


Figure 2.1.3 : North Highland CHP
Percentage of staff within each age group by staff group

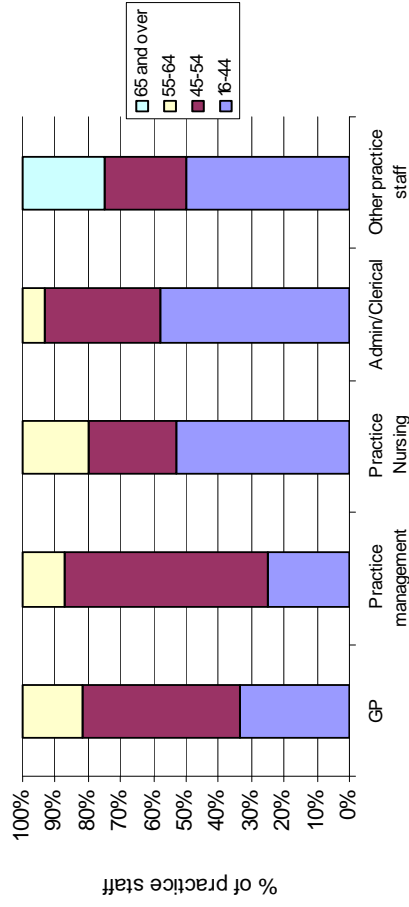
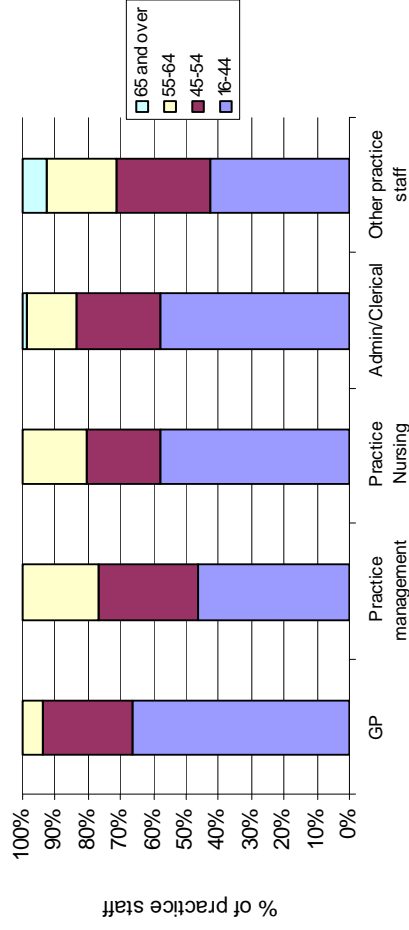


Figure 2.1.4 : South East Highland CHP
Percentage of staff within each age group by staff group



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

With the exception of South East Highland CHP, GPs and Practice managers are predominantly employed as full time staff. Practice nursing, admin & clerical and other practice staff are more likely to be employed as part-time.

