



Nurses' employment and morale

Wales 2009

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Employment Research Ltd

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Employment Research Ltd

Employment Research Ltd, an independent research consultancy, was formed in 1994. The company undertakes a range of research and evaluation, and since 2001 has undertaken the annual RCN Employment Survey, the RCN *Working Well* surveys, and several surveys of selected sub groups of the membership.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The 2009 RCN employment survey

This report describes the findings for Wales from the 22nd RCN employment survey of a sample of RCN members. This year, as in 2007, 9,000 nurses from across the UK were surveyed (including 1100 identified as living in Wales).

The RCN membership is broadly representative of the nursing workforce as a whole, thus the results of this survey of members in Wales can be taken to broadly reflect the UK and Wales nursing populations more generally.

1.2 UK context

Four years ago, in 2005, after a period of sustained workforce growth, the level of morale amongst nurses responding to the RCN employment surveys reached the highest levels witnessed since the early nineties. But the 2007 survey saw a significant shift in mood from one of positive change in 2005 to deep concerns about livelihoods and careers in 2007, although this downturn in nurses' views was less acute in Wales than in England.

The health sector and wider national economy have witnessed considerable change since the last survey. A recent NHS Confederation paper forecast a shortfall of £15bn for the NHS from 2011¹ and warned that measures taken in the past – training cuts, allowing waiting lists to grow, across the board budget cuts – were not viable options and could be counter productive.

In June 2008 the Department of Health in England published *High Quality Care for All* which 'sets out a vision for an NHS with quality at its heart'². The drive to ensure quality and minimise risk to patients is also reflected in the search for appropriate nursing metrics³, a change in policy emphasis that is reflected across all countries in the UK. Finally in September 2008, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) ratified plans to make entry to nursing degree level only by 2015, bringing England in line with Wales and Scotland.

The most recent labour market review reports that after a period of rapid growth earlier in the decade, nursing workforce numbers have stabilised, but that the aging profile continues to pose a critical challenge⁴. Scenario modelling suggests that significant growth will be required to meet future demand for nurses.

'Nurses' is used throughout the report to cover the whole nursing family who are members of the RCN including health care assistants, midwives, district nurses and health visitors.

¹ NHS Confederation (2009) *Dealing with the downturn: The greatest ever leadership challenge for the NHS?* June 2009

² Department for Health (2008) *High Quality Care for All: NHS Next Stage Review*, Department of Health. London

³ Griffiths P, Jones S, Maben J & Murrells T (2008), *State of the art metrics for nursing: a rapid appraisal*, National Nursing Research Unit at Kings College: London.

⁴ Buchan J and Seccombe I (2008) *An incomplete plan: the UK nursing labour market review, 2008* London: RCN, 2008.

1.3 The Welsh context

The period between 2007 and 2009 has been a dynamic one for health policy in Wales. There has been a continuing emphasis on shifting services from acute to the community and a new emphasis on the abolition of the internal market and ensuring consistency of health services across Wales. Perhaps most significantly October 1 2009 saw the completion of an ambitious reconfiguration of the NHS in Wales abolishing NHS Trusts and NHS local Health Boards and replacing them with seven health boards to both plan and provide services.

While it is too early to assess the impact of the reconfiguration on service performance this survey provides the most accurate information on the current views of nurses working in Wales. This report seeks to describe the employment characteristics of nurses in 2009, and identify changes in the employment behaviour and morale of the Wales nursing workforce.

1.3 Method

A postal survey of 9,000 RCN members at their home addresses was undertaken between February and April 2009.

The approach to the survey has been refined gradually since it was first commissioned in 1987, with questions altered to reflect changes in nursing. Samples have also increased in the last three surveys, to allow analysis by country so that separate reports for Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland can be provided.

Sample

The sampling was altered slightly this year and split into separate country samples. The sample consisted of 4,800 members who live in England, 1,100 from Wales, 1,400 from Scotland and 1,000 from Northern Ireland to allow country specific data to be analysed and reported separately. An additional sample of 400 members (from across the UK) aged under 30 was included to ensure that this group was covered adequately in the data set. They form a relatively small group and are characterised by lower response rates, and in recent years the numbers of newly qualified nurses has increased following growth in numbers in nurse training.

Finally, 300 additional practice nurses were included in the sample, so that a separate report examining the views and working lives of this group could also be produced. For the country specific reports and the main UK report, respondents from the additional sample of practice nurses have been excluded (10 cases in Wales).

The samples for each country are based on members' home addresses. However, the final data set used to provide country specific data is based on where members work.

Within each strata of the sample members were selected at random, and all cases were removed after selection so that no individual could be selected twice. Before mail-out the profile of each sample was checked against the entire RCN membership, to ensure that a representative cross section had been drawn.

Further details of the sampling process and subsequent weighting applied are provided in Appendix A.

Questionnaire design

To ensure continuity and allow comparisons with previous years, the questionnaire covers core employment and biographical questions including: demographic details; pay and grading; working hours; job change; and various attitude items relating to nurses' experiences of working life.

The questionnaire design reflects input from the RCN Employment Relations Department, and builds on earlier surveys by using some previous question formats to allow longitudinal comparisons. As a result of slightly lower response rates in the last few surveys of RCN members, reflecting wider difficulties in maintaining public sector response rates, this year the length of the questionnaire was reduced from 10 pages to eight, focusing primarily on the core longitudinal employment issues as listed above. However, there are also sections covering the move to Agenda for Change (AfC) and comparisons between prior clinical grade and new AfC pay band, continuing professional development (CPD) and workload.

A draft questionnaire was designed following discussion between Employment Research and the RCN and piloted, both in paper and online formats during November/December 2008 among 100 members. In addition a pilot group of nurses was convened to discuss the questionnaire. All comments and suggestions were considered and the questionnaire revised to ensure it was as user friendly as possible while still meeting the requirement to supply reliable longitudinal data.

The form was printed as an eight page A4 booklet and mailed to 9,000 RCN members between February and April 2009.

Survey process and response

The form was printed as an eight page A4 booklet and mailed to the home addresses of 9,000 RCN members in February, and remained open until April 2009. An online version of the survey was also made available to survey participants (who were sent the link).

Reminders were sent to non-respondents at two weekly intervals (first a postcard, then a second questionnaire pack, and finally a letter). To explore non-response and boost the final response rate, a telephone follow-up was undertaken of all members with telephone numbers who had not completed the survey. When the survey closed at the end of April 2009, 4845 forms had been returned representing an overall response rate of 49% (UK 54%) (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Response rates by sample

| | Total mailed | Post Office returns | Not appropriate | Completed forms | Response rate |
|---|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| England sample | 4800 | 39 | 2 | 2461 | 52% |
| Northern Ireland sample | 1000 | 4 | 0 | 481 | 48% |
| Scotland sample | 1400 | 6 | 1 | 645 | 46% |
| Wales sample | 1100 | 1 | 0 | 536 | 49% |
| Under 30 top up | 400 | 7 | 0 | 158 | 40% |
| Practice nurse top up | 300 | 0 | 0 | 206 | 69% |
| Total | 9000 | 57 | 3 | 4487 | 50% |
| Anonymous forms (online and id removed) | - | - | - | 358 | 4% |
| Total | 9000 | 57 | 3 | 4845 | 54% |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Four percent of forms returned were anonymous – hence they could not be marked off against a particular sample. In addition, 57 forms had been returned by the Post Office as not being known at the address given, and three forms were returned as inappropriate.

An overall response rate of 54% was achieved (based on all samples). There was more variation in the response rate by sample group than was the case in previous years with lower response rates in each of Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. This might in part be due to the additional survey burden on individual nurses in these countries as a higher proportion of the population are being sampled in any given survey.

Weighting was applied to the UK dataset to firstly adjust for the stratified sampling by country and second to rebalance the age profile of respondents and ensure that it is in line with the membership profile. This weight also increases the representation of members who are less likely to have responded to the survey e.g. men and BME members.

The final data set used for Wales includes 616 cases. Weighting has been applied to this dataset to rebalance the age profile of respondents so that it matches the population of RCN members living in Wales⁵. Details are provided in Appendix A.

1.4 2009 employment survey: UK summary

In order to give some additional context to the findings for each country a summary of the 2009 UK report is included in the following sections. This also provides some coverage of variables where the number of cases within each country are too small to allow reliable analysis.

Context

In 2007 the mood of the nurses surveyed was one of heightened anxiety. Although there was evidence of improved staffing relative to 2005, nurses were deeply concerned about the impact that cuts and recruitment freezes may have on their job security and potential to develop and progress.

Growth in the nursing workforce has slowed in the last few years, and cost containment pressures in the coming years will continue to restrict expansion. Meanwhile the volume of care delivered in the NHS has continued to increase. With a policy agenda firmly focussed on driving up quality and safeguarding patients from risk, how are nurses faring in 2009? Do they have the resources and support needed to deliver quality care?

Biographical profile

While the ageing of the nursing profession has been an issue of some concern over the last decade, in the last five years the average age of a nurse in the UK has remained unchanged at around 42, nine years older than was the case in 1992. This is primarily due to an increased reliance on internationally recruited nurses (IRNs), who are typically younger. Although recruitment of overseas nurses has tailed off recently, IRNs still form 10% of all members responding to the survey, the same as in 2007.

More than a quarter (27%) of nurses working in independent care homes are IRNs and the average age of in this sector is 47, with 41% aged over 50. Care homes are increasingly staffed by older white nurses and younger black and minority ethnic (BME) nurses.

⁵ Although the weighting is applied using data on where nurses live it is used as a proxy for nurses working in Scotland.

Pay and rewards

It remains the case that nurses are more dissatisfied with their pay and remuneration than any other aspect of their working lives. The current survey is the first one since all NHS staff across the UK have been assimilated to AfC pay bands making pre and post AfC comparisons possible (using data from 2003, the last survey in which all nurses were on clinical grades).

More E grade nurses in England and Wales were placed on band 6 (15% and 17% respectively) compared to Scotland 8% and Northern Ireland 2%. There were similar disparities in the proportion of G grades moving on to band seven. One in four (23%) NHS nurses requested a banding review. More nurses in Scotland (27%) and in Northern Ireland (30%) requested a banding review, reflecting the higher proportions of nurses who had been assimilated onto lower pay bands.

Health visitors are most dissatisfied with their transition to AfC; a half requested a banding review (50%), and many more saying that their grade/pay band is not appropriate to their role and responsibilities (74% compared with 49% in 2003 prior to AfC).

Across all nurses, 44% consider that their pay band/grade is not appropriate given their role and responsibilities. The proportion of IRNs working in care homes who say they 'don't know' if their pay band is appropriate has more than doubled, since 2001 to 27%.

Within the NHS, senior nurses are less likely to think that their grade/pay band is inappropriate relative to their role and responsibilities than in 2003 (e.g. 59% pre AfC in 2003, 28% in 2009). Nurses on band 5 are twice as likely as those on band 8/9 to consider their pay band to be inappropriate, whereas in 2003 there was little variation by grade.

BME nurses are least likely to feel that they are appropriately graded (65% say their grade is not appropriate compared to 44% across all respondents). IRNs are also more likely to view their pay band as inappropriate.

Nurses continue to be generally dissatisfied with their pay, 84% say that nurses are not well paid in relation to other professional groups and 78% think they could be paid more for less effort if they left nursing. Nurses early in their careers are least positive about pay.

One in four nurses (23%) say they are 'finding it difficult' financially at present, and 24% of nurses have an additional job. More band 5 BME nurses have another job (42% vs. 24% of all nurses), and do so in order to provide additional income. Agency work is much less common in 2009 than in the past.

Working hours

There has been no change in the proportion of nurses working full-time since 2003 (63% with 34% working part-time and 3% working occasional/various hours) and two thirds of all NHS nurses working shifts, work internal rotation.

More nurses in care homes work permanent night shifts (24% compared to 7% of NHS hospital nurses). IRN staff nurses in the NHS are more likely to work shifts (92%) and internal rotation (77%) than UK qualified staff nurses (87% and 71% respectively).

Most nurses are more satisfied with their working hours, if they have not had to work extra hours or if they work part-time, but the reverse is true for BME nurses.

Nurses working 12 hour shifts are more likely to be satisfied with their working hours than those working 8 hour shifts.

The mean total hours worked by full-time staff nurses in their last full working week was 44 hours. Full-time BME nurses in NHS hospitals work an average of 48 hours per week compared to 43 hours among white nurses.

Staffing and workload

The average number of patients per registered nurse on NHS wards is 7.9 patients in the daytime and 10.6 at night. This is the same as recorded in 2005, but is a higher figure, by one patient per registered nurse (RN), than recorded in 2007. Typically, RNs make up 60% of nursing staff during the day on NHS wards, less than in 2007, when 66% on duty were RNs.

Three quarters of those who were in charge of an NHS ward on their last shift are staff nurses, and 17% have less than five years experience as a qualified nurse.

Two thirds (68%) of NHS nurses feel that the mix of activities in their work is about right, but sister/charge nurses, district nurses and health visitors are most likely to be dissatisfied with how their time is divided. Generally they consider that they should be spending less time on clinical activities and more on training/educating others, research and management.

Similar to 2007, 52% of all respondents and 58% of NHS nurses report that they have mentoring responsibilities, and 33% of all nurses and 38% of NHS nurses saying they have preceptorship responsibilities.

Although more nurses today say there are sufficient staff to provide a good standard of care, nurses are generally more negative about workloads than in 2007. Six in ten (61%) NHS nurse say their workload is too heavy, 55% say they are under too much pressure at work, 54% say they are too busy to provide the standard of care they would like.

Amongst NHS staff nurses, IRNs are more likely to say they feel their workload is too heavy (73% compared to 58% of UK qualified nurses), but fewer say too much time is spent on non-nursing duties (31% compared to 47% of UK qualified nurses).

Views of NHS hospital nurses about their workload are strongly correlated with reported patient to RN ratios. So, those who say their workload is not too heavy work on wards with an average of 6.8 patients per RN, compared with 9.3 patients per RN for those who say their workload is too heavy.

More than a half of NHS nurses (55%) consider that the nursing establishment where they work is not sufficient to meet patient needs. In addition to this, 42% say that short staffing compromises patient care at least once or twice per week, with one in four saying it is on most or every shift. NHS nurses are most likely to say that patient care is compromised regularly.

Job change

Turnover as measured by job changes across all nurses has increased from the 10 year low reported in 2007 of 16% to 19% and movement between employers has increased from 8% to 10% in 2009. This remains lower than the figure reported in 2005. In the NHS the rate of job change is 16%. Much of the increase in turnover between 2007 and 2009 is concentrated among nurses early in their careers.

The main reason nurses change jobs is to gain new experience and skills (54%). There has been an increase in job moves due to stress/workload issues (31% compared to 23% in 2007) and because of dissatisfaction with their previous job (30% compared to 26% in 2007).

There has been little change in how nurses view their career progression opportunities. In 2009, 56% of nurses agreed that it will be very difficult to progress from their current pay band/grade; in 2003 the equivalent figure was 58%. One in four nurses in NHS and outside NHS are looking for work or a change of job, slightly higher than the 24% reported in 2007.

One in five nurses expects to work beyond their retirement age. More nurses in the later stages of their career say they will work beyond their retirement age, while more in the middle of their career say they will retire before their retirement age.

Just under a half (47%) of all nurses agree with a statement saying they have sufficient information about their pensions. Younger nurses and those working in Scotland and Northern Ireland are less likely to say they have sufficient information.

Training and continuing professional development

In 2007, annual CPD in the NHS fell steeply from 11 days in 2005 to seven days in 2007. In 2009 the amount of CPD undertaken remains lower than in preceding years, and is more or less the same as reported in 2007. Staff nurses in the NHS have undertaken less CPD (5.3 days) than other groups of NHS nurse (6.8 days).

Just over six in ten nurses (61%) across all sectors have had an appraisal/development review with their manager in the 12 months prior to the survey, slightly higher than in 2007 (58%).

In general, mandatory training has increased across the board since 2007, but there has been a particular increase in infection control training in NHS hospitals (80% in 2009 compared with 63% in 2007) and independent care homes (81% compared to 67% in 2007).

Views of access to training opportunities are slightly more positive in 2009 than was the case in 2007, but remain lower than was recorded in 2005.

Morale

In 2007 there was a steep downturn in the confidence of nurses across various aspects of working life. Aside from workload, views have generally improved since 2007, but not returning to the levels of satisfaction recorded in 2005.

More nurses feel enthusiastic about their jobs, feel that nursing is a rewarding career and would recommend nursing as a career than at any time in the last 12 years.

Nurses in the NHS respond more negatively than nurses in other health care sectors to bullying and harassment themes, being able to balance home and working lives, feeling that their work is valued, training, stress and workload themes.

In the NHS BME nurses are less likely to report that they feel satisfied in their present job and more likely to say that bullying and harassment is a problem where they work and that they would leave nursing if they could. BME nurses are also more concerned about redundancy than white nurses, but more BME nurses feel positive about career opportunities for nurses.

1.5 Report structure

The findings in the report are based on all respondents (weighted for age), who are currently employed in nursing (616 cases).

There are some changes to the variables used in the analysis to allow sufficient numbers in each cell. NHS community includes primary care, hospices and GP practices and the independent sector has been grouped as the cell sizes are often not large enough to compare care homes with hospitals. Throughout the report comparisons are made between the UK figures and Wales results and where significant differences emerge these are highlighted.

This year results for each question have been provided by country for NHS respondents only in order to better inform each country of how their results compare to the other countries of the UK. The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2** examines the demographic and employment profile of nurses in 2009
- Chapter 3** looks at pay and examines the impact Agenda for Change on NHS respondents
- Chapter 4** describes working hours and shift patterns
- Chapter 5** explores current workloads in terms of excess hours worked, perceived workload, and nurse to patient ratios
- Chapter 6** summarises patterns of job change. The data give an indication of turnover and progression, and reasons for changing jobs are explored. Finally, we present the survey findings on retirement
- Chapter 7** examines the data on continuing professional development
- Chapter 8** concludes the report by reviewing morale among nurses in 2009.

