

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

Results for Scotland

Final version, 28th 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.

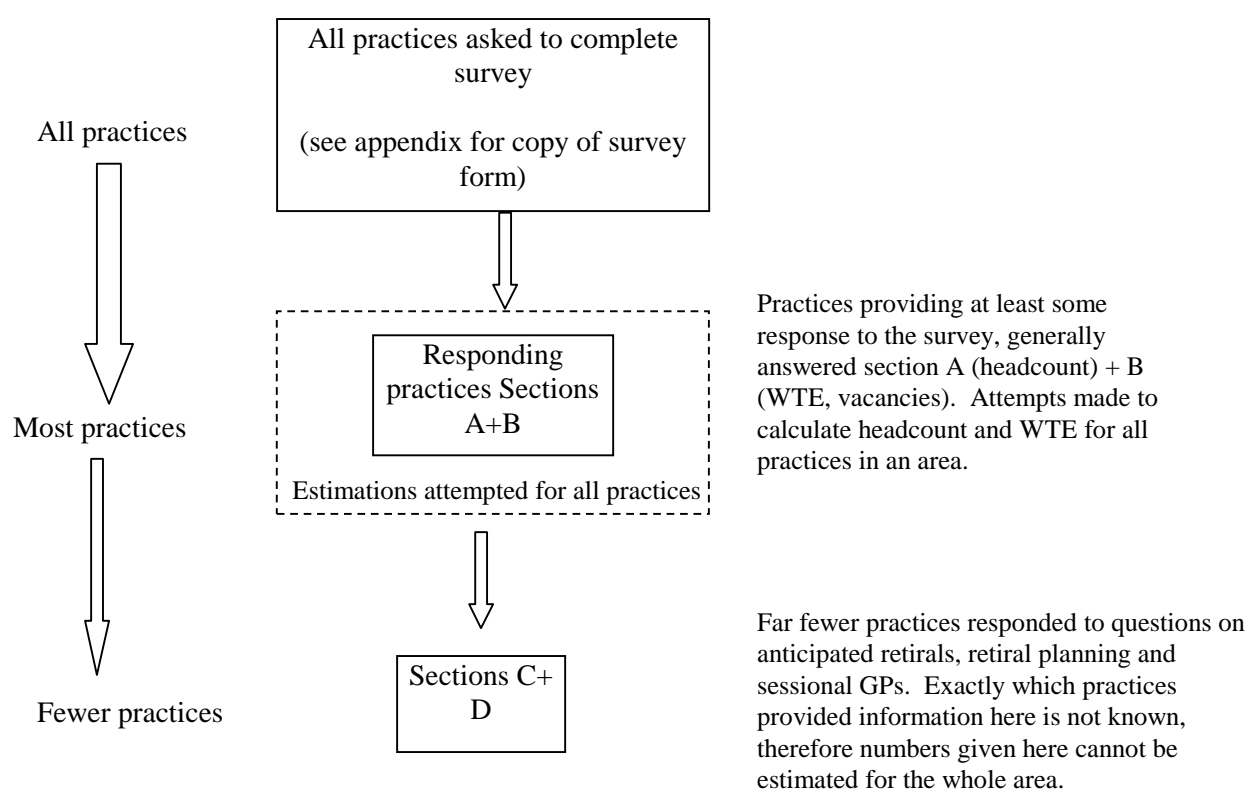
Survey content, process and responses

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. Scotland). The questions in the survey providing these results were the best recorded, but the response rate does vary between areas within the region. The region 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 Region should be fairly representative of Scotland.

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 Region and Scotland 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.

This Scotland report is based upon data from all NHS Board areas, however NHS Grampian practices have been treated as non-responders for the purposes of this report. Unfortunately, whilst Grampian LMC did receive survey submissions from 33 practices (a response rate of approximately 40%) and compiled their own survey report, the data were not returned to ISD Scotland in a form that allowed them to be included in regional or national reporting. In particular, no indication was provided of the total size of the population served by the responding practices, so inclusion in any estimated figures was not possible. Furthermore, no data were returned for the section on full time/part time status of staff / vacancies. After several attempts by ISD, members of the primary care workforce survey subgroup, and NHS Grampian to obtain a more useable return for Grampian practices, ultimately this report has had to be produced treating all practices in Grampian as a non-return. The absence of Grampian data will have an effect on the robustness of some estimates in this report.