Figure 2.2.1 : Argyll & Bute CHP

Percentage of full-time/part-time staff by staff group

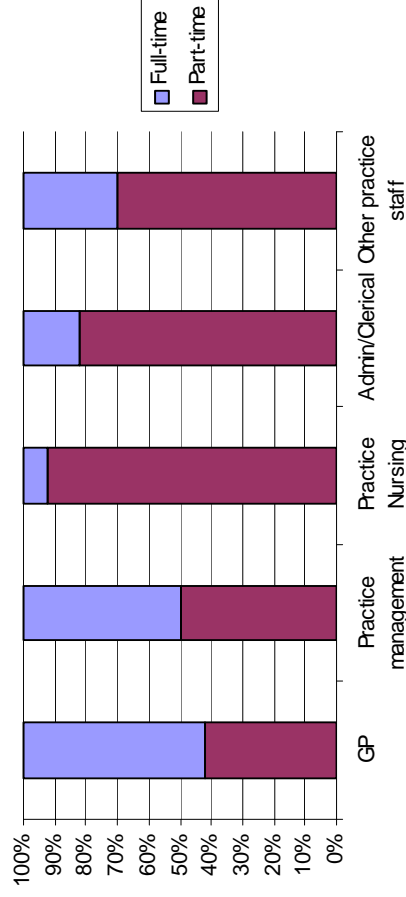


Figure 2.2.2 : Mid Highland CHP

Percentage of full-time/part-time staff by staff group

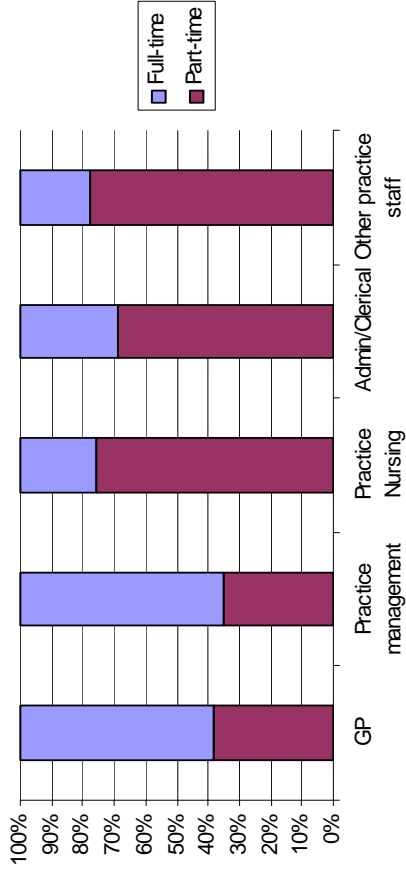


Figure 2.2.3 : North Highland CHP
Percentage of full-time/part-time staff by staff group

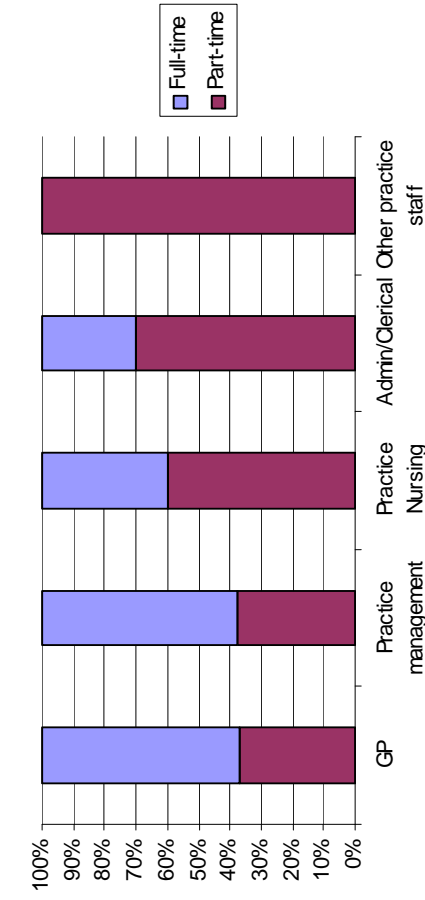
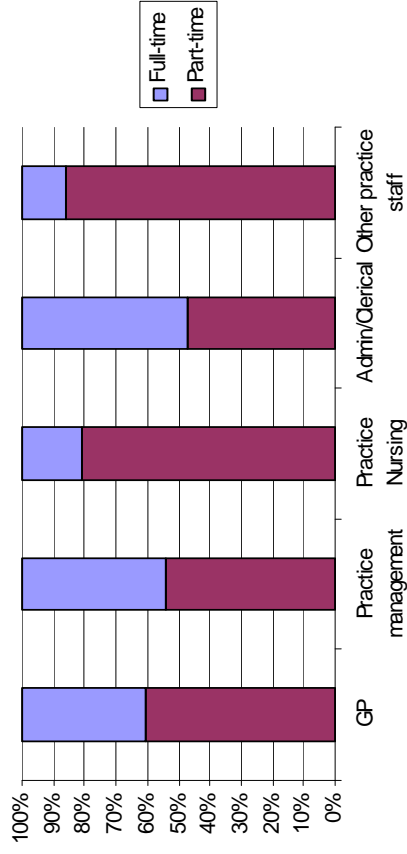


Figure 2.2.4 : South East Highland CHP
Percentage of full-time/part-time staff by staff group



Figures 2.3 show the percentage of staff of each gender within each staff group, shown separately for each CHP.

GPs have a relatively even gender split in many areas but all other staff groups are predominantly female.