2. Profile

The demographic profile of the nursing workforce is shifting. Over the last five years, the key changes in the profile of the RCN membership have been:

- an older age distribution; although this has been mitigated to some extent by an influx of nurses recruited from abroad
- a trend towards older newly qualified nurses i.e. numbers qualifying in their 30s as opposed to 18-21 as was the historical norm
- increased numbers of migrant nurses in the UK, although this is less the case in Wales, now forming some 10% of the total RCN population
- increased levels of academic qualifications.

This chapter serves two main functions. Firstly to update these trends, highlighting changes in the demographic and employment profile that have taken place in the last couple of years, since the last employment survey. Secondly, to introduce many of the variables used in subsequent analysis to compare differences within the population.

The picture drawn from the employment survey is particularly valuable, as it affords a unique view of a cross-section of the nursing workforce as a whole with the membership covering roughly half of the total pool of registered nurses and midwives in the UK. The demographic profile of the RCN is broadly in line with that captured by other national statistics. For example, 10% of nurses on the NMC register⁶ are aged under 30 compared to 13% of the RCN membership. Primarily due to a difference in response rate, men account for a slightly smaller proportion of survey respondents compared to NMC registrants (7% vs. 11%).

However, the problem in trying to determine how 'representative' the survey population is of the nursing workforce overall, is that the other statistics available are also all limited in their own ways. The NMC register provides demographic data on registrants, but not all registrants are currently using their registration in paid employment. NHS data gives some demographic breakdowns, but the data does not present a pan-UK view, nor does it cover nurses working outside the NHS.

The shifting age profile of the nursing workforce has been, for the last 20 years, one of the most significant issues facing workforce planning in the health sector. Concern over this issue had subsided somewhat as increased intakes and recruitment of nurses from overseas during the 2000s has, at least quantitatively, addressed this impending shortfall, especially in independent sector care homes.

⁶ Statistical Analysis of the Register: 1 April 2007 to 21 March 2008. (2008) Nursing & Midwifery Council, www.nmc-uk.org

2.1 Age Profile

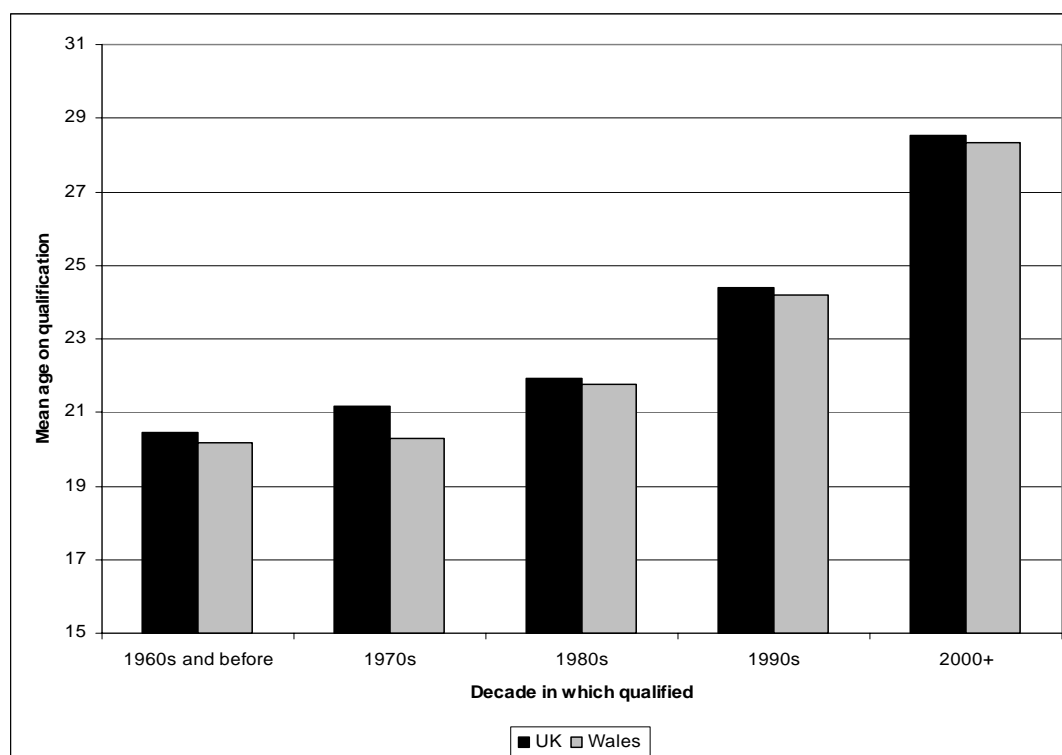
The age profile of the RCN membership and the wider nursing workforce has grown steadily older over the last 20 years, since these surveys started. In 2007 it was reported that the average age of nurses responding to the survey across the UK had increased from 33 in 1987, to 37 in 1995, 41 in 2003 to 41 in 2007 in Wales (UK 42). The average age in 2009 is once again 41 in Wales, the same as for the UK as a whole. In Wales 43% of nurses are aged under 40 compared to 41% across the rest of the UK.

There is considerable variation in the age profile of the nursing workforce with younger nurses employed predominantly in NHS hospitals, where just 16% (UK 19%) are aged over 50. This is in contrast to NHS community settings⁷, where 28% (UK 33%) are aged over 50. Across the UK, just five years ago 19% of community nurses were aged over 50.

The older age profile of those working in the community has been an issue of concern, particularly given the continued plan outlined in *The Next Stage Review* to increase the proportion of care delivered in the community.

The average age that members in 2009 first qualified as nurses is 24 (UK 24). The age at which members qualified relates to the era in which they first qualified as Figure 2.1 shows. The average age has steadily increased over time, from around 20 among those qualifying in Wales in the 1960s or before, to 28 (UK 29) among those qualifying since 2000 (Figure 2.1). In the years since 2000, 32% (UK 35%) of those who qualified as registered nurses were aged over 30 compared to 3% (UK 4%) of those who qualified before 1990.

Figure 2.1: Mean age on qualification by decade in which qualified



Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

⁷ There are some changes to the variables used in the analysis to allow sufficient numbers in each cell. NHS community includes primary care, GP practices and hospices and the independent sector has been grouped as the cell sizes are not large enough to compare care homes with hospitals in Scotland.

There has been little change since 2007 in the time since qualification 17 years (more or less same as across the UK as a whole).

2.2 Caring responsibilities

The 2009 survey asked respondents: ‘Do you have dependent children living with you?’⁸. In addition to childcare responsibility, respondents are also asked ‘Do you have a regular caring responsibility for an elderly relative or other adult with care needs? Across all respondents a half (57%, UK 52%) have dependent children living at home. This figure is more or less the same as reported in 2007 with 40-44 year olds most likely to report having childcare responsibility (79%, UK 74%) (see Table 2.1).

One in five (21%, UK 16%) report that they have care responsibilities for an elderly relative or other adult, with this proportion rising with age to 35% (UK 25%) amongst respondents who are over 50. Both these figures are higher than across the UK as a whole. Twelve per cent (UK 7%) of nurses have responsibility for both a child and adult/elderly relative and three quarters (77%, UK 75%) of nurses in their forties have either child or adult caring responsibilities.

Table 2.1: Nurses with domestic caring responsibilities (percentages and figures in brackets are UK results) by age group

| | Children | Elderly/other adult | Weighted cases |
|------------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Under 30 | 24 (20) | 14 (6) | 79 (586) |
| 30-34 | 61 (56) | 6 (7) | 74 (562) |
| 35-39 | 75 (71) | 18 (9) | 97 (676) |
| 40-44 | 79 (74) | 18 (18) | 103 (761) |
| 45-49 | 62 (68) | 26 (21) | 107 (776) |
| 50-54 | 41 (41) | 41 (25) | 78 (586) |
| 55 plus | 16 (14) | 25 (25) | 49 (521) |
| All respondents | 57 (52) | 21 (16) | 616 (4474) |

Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

Table 2.2 shows the proportion of nurses in each country who have child and adult caring responsibilities. Nurses in Scotland and England are less likely than nurses in Wales and especially Northern Ireland to have childcare and adult caring responsibilities.

Table 2.2: Caring responsibilities by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-------------------------------|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Children living at home | 57 | 51 | 51 | 65 | 52 |
| Adult caring responsibilities | 22 | 15 | 17 | 29 | 16 |
| Weighted cases | 494 | 2032 | 578 | 416 | 3520 |

Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

⁸ Prior to 2007, the survey asked ‘Do you have children living with you?’ and then a follow up question that asked for the number that were pre-school, school age and older. Hence direct comparisons cannot be made to the findings from previous years, as there is now a direct reference to dependence (as opposed to using age as a proxy).

2.3 Gender and Ethnicity

The proportion of men in the RCN membership has remained broadly unchanged over the last 10 years or more, hovering at around 8% (UK 7%). In contrast to gender, the ethnicity profile of the UK membership has changed considerably in recent years. The proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME⁹) nurses covered by the survey has doubled since 2002, from 6% to 13% in 2009. However, in Wales 8% are from BME backgrounds, which shows no change from 2007.

Table 2.3: Gender and ethnic breakdown by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-----------------------|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Female | 92 | 92 | 93 | 93 | 92 |
| Male | 8 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 7 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 494 | 2049 | 578 | 417 | 3538 |
| White | 94 | 86 | 98 | 96 | 90 |
| BME | 8 | 14 | 2 | 4 | 12 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 495 | 2043 | 584 | 417 | 3539 |
| UK qualified | 97 | 92 | 99 | 97 | 96 |
| Overseas qualified | 5 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 495 | 2043 | 584 | 417 | 3539 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Table 2.3 shows the proportion of respondents in the NHS who are male, BME origin and who first qualified as a registered nurse overseas. Across the UK, fewer respondents are from BME origins or first qualified overseas than is the case outside the NHS, this is especially the case in care homes. In Wales the numbers are smaller and there is little discernible difference between the sectors. In Northern Ireland and Scotland, and to a lesser extent Wales, fewer nurses are from BME origins or qualified overseas and the numbers in these groups are too small to undertake further analysis. To see comparisons between BME and white nurses and overseas and UK qualified nurses please refer to the main UK report¹⁰.

2.4 Country of qualification

One in ten (10%) UK respondents first qualified as a registered nurse outside of the UK. This has increased significantly over the last few years – in 2001 2% were qualified outside the UK, rising to 6% in 2003, and 10% in 2009, same as in 2007. Again, the figures in Wales are lower with 6% first registering as a qualified nurse outside the UK (slightly lower than reported in 2007 – 8%). The numbers of both BME and overseas qualified nurses are too small to allow any further analysis.

⁹ This includes all mixed ethnic groups, Asian/Asian British, Black/Black British, Chinese and other ethnic groups ONS categories 4-16

¹⁰ Ball J and Pike G (2009) *Past Imperfect, Future Tense, Nurses' Employment and Morale: results from the 2009 RCN Employment Survey*, RCN, London

2.5 Qualifications

The level of qualifications held by nurses has been rising steadily in recent years, as the profession moves towards all graduate entry for RNs¹¹. In Wales fewer nurses are diploma qualified (19%, UK 34%) but more are degree qualified (42%, UK 31%). Older respondents are more likely to hold other academic qualifications. Just one per cent hold NVQs/SVQs (see Table 2.4)

Table 2.4: Highest qualification held by time since qualification (percentages)

| Years since qualified... | No academic qualification | NVQ/SVQ 2-4 | Other qualification | Diploma | Degree | Higher degree | Weighted cases |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 1-5 years | 1 (5) | 1 (0) | 5 (1) | 28 (58) | 66 (35) | 0 (1) | 109 (794) |
| 6-10 | 3 (7) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 53 (52) | 42 (39) | 3 (2) | 81 (667) |
| 11-15 | 9 (12) | 1 (1) | 0 (1) | 39 (41) | 43 (40) | 8 (6) | 77 (573) |
| 16-20 | 34 (39) | 0 (2) | 4 (4) | 30 (22) | 23 (27) | 9 (6) | 70 (583) |
| 21-25 | 24 (41) | 1 (1) | 3 (8) | 39 (22) | 26 (22) | 8 (5) | 78 (624) |
| 26-30 | 35 (46) | 0 (3) | 5 (7) | 20 (19) | 26 (18) | 14 (7) | 84 (558) |
| 31-35 | 48 (50) | 2 (3) | 6 (9) | 23 (16) | 13 (15) | 8 (7) | 48 (362) |
| 35 plus | 55 (56) | 0 (3) | 18 (12) | 23 (15) | 5 (10) | 0 (4) | 22 (273) |
| Total | 21 (28) | 1 (1) | 4 (4) | 33 (34) | 36 (28) | 6 (4) | 569 (4434) |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

In 2002, across the UK 17% reported holding a degree, with 3% holding a higher degree and 26% a diploma. Nurses who qualified 6-15 years ago are most likely to hold a degree or higher degree (50%, UK 43%). Table 2.5 shows the qualifications held by NHS nurses in each of the four countries. More nurses in Wales (43%) (and Scotland and Northern Ireland), hold degree level qualifications than is the case in England but fewer hold diploma level qualifications (19% in the NHS in Scotland and Northern Ireland). The figure is more or less the same in Wales (32%).

Table 2.5: Qualifications held by nurses by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| No academic qualification | 20 | 25 | 34 | 33 | 26 |
| NVQ/SVQ level 2-4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Other qualification | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Diploma | 32 | 36 | 19 | 19 | 34 |
| Degree | 37 | 28 | 39 | 40 | 30 |
| Higher degree | 6 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 495 | 2044 | 578 | 416 | 3480 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

¹¹ Staines R (2008) 'Nursing to become degree-only profession' *Nursing Times*. 4 Sept 2008.

2.6 Employer and setting

Although the survey is designed to be applicable to nurses in all specialties and employer groups, nevertheless more than three-quarters of members responding to the survey are employed in the NHS (78%, UK 74%), and six in ten (59%, UK 53%) of all respondents are employed in NHS hospitals. These figures are both slightly higher than reported in 2007. Table 2.6 shows the distribution of respondents by employer group by country. In Wales (and Scotland and Northern Ireland) more respondents work in NHS hospitals and slightly fewer in NHS community settings.

Table 2.6: Employer group by country (percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| NHS hospital | 59 | 53 | 59 | 56 | 55 |
| NHS community | 13 | 15 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| NHS other | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| GP practice | 7 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 6 |
| Independent hospital | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Independent care home | 6 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 6 |
| Other independent | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Bank/agency | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Higher education | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Hospice/charity | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| HA/NHS Exec | 2 | <1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| Other | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 620 | <i>2722</i> | <i>718</i> | <i>526</i> | 4586 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Despite the well established policy agenda to increase the volume of care delivered in the community (reiterated in the *Next Stage Review*), across the UK the mix between sectors is broadly the same as it has been since 2001.

The other major employer groups include NHS community settings (13% of all respondents, UK 15%), GP practice 7% (UK 6%), independent care homes 6% (UK 6%), other NHS employers (including NHS Direct) 5% (UK 5%), hospice/charity (2%, UK 3%) and independent hospital settings 2% (UK 3%) and bank/agencies 1% (UK 3%). These figures are almost entirely unchanged from 2007. More nurses in Scotland (54%) and Northern Ireland (58%) are employed as staff nurses in the NHS compared to England (46%) and Wales (49%) but fewer in other job categories and as specialist nurses (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Job title by country (percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Staff nurse | 49 | 46 | 54 | 58 | 47 |
| Community nurse | 3 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 7 |
| Ward manager | 11 | 13 | 12 | 11 | 13 |
| Senior nurse | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| CNS | 9 | 8 | 6 | 6 | 8 |
| Other | 23 | 20 | 18 | 16 | 20 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 498 | <i>2047</i> | <i>586</i> | <i>417</i> | 3548 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

In terms of specialty fewer NHS nurses in Wales are employed in primary care (8%) and adult critical care (15%) than elsewhere in the UK, but more are employed in mental health (10%).

Table 2.8: Field of practice by country (percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Primary care | 8 | 12 | 13 | 10 | 11 |
| Community care | 7 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 7 |
| Older people's nursing | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Mental health | 10 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 8 |
| Learning disabilities | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| Adult critical care | 15 | 16 | 19 | 16 | 16 |
| Adult general/medical/surgical | 22 | 21 | 22 | 24 | 22 |
| Rehabilitation/longer term care | 6 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Paediatric critical care | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Paediatric general | 5 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| Women's health/midwifery | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| Oncology/palliative care | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| Work across the organisation | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Other | 9 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 9 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 487 | <i>2001</i> | <i>575</i> | <i>406</i> | 3469 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Here we highlight the main differences between different settings:

- Age profiles by employer group vary but across all settings the profile has aged
- Most young nurses are employed in NHS hospitals (where the average age is 39, slightly lower than for the UK as a whole), as staff nurses. More than half (60%, UK 50%) of all NHS hospital staff nurses are aged under 40 compared to 35% (UK 30%) across all other settings
- Older age profiles are found in community/primary settings, where the average age is 44 (UK 45). One in four (28%, UK 26%) are aged under 40 with 29% (UK 31%) aged 50 plus
- The average age of NHS staff nurses is 38 (UK 38) and that of other NHS staff is 44 (UK 44).

Nurses in the survey have been in their current position for five years (UK six years), and with their current employer for 10 years (UK 10 years). For respondents employed in GP practice settings, independent care homes and other independent settings, there is little difference between time in post and length of service, reflecting the smaller organisations in these sectors, in that a job move typically involves a change of employer too.

2.7 Key points: Chapter 2

This chapter has served to introduce the key biographical and employment situation variables that will be used in the subsequent sections of the report to explore variation in the aggregate results. Key points to note are:

- Average age of nurses in Wales is 41, the same as across the whole of the UK and as reported in 2007
- Younger nurses are employed predominantly in NHS hospital settings 55% (UK 50%) aged under 40. In community settings 31% (UK 31%) are aged over 50
- Eight per cent of respondents are male (same as for the UK as a whole) and 8% are from BME backgrounds, the same figures as reported in 2007 and lower than England
- More NHS nurses in Wales hold nursing degrees (43%) compared to elsewhere in the UK 34%.

3. Pay bands and grading

At the time of the last survey in 2007, Agenda for Change (AfC) was almost fully implemented across England but significant numbers of NHS respondents had not been assimilated onto the new pay bands; in Wales (21% had not been assimilated), in Scotland (29%) and in Northern Ireland (23%). Early reviews¹² of AfC reported that although managers expected that the new system would help deliver improvements in care and staff experience, the implementation process had been rushed and there had been problems embedding KSF. These findings are echoed by the National Audit Office¹³, who report a lack of formal evaluation of AfC, and lack of evidence as to its impact on productivity or recruitment and retention.

