

# **The Health and Personal Social Services Workforce**

## **Brief Overview**

The Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS) workforce has changed substantially over the last decade and this Statistical Bulletin is part of the Department's continuing drive to improve the information that is available on its most valuable asset, its people. In the financial year 2001-2002 expenditure on Trust and HSS Board employees exceeded £1,000 million. The analysis presented in this Bulletin, the first in a planned series of annual reports, represents the make-up of the workforce at September 2001.

In September 2001 the HPSS employed around 60,000 people (approximately 42,000 Whole Time Equivalent) accounting for 8.4% of all in employment in Northern Ireland. HPSS staff comprise by far the largest and most complex workforce in Northern Ireland. The largest group, representing around a third of the HPSS workforce, is nursing, midwifery and health visiting. The smallest group, comprising 1% of the workforce, is works and general maintenance staff. Around 80% of the HPSS workforce is female compared to 44% of those in employment in Northern Ireland.

The statistical analysis presented in this Bulletin excludes bank staff and home help staff. Bank staff maintain service delivery by covering staffing shortfalls and fluctuating workloads and, as a consequence, their input to the service is difficult to measure. Home help staff are predominately part-time with varying working patterns, and therefore not all home help staff are recorded on the personnel systems from which the data are taken (although this practice varies for different organisations).

Between 1990 and 2002, the HPSS workforce in Northern Ireland has gone through significant changes. Overall, the number of people employed is approximately the same in 2002 as it was in 1990 but within this, certain groups have seen substantial changes. The total Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) workforce gradually dropped from 42,712 in 1990 to a low of 39,177 in 1998. After 1998, it gradually increased to its current level. Over the period, the medical and dental, unqualified nursing and ambulance groups

increased by a third. The professional and technical group, and the administration and clerical group increased by 45% and 39% respectively while the ancillary and general group decreased by half. The qualified nursing, midwifery and health visitor group decreased by 11% over the period.

In order to ensure that the right numbers of people with the right skills are available to work in the HPSS, the Department initiated a series of workforce planning reviews last year covering all the main professional groups. The type of information contained in this Bulletin is essential for effective workforce planning. Consequently, to ensure that the Department's information is accurate, high data quality standards need to be achieved and maintained by all HPSS organisations. The analyses presented in this Bulletin are based on data that has been extracted from the Human Resource Management Systems that are maintained by various HPSS organisations.

Enquiries about the data or requests for additional copies of this publication should be referred to:

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The tables are also available on the web at [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/iau](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/iau) and follow the links to the publications section.

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