Figure 2.3.1 : Argyll & Bute CHP

Percentage of male and female staff by staff group

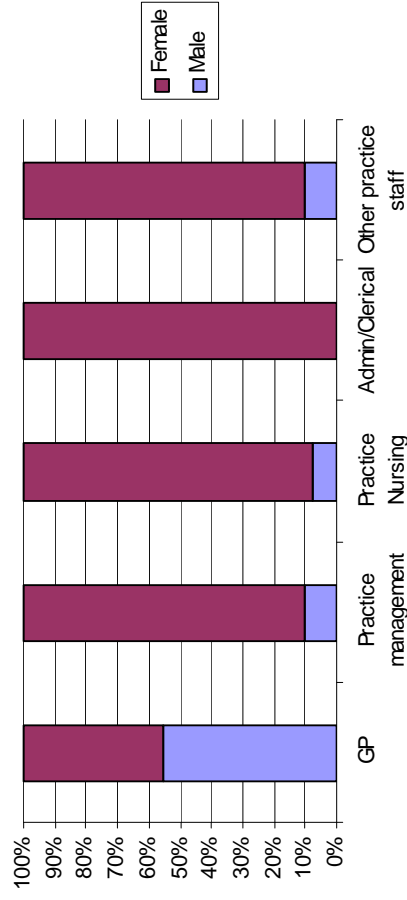


Figure 2.3.2 : Mid Highland CHP

Percentage of male and female staff by staff group

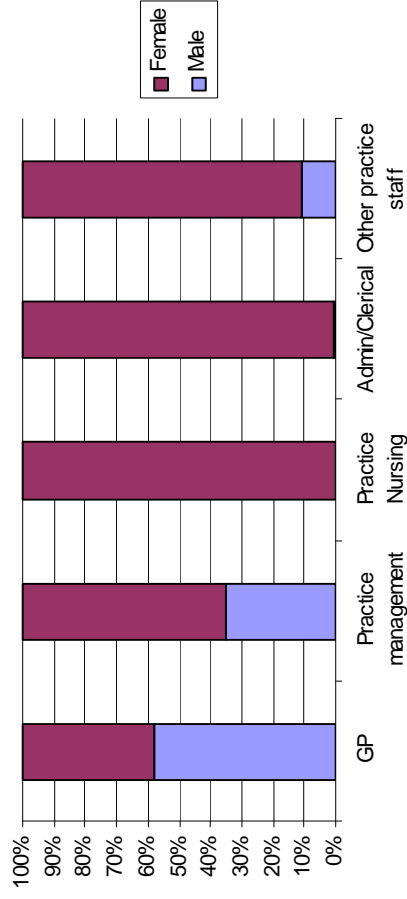


Figure 2.3.3 : North Highland CHP
Percentage of male and female staff by staff group

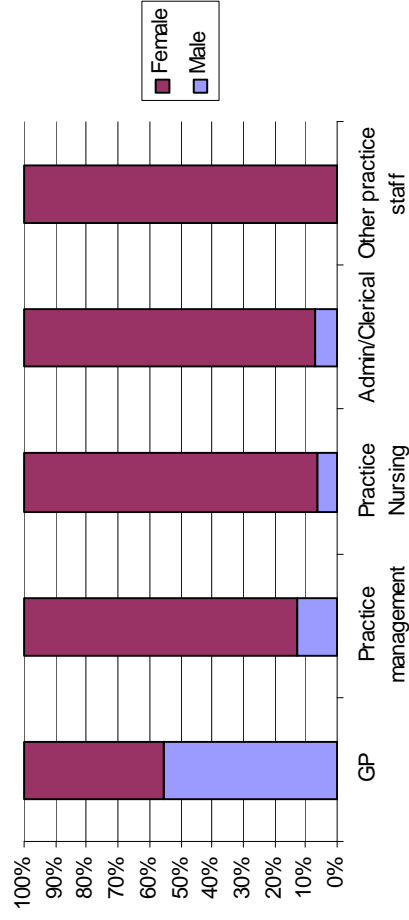
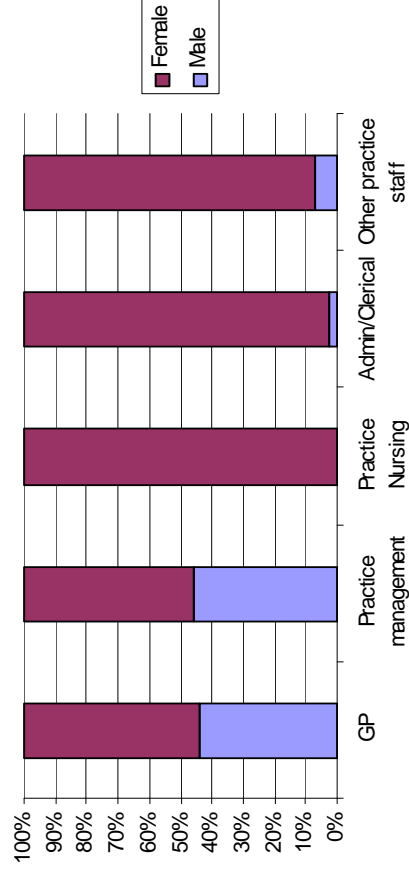