This is the first employment survey where almost all NHS nurses across the UK are on AfC pay bands. It provides an opportunity to assess UK-wide, the transition process from clinical grading to AfC, and allows a more complete analysis to explore country and regional differences. To explore differences in views and experiences of NHS nurses, pre- and post-AfC, comparisons are made between the 2003 survey (the last where the majority of nurses were employed on clinical grades) and this survey (the first where almost all are employed on AfC pay bands).

3.1 Transition to Agenda for Change

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their clinical grade **immediately prior** to the transition to AfC and their AfC pay band **immediately after** the transition. Table 3.1 presents data on the resultant pay bands of E and G grade nurses, which are the two grades with enough cases to allow country differences to be explored.

There is a clear split in terms of the pay bands to which nurses were allocated between the four countries of the UK. Across the UK, of all E grade nurses who provided details, 88% moved to band 5 and 12% moved to band 6. However, in Scotland only 8% moved to band 6 and in Northern Ireland only 2% made the higher band. This compares unfavourably with England and Wales where 15% and 17% respectively moved on to band 6. A similar, albeit less marked, difference is noticeable with transitions from G grade with fewer nurses in Scotland and Northern Ireland making the transition to band 7 than was the case in England and Wales. However, numbers in this case are too small to be considered statistically significant.

¹² Buchan J & Evans D (2007) *Realising the benefits? Assessing the implementation of Agenda for Change*. Kings Fund: London

¹³ National Audit Office (2009) *NHS Pay Modernisation in England: Agenda for Change. A report ordered by the House of Commons*. Department of Health: London.

Table 3.1: Grade E / G AfC transitions by country (percentages NHS only)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All respondents |
|--|------------|---------|----------|------------------|-----------------|
| Grade E / AfC 5 | 83 | 85 | 92 | 98 | 88 |
| Grade E / AfC 6 | 17 | 15 | 8 | 2 | 12 |
| <i>Cases (unweighted)</i> | 145 | 551 | 197 | 155 | 1048 |
| E Grade nurses who requested a banding review | 27 | 21 | 29 | 30 | 22 |
| Grade G / AfC 6 | 42 | 45 | 52 | 56 | 47 |
| Grade G / AfC 7 | 58 | 55 | 48 | 44 | 53 |
| <i>Cases unweighted</i> | 83 | 371 | 114 | 71 | 639 |
| G Grade nurses who requested a banding review | 26 | 29 | 36 | 45 | 30 |
| Percentage of all nurses requesting a banding review | 23 | 21 | 27 | 28 | 23 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

The survey also asked if individuals had requested a banding review. Across the UK, just under a quarter (23%) had requested a review of their banding. This is a higher than reported in 2007 (18%), primarily due to the larger numbers of nurses from Northern Ireland (28%) and Scotland (27%) who have now been through the process, more of whom were moved onto the lower band and more of whom requested a review. In Wales 23% requested a review.

Larger proportions of previously E grade nurses in Northern Ireland and Scotland were placed on band 5, and similarly G grade nurses in these countries are more likely to have been placed on band 6. And it is these nurses (who have been moved onto the lower of two possible bands) that are most likely to have requested a review.

3.2 Current pay bands

All but 2% (UK 4%) of NHS nurses are paid on AfC pay bands, and most of those who indicated they were on another pay scale nonetheless provided an equivalent AfC pay band. There are significant differences by country among NHS nurses (see Table 3.2). More NHS nurses in Scotland (55%) and, especially, Northern Ireland (62%), are employed on band 5 than is the case among nurses working in England (49%) and Wales (45%). In Northern Ireland especially, there are significantly fewer nurses employed on band 6, 7 and 8/9 than is the case elsewhere in the UK. This reflects the higher numbers of staff nurses in the data set in these countries shown in chapter two. These national differences remain, even when controlling for levels of experience. For example, among nurses with 11-20 years experience 57% of nurses in Northern Ireland are on band 5 compared to 36% in England, 44% in Scotland and 37% in Wales.

Table 3.2: AfC pay bands by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | AfC pay band | | | | | | <i>Weighted cases</i> |
|-------------------|--------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------------------|
| | 1/2/3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8/9 | |
| England | 2 | 0 | 49 | 25 | 18 | 6 | 2705 |
| Scotland | 1 | 1 | 55 | 23 | 18 | 3 | 337 |
| Wales | 2 | 0 | 45 | 30 | 18 | 5 | 157 |
| Northern Ireland | 2 | 0 | 62 | 20 | 12 | 4 | 118 |
| All UK NHS | 2 | 0 | 50 | 25 | 18 | 6 | 3317 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Table 3.3 shows the distribution of AfC pay bands by sector. In Wales a higher proportions of nurses are paid on pay band 5 (56%) than is the case across the rest of the UK (48%) especially, Scotland and Northern Ireland. One in three NHS nurses in Wales (23%, UK 29%) are on band 6, 17% (UK 18%) on band 7 and 5% (UK 6%) on band 8/9. In NHS hospitals 55% (UK 56%) of all nurses are on band 5.

Table 3.3: Current AfC pay bands by employer group (NHS only, percentages UK figures in brackets)

| | AfC pay band | | | | | | Weighted cases |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| | 1/2/3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8/9 | |
| NHS hospital | 1 | 0 | 55 | 27 | 14 | 3 | 347 |
| Community/primary | 5 | 0 | 20 | 37 | 27 | 11 | 126 |
| Independent | 6 | 0 | 78 | 6 | 0 | 11 | 18 |
| Other | 7 | 0 | 21 | 43 | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| All NHS | 2 (2) | 0 (0) | 47 (50) | 29 (25) | 17 (18) | 5 (6) | 462 (319) |
| All respondents | 2 (2) | 0 (1) | 46 (48) | 29 (25) | 17 (17) | 6 (7) | 506 (3718) |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Table 3.4 shows the pay band distribution by job title showing staff nurses, ward managers and other NHS nurses. As can be seen the pay band distribution for NHS nurses in Wales and the whole UK and for staff nurses, ward managers and other nurses in the NHS are more or less the same. However, at an aggregate level there are more on pay band 5 which reflects the larger number of band 5 nurses in Scotland and Northern Ireland than is the case in England and Wales, as shown in table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Current AfC pay bands by job title (NHS only, percentages UK figures in brackets)

| | AfC pay band | | | | Weighted cases |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8/9 | |
| Staff nurse | 83 (90) | 17 (9) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 239 (1555) |
| Sister/charge nurse | 0 (0) | 56 (57) | 44 (43) | 0 (0) | 55 (424) |
| Other | 14 (17) | 38 (39) | 31 (33) | 17 (11) | 166 (1764) |
| All NHS | 57 (50) | 23 (25) | 17 (18) | 3 (6) | 462 (3319) |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

3.3 Pay band/grade is appropriate

One of the objectives of the 2009 employment survey was to try and examine the full implementation of AfC and compare views of nurses of their pay band in 2009 with views of nurses of their grade in 2003, pre-AfC. A question asking whether or not nurses consider their pay band/grade to be appropriate given their role and responsibilities, has been included in the employment surveys undertaken both before and after AfC implementation.

Across all sectors, 45% (UK 44%) of nurses surveyed in Wales in 2009 say that the pay band or grade that they are on is not appropriate given their role and responsibilities, with 48% (UK 49%) reporting that it is and 8% (UK 8%) saying they do not know. Across the UK these figures are roughly the same as reported in 2007 but in Wales there are slightly more nurses saying their pay band is appropriate in 2009 than was the case in 2007 (41%).

Within the NHS 47% (UK 46%) say that their pay band is not appropriate. Overall there has been little change in response since this question was first asked in 2003 but in Wales there has been a slightly larger reduction in numbers saying their pay band is not appropriate (down from 50% to 47%). Table 3.5 shows the proportion of nurses in each country reporting their pay band/grade to be inappropriate in 2003 and 2009 (for the NHS only).

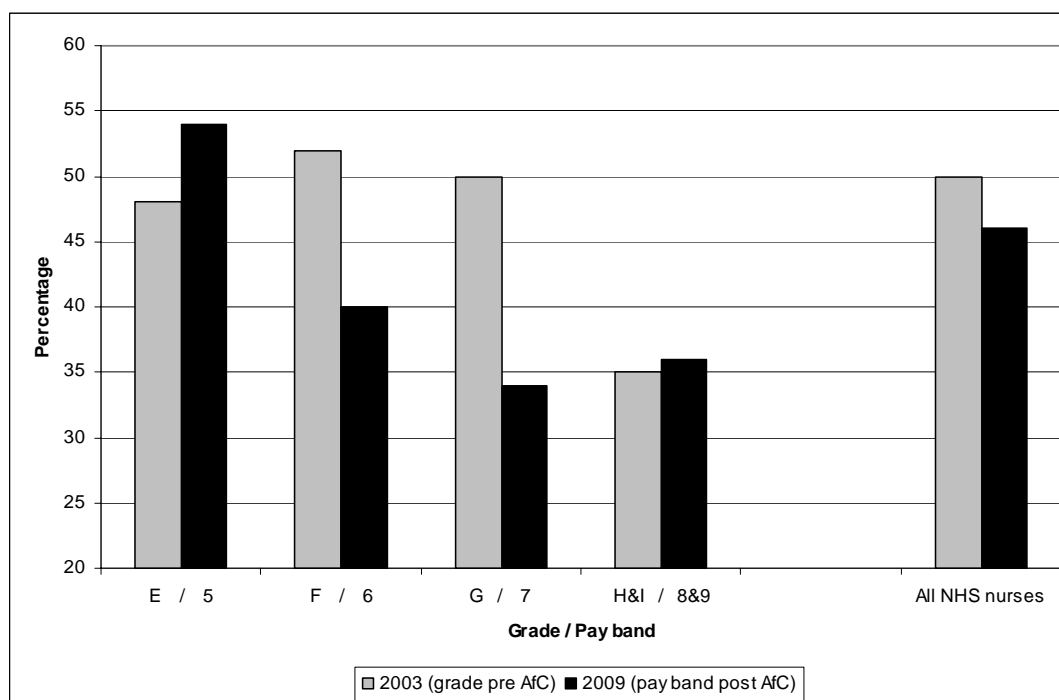
Table 3.5: Current pay band/grade is considered appropriate by country (2003 & 2009, NHS percentages)

| | AfC pay band/grade | | | | | | Cases (2009) |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|------------|----------|--------------|
| | Appropriate | | Not appropriate | | Don't know | | |
| | 2003 | 2009 | 2003 | 2009 | 2003 | 2009 | |
| Scotland | 45 | 45 | 50 | 51 | 5 | 4 | 569 |
| Northern Ireland | 35 | 36 | 60 | 56 | 6 | 8 | 405 |
| Wales | 46 | 47 | 50 | 47 | 4 | 6 | 482 |
| England | 49 | 49 | 47 | 44 | 4 | 6 | 1992 |
| All UK NHS | 48 | 48 | 48 | 46 | 4 | 6 | 3448 |

Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

In 2003 there was little variation between nurses on different grades as to whether or not they considered their grade to be inappropriate given their role and responsibilities. But in 2009, band 5 nurses are much more likely than band 7/8/9 nurses to consider their grade inappropriate to their role and responsibilities. The proportion considering their pay band to be inappropriate reduces as pay band increases (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Pay band/grade is inappropriate by grade/band (Wales, 2003 & 2009 NHS)



Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

It might be expected given the greater likelihood of nurses in Scotland (and especially Northern Ireland), to be employed on lower AfC pay bands, in these countries are more likely to see their pay band as inappropriate. However, if anything, more nurses in Northern Ireland viewed their grade as inappropriate in 2003 compared to views in 2009. Dissatisfaction with current pay bands in Northern Ireland in particular, would seem to reflect disparities that existed between the four countries prior to the implementation of AfC.

Table 3.6 shows that nurses working in the community, GP practices and hospices/charities are more likely than other respondents to indicate that their pay band/grade is appropriate given their role and responsibilities (50%, UK 51%). Nurses working in the independent sector are most likely to say that they do not know whether or not their pay band/grade is appropriate for their role and responsibilities (29%, significantly higher than for the whole UK (18%)). By and large, responses from nurses in Wales in relation to AfC implementation and pay bands are much the same as those from England but very different to responses from nurses in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Table 3.6: Pay band appropriate to role and responsibilities by employer group (percentages)

| | Pay band Appropriate | Pay band not appropriate | Don't know | Weighted cases |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| NHS hospital | 47 (47) | 45 (46) | 8 (7) | 357 (2423) |
| NHS Community/primary | 50 (51) | 47 (43) | 3 (6) | 154 (1660) |
| Independent | 36 (40) | 36 (42) | 29 (18) | 42 (440) |
| Other | 56 (56) | 41 (37) | 4 (7) | 27 (163) |
| All respondents | 48 (48) | 45 (44) | 8 (8) | 580 (4686) |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

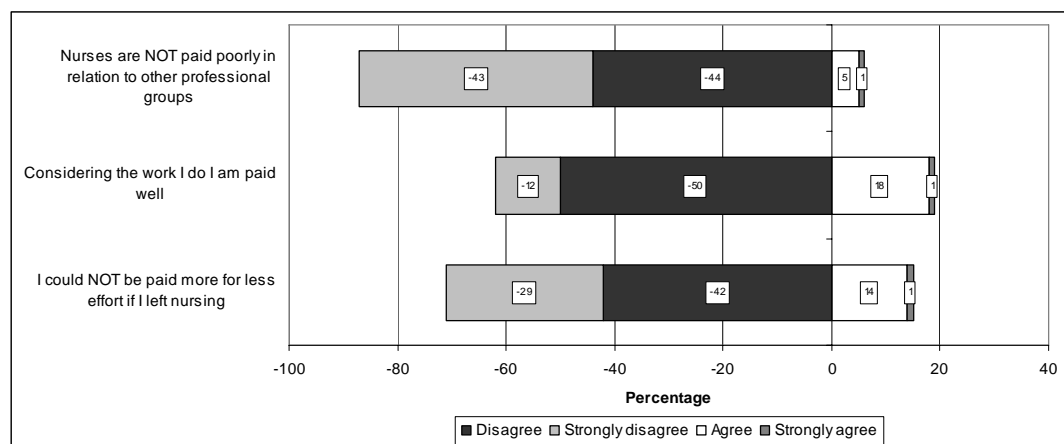
3.4 Pay satisfaction

A regular feature of all the employment surveys since 1992 has been the use of a series of attitude statements to garner opinion on pay. The three statements used have remained unchanged, allowing comparisons year on year. These are:

- *I could be paid more for less effort if I left nursing*
- *Considering the work I do I am well paid*
- *Nurses are paid poorly in relation to other professional groups*

Respondents were asked to indicate on a five point scale the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement. Figure 3.2 highlights the overall findings for NHS nurses in 2009.

Figure 3.2: Summary of pay satisfaction in the NHS (percentages)



Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

Views of pay among nurses have historically been very negative and this remains the case in 2009 and the figures for Wales mirror those for the UK as a whole, if anything they are slightly more negative than for the rest of the UK. That said, there has been a small improvement in satisfaction with pay ‘*considering the work I do*’. In 2007 64% (UK 64%) did not feel well paid considering the work they do – this year the equivalent figure is 62% (UK 57%) – this improvement though was smaller in Wales than the other UK countries. There was very little change in views on the other two pay variables with 87% (UK 84%) indicating that nurses are not well paid in relation to other professional groups and 71% (UK 78%) disagree with the statement ‘*I could be paid more for less effort if I left nursing*’.

Table 3.7: Pay satisfaction scores by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Could NOT be paid for less effort if left nursing | 15 | 12 | 15 | 14 | 13 |
| Well paid considering the work | 19 | 21 | 23 | 14 | 21 |
| Nurses are NOT poorly paid in relation to other professional groups | 6 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 6 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 495 | 2044 | 578 | 416 | 3480 |

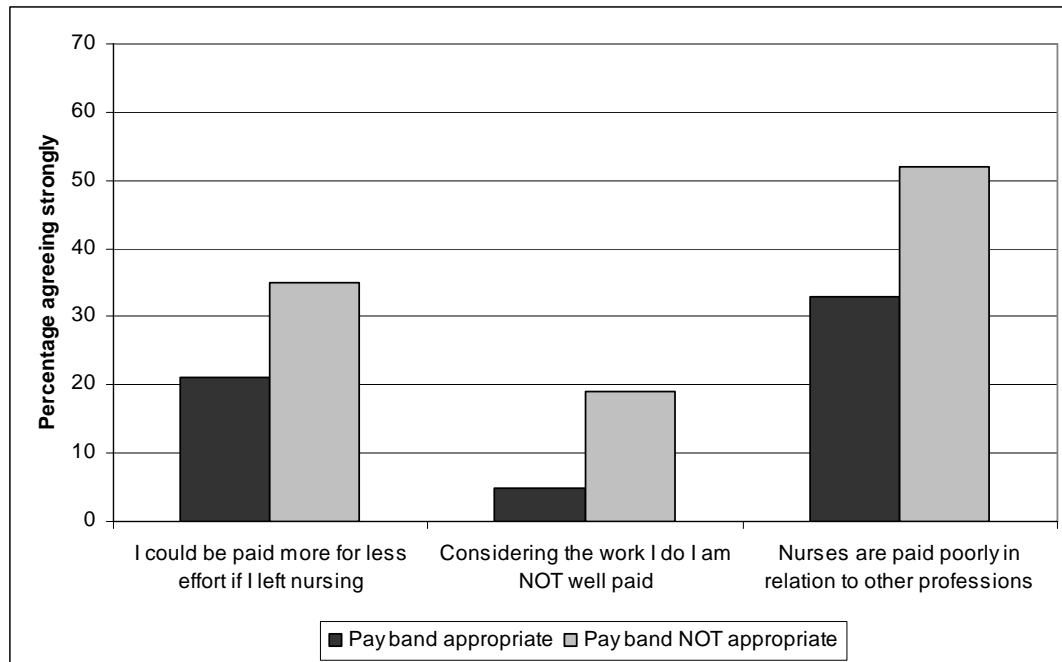
Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

Nurses working in NHS hospitals are least likely to be satisfied with their pay when considering the work they do than any other sector (16%, UK 19%), although there is little difference between independent and NHS hospital nurses in their views of their pay. One in four (27%, UK 32%) of NHS community nurses consider they are paid well given the work that they do. However, this figure is lower in Wales than elsewhere.