It should be noted that NHS Grampian has been excluded totally from the separate North region report as including it but treating all practices within it as non-responders would have had more impact on the north region results. For this reason, please note the difference in response rates for North region/North region excluding Grampian.

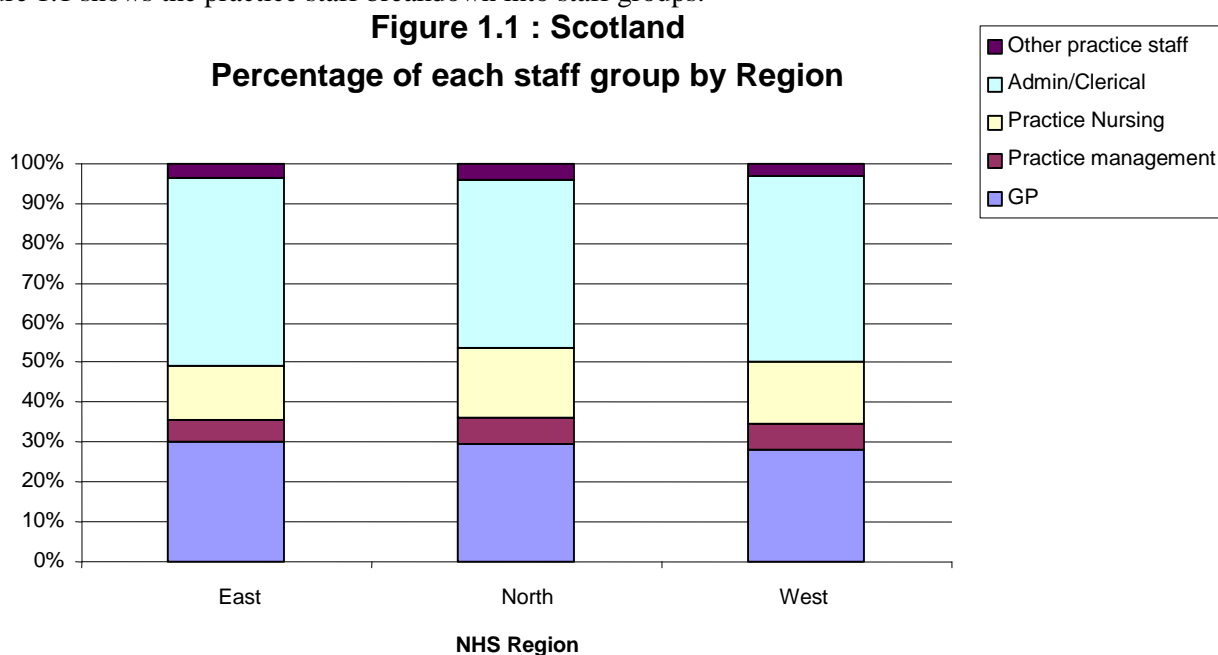
Table 1.1 : Response rates

Area	No of practices asked to participate	No of practices included in submission	Practice Response rate	Responses from % of the population
East region	206	140	68%	70%
North region ¹	293	122	42%	36%
West region	505	375	74%	74%
Scotland	1004	637	63%	64%

1. This will differ from the results in the North region report as NHS Grampian has been excluded from the region report, but is included as a non-responder in the Scotland report.

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 region.

NHS Scotland 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 region. 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 (Scotland) = $\frac{\text{headcount recorded by survey responses}}{\text{practice population response rate}}$

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 region area as a whole.

Table 1.2: Workforce summary of Scotland

Staff Group		Responses from 64% of the population		Estimated for the total population	
		Headcount	WTE¹	Headcount	WTE¹
GPs	Total	2956	2209.7	4650	3475
	Performer (Partner)	2410	1854.7	3790	2920
	Performer salaried	248	153.6	-	-
	Performer retaine	111	38.8	175	60
	Performer registrar	187	162.7	295	255
Practice Management	Practice Manager	641	528.3	1010	830
Practice Nursing	Registered Practice Nurse	1290	799.7	2030	1260
	Health Care/Primary Care Assistants	287	124.9	450	195
Admin/Clerical	General Clerical Staff	4727	3170.3	7435	4985
Other	Phlebotomist	145	35.6	230	55
	Allied Health Professional	24	6.7	40	-
	Counsellor	29	6.9	45	-
	Other	143	66.4	225	105

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 Region. See table 1.1 for the population response rates. These responses may or may not be representative of the complete Region. The numbers used in creating all charts in section 2 below are included as tables in the appendix.

