

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

## **Brief Overview**

This is the fourth bulletin in a series of annual reports analysing the make-up of the Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS) in Northern Ireland.

The aim of this publication is to provide a specific breakdown of HPSS workforce data and key summary points. The bulletin is issued to Parliament, MLAs, HPSS Organisations and colleagues within the Department. The information contained in this bulletin is used for a number of purposes, including to inform policy makers, supply information to outside Departments and Agencies and enable 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 Departmental workforce planning reviews, which are currently ongoing, are essential in order to ensure that the correct numbers of people with the appropriate skills are available to work in the HPSS.

In September 2004 the HPSS employed just over 68,000 people either full-time or part-time, accounting for 9.5% of all in employment in Northern Ireland<sup>i</sup>. In the financial year 2003 – 2004, expenditure on Trust and HSS Board employees exceeded £1.2 billion<sup>ii</sup>

HPSS staff comprise by far the largest and most complex workforce in Northern Ireland. The largest group, representing over a third of the HPSS workforce, is Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting. The smallest group is Works and Maintenance, which represents 1% of the total workforce. Females make up 79% of the HPSS workforce compared to 45% of those in employment in Northern Ireland<sup>i</sup>.

The HPSS workforce in Northern Ireland has changed substantially between 1995 and 2004. The overall headcount figure has increased by 21.7%. The total Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) workforce (excluding bank staff and home helps) gradually dropped from 39,821 in 1995 to a low of 38,823 in 1997. It then gradually increased to its current level of 48,432. Over the total period, the Medical and Dental group increased by 46% (WTE) with a similar rise of 49% being seen in the Professional and Technical group. The Social Services and Administration and Clerical groups increased by 40% and 34% respectively. There were decreases of 28% in the Works and Maintenance group and 6% in the Ancillary and General group. Within Nursing, Qualified and Unqualified Nursing increased by 11% and 20% respectively.

In addition to staff in post, this publication also details staff vacancies by Terms and Conditions group for each HPSS organisation. Information for this survey was collated by means of a survey issued to all HPSS organisations and is a snap shot of vacancies at 30 June 2004.

The analyses presented in this Bulletin are based on data that have been extracted from the Human Resource Management Systems that are maintained by various HPSS organisations. Bank and home help staff have necessarily been excluded. 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). It must be noted that any individual can contribute to the HPSS workforce on more than one aspect or even within more than one Trust. These individuals will, of course, have multiple records. For the sake of total employee headcount only, such multiples are removed. For all other breakdowns and WTEs these records are retained.

All enquiries should be referred to: Workforce Section  
Project Support Analysis Branch  
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety  
Room 2 Annex 2  
Castle Buildings  
Stormont  
Belfast, BT4 3SQ  
Telephone: 028 90 522509 or 028 90 522342  
E-Mail: [jacqueline.liddicoat@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:jacqueline.liddicoat@dhsspsni.gov.uk)  
[deirdre.murphy@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:deirdre.murphy@dhsspsni.gov.uk)

The publication is available at [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/stats&research/workforcecen2004/html](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/stats&research/workforcecen2004/html)

<sup>i</sup> Source: N.I. Labour Force Survey Autumn 2004

<sup>ii</sup> Source: N.I. Quarterly Cost Analysis March 2004