There is a strong correlation between pay satisfaction and pay bands. The higher the pay band, the more satisfied members tend to be with their pay. Just 12% (UK 16%) of NHS band 5 nurses feel well paid considering the work they do, compared to 34% (UK 20%) of band 7 and 30% (UK 40%) of band 8/9 nurses.

As might be expected, nurses who do not feel appropriately graded are least likely to be satisfied with their pay (Figure 3.3). Four times as many nurses strongly disagree with the statement 21% compared to 5% of those who do feel their pay band is appropriate to their role and responsibilities. The differences by whether or not pay band is considered appropriate are slightly less in Wales than elsewhere in the UK.

Figure 3.3: Views on pay (strong agreement) by whether or not pay band is viewed as appropriate to role and responsibilities (percentages)



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

3.5 Household income and financial circumstances

In one in five cases (22%, UK 21%) nurses' earnings represent all of their household income, in a further one in three cases (35%, UK 27%) earnings represent most of the household income, in 25% (UK 24%) of cases it represents about half of all income and in 19% (UK 27%) of cases it represents less than half of household income. These figures have not changed significantly since the question was introduced in 2003 but in Wales fewer nurses earn less than half their total household earnings.

Table 3.8 shows the distribution of NHS nurses by country in their earning as a proportion of household income and their financial circumstances.

Table 3.8: Nurses' earnings as proportion of household income and current financial situation by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-----------------------|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Less than half | 18 | 26 | 29 | 24 | 26 |
| About half | 25 | 26 | 25 | 28 | 26 |
| More than half | 58 | 48 | 46 | 48 | 48 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 492 | 2012 | 579 | 417 | 3500 |
| Living comfortably | 17 | 22 | 26 | 18 | 21 |
| Getting by | 54 | 54 | 53 | 61 | 55 |
| Finding it difficult | 29 | 24 | 21 | 21 | 24 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 489 | 2004 | 571 | 413 | 3477 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

The following groups of nurses are all more likely to have earnings that represent a higher proportion of their household income i.e. more than half total household income and this is more the case in Wales than elsewhere in the UK:

- Nurses working full-time (67%, UK 61%)
- Nurses who do not have children living with them (62%, UK 55%)
- Nurses on pay bands 7-9 (59%, UK 60%)
- Nurses early in their career (57%, UK 50%).

This year nurses were also asked how they view their financial circumstances to provide a barometer of how well nurses are coping financially in 2009. Across all respondents one in four (18%, UK 24%) say they are 'living comfortably', just over half (54%, UK 53%) say they are 'getting by' and one in five (28%, UK 23%) say they are 'finding it difficult'. Nurses in Wales appear to be finding it financially more difficult at the moment than nurses elsewhere in the UK.

Nurses whose earnings represent all or most of their household income are more likely to report that they are finding it difficult to manage financially, and there are more nurses in this situation in Wales. Of those respondents whose earnings represent all of their household income, 48% (UK 39%) say that they are 'finding it difficult' compared to 14% (UK 15%) of those where earnings represent less than half of their household income.

3.6 Additional jobs

Over the last ten years, since this question was first asked, approximately one in four nurses report having additional jobs. This year the figure is 22% (UK 25%), the same as in 2007, fewer nurses in Wales seem to have second jobs than is the case in the rest of the UK. Table 3.9 presents these data for NHS nurses only.

Whether or not nurses are likely to have an additional job is determined primarily by stage of career, the proportion of total household income nurses' earnings represent and their pay band.

Table 3.9: Percentage of nurses with additional job and location of additional job by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--------------------------------------|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Have second job | 24 | 25 | 24 | 29 | 25 |
| No second job | 76 | 75 | 76 | 71 | 75 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 488 | 2026 | 570 | 415 | 3499 |
| Type of second job | | | | | |
| Bank nursing with same employer | 66 | 56 | 60 | 48 | 57 |
| Bank nursing with different employer | 9 | 16 | 11 | 13 | 15 |
| Agency nursing | 17 | 13 | 11 | 19 | 13 |
| Non Nursing work | 5 | 8 | 13 | 10 | 8 |
| Other | 3 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 7 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 117 | 517 | 139 | 119 | 892 |

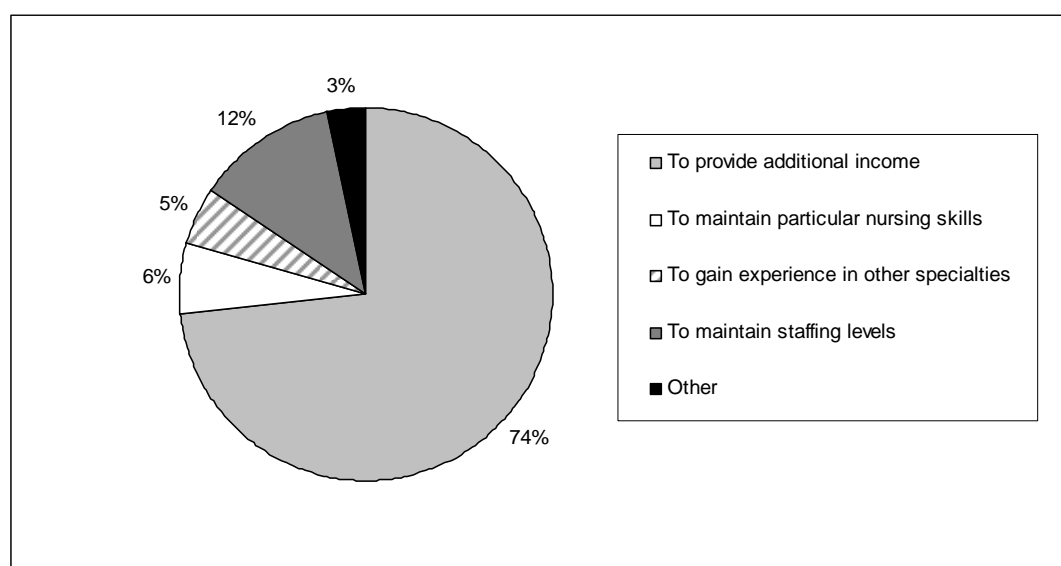
Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

More nurses in the early stage of their career have a second job (26%, UK 29% compared to 18%, UK 21%, of those who have more than 10 years experience as a registered nurse) and this has not changed significantly since 2003. Related to this, 27% (UK 28%) of nurses on band 5 have a second job compared to 13% (UK 17%) of those on band 7-9.

Reasons for undertaking second jobs

The survey asked members their main reason for doing additional paid work. Five responses were provided: 'to provide additional income', 'to maintain particular nursing skills', 'to gain experience in other specialties', 'to maintain staffing levels where I work' and 'other'. Figure 3.4 shows that two thirds (74%, UK 70%) undertake another job to provide additional income.

Figure 3.4: Reasons for undertaking additional work



Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

Across the UK, the nature of additional work undertaken by nurses varies by sector and specialty however it is not possible to explore this in detail for Wales only as the number of respondents is not sufficient. NHS hospital nurses (74%, UK 64%) are most likely to do bank work with their employer.

Table 3.10: Main reasons NHS nurses have an additional job by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| To provide additional income | 74 | 70 | 66 | 79 | 71 |
| To maintain particular nursing skills | 4 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 6 |
| To gain experience in other specialties | 5 | 6 | 6 | 3 | 6 |
| To maintain staffing levels | 13 | 13 | 15 | 8 | 13 |
| Other | 3 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 117 | 507 | 133 | 117 | 798 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

3.7 Key points: Chapter 3

The main points to emerge from Chapter 3 are:

- Fewer NHS nurses on E and G grades were assimilated to pay bands 5 and 6 respectively than was the case across the UK as a whole. Of E grades 17% moved to band 6 compared to 12% across the UK as a whole and of G grades only 58% moved band 7 compared to 53% across the UK as a whole
- One in four (23%) of nurses in Wales requested a review of their banding the same as for the UK as a whole
- Fewer NHS nurses in Wales (45%) are employed on band 5 compared to the rest of the UK (50%). Looking at job titles where there are sufficient cases however (staff nurses and ward managers), there is no difference in the banding between NHS staff nurses in Wales and the rest of the UK
- In aggregate, there has been little change between 2003 (pre-AfC) (46% thought it was appropriate, 48% UK) and 2009 (post-AfC) (47%, UK 48%) in whether or not NHS nurses think their grade/pay band is appropriate given their role and responsibilities
- Fifty four per cent of nurses in Wales on pay band 5 consider their band inappropriate for their role and responsibilities. In 2003 48% of E grades felt the same way about their grade. This disparity reflects the picture across the whole UK. Before AfC there was little difference by grade in whether or not nurses felt their grade was appropriate to their role and responsibilities but post AfC band 5 nurses and to a lesser extent band 6 are more likely than band 7-9 nurses to feel their pay band is not appropriate to their role

- NHS nurses in Wales are as likely as other UK to say that they feel satisfied with their pay considering the work they do (19%) compared to 21% UK wide. Views of this aspect of pay have also improved a little since the last survey
- More NHS nurses in Wales earnings account for more than half their household income (58%) than is the case among all UK nurses (48%). Also more nurses in Wales say they are finding it difficult financially (28%, compared to 23% of all UK nurses)
- One in four NHS nurses (24%, UK 25%) have a second job and 66% (UK 57%) of them are working for the bank with their current employer. More NHS nurses in Wales have a second job for the main reason of providing additional income (74%).

4. Working hours

Nurses' working hours influence health service provision at all levels – nationally, locally and individually. The average number of hours worked by each nurse determines the volume of care that can be delivered by the nursing workforce as a whole. Changes in working patterns that produce a subtle effect on the average full time equivalent that each nurse represents may have significant workforce planning implications. Meanwhile for employers, providing flexible and family friendly working patterns is part of a wider human resource strategy to improve nurses' working lives and retain staff. The NHS was named by the charity 'Working Families' as one of the best employers¹⁴. For individual nurses, control over working hours can contribute significantly to overall quality of work life.

The continued ageing of the nursing workforce means there has been a gradual increase in the number of older respondents (aged 55 plus) approaching retirement, who are more likely to work part-time. Meanwhile the tendency for nurses to take up the profession later in life means that the potential total career length of newly qualified nurses is shorter today than it was in the past.

4.1 Mode of working

In 2009, 67% (UK, 63%) of all members in Wales work full-time and 33% (UK 37%) work part-time/occasionally (32% (UK 34%) part-time, 1% occasionally – within the analysis both are considered 'part-time'). The proportion working full-time has increased significantly in Wales since 2003 when 56% worked full-time. The proportion of nurses working part-time varies by sector, more nurses in the community and GP practices work part-time (45%), than is the case among NHS hospital nurses (30%).

Table 4.1 shows the mode of working for all NHS nurses by country.

Table 4.1: Mode of working by country (NHS only, percentages)

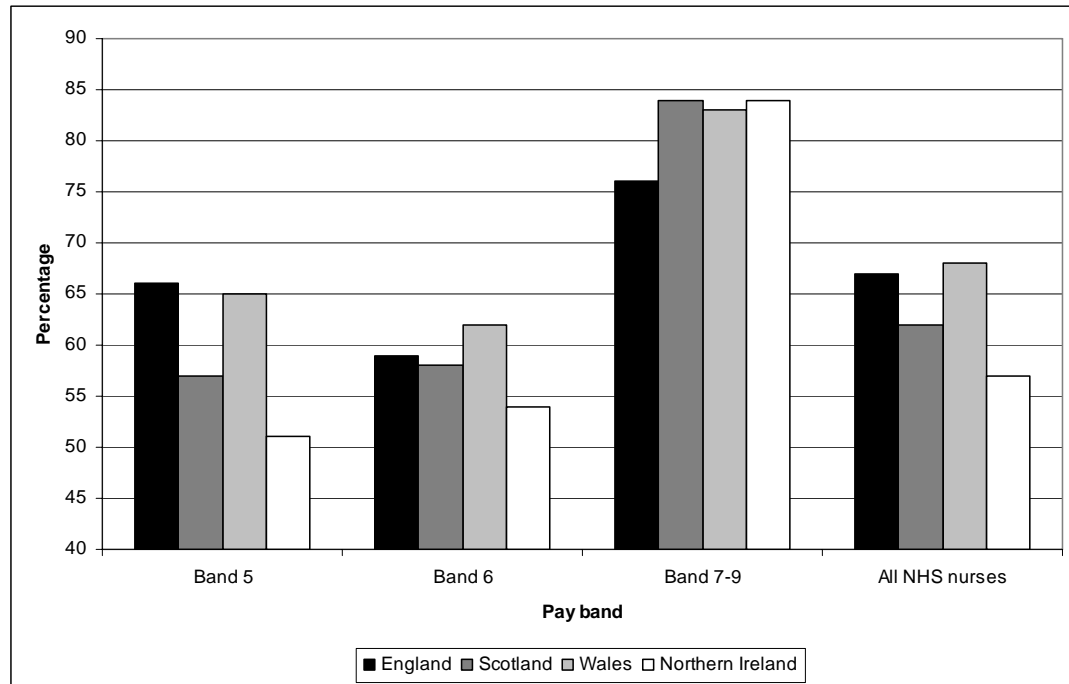
| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Full-time | 67 | 66 | 62 | 58 | 66 |
| Part-time | 32 | 32 | 36 | 40 | 32 |
| Occasional/various hours | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 497 | <i>2057</i> | <i>584</i> | <i>419</i> | 3480 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

The prevalence of working full-time varies across the UK, with larger proportions of nurses in England and Wales working full-time than nurses in Scotland and Northern Ireland. This overall difference primarily relates to a difference in the working patterns of band 5 nurses, who are more likely to work full-time in England and Wales. At the other end of the scale, band 7-9 nurses are less likely to work full-time in England than in the other countries (see Figure 4.1).

¹⁴ NHS Employers (2009) www.nhsemployers.org

Figure 4.1: Full-time working by country and pay band (NHS only, percentages)



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Figure 4.1 also highlights the fact that more nurses on higher pay bands i.e. bands 7-9, work full-time than is the case among nurses on bands 5 and 6. In the NHS in Wales 65% (UK 65%) of staff nurses compared to 74% (UK 82%) of other nurses, corroborating other research evidence that fewer nurses working part-time are found in the more senior positions of the NHS¹⁵.

4.2 Working patterns

In Wales more nurses work shifts, especially in the NHS and more work internal rotation. Across all nurses 61% (UK 57%) work shifts (NHS 66%, UK 61%) and 33% (UK 36%) 'office' hours (NHS 30%, UK 34%). Of those nurses working shifts 62% (UK 58%) work a form of internal rotation (NHS 66%, UK 65%), 28% (UK 32%) work day time shifts (NHS 26%, UK 27%) and 10% (UK 7%) work permanent nights (NHS 8%, UK 8%).

Permanent night shifts are most prevalent in the independent sector (30%, UK 22%), compared to 8% (UK 7%) of NHS hospital nurses. Fewer nurses in Wales 49% (UK 28%) work 12 hour shifts, 32% (UK 41%) of NHS hospital nurses and 46% (UK 50%) of independent sector nurses.

¹⁵ Lane, Nikala, *The Low Status of Female Part – Time NHS Nurses: A Bed-Pan Ceiling? Gender, Work and Organization*, Vol. 7, Issue 4, October 2000. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com>

Table 4.2: Nurses' patterns of work by country (NHS only, percentages)

| Working pattern | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|--------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Shifts | 64 | 60 | 64 | 62 | 61 |
| 'Office' hours | 32 | 34 | 33 | 36 | 34 |
| Flexi-time/irregular hours | 4 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 5 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 496 | 2039 | 582 | 417 | 3534 |
| Shift pattern | | | | | |
| Internal rotation (mix of day & night shifts) | 64 | 65 | 70 | 53 | 65 |
| Daytime shifts only | 26 | 28 | 23 | 30 | 27 |
| Permanent night shifts | 9 | 8 | 7 | 17 | 8 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 321 | 1258 | 378 | 264 | 2221 |
| Length of shifts | | | | | |
| 8 hours | 42 | 38 | 29 | 20 | 36 |
| 12 hours | 28 | 35 | 49 | 54 | 37 |
| Other | 30 | 27 | 22 | 26 | 27 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 327 | 1293 | 385 | 269 | 2274 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Nurses' working patterns are related to their stage of career (as measured by time since qualification) and domestic circumstances. For example, 84% (UK 87%) of newly qualified nurses work full-time compared to 63% (UK 60%) of nurses with more than five years experience. They are also much more likely to work shifts (95%, UK 84%) and work internal rotation (75%, UK 82%). Conversely nurses with children living at home and, to a lesser extent, with adult caring responsibilities are less likely to work full-time, shifts and internal rotation.

4.3 Working excess hours

Across the UK, the proportion of nurses working excess hours has remained more or less unchanged for the last 10 years (58%), in Wales this year the figure is 54%. In Wales however, there has been a reduction from 56% (UK 58%) in 2007 which was slightly lower than the figure reported in 2005 (58%, UK 60%). In the NHS 53% worked excess hours in 2009.

Nurses in higher grade/pay band posts are more likely to work excess hours. In the NHS, 48% (UK 53%) of band 5 nurses work excess hours compared to 46% (UK 60%) of band 6, 69% (UK 75%) of band 7 and 90% (UK 85%) of band 8/9.

More nurses in Wales and England work in excess of their contracted hours than nurses in the other countries of the UK. This is not simply connected to the different pay band distribution of the four countries. Looking specifically at nurses in band 5 posts (where there is most variation), nurses in Scotland and Northern Ireland are less likely to have worked excess hours in their last full working week and they also work excess hours less frequently and for shorter amounts of time, than nurses in Wales and England (see Table 4.3).

Reimbursement for working overtime also varies by country. Nurses in Northern Ireland and Wales are more likely to be offered time off in lieu as opposed to a higher rate of pay and less likely to be offered bank work than the equivalent nurses in Wales and England.