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

Figure 2.1.1 : East Region
Percentage of staff within each age group by staff group

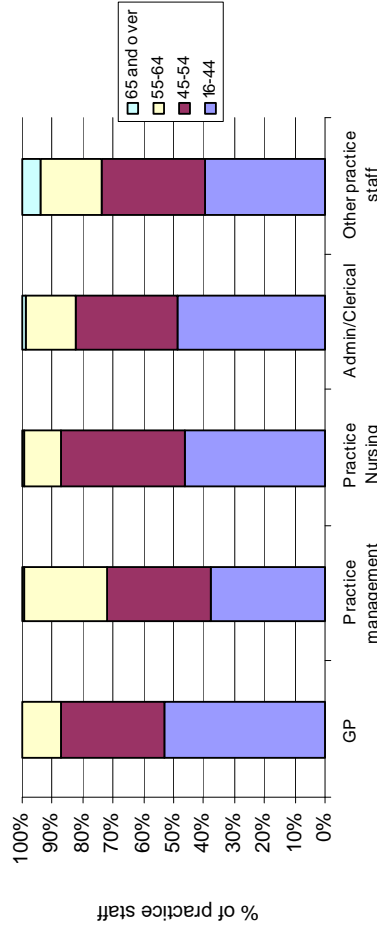


Figure 2.1.2 : North Region
Percentage of staff within each age group by staff group

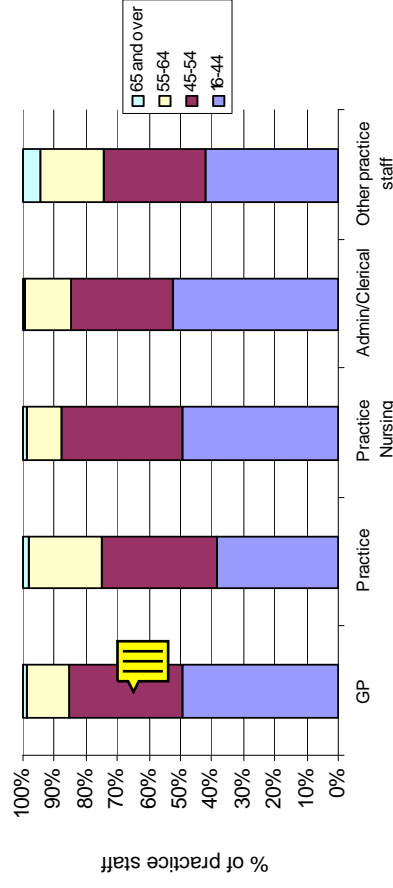
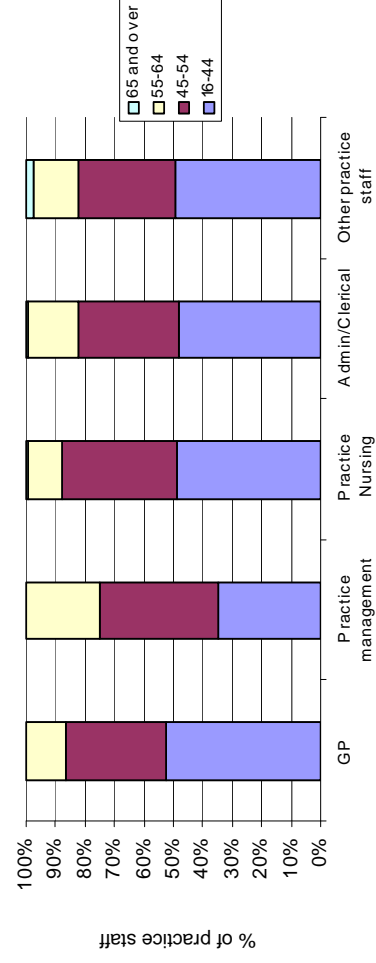


Figure 2.1.3 : West Region
Percentage of staff within each age group by staff group



Figures 2.2 show the percentage of full-time and part-time staff within each staff group for each Region. Note that these particular figures do not differentiate between different extents of part time working, e.g. 80% contracts versus half time contracts. GPs and Practice managers are predominantly employed as full time staff, with the exception of GP' s in the East region. Practice nursing, admin & clerical and other practice staff are more likely to be employed as part-time.