Figure 2.3.4 : South East Highland CHP
Percentage of male and female staff by staff group



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.

Table 3.1 : Reported Vacancies

Up to 46% of practices responded, relating to up to 49% of the Boards population

Staff group	Headcount	WTE¹
GP	2	1.6
Practice Manager	1	0.9
Practice Nurse	2	1.1
Admin/Clerical	6	3.7
Other	1	0.1

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 Highland

21 (20%) practices within the board responded to this particular question

19 (18%) practices responded “yes” that they have staff due to retire in next 5 years

Staff Group	Headcount	No of hours	No of sessions	WTE	% staff due to retire¹	% staff at retiral age²
GP	19	N/A	149	16.6	9%	7%
Practice Manager	6	206	N/A	5.6	13%	10%
Practice Nurse	8	196.5	N/A	5.3	8%	13%
Admin/Clerical	18	477.38	N/A	12.9	6%	11%
Other	4	63.5	N/A	1.7	11%	38%

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 and practice managers known to be retiring in the next 5 years is higher than the expected percentage, based on the standard retiral age. For all other staff, the proportion of known retirals is less than the proportion of 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 for latest contact information.

Table 3.2.2 shows that, although based on partial data, not all GPs planning to retire in the next 5 years are to be directly replaced by another GP. Some 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

Information¹ from 12 practices planning to replace GPs with another GP or a nurse

Staff Group	Headcount	Number of Hours	Number of Sessions	WTE²
Another GP	17	N/A	128	14.2
Nurse	2	51.5	N/A	1.4

¹ This is equivalent to 12% of the 103 practices within the board.

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

N/A - not applicable

Practices employing sessional GPs

14 (14%) practices within this Board provided at least some response to the question “Does your practice employ sessional GPs, excluding salaried GPs?”

12 (12%) practices within this Board responded “yes” they did employ sessional GPs.

The number of sessions worked by sessional GPs at these responding practices between 1st October 2006 and 30th September 2007 was recorded as 1402. The total number of sessions is equivalent to approximately 3 GPs working full-time (assumed to be 9 sessions per week for 52 weeks of a year).