Table 4.3: NHS band 5 nurses working excess hours by country (percentages)

| | Band 5 in each country | | | | All band 5 |
|---|------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|------------|
| | Wales | England | Scotland | N Ireland | |
| % working excess hours | 48 | 53 | 39 | 41 | 50 |
| % working excess hours at least several times per week | 30 | 36 | 26 | 27 | 34 |
| Average (mean no.) excess hours (<i>all nurses</i>) | 3.4 | 3.1 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 2.9 |
| Average (mean no.) excess hours (<i>those working excess hours</i>) | 8.0 | 6.4 | 5.2 | 5.6 | 6.3 |
| % respondents offered pay at higher rate | 17 | 19 | 18 | 14 | 18 |
| % respondents offered pay at normal rate | 28 | 28 | 32 | 31 | 28 |
| % respondents offered bank work | 25 | 28 | 28 | 23 | 28 |
| % respondents offered time off in lieu | 26 | 22 | 21 | 29 | 22 |
| % respondents offered nothing | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| <i>Weighted cases (max)</i> | 65 | 1229 | 169 | 70 | 1533 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Although more full-time nurses work excess hours than part-time (60% compared to 55%), and there are more part-time nurses working in Northern Ireland and Scotland, this does not entirely explain the national differences in the table above.

Members were also asked 'If your employer wants you to work extra hours to provide cover, what are you most likely to be offered?' Their responses, categorised by employer, are presented in Table 4.4. The findings are broadly the same as in the 2007 survey,

Table 4.4: Cover pay offered by employer group (percentages)

| | Community/ | | | | All |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| | NHS hospital | primary | Independent | Other | |
| Paid at higher rate | 19 | 2 | 24 | 5 | 15 (14) |
| Paid at normal rate | 23 | 23 | 57 | 14 | 25 (31) |
| Paid at lower rate | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 (1) |
| Bank work | 22 | 9 | 0 | 5 | 16 (18) |
| Time off in lieu | 31 | 53 | 7 | 62 | 36 (31) |
| Nothing | 2 | 9 | 10 | 14 | 5 (5) |
| Other | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 (1) |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 330 | 138 | 42 | 21 | 531 (4129) |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Community nurses are more likely than other groups to be offered time off in lieu – this is partly a function of pay band, with more community nurses employed on higher pay bands. Independent sector nurses are more likely to be offered pay at the normal rate when they work extra hours to provide cover. These figures are very similar to the UK wide picture.

Five per cent (UK 5%) of members in Wales said that they are not offered anything should their employer want them to work extra hours. This is most common for higher band nurses.

On average, full-time nurses work a total of 43 hours (UK 44) and part-time work 29 hours (UK 29). This has changed little since 2007. Table 4.5 shows the total working hours of nurses in Wales and the UK by mode of working.

Table 4.5: Hours worked (full-time/part-time) – percentages and means

| | Wales | | UK | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Full-time | Part-time | Full-time | Part-time |
| Mean contracted hours in main job | 37.5 | 24.2 | 37.5 | 23.2 |
| Working excess hours in last week (%) | 56 | 51 | 60 | 55 |
| Working in excess of contract several times per week or more (%) | 42 | 28 | 47 | 31 |
| Mean excess hours in main job (ALL) | 4.0 | 2.8 | 4.6 | 3.0 |
| Average excess hours in main job (those that worked excess hours) | 7.7 | 6.1 | 7.7 | 5.6 |
| Additional jobs (%) | 23 | 19 | 25 | 23 |
| Mean hours worked in additional jobs (ALL) | 1.8 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 2.2 |
| Mean hours worked in additional jobs (those with additional jobs) | 11.8 | 11.1 | 13.2 | 12.4 |
| TOTAL hours worked in last week (ALL) | 43.3 | 28.9 | 44.4 | 28.7 |
| <i>Weighted cases (all respondents)</i> | 331 | 163 | 2498 | 1546 |

Source: Employment Research Ltd/RCN 2009

4.4 Working hours satisfaction

Despite the long hours many nurses work, most members/nurses are positive about their working hours and these views have changed little in recent years. Three quarters of all nurses (70%, UK 71%) are happy with their working hours¹⁶, 60% (UK 65%) are satisfied with their input into planning off duty/times of work, 54% (UK 58%) feel able to balance their home and working lives and 59% (UK 60%) feel satisfied with the choice they have over the length of shifts they work. The main difference here between nurses working in Wales and elsewhere in the UK is they are less likely to report being happy with their working lives. It is likely that this is a function of more nurses in Wales working full-time.

Looking at the NHS only, by and large nurses in Wales are as satisfied with their working hours as nurses across the whole UK but fewer are satisfied with their input into planning off duty and times of work (62%, UK 65%). It is likely this is because more nurses responding to the survey work internal rotation shifts in Wales and this working pattern is generally associated with lower levels of working hours satisfaction.

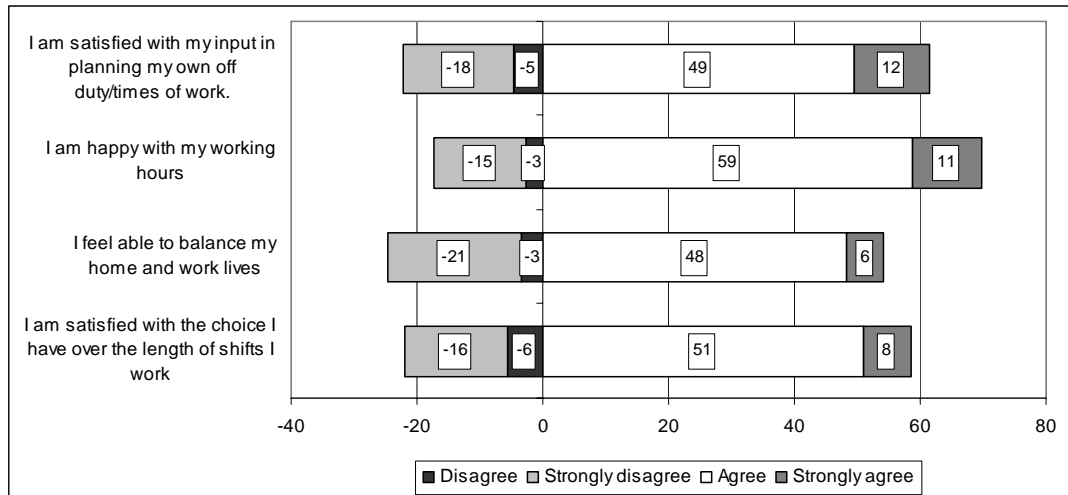
Table 4.6: Satisfaction with working hours by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Satisfied with planning off duty/times of work | 62 | 65 | 58 | 68 | 65 |
| Happy with working hours | 70 | 70 | 74 | 74 | 71 |
| Feel able to balance home and working lives | 54 | 58 | 58 | 62 | 58 |
| Satisfied with choice over length of shifts worked | 59 | 60 | 58 | 63 | 60 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 483 | 2008 | 573 | 409 | 3473 |

Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

¹⁶ This statement is new to the 2009 survey used as it provides an overall indicator of working hours satisfaction while the others focus on specific aspects of working hours.

Figure 4.2: Views of working hours (percentages NHS only)



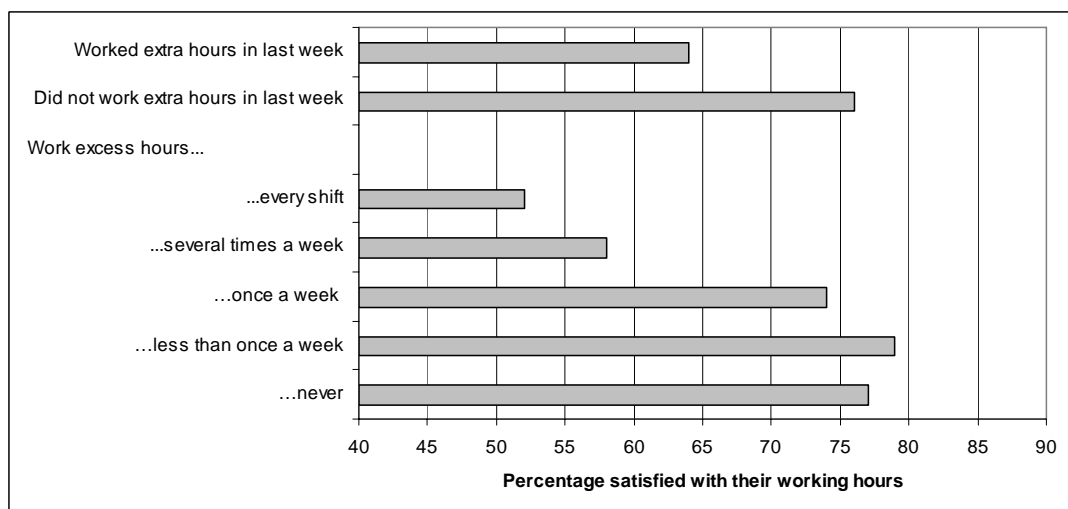
Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

However, not all nurses feel equally satisfied with their working hours. Part-time nurses are generally more satisfied with their working hours (75% vs. 68% of full-time nurses) (UK 79% vs 67%), and current working patterns (in terms of full or part-time, shift pattern and shift length) are the main predictors of satisfaction with working hours. However, these differences are not quite as wide in Wales as they are elsewhere in the UK.

Working extra hours and satisfaction

Most nurses working extra hours are less satisfied with their working hours, as illustrated in Figure 4.3. Nurses who are not offered any reimbursement when they are asked to work extra hours are also less satisfied with their working hours overall (37% (UK 47%) compared to 74% (UK 71%) across all nurses).

Figure 4.3: I am happy with my working hours by working excess hours in last week



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Nurses who work long hours in total, are also less satisfied with their hours. Thus full-time nurses who express most dissatisfaction with their hours are typically working six (UK six) hours a week more than those who are most positive about their working hours. The same pattern is found for part-time nurses.

4.5 Key points: Chapter 4

The main points from chapter four include:

- Two thirds of NHS nurses in Wales work full-time (67%) the same as for the UK as a whole
- Two thirds (64%) of NHS nurses in Wales work shifts, with 64% of these nurses working internal rotation (UK 65%) and 28% work 12 hour shifts (much lower than across the UK as a whole 37%)
- Nearly a half of all Band 5 nurses in Wales (48%) work excess hours. This is less than higher banded nurses (69% of Band 7 and 90% of Band 8/9).
- On average, full-time nurses work a total of 43 hours (UK 44) and part-time work 29 hours (UK 29). This has changed little since 2007
- In terms of working hours, fewer NHS nurses in Wales feel able to balance their home and work lives (54%, UK 58%)
- The more frequently nurses work excess hours the less likely they are to be satisfied with their working hours
- Also, nurses who are not offered any reimbursement when they are asked to work extra hours are also less satisfied with their working hours overall (37% (UK 47%) compared to 74% (UK 71%) across all nurses).

5. Workload and staffing

After a period of rapid growth earlier in the decade, NHS funding restraints have curtailed this growth, and the numbers of nurses working in the NHS has flat-lined since 2005¹⁷. This has resulted from significantly reduced recruitment. Meanwhile the demand for care continues to grow – for example in England, NHS hospital admissions have risen from 11m to 13.5m in the last decade, at a time when the mean length of stay has fallen from 8.4 days to 5.7 days, and average age of inpatients has gone up from 45 to 50¹⁸.

There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating that the ratio of registered nurses to patients, although a crude measure when taken in isolation, is nonetheless strongly correlated with patient outcomes¹⁹. The RCN employment survey provides a unique opportunity to capture a snapshot of staffing levels in different settings, and explore how changes in workforce numbers and demand for care at the national level are playing out in hospital wards and care homes.

5.1 Nurse to patient ratios (NHS wards)

Overall there has been little change on NHS wards in the patient and staffing data reported. The average NHS ward has 23 beds (UK 24) and an average of 22 patients (UK 23) during the day. Daytime occupancy rates are also much as they have been (96% vs. 94% in 2007).

The average total number of RNs and HCAs/auxiliaries staffing on these wards is slightly lower at 5.0 (UK 5.4) (see Table 5.1) nursing staff during daytime (compared with 5.7 in 2007, and 5.5 in 2005). There has also been a small shift in the skill-mix reported; registered nurses represent approximately 59% of all nursing staff recorded as being on duty in the day, compared with 64% in 2007. The numbers of RNs has reduced slightly since 2007 (with 2.8 RNs during the day and 2.0 during the night)²⁰. During the day there has been little change in Wales in the number of patients per RN but at night there has been a small increase from 10.5 patients per RN to 11.1.

Many of the basic parameters of NHS wards remain the same as two years ago – typically 23 beds, with 90+ occupancy rates. The results suggest very little change from 2007.

¹⁷ Buchan J, Seccombe I (2008) *An incomplete plan: The UK nursing labour market review 2008*. RCN London

¹⁸ Hospital Episode Statistics (2009) *A decade in view* www.hesonline.nhs.uk

¹⁹ Kane R et al (2007) The Association of Registered Nurse Staffing Levels and Patient Outcomes: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *Med. Care* 2007; 45:1195-204

More nurses equals better care, *Nurs. Times* . 31 March 2009, www.nursingtimes.net

²⁰ Note that the question asking about staffing numbers in 2009 asked respondents to give the total numbers INCLUDING themselves (in capital letters), whereas in the previous surveys the question asked for numbers EXCLUDING yourself.

Table 5.1: Average staffing and patient data – NHS wards 2009, 2007 and 2005 (UK in brackets)

| | NHS wards 2009 | | NHS wards 2007 | | NHS wards 2005 | |
|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | Day | Night | Day | Night | Day | Night |
| Number of beds | 23 (24) | 25 (24) | 23 (23) | 22 (23) | 22 (23) | 25 (22) |
| Total number of patients | 22 (23) | 24 (22) | 22 (22) | 21 (22) | 21 (22) | 22 (21) |
| Occupancy | 96 (97%) | 95 (92%) | 94 (96)% | 100 (100)% | 93 (96)% | 88 (95)% |
| Number of registered nurses | 2.8 (3.3) | 2.0 (2.5) | 3.4 (3.6) | 2.3 (2.8) | 3.3 (3.3) | 2.5 (2.4) |
| Number of HCAs/auxiliaries | 2.2 (2.2) | 1.4 (1.5) | 2.0 (1.9) | 1.3 (1.2) | 2.1 (2.1) | 1.4 (1.3) |
| Total staff on duty (RNs + HCAs) | 5.0 (5.4) | 3.5 (3.9) | 5.4 (5.6) | 3.6 (4.0) | 5.5 (5.4) | 3.9 (3.7) |
| RNs as % of all nursing staff | 59 (60%) | 60 (62%) | 64 (66)% | 63 (70)% | 61 (62)% | 63 (66)% |
| Patients per registered nurses (mean across all RNs) | 7.2 (7.9) | 11.1 (10.6) | 7.2 (6.9) | 10.5 (9.1) | 7.4 (7.7) | 10.6 (10.1) |
| Patients per member of nursing staff (mean across total staff) | 4.0 (4.4) | 6.3 (6.1) | 4.1 (4.2) | 6.0 (5.7) | 4.0 (4.4) | 6.1 (6.1) |
| <i>Number of cases</i> | <i>134 (713)</i> | <i>63 (324)</i> | <i>113 (805)</i> | <i>50 (380)</i> | <i>162 (822)</i> | <i>58 (316)</i> |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

5.2 How nurses' time is spent

Nurses were asked to give a breakdown of their working time, showing how it is split between: clinical work, management, educating and training others, research and other activity. They were also asked if they thought that their time was divided was about right.

NHS nurses typically spend (71%, UK 71%) of their time on clinical activity, which is similar to the figure reported in 2007 (70%). On average 16% (UK 15%) of nurses' time is spent on management (14% in 2007), 9% (UK 10%) on educating/training others and 3% (UK 5%) on research and other activities.

Table 5.2 breaks down these results by job-title within the NHS. For staff nurses, 81% of time is spent on clinical activities (which is the same as in 2007) and 8% on management, 8% on educating/training others, 1% on research and 1% on other activities. Typically 42% of senior nurse's time is spent on management and 43% on clinical work. On average a quarter of a sister/charge nurse's time is spent on management and 64% on clinical work. All these figures are almost identical to the UK wide data.

Table 5.2: Activity mix in the NHS by job title: mean percentages actual (and ideal)

| | Nature of activity | | | | | Weighted cases |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| | Clinical | Mgt | Ed/training others | Research | Other | |
| Staff nurse | 80 (71) | 9 (9) | 8 (14) | 1 (4) | 1 (2) | 239 (90) |
| Community nurse | 82 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 15 |
| Sister/Charge nurse | 63 (55) | 30 (26) | 7 (13) | 1 (3) | 0 (1) | 54 (42) |
| CNS | 64 | 10 | 17 | 8 | 2 | 39 |
| Other | 58 (55) | 26 (23) | 11 (14) | 2 (5) | 3 (3) | 123 (35) |
| All NHS respondents | 71 (64) | 16 (16) | 9 (14) | 2 (4) | 1 (2) | 468 (186) |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

This year the survey asked respondents to indicate whether or not they felt their mix of activity was about right for the job they are in. Most nurses (72, UK 70%) were happy with the current mix, rising to 74% of community, hospice and GP practice nurses (UK 81%). Within the NHS, 70% (UK 68%) nurses feel their mix of activities is about right and in the independent sector 68% respond in the same vein.

Nearly three quarters of staff nurses (73%, UK 72%) say that the activity mix is about right for their job but of sisters/charge nurses just 59% (UK 52%) report that their activity mix is about right. In general, nurses dissatisfied with their current role feel that they should be spending less time on clinical activities and more on training/educating others and research, and to a lesser extent management. Of the ward managers who report that the mix of activities is not right the average amount of time they feel should be spent on clinical activities is 48% (UK 55%) compared to the 63% (UK 64%) actually undertaken.

5.3 Responsibilities

As well as asking about staffing on their last shift, hospital nurses were also asked whether they were in charge. Overall 64% (UK 59%) of NHS hospital nurses in Wales reported that they were in charge on their last shift, a higher proportion than across the rest of the UK.