Figure 2.2.1 : East Region
Percentage of full-time/part-time staff by staff group

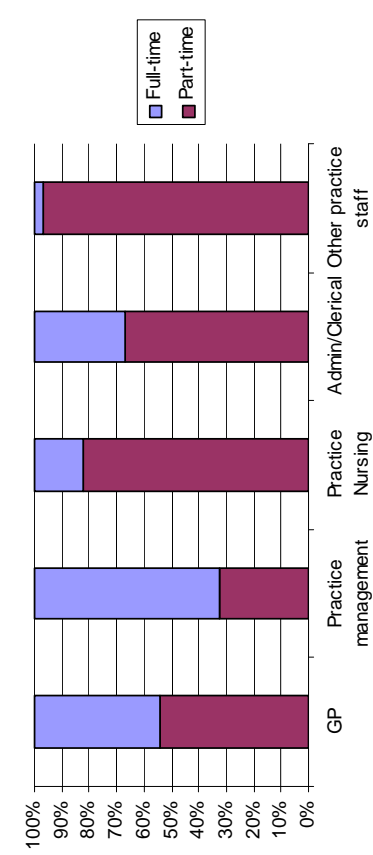


Figure 2.2.2 : North Region
Percentage of full-time/part-time staff by staff group

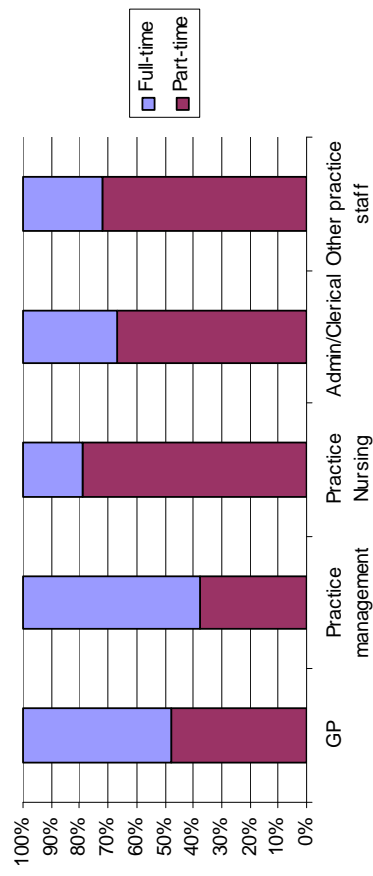
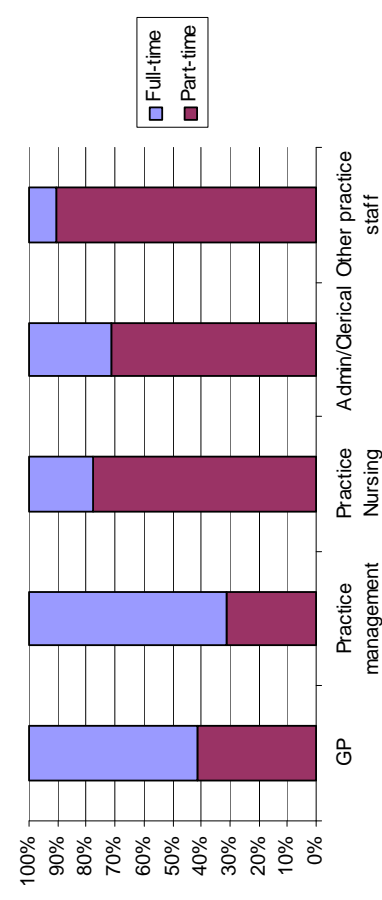


Figure 2.2.3 : West Region
Percentage of full-time/part-time staff by staff group