Some 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
Argyll & Bute CHP									
GP	13	13	10	2	38	34.2%	34.2%	26.3%	5.3%
Practice management	6	4	0	0	10	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Practice Nursing	11	12	2	1	26	42.3%	46.2%	7.7%	3.8%
Admin/Clerical	33	21	2	1	57	57.9%	36.8%	3.5%	1.8%
Other practice staff	2	3	5	0	10	20.0%	30.0%	50.0%	0.0%
All Staff groups	65	53	19	4	141	46.1%	37.6%	13.5%	2.8%
Mid Highland CHP									
GP	35	29	12	0	76	46.1%	38.2%	15.8%	0.0%
Practice management	10	3	4	0	17	58.8%	17.6%	23.5%	0.0%
Practice Nursing	19	12	2	0	33	57.6%	36.4%	6.1%	0.0%
Admin/Clerical	63	35	13	1	112	56.3%	31.3%	11.6%	0.9%
Other practice staff	3	2	3	1	9	33.3%	22.2%	33.3%	11.1%
All Staff groups	130	81	34	2	247	52.6%	32.8%	13.8%	0.8%
North Highland CHP									
GP	9	13	5	0	27	33.3%	48.1%	18.5%	0.0%
Practice management	2	5	1	0	8	25.0%	62.5%	12.5%	0.0%
Practice Nursing	8	4	3	0	15	53.3%	26.7%	20.0%	0.0%
Admin/Clerical	25	15	3	0	43	58.1%	34.9%	7.0%	0.0%
Other practice staff	2	1	0	1	4	50.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%
All Staff groups	46	38	12	1	97	47.4%	39.2%	12.4%	1.0%
South East Highland CHP									
GP	44	18	4	0	66	66.7%	27.3%	6.1%	0.0%
Practice management	6	4	3	0	13	46.2%	30.8%	23.1%	0.0%
Practice Nursing	15	6	5	0	26	57.7%	23.1%	19.2%	0.0%
Admin/Clerical	43	19	11	1	74	58.1%	25.7%	14.9%	1.4%
Other practice staff	6	4	3	1	14	42.9%	28.6%	21.4%	7.1%
All Staff groups	114	51	26	2	193	59.1%	26.4%	13.5%	1.0%

Table 2.2
Practice staff by Gender

CHP	Staff group	Number		Percentage	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Argyll & Bute CHP					
	GP	21	17	55.3%	44.7%
	Practice management	1	9	10.0%	90.0%
	Practice Nursing	2	24	7.7%	92.3%
	Admin/Clerical	0	57	0.0%	100.0%
	Other practice staff	1	9	10.0%	90.0%
	All Staff groups	25	116	17.7%	82.3%
Mid Highland CHP					
	GP	44	32	57.9%	42.1%
	Practice management	6	11	35.3%	64.7%
	Practice Nursing	0	33	0.0%	100.0%
	Admin/Clerical	1	111	0.9%	99.1%
	Other practice staff	1	8	11.1%	88.9%
	All Staff groups	52	195	21.1%	78.9%
North Highland CHP					
	GP	15	12	55.6%	44.4%
	Practice management	1	7	12.5%	87.5%
	Practice Nursing	1	14	6.7%	93.3%
	Admin/Clerical	3	40	7.0%	93.0%
	Other practice staff	0	4	0.0%	100.0%
	All Staff groups	20	77	20.6%	79.4%
South East Highland CHP					
	GP	29	37	43.9%	56.1%
	Practice management	6	7	46.2%	53.8%
	Practice Nursing	0	26	0.0%	100.0%
	Admin/Clerical	2	72	2.7%	97.3%
	Other practice staff	1	13	7.1%	92.9%
	All Staff groups	38	155	19.7%	80.3%

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
Argyll & Bute CHP						
	GP	22	16	38	57.9%	42.1%
	Practice management	5	5	10	50.0%	50.0%
	Practice Nursing	2	24	26	7.7%	92.3%
	Admin/Clerical	10	47	57	17.5%	82.5%
	Other practice staff	3	7	10	30.0%	70.0%
	All Staff groups	42	99	141	29.8%	70.2%
Mid Highland CHP						
	GP	47	29	76	61.8%	38.2%
	Practice management	11	6	17	64.7%	35.3%
	Practice Nursing	8	25	33	24.2%	75.8%
	Admin/Clerical	35	77	112	31.3%	68.8%
	Other practice staff	2	7	9	22.2%	77.8%
	All Staff groups	103	144	247	41.7%	58.3%
North Highland CHP						
	GP	17	10	27	63.0%	37.0%
	Practice management	5	3	8	62.5%	37.5%
	Practice Nursing	6	9	15	40.0%	60.0%
	Admin/Clerical	13	30	43	30.2%	69.8%
	Other practice staff	0	4	4	0.0%	100.0%
	All Staff groups	41	56	97	42.3%	57.7%
South East Highland CHP						
	GP	26	40	66	39.4%	60.6%
	Practice management	6	7	13	46.2%	53.8%
	Practice Nursing	5	21	26	19.2%	80.8%
	Admin/Clerical	39	35	74	52.7%	47.3%
	Other practice staff	2	12	14	14.3%	85.7%
	All Staff groups	78	115	193	40.4%	59.6%

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