Table 5.3: Responsibilities of NHS hospital ward nurses by country (NHS only, percentages)

| In charge of last shift | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-------------------------|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 64 | 58 | 61 | 61 | 59 |
| No | 36 | 42 | 39 | 39 | 41 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 57 | 828 | 118 | 41 | 1044 |
| Mentor students | | | | | |
| Yes | 56 | 68 | 62 | 54 | 62 |
| Mean no. | 3.1 | 3.8 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 3.6 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 55 | 823 | 113 | 39 | 1030 |
| Preceptorship | | | | | |
| Yes | 48 | 45 | 47 | 45 | 45 |
| Mean no. | 1.4 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.6 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 814 | 54 | 112 | 38 | 1018 |

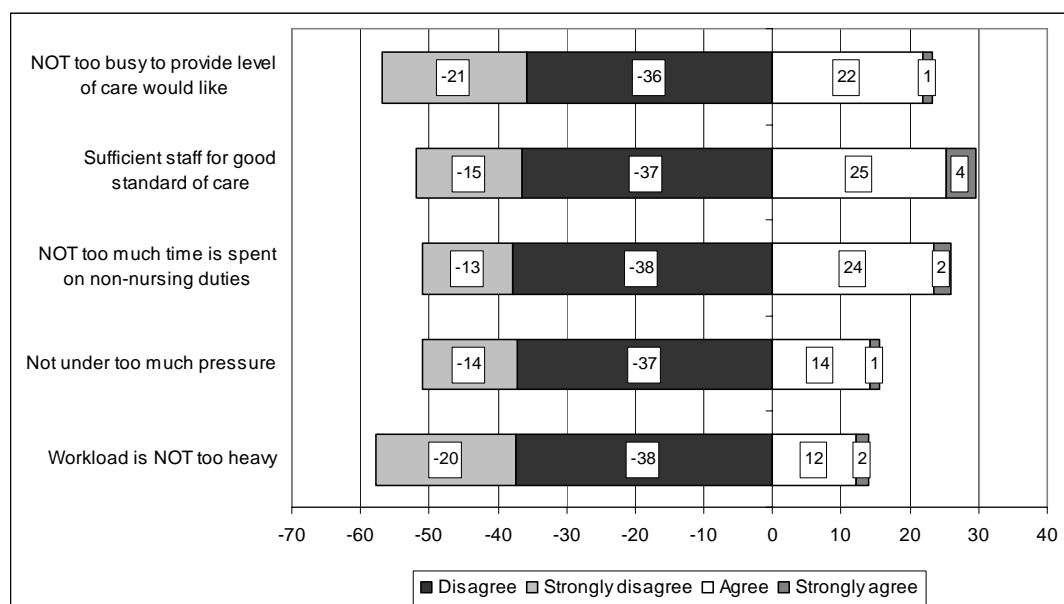
Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Approximately a half of NHS hospital ward nurses (56%, UK 62%) responding mentor students, and 48% (UK 45%) provide preceptorship for newly qualified nurses. Sister/charge nurses are most likely to provide preceptorship (82%, UK 71%), and 100% (UK 78%) have responsibility for mentoring students (numbers here are small so not statistically significant). In the last year sister/charge nurses typically have responsibility for mentoring two (UK four) students and one (UK two) newly qualified nurses.

5.4 Views of workload and staffing

Respondents were presented with 34 statements about their working life as a nurse, and asked to indicate their agreement with each on a five point scale. The results for the items related to workload and staffing are presented in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Views of workload and staffing (NHS only) – percentages



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Despite an overall improvement in morale and motivation since 2007, views of workload have continued to decline, from what was already a low base. The majority (57%, UK 58% of all nurses, 58%, UK 61%, in the NHS) consider that their workload is too heavy and that they are under too much pressure (50%, UK 52%, all and 51%, UK 55%, NHS) and 47% (UK 47%) say too much time is spent on non-nursing duties. More than a half (53%, UK 55%) of all NHS nurses say they are too busy to provide the level of care they would like. On all four of these items there has been a decrease in numbers responding positively since 2007.

Table 5.4: Satisfaction with workload issues by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| My workload is too heavy | 58 | 62 | 57 | 63 | 61 |
| I feel I am under too much pressure at work | 51 | 55 | 52 | 59 | 55 |
| Too much of my time is spent on non-nursing duties | 51 | 46 | 50 | 51 | 47 |
| There are NOT sufficient staff to provide a good standard of care | 52 | 52 | 48 | 54 | 52 |
| Too busy to provide standard of care I would like | 56 | 55 | 52 | 57 | 55 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 490 | 2033 | 569 | 411 | 3512 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

The following highlight the differences between subgroups of nurses:

- There was no discernible difference in the NHS between staff nurses working full or part-time

- Pressure in the workplace may also relate to outside pressures. Nurses in the NHS who have adult caring responsibilities at home are more likely to feel they are under too much pressure at work than nurses who do not have these responsibilities (64% compared to 47% respectively, UK 62% vs. 53%).

Views of workload are strongly related to typical patient to RN ratios. Within the NHS, nurses who feel that their workload is too heavy are on wards with an average of 11.6 (UK 9.3) patients per RN, compared with 6.8 (UK 6.8) amongst nurses who say that their workload is not too heavy.

Although workloads continue to be viewed negatively, more NHS nurses in 2009 agree that: *'there are sufficient staff to provide a good standard of care'* (up from 29% (UK 26%) in 2007 to 35% (UK 30%) in 2009).

However NHS nurses are significantly more negative about staffing levels than nurses in other sectors. More than half (59%) of nurses in other sectors (independent sector 44%) agree with the statement compared to just 30% of NHS nurses.

Nursing establishments and compromised care

Two related questions ask respondents firstly, whether they consider the nursing establishment (i.e. the planned complement of staff to be employed) where they work to be sufficient to meet patient needs and secondly, how often they feel patient care is compromised where they work.

Just over a half (51%, UK 51%) of all nurses responding to the question say that the nursing establishment where they work is sufficient to meet patient needs and just under a half (49%, UK 49%) say it is not. Among NHS nurses 43% (UK 45%) say there are sufficient staff, 57% (UK 55%) say there are not sufficient staff to meet patient needs.

Table 5.5: Nursing establishment sufficient to meet patient needs and frequency with which patient care is compromised by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Establishment sufficient | 43 | 45 | 48 | 50 | 46 |
| Establishment not sufficient | 57 | 55 | 52 | 50 | 54 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 480 | 1996 | 569 | 401 | 3446 |
| Frequency patient care is compromised | | | | | |
| Never | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 |
| Rarely | 26 | 24 | 26 | 25 | 25 |
| Several times a month | 26 | 25 | 25 | 23 | 25 |
| Once or twice a week | 13 | 20 | 21 | 19 | 19 |
| On most shifts | 26 | 22 | 20 | 22 | 22 |
| On every shift | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 482 | 1994 | 567 | 398 | 3441 |

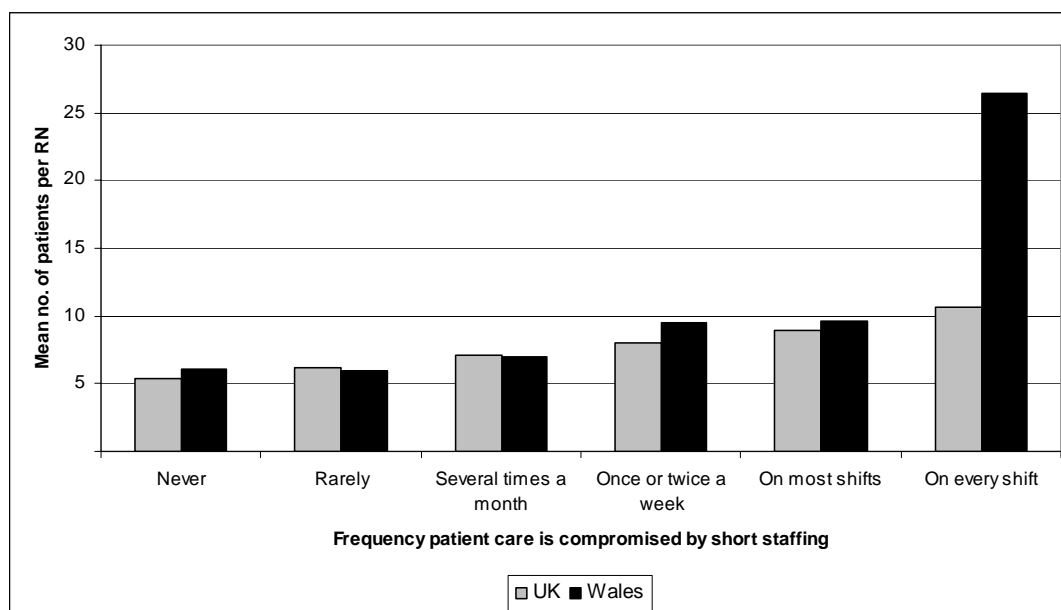
Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

Whether the nursing establishment is in reality sufficient to provide enough staff on a daily basis, will depend a number of other factors – the level of unfilled posts, the number of staff absent (short or long-term) and the extent which these gaps are covered (through staff working additional hours or temporary staff). Thus in the NHS, even where nurses consider that the nursing establishment is sufficient, only half (55%, UK 53%) agree that there are sufficient staff to provide a good standard of care. On the other hand where the nursing establishment is not considered sufficient, 11% (UK 11%) nonetheless say there are sufficient staff to provide a good standard of care.

Just over a third of nurses (35%, UK 35%) report patient care is rarely or never compromised by short staffing, 25% (UK 23%) say it is compromised several times per month and 40% (UK 42%) say it is compromised at least once or twice per week (with 28% (UK 25%) saying it is compromised on most or every shift). Patient care is compromised more frequently in the NHS; 44% (UK 47%) report it is compromised at least once or twice per week compared to 16% (UK 23%) outside the NHS. This is more or less the same as in 2007, when 43% (UK 44%) of NHS respondents reported that short staffing compromised patient care at least once a week.

Figure 5.2 demonstrates the link between patient to nurse ratio and reports that care is compromised by short staffing in NHS hospitals. Where patient care is reported to never be compromised the average number of patients per RN is six (UK five) but where it is compromised on every shift the patient to nurse ratio is two times higher at 26 (UK 10) patients per RN.

Figure 5.2: Frequency patient care is compromised by short staffing in NHS hospitals, mean number of patient per RN



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

5.5 Key points: Chapter 5

The main points to emerge from Chapter 5 are:

- There has been little change in the staffing data since 2007. The number of RNs is slightly less during the day than in 2007. There has been little change in Wales in the number of patients per RN between 2007 and 2009
- NHS nurses typically spend 71% (UK 71%) of their time on clinical activity and 16% on management, which is similar to the figure reported in 2007 (70%). Most NHS nurses (72%) are satisfied with the balance of activities in their job. An exception however, is ward managers, just 59% (UK 52%) report that their activity mix is about right. Ward managers who are dissatisfied with the mix of activities in their role think they should be spending less time on clinical activities (48% of their time) compared to the 63% actually undertaken
- Two thirds (64%, UK 59%) of NHS hospital nurses in Wales reported that they were in charge on their last shift. Also 56% of those in the NHS (UK 62%) mentor students, and 48% in the NHS (UK 45%) provide preceptorship for newly qualified nurses
- There has been a decline in positive responses to workload and staffing attitude items since 2007, despite an improvement in most other areas of employment
- Views of workload are strongly related to typical patient to RN ratios. Within the NHS, nurses who feel that their workload is too heavy are on wards with an average of 11.6 (UK 9.3) patients per RN, compared with 6.8 (UK 6.8) amongst nurses who say that their workload is not too heavy
- Four in ten (43%) nurses in Wales say that the nursing establishment where they work is sufficient to meet patient needs and 44% say that patient care is compromised at least once or twice per week. These figures are more or less the same as elsewhere in the UK.

6. Job change and career progression

In this chapter we examine job change and career movement and progression issues. These questions provide the survey with indicators of turnover, retention and of the nursing workforce dynamics. In addition the data highlight differences in experience of groups of nurses when moving jobs or applying for posts of a higher grade/pay band.

In 2005 the employment survey reported a small decline in turnover suggesting a slow down in recruitment. In addition to this, the slow down in the health labour market resulted in difficulties for newly qualified nurses in finding employment²¹. Then in 2007 there was a steep decline in turnover with the lowest recorded level of job change since 1997 as the health economy reacted to NHS financial deficits, and as a new pay system was introduced which inevitably put people ‘on hold’ as they waited to see what their final position on the new pay bands would be.

Two years on since the last employment survey, AfC has been fully implemented in the NHS across the UK. But since the autumn of 2008 the national economic climate has deteriorated and the country now faces a recession and growing levels of unemployment. How has this impacted on nurses’ job mobility and progression?

6.1 Changing jobs and employer

To provide a barometer of turnover in the nursing labour market over the previous year, respondents are asked to answer two questions ‘*have you changed jobs in the last 12 months?*’ and following this ‘*have you changed employer in the last 12 months?*’

In 2005, we reported that the turnover figure (as measured by job changes²²) had reduced slightly for the first time since 1997/8. At the time it was not clear if this was a temporary dip or the start of downward trend. The data in 2007 suggested that it was the start of a downward trend. Across the workforce as a whole there was a significant reduction in the number of members who changed jobs in the 12 months preceding the survey; down from 22% (UK 24%) in 2004/5 and 20% (UK 26%) in 2002/3 to 14% (UK 16%) in 2006/7.

Table 6.1: Changing jobs and changing employers in 12 months prior to the survey by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| Changed jobs in last 12 months | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|--------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Yes | 15 | 20 | 13 | 12 | 19 |
| No | 85 | 80 | 87 | 88 | 81 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 491 | 2033 | 583 | 414 | 3521 |
| Changed employer in last 12 months | | | | | |
| Yes | 5 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 8 |
| No | 95 | 91 | 95 | 95 | 92 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 491 | 2020 | 585 | 411 | 3507 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

²¹ Buchan J (2006) *From Boom to Bust? The UK Nursing Labour Market Review 2005/6*, Queen Margaret University College, September 2006, pg 39

²² It has always been assumed that this figure includes all job changes, both within the same organisation be it horizontal or via promotions and employer moves.

In England there has been an increase in the turnover rate from two years ago but in Wales, and indeed the other UK countries, there has been little change from two years ago.

Reduced turnover as expressed by job changes is likely to be caused by a combination of factors. Firstly, there are fewer opportunities due to budget deficits, recruitment freezes and job losses. And secondly, over the 12 months prior to the survey more NHS nurses in Wales were waiting to discover how their post had been evaluated in the new pay system Agenda for Change – this took longer in Wales than was the case in England.

In NHS hospitals the proportion of respondents who had changed job in the 12 months prior to the survey has fallen from 22% (UK 21%) in 2005 to 13% (UK 14%) in 2007 and now stands at 16% (UK 16%), a small turnaround.

In Wales there has been a small increase in the proportion of respondents indicating that they have changed employer (8%, UK 8%) up from 6% (UK 8%) in 2007.

Why nurses change jobs/employer

The survey asked members to indicate from a list of possible factors the main reasons they changed jobs/employer. Although the options changed slightly this year, the results are broadly comparable with 2007, and are presented for all nurses who changed jobs. There are insufficient cases in Wales to examine the reasons nurses changed employers.

The most common reason for changing jobs is to gain different experience and skills, mentioned by a half (46%, UK 54%) of all nurses who had changed jobs in the preceding year. Career progression issues such as seeking better prospects were referred to by 39% (UK 39%) and this figure is slightly higher than in 2007 when 26% (UK 34%) moved jobs for this reason.

Other differences in response include fewer nurses in Wales moving jobs because of stress and workload (22%) compared to UK 31%) and dissatisfaction with previous job (20% compared to UK 30%). More nurses moved jobs to gain a change in working hours (32% (UK 35%) in 2009 and 26% (UK 31%) in 2007), distance to work and bullying and harassment both of which were also cited by more respondents in 2009 than was the case in 2007. Interestingly, on average, respondents ticked more factors for moving jobs in 2009 than was the case in 2007.

Looking at the two most important reasons nurses gave for moving jobs, the major change since 2007 is that fewer refer to gaining different skills and experience as a reason for the change but, in Wales, more refer to better job prospects and promotion.

Table 6.2: Reasons for changing jobs – percentages (UK in brackets)

| | All job changers | | Employer changers | % most important 2 |
|---|------------------|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| | UK | Wales | (UK: too few cases in Wales) | |
| Gain different experience/skills | 54 | 46 | 48 | 26 (29) |
| Better prospects | 39 | 35 | 40 | 20 (22) |
| Change in hours/better work life balance | 35 | 32 | 41 | 27 (24) |
| Stress/workload in previous job | 31 | 22 | 35 | 19 (19) |
| Promotion | 30 | 34 | 17 | 20 (17) |
| Better pay | 30 | 28 | 27 | 17 (22) |
| Dissatisfied with previous job | 30 | 20 | 37 | 15 (20) |
| Distance to work | 15 | 16 | 23 | 9 (5) |
| Personal reasons/moving/partner's job ²³ | 13 | 10 | 20 | 7 (8) |
| Bullying/harassment | 11 | 11 | 14 | 12 (7) |
| Training reasons | 8 | 5 | 10 | 2 (4) |
| Better terms and conditions | 7 | 3 | 10 | 2 (2) |
| Health problems | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 (1) |
| Redeployment ²⁴ | 4 | 8 | 3 | 6 (2) |
| Place of work closed/redundancy | 3 | 2 | 5 | 1 (2) |
| Retirement (semi) | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 (2) |
| Dismissed (unfairly/fairly) | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 (1) |
| Other | 12 | 9 | 14 | 5 (6) |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | <i>863</i> | <i>93</i> | <i>451</i> | <i>125 (639)</i> |

Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

6.2 Applications for higher band posts

The employment survey includes questions to explore nurses' efforts to gain promotion. Respondents are asked if, in the last 12 months, they have applied for a higher grade/banded post and if they have whether or not that application was successful.

In 2007, 19% (UK 16%) had applied for a higher band/grade post, whilst in 2003 the equivalent figure was 22%.

Table 6.3: Applying for higher band posts in 12 months prior to the survey by country (NHS only, percentages)

| Applied for a higher grade post? | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 15 | 18 | 10 | 18 | 17 |
| No | 85 | 82 | 90 | 82 | 83 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | <i>494</i> | <i>2031</i> | <i>584</i> | <i>418</i> | <i>3527</i> |
| Successful in application for higher grade post? | | | | | |
| Yes | 51 | 53 | 33 | 38 | 49 |
| No | 49 | 47 | 67 | 62 | 51 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | <i>75</i> | <i>354</i> | <i>69</i> | <i>73</i> | <i>571</i> |

Source: Employment Research/RCN 2009

²³ This includes family reasons. In 2007 family reasons was a separate factor

²⁴ Redeployment not included as an option in 2005.