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

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

Figure 2.3.1 : East Region
Percentage of male and female staff by staff group

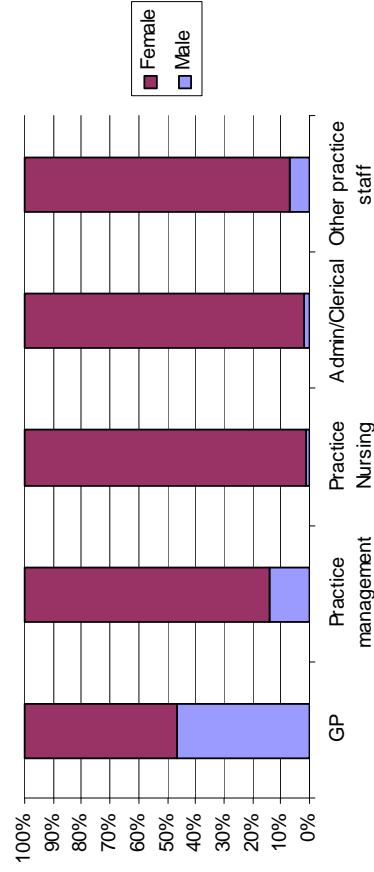


Figure 2.3.2 : North Region
Percentage of male and female staff by staff group

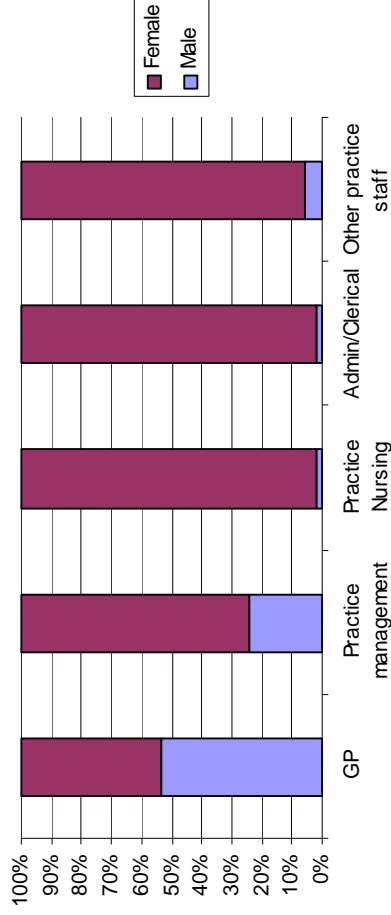
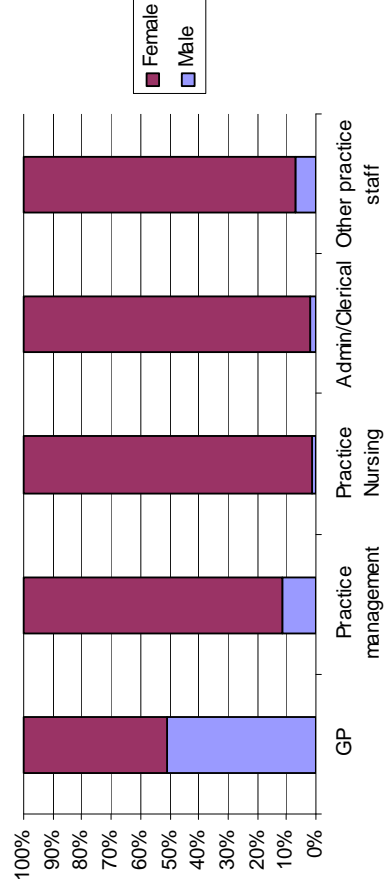


Figure 2.3.3 : West Region
Percentage of male and female staff by staff group



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 region that responded.

Table 3.1 : Reported Vacancies

Scotland

Up to 63% of practices responded, relating to up to 64% of the population

Staff group	Headcount	WTE ¹
GP	18	8.7
Practice Manager	2	1.8
Practice Nurse	11	5.5
Admin/Clerical	36	19.9
Other	6	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 Scotland, excluding Grampian). 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

Scotland

502 (50%) practices within Scotland responded to this particular question

424 (42%) 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	256	N/A	1898.16	210.9	9%	6%
Practice Manager	112	3720.0	N/A	100.5	17%	23%
Practice Nurse	129	2920.8	N/A	78.9	8%	12%
Admin/Clerical	522	13202.9	N/A	356.8	11%	17%
Other	32	471.3	N/A	12.7	9%	21%

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. For all other staff, the proportion of known retirals is less than the proportion of expected. GPs seem to be more likely to retire early and all other practice staff groups are less likely to retire early.

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 GPs due to retire in next 5 years

Scotland

Information¹ from 194 practices planning to replace GPs with another GP or a nurse

Staff Group	Headcount	Number of Hours	Number of Sessions	WTE²
Another GP	212	N/A	1703.16	189.2
Nurse	45	1096.5	N/A	29.6

¹ This is equivalent to 19% of the 1004 practices within Scotland.

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

308 (31%) practices within Scotland provided at least some response to the question “Does your practice employ sessional GPs, excluding salaried GPs?”

166 (17%) practices within Scotland 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 21462. The total number of sessions is equivalent to approximately 46 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 area and therefore great care should be taken if using these numbers as they may give a false picture of usage throughout the whole area.