This year in Wales the proportion of nurses who had applied for a higher grade post has reduced again to 15% compared to 16% across the UK as a whole. Within the NHS, 15% (UK 17%) had applied for a higher grade post, while in 2003 the equivalent figure was 26% (UK 26%).

Some of the reduction in applications to higher grade posts will be due to the width of band 5, which encompasses, what was previously, two separate grades. A half (45%, UK 49%) of all NHS nurses are employed on band 5, whilst in 2003 this proportion was split between E and D grades. Thus transition between grade D and E would previously have involved an application to a post of higher grade, but now both levels fall within the same pay band.

The reduction in the proportions of nurses applying for jobs of a higher pay band is likely to be due to the relatively recent implementation of AfC. That process in itself may have felt like a job change for many respondents, as they waited to see the outcome of job evaluation, and to see how their post had been banded.

Success in applying for higher banded posts

A half (52%, UK 52%) of those nurses who applied for higher banded posts were successful in getting the job (NHS 54%, UK 49%).

There are too few cases to allow further analysis of application success.

6.3 Currently seeking a change of job

In 2007 a new question was introduced to find out if members were currently seeking work or a change of job and if so, to indicate what type of job they are seeking. In 2009 one in four nurses (28%, UK 26%, same as NHS figure) are currently seeking work or a change of job, marginally higher in Wales than the figure reported in 2007 (24%, UK 24%).

Table 6.4: Currently seeking a change of work/job and nature of work sought by country (NHS only, percentages)

| Currently seeking work or a change of job? | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 28 | 26 | 24 | 26 | 26 |
| No | 72 | 74 | 76 | 74 | 74 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 459 | 1915 | 546 | 384 | 3304 |
| What type of work sought? | | | | | |
| NHS working | 77 | 72 | 73 | 68 | 73 |
| Agency working | 2 | 8 | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| Bank nursing | 3 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 5 |
| Non-NHS nursing | 10 | 10 | 8 | 4 | 9 |
| Nursing outside the UK | 7 | 10 | 8 | 7 | 9 |
| Non-nursing | 13 | 13 | 22 | 18 | 14 |
| Other | 11 | 11 | 8 | 12 | 10 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 128 | 484 | 130 | 94 | 836 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Looking for a change in job is correlated with career stage. A third (36%, UK 33%) of nurses in the first ten years of their careers are seeking work or a change of job, compared 22% (UK 20%) of those more than 20 years into their career.

Nurses who are dissatisfied with their working lives are more likely to be seeking a change of job. For example, 64% (UK 59%) of nurses who say they are dissatisfied with their current job are looking for a change of job, compared to just 12% (UK 14%) of those who report job satisfaction. Four other factors have been identified as being most strongly correlated with looking for a new job: control over working hours, feeling work is valued, access to training, and having a supportive manager. In each case, nurses who are not currently seeking a change in job are more satisfied, and are at least twice as likely to be satisfied with each of these aspects of their working lives compared to those looking for a job.

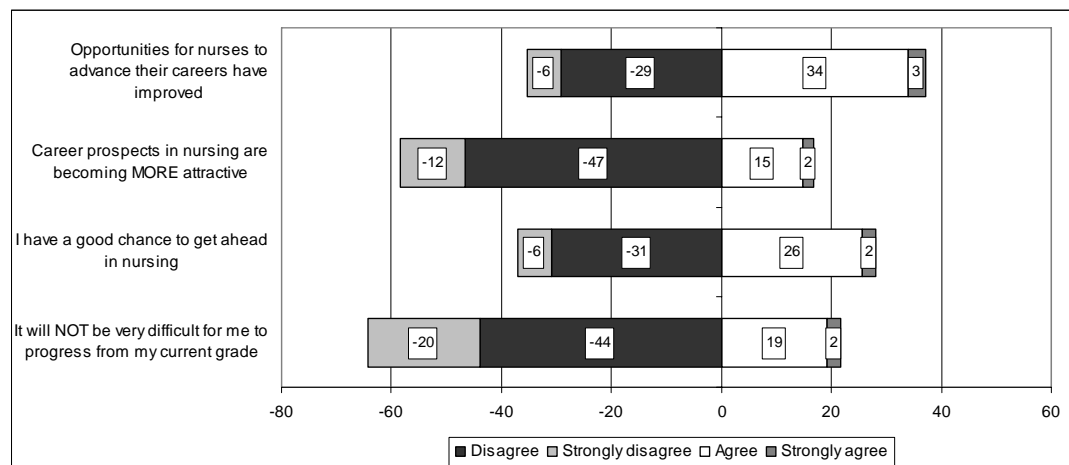
Preferred type of work

Across all nurses looking for work or a job change more than nearly three quarters are seeking NHS work (73%, UK 69%). This represents an increase in numbers seeking NHS work from 2007 (65%, UK 62%). Within the NHS 77% (UK 73%) are looking for NHS work (up from 66%, UK 64% in 2007), 10% (UK 10%) to the non-NHS sector, 10% (UK 11%) seeking other work, 12% (UK 14%) non-nursing work and 8% (UK 9%) work outside the UK.

6.4 Views of career progression issues

Four of the attitude items included relate career opportunities and progression. Most nurses feel it will be very difficult for them to progress from their current grade (63%, UK 55%), one in four (36%, UK 33%) think they have a good chance to get ahead in nursing, just 18% (UK 22%) feel that career prospects in nursing are becoming more attractive but 40% (UK 45%) of NHS nurses think that opportunities for nurses to advance their careers have improved. The results for NHS nurses are presented in Figure 6.1. These figures are all more negative than reported across all UK NHS nurses.

Figure 6.1: Views of career progression issues (NHS only, 2009 percentages)



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Views of nurses vary according to their employer group with NHS nurses more negative than nurses in other employment sectors.

Views of career prospects also vary by country; more nurses in England (35%) feel positive about their chances of progress in nursing than in Wales (28%), Scotland (25%) or Northern Ireland (27%) (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.5: Satisfaction with career progression issues by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| It will be very difficult to progress from current grade | 65 | 54 | 66 | 62 | 56 |
| Have a good chance to get ahead in nursing | 27 | 35 | 25 | 27 | 33 |
| Career prospects in nursing are becoming more attractive | 17 | 23 | 18 | 18 | 22 |
| Opportunities for nurses to advance their careers have improved | 37 | 46 | 38 | 48 | 45 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 490 | <i>2013</i> | <i>575</i> | <i>414</i> | 3492 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

By and large younger nurses are more positive about career prospects, although less so in Wales than elsewhere in the UK. For example, 36% (UK 44%) of nurses under 40 agree that they have a good chance to get ahead in nursing compared to just 22% (UK 24%) of those over 40.

6.5 Retirement

For the last three surveys the questionnaire has sought information on nurses' retirement plans. Firstly members were asked to indicate their official retirement age. A half (50%, UK 51%) report that their official retirement age is 65, 41% (UK 39%) say it age 60 and 9% (UK 10%) say it is age 55.

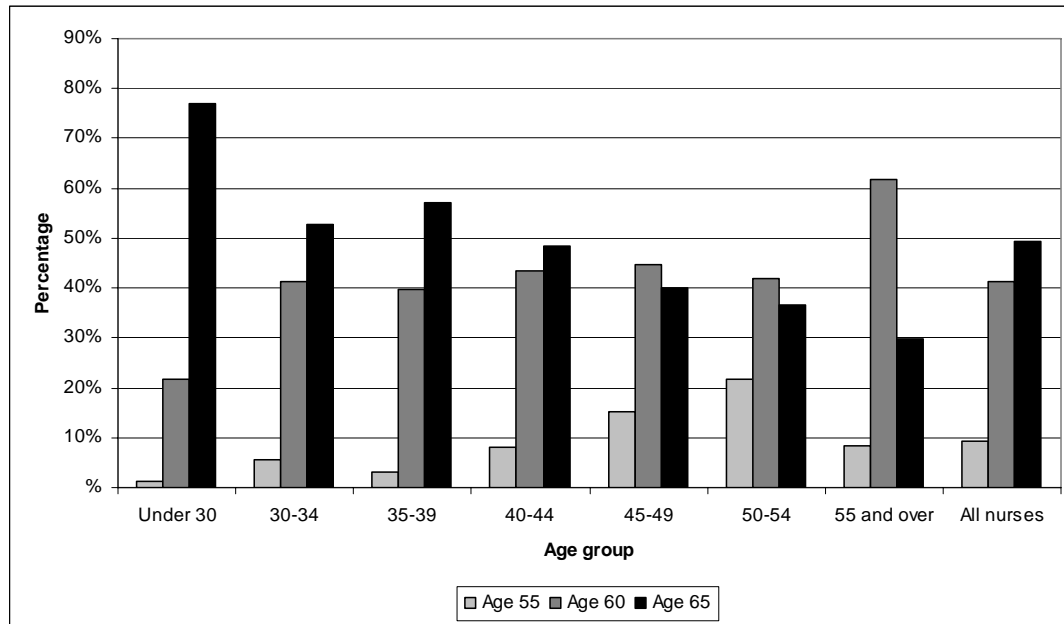
Table 6.6: Retirement ages (official and planned) by country (NHS only, percentages)

| Official retirement age? | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Age 55 | 10 | 10 | 8 | 13 | 10 |
| Age 60 | 43 | 40 | 39 | 39 | 40 |
| Age 65 | 46 | 50 | 53 | 48 | 50 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 481 | <i>1962</i> | <i>568</i> | <i>410</i> | 3421 |
| Anticipated retirement age? | | | | | |
| Before official retirement age | 33 | 33 | 35 | 44 | 34 |
| At official retirement age | 49 | 47 | 49 | 46 | 48 |
| After official retirement age | 18 | 20 | 17 | 10 | 18 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 485 | <i>1984</i> | <i>575</i> | <i>409</i> | 3453 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Younger nurses are more likely to report having an official retirement age of 65 (77%), while more nurses nearing retirement age say their official retirement age is 60 (Figure 6.2).

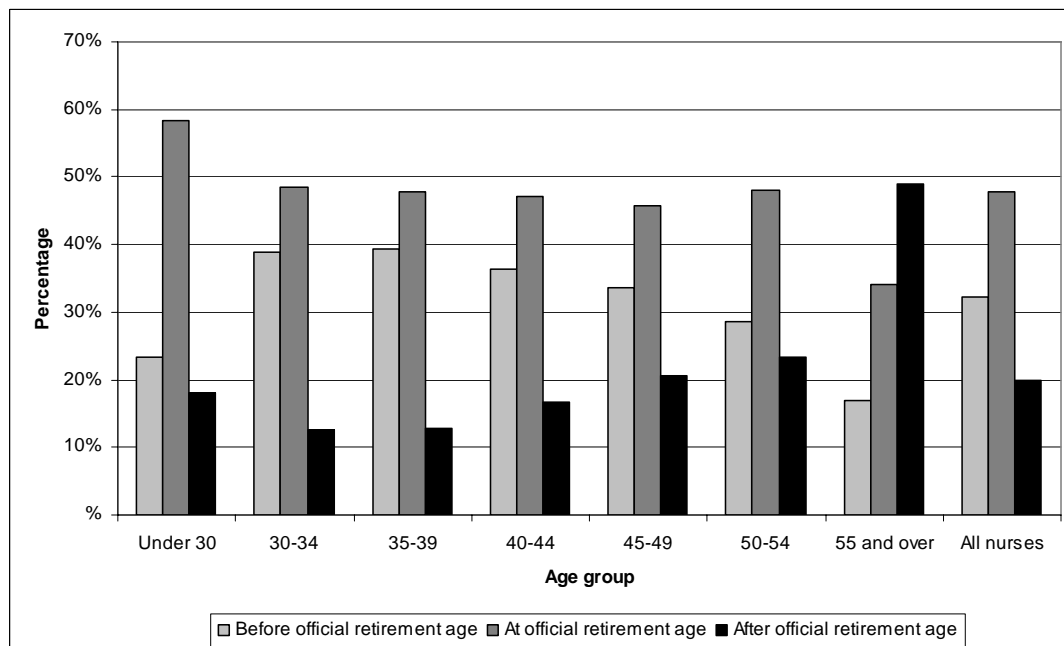
Figure 6.2: Official retirement age by age band (percentages)



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

A second question asked when members anticipated that they would retire (before, on or after their official retirement age). Figure 6.3 shows the anticipated retirement point of nurses by age group.

Figure 6.3: Anticipated retirement age by age band (percentages)



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

It highlights the fact that at the outset of nurses' careers, most anticipate retiring at their retirement age, however, in the middle of their careers more nurses anticipate retiring before their retirement age. In the final 5-10 years there is a surge of nurses who expect to work beyond their retirement age and anticipate retiring after their retirement age (some of these are already working beyond their retirement age).

Overall, just 23% (UK 25%) plan to continue to work in nursing²⁵. In 2007 17% said they would continue to work in nursing, compared to 23% in 2009, 15% say they would continue to work in non-nursing compared to 11% in 2007 and 26% say they would not continue working compared to 36% in 2007 and 36% in both surveys did not know what they their post retirement intentions were. It would seem that more nurses intend to continue working beyond their retirement age and more in nursing than was the case two years ago.

Table 6.7 presents the same data but for NHS nurses only showing that slightly more nurses in Wales intend to work in non-nursing after they reach retirement 28% (UK 27%), otherwise the figures are more or less the same for Wales compared to the UK as a whole.

Table 6.7: Retirement ages and plans by country (NHS only, percentages)

| Working after retirement age? | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes, in same sort of nursing work | 14 | 16 | 12 | 12 | 15 |
| Yes, in different nursing work | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 8 |
| Yes, but not in nursing | 16 | 13 | 15 | 13 | 14 |
| No | 28 | 24 | 32 | 37 | 27 |
| Don't know | 34 | 38 | 34 | 32 | 36 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 493 | <i>2018</i> | <i>576</i> | <i>414</i> | 3501 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Table 6.8 gives a break down by time since qualification of the respondents' working plans after they reach retirement age.

Table 6.8: Working beyond retirement age by time since qualification (percentages)

| | 1-5 years | 6-10 | 11-15 | 16-20 | 21-25 | 26-30 | 31-35 | 35 plus | All nurses |
|---|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| Yes, in nursing in same sort of work | 15 (14) | 13 (11) | 5 (11) | 13 (12) | 13 (15) | 13 (18) | 28 (27) | 50 (61) | 15 (17) |
| Yes, in nursing but in different type of work | 10 (11) | 5 (7) | 4 (6) | 6 (5) | 8 (9) | 10 (8) | 9(8) | 9 (7) | 7 (8) |
| Yes, but not in nursing | 17 (10) | 6 (12) | 17 (14) | 13 (14) | 18 (14) | 24 (19) | 13 (12) | 5 (8) | 15 (13) |
| No, will not continue working | 15 (20) | 30 (29) | 34 (31) | 26 (32) | 36 (25) | 28 (24) | 19 (23) | 14 (14) | 26 (26) |
| Don't know | 44 (45) | 46 (41) | 40 (38) | 43 (36) | 26 (37) | 24 (31) | 32 (29) | 23 (11) | 36 (36) |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | <i>1103</i> | <i>80</i> | <i>76</i> | <i>72</i> | <i>80</i> | <i>82</i> | <i>47</i> | <i>22</i> | 5690 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Not surprisingly nurses at the start of their careers are less likely to know their retirement plans, but the proportion saying they 'don't know' gradually reduces with stage of career. During the middle stages of their careers more nurses intend to stop working at retirement age. However, as nurses reach retirement age an increasing number intend to work in nursing and in the same work in which they are currently engaged.

²⁵ Note that the wording changed slightly. In 2009, respondents were given two 'stay in nursing' options, 'Yes, in nursing in same sort of work' and 'Yes, in nursing but in a different type of work'. In 2007 respondents were only offered one option 'Yes, in nursing work'.

Information about pensions

This year an additional attitude item was included to assess nurses' views of the information they have regarding the pension associated with their job. Overall, just under half of all nurses (44%, UK 46%) agree that they have sufficient information about the pension associated with their job. There is no aggregate difference between the NHS (42%, UK 45%) and other sectors of health care (50%). The closer in age nurses are to their retirement, the better informed they are likely to be – 54% (UK 53%) of nurses aged over 50 say they have sufficient information.

6.6 Key points: Chapter 6

The key points from Chapter 6 are:

- Job turnover in the 12 months preceding the survey is much lower in the NHS in Wales (15%) Scotland and Northern Ireland than it is in England (20%). There has been a similar reduction in the proportion of nurses changing employer in the previous 12 months
- In NHS hospitals the proportion of respondents who had changed job in the 12 months prior to the survey had fallen from 22% (UK 21%) in 2005 to 13% (UK 14%) in 2007 and now stands at 16% (UK 16%)
- There has been a steep reduction in Wales of nurses applying for a higher banded post. Within the NHS, just 15% (UK 17%) had applied for a higher grade post, while in 2003 the equivalent figure was 22% (UK 26%).
- A half (52%, UK 52%) of those nurses who applied for higher banded posts were successful in getting the job (NHS 51%, UK 49%)
- One in four nurses (28%) in Wales are looking for work or a change of job (more or less the same as across the UK as a whole)
- Two thirds (65%) of NHS nurses in Wales say it will be very difficult for them to progress from their current grade, higher than for England (56%) and fewer are positive about other aspects of career progression, than is the case in England
- 28% of NHS nurses in Wales (UK 27%) do not intend to work after they reach retirement.

7. Continuing professional development (CPD)

This chapter explores individual access to training and development, looking at time spent in CPD, how CPD is funded, managers' involvement in appraisal/review and personal development plans, and mandatory training received.

The implementation of the new pay system in the NHS was accompanied by the introduction of the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) – a system to make more transparent the associations between professional development, career progression and pay. But by the end of 2006, concern was expressed by a House of Commons Health committee that education and training cuts driven by NHS deficits were seriously affecting the roll-out of KSF.