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

**Table 2.1
Practice staff by age group**

Region	Staff group	Number					Percentage				
		16-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	All ages	16-44	45-54	55-64	65 and over	
East Region											
	GP	424	278	99	2	803	52.8%	34.6%	12.3%	0.2%	
	Practice management	56	50	40	1	147	38.1%	34.0%	27.2%	0.7%	
	Practice Nursing	169	150	45	2	366	46.2%	41.0%	12.3%	0.5%	
	Admin/Clerical	615	426	213	13	1267	48.5%	33.6%	16.8%	1.0%	
	Other practice staff	38	33	19	6	96	39.6%	34.4%	19.8%	6.3%	
	All Staff groups	1302	937	416	24	2679	48.6%	35.0%	15.5%	0.9%	
North Region (excluding NHS Grampian)											
	GP	267	197	74	5	543	49.2%	36.3%	13.6%	0.9%	
	Practice management	45	43	27	2	117	38.5%	36.8%	23.1%	1.7%	
	Practice Nursing	158	123	37	3	321	49.2%	38.3%	11.5%	0.9%	
	Admin/Clerical	404	246	110	6	766	52.7%	32.1%	14.4%	0.8%	
	Other practice staff	30	23	14	4	71	42.3%	32.4%	19.7%	5.6%	
	All Staff groups	904	632	262	20	1818	49.7%	34.8%	14.4%	1.1%	
West Region											
	GP	840	555	213	2	1610	52.2%	34.5%	13.2%	0.1%	
	Practice management	130	152	94	1	377	34.5%	40.3%	24.9%	0.3%	
	Practice Nursing	435	344	106	5	890	48.9%	38.7%	11.9%	0.6%	
	Admin/Clerical	1301	913	462	18	2694	48.3%	33.9%	17.1%	0.7%	
	Other practice staff	86	57	27	4	174	49.4%	32.8%	15.5%	2.3%	
	All Staff groups	2792	2021	902	30	5745	48.6%	35.2%	15.7%	0.5%	

Table 2.2
Practice staff by Gender

Region	Staff group	Number		Percentage	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
East Region					
	GP	375	428	46.7%	53.3%
	Practice management	21	126	14.3%	85.7%
	Practice Nursing	5	361	1.4%	98.6%
	Admin/Clerical	27	1240	2.1%	97.9%
	Other practice staff	7	89	7.3%	92.7%
	All Staff groups	435	2244	16.2%	83.8%
North Region (excluding NHS Grampian)					
	GP	289	254	53.2%	46.8%
	Practice management	28	89	23.9%	76.1%
	Practice Nursing	7	314	2.2%	97.8%
	Admin/Clerical	16	750	2.1%	97.9%
	Other practice staff	4	67	5.6%	94.4%
	All Staff groups	344	1474	18.9%	81.1%
West Region					
	GP	823	787	51.1%	48.9%
	Practice management	43	334	11.4%	88.6%
	Practice Nursing	11	879	1.2%	98.8%
	Admin/Clerical	49	2645	1.8%	98.2%
	Other practice staff	12	162	6.9%	93.1%
	All Staff groups	938	4807	16.3%	83.7%

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

Region	Staff group	Number			Percentage	
		Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time
East Region						
	GP	366	437	803	45.6%	54.4%
	Practice management	99	48	147	67.3%	32.7%
	Practice Nursing	66	300	366	18.0%	82.0%
	Admin/Clerical	421	846	1267	33.2%	66.8%
	Other practice staff	3	93	96	3.1%	96.9%
	All Staff groups	955	1724	2679	35.6%	64.4%
North Region (excluding NHS Grampian)						
	GP	285	258	543	52.5%	47.5%
	Practice management	73	44	117	62.4%	37.6%
	Practice Nursing	68	253	321	21.2%	78.8%
	Admin/Clerical	253	513	766	33.0%	67.0%
	Other practice staff	20	51	71	28.2%	71.8%
	All Staff groups	699	1119	1818	38.4%	61.6%
West Region						
	GP	944	666	1610	58.6%	41.4%
	Practice management	259	118	377	68.7%	31.3%
	Practice Nursing	200	690	890	22.5%	77.5%
	Admin/Clerical	769	1925	2694	28.5%	71.5%
	Other practice staff	17	157	174	9.8%	90.2%
	All Staff groups	2189	3556	5745	38.1%	61.9%

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 retirements 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