To boost the take-up of KSF, in May 2008 the government wrote to all NHS organisations emphasising the importance of KSF. The 2008 Healthcare Commission²⁶ NHS staff survey reported that 55% of NHS staff had a personal development plan, whilst the National Audit Office²⁷ estimated that in Aug/Sept 2008, 54% of all staff in the NHS had received an annual appraisal in accordance with the KSF.

What impact have training cuts and subsequent ring-fencing had on nurses' levels of CPD and how do levels of training and having a personal development plan vary across health care employment settings?

7.1 Time spent in CPD

In 2005, respondents who had undertaken some CPD had spent an average of 12 days (UK 11 days) per year on CPD activities²⁸ and this figure had remained more or less unchanged since 2000. In 2007 though, the average number of days spent on CPD activities across all respondents (again who had undertaken some CPD activity) fell to 8.7 (UK 7.3) a reduction of 28% (UK 31%). In the NHS the figure fell from 13.1 (UK 10.9) days to 8.7 (UK 7.1), a fall of 43% (UK 35%). Including those who had not undertaken any CPD activity in the previous 12 months there was a fall of 37% (UK 40%) in the number of days spent on CPD activity (43%, UK 44% in the NHS)²⁹ between 2005 and 2007. NHS numbers for 2005-2009 are presented in Table 7.1.

²⁶ Healthcare Commission (2008). *National NHS staff survey 2008*, The Care Quality Commission. www.cqc.org.uk

²⁷ National Audit Office (2009), Op cit

²⁸ This figure excluded those who had not done any CPD activity, and those who had reported having done 100 days or more (classified here as undertaking full-time study)

²⁹ In 2007 just 1% of respondents indicated that they had not undertaken any CPD activity in the preceding 12 months in 2009 this figure had increased to 12%.

Table 7.1: No. days training in last year 2005, 2007, 2009 by country (NHS only, percentages)

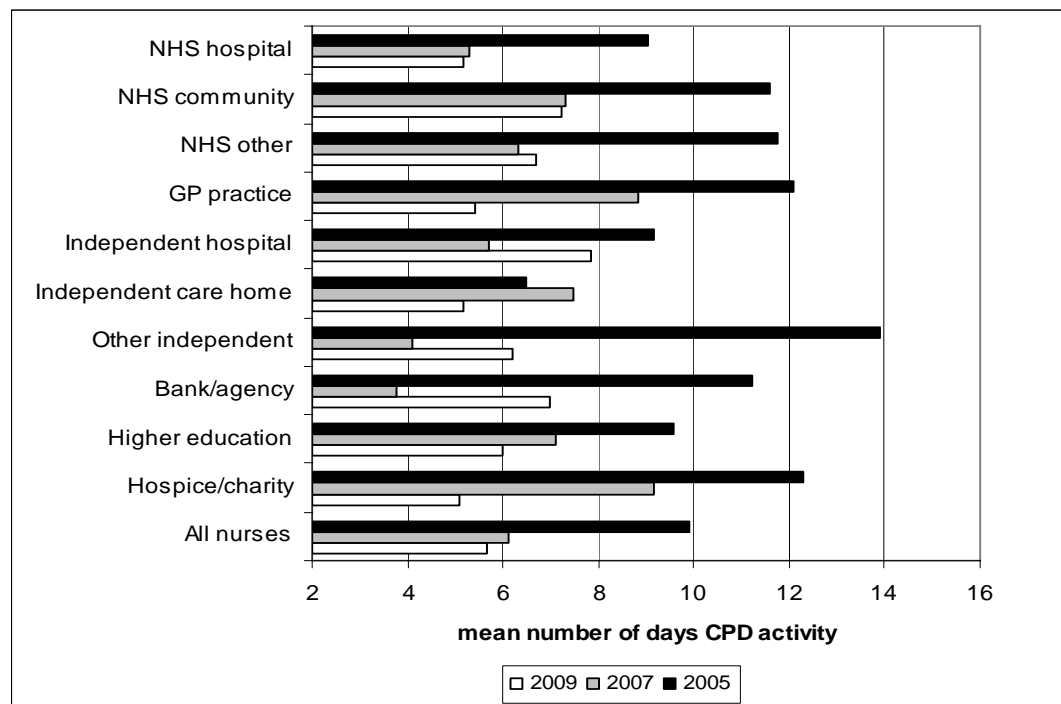
| Mean no. of days CPD | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| 2009 | 5.6 | 6.3 | 5.6 | 5.4 | 6.1 |
| 2007 | 6.8 | 6.0 | 5.8 | 5.9 | 6.1 |
| 2005 | 11.5 | 10.9 | 9.7 | 9.5 | 10.7 |
| <i>Weighted cases (2009)</i> | 482 | 1978 | 554 | 399 | 3413 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

There was some variation in the amount of CPD undertaken between countries; in England an average of 6.3 days, Wales and Scotland 5.6 days and Northern Ireland 5.4 days in the last 12 months. These differences remain even when controlling for difference in the employer group. For example, NHS hospital nurses spend an average of 5.9 days CPD days a year in England, compared to 5.2 in Scotland and Northern Ireland and 5.5 in Wales.

Figure 7.1 shows the average amount of CPD undertaken by employer group including nurses who had not undertaken any CPD in the preceding year. Between 2005 and 2007 the biggest decrease in CPD was found in NHS hospitals and levels of CPD in NHS hospitals have not changed since then.

Figure 7.1: Mean annual days CPD by employer group (2005, 2007 and 2009)



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Within the NHS, staff nurses have undertaken the least CPD in the preceding year: 4.8 days (UK 5.3) compared to 5.3 days (UK 6.1) on average among sisters/charge nurses and 6.3 days (UK 6.9) among community nurses. In terms of specialty, the lowest levels of CPD are reported in paediatric and adult general (4.2 days, UK 5.2 days).

Respondents are also asked how much of their CPD is paid for by their employer. Three quarters (79%, UK 80%) report that all their CPD is paid for by their employer, 7% (UK 6%) say that none of it is and the remainder say it is partially paid for by their employer. These are very similar results to those reported in 2007. In the NHS, how CPD is funded does not vary by where nurses work or their pay bands. NHS nurses report that on average 87% (UK 89%) of their CPD was paid for by their employer.

This year the survey sought a judgement from respondents as to whether or not the amount of CPD undertaken in the last year has changed compared to the previous 12 months. Approximately a half (49%, UK 49%) of all nurses think the amount of CPD they have done in the last year is more or less the same as it was in the preceding 12 months. Three in ten (21%, UK 29%) think it has increased and 30% (UK 22%) think it has decreased. More nurses in Wales think that the amount of CPD they have done in the last year has decreased. Unlike across the UK there is little difference NHS community and hospital nurses. Figures for the NHS are shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Change in amount of training done compared to previous 12 months by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Increased a lot | 7 | 13 | 13 | 11 | 12 |
| Increased a little | 13 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 15 |
| Remained about the same | 46 | 48 | 47 | 53 | 48 |
| Decreased a little | 19 | 13 | 15 | 14 | 14 |
| Decreased a lot | 15 | 10 | 11 | 9 | 11 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 460 | 1933 | 546 | 392 | 3331 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

In the NHS, nurses who have been promoted onto a higher grade since they moved on to an AfC pay band are more likely to say the amount of CPD they have done has increased in the last year.

7.2 Development reviews and training plans

Just under half of all nurses in Wales (49%, UK 61%) have had an appraisal/development review with their manager in the 12 months prior to the survey. This figure is slightly higher than that reported in 2007 (47%, UK 58%). In the NHS this figure is slightly lower at 42% (UK 59%) more or less the same as reported in 2007 (41%, UK 53%). Similar to 2007, the figures in Wales are significantly lower than for the rest of the UK.

Staff and community nurses in the NHS are least likely to have had a review (32% and 27%, UK 53%).

The likelihood of nurses in the NHS having received an appraisal/development review is significantly correlated with country. Table 7.3 demonstrates this showing that for England 61% of NHS nurses have had a development review, compared to 42% of nurses in Wales, 53% in Scotland and 35% in Northern Ireland.

Table 7.3: Nurses having an appraisal/development review with their manager in last 12 months by country (NHS only, percentages)

| Appraisal/review in last 12 months? | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|-------------------------------------|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 42 | 61 | 53 | 35 | 59 |
| No | 58 | 39 | 47 | 65 | 41 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 481 | 2000 | 566 | 404 | 3451 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Within the NHS in England, Scotland and Wales more full-time nurses than part-time have had appraisals/development reviews. In Northern Ireland there is no difference between full-time and part-time nurses. In England 64% of full-time respondents have had a review compared to 57% of part-time nurses and 45% of full-time compared to 37% of part-time nurses in Wales and in Scotland 56% of full-time compared to 48% of part-time.

Personal training and development plans (PTDPs)

Unlike the rest of the UK where there was an increase, there has been a small decrease in the proportion of nurses in Wales who have personal training and development plans, from 47% (UK 52%) in 2005, to 49% (UK 56%) in 2007 and 46% (UK 60%) in 2009.

Table 7.4: Personal training and development plans (PTDP) by country (NHS only, percentages)

| Currently have a PTDP? | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 43 | 60 | 63 | 45 | 56 |
| No | 52 | 35 | 34 | 48 | 39 |
| Don't know | 5 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 5 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 482 | 1997 | 561 | 406 | 3446 |
| Manager involved in drawing up PTDP? | | | | | |
| Yes | 76 | 80 | 77 | 67 | 78 |
| No | 24 | 20 | 23 | 33 | 22 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 207 | 1206 | 351 | 184 | 1948 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Within the NHS, nurses in Wales (43%) and Northern Ireland (45%) are much less likely to have PTDPs than nurses in England (60%) and Scotland (63%). Also, more full-time nurses have PTDPs (45% compared to 38% of part-time nurses) and band 5 nurses are less likely to have PTDPs (35%, UK 55%) than other nurses.

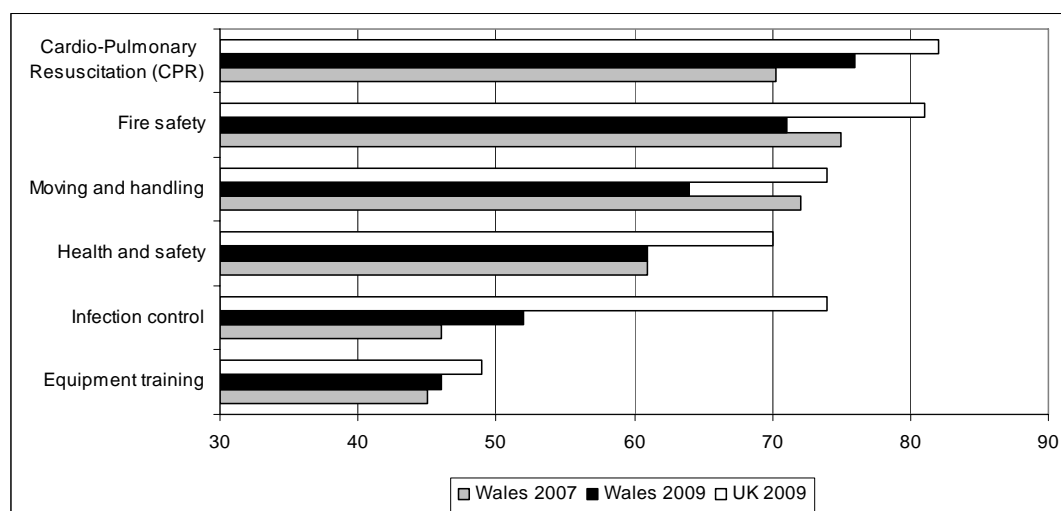
Respondents who have PTDPs were asked to indicate whether or not their manager was involved in drawing up the plan. Nearly eight in ten (78%, compared with 75% in 2007) respondents indicated that their manager had been actively involved in drawing up their PTDP, with very little variation by employer group (NHS 76%, UK 80%).

7.3 Mandatory training

A new question was introduced in 2007 that asked whether or not members had received mandatory training in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR), fire safety, moving and handling, health and safety, infection control and equipment training. Across most activities (all in the UK) there has been an increase in the incidence of mandatory training since 2007, especially in infection control from 46% (UK 59%) of nurses in 2007 to 52% (UK 74%) in 2009 (Figure 7.2). However, this increase is not as large as in England and in Wales there has been a reduction in numbers having undertaken moving and handling and fire safety training.

Three quarters of respondents (76%, UK 82%) had received CPR and fire safety (71%, UK 81%), 64% (UK 74%) had received moving and handling training 44% (UK 70%) health and safety and 34% (UK 49%) equipment training. Across all activities these percentages are significantly lower than reported across the whole UK.

Figure 7.2: Mandatory training received in last year (percentages)



Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Across the UK the biggest increases in mandatory training have been in the NHS, both hospital and community sectors but this has not been reflected to the same degree in Wales.

Table 7.5: Mandatory training undertaken in last the last year by country (NHS only, percentages)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Fire safety | 71 | 86 | 76 | 71 | 80 |
| Moving and handling | 66 | 80 | 61 | 61 | 73 |
| Infection control | 50 | 81 | 52 | 70 | 71 |
| Equipment training | 46 | 53 | 34 | 33 | 47 |
| Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) | 78 | 85 | 76 | 71 | 81 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 449 | 1895 | 498 | 382 | 3224 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Since 2007 in NHS hospitals in Wales, unlike the UK as a whole where there has been a significant increase, the proportion of nurses who have received infection control has remained unchanged at 47%.

7.4 Views of training

Views of training are slightly more positive since 2007, having fallen significantly between 2005 and 2007.

Across the UK, in the decade leading up to 2005, there was a marginal increase in the proportion of NHS nurses indicating that their employer supports their training and development. In 2007 the proportion agreeing fell to 45% in the NHS. Today there has been a small improvement with 48% of NHS nurses saying they are ‘able to take time off for training’, but this is still lower than the figure reported in 2005 (53%). In Wales the proportion indicating that they are able to take time off for training is significantly lower at 40%. More nurses in England (50%) say they can take time off for training compared to Northern Ireland (45%), Scotland (42%) and Wales (40%).

Table 7.6: Satisfaction with training issues by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|--|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Able to take time off for training | 40 | 50 | 42 | 45 | 48 |
| Employer provides opportunities to keep up with job developments | 50 | 56 | 55 | 53 | 55 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 488 | 2013 | 571 | 413 | 3485 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

NHS nurses are less likely to respond positively about being able to take time off for training than nurses working in other sectors. For example, 37% (UK 46%) of NHS hospital nurses say they can take time off for training compared to 48% of community/practice nurses, 51% of independent sector nurses.

Similarly, 50% (UK 54%) of NHS nurses say that their employer provides them with opportunities to keep up with developments related to their job compared to 69% of nurses working outside the NHS.

Within the NHS nurses who work full-time are more inclined to say that they can take time off for training (51%, UK 52% compared to 46%, UK 41%, of part-time nurses). Also, only 35% (UK 43%) of staff nurses say they can take time off for training, compared to 46% (UK 51%) of sisters/charge nurses.

7.5 Key points: Chapter 7

The main points from Chapter 7 are:

- The amount of CPD undertaken remains at more or less the same levels reported in 2007 which were significantly down on the 2005 figure (8.7 days per year compared to 12 in 2005). The amount of CPD undertaken in Wales is slightly lower than in England (NHS, 5.6 days, UK NHS 6.1)

- Approximately one in five think that the amount of CPD they have undertaken has increased in the last year, while more think it has decreased (34%). Across the UK as a whole similar numbers think the amount of training undertaken in the last year has decreased as think it has increased)
- Within the NHS, staff nurses have undertaken the least CPD in the preceding year: 4.8 days (UK 5.3) compared to 5.3 days (UK 6.1) on average among sisters/charge nurses and 6.3 days (UK 6.9) among community nurses
- Just under half (49%) of NHS nurses in Wales have had a development review in the previous 12 months, compared to 61% in England and 53% in Scotland and 35% in Northern Ireland
- Significantly fewer nurses in Wales have a Personal Training and Development Plan (NHS 43%, UK 56%) and in three quarters of cases (77%, same as UK) their manager was involved in drawing up the plan
- In all areas of mandatory training fewer nurses in Wales reported having undertaken training than was the case across the rest of the UK, although numbers were up from 2007
- In NHS hospitals in Wales the proportion of nurses who have received infection control training has remained unchanged at 47% and significantly lower than the 80% reported across the whole of the UK
- Fewer NHS nurses in Wales (40%, UK 48%) report that they are able to take time off for training than among NHS nurses in all other countries of the UK.

8. Morale in 2009

Since 1996, some 20 items have formed an unchanging ‘core’ in the employment survey to provide a reliable barometer of the changing morale of nursing in the UK. Between the 2005 and 2007 surveys there had been much change in the health sector economy with financial deficits, recruitment freezes and some redundancies. This was reflected in the findings from the 2007 survey when morale overall had declined and nurses were particularly concerned about job security and redundancy.

In 2008/2009, there has been a national economic downturn. Whilst initially public sector workers may have felt relatively protected compared with the private sector³⁰ the recent NHS Confederation report flags up concerns that the health service will not be immune from the effects of recession.

Meanwhile the last two years have seen a range of developments in the NHS. In the same period that the *Next Stage Review* has been published prioritising quality of care, the NHS has witnessed several high profile care ‘crises’ at particular hospitals, which have shaken public confidence and sparked concern about nurse staffing levels and opportunities for staff to speak out when standards fall.

The nursing profession itself is on the brink major reforms – new career paths for nurses have been proposed, the move towards becoming an all graduate profession has expanded to encompass England by 2015, and employers and policy makers alike consider the need for assistant nursing role.

This chapter presents an overview of nurses’ morale and how it has changed.

8.1 Overview of morale in 2009

Table 8.1 presents the data for all nurses and NHS nurses, comparing this year’s findings with the 2007 survey, grouped into themes. Many of the specific themes have been explored in the relevant chapters. Here we present an overview of how morale amongst nurses has changed and summarise the key differences between sectors and subgroups of nurses.

On the questionnaire received by nurses, attitude items are presented as a mix of positively and negatively framed statements. For consistency, and to enable comparisons to be drawn, negative items have been reworded in the positive, and the scores reversed. Thus across all items, agreement indicates a positive response.

Across most themes nurses are more positive in 2009 than they were in 2007. The items that have shown most improvement in satisfaction ratings since 2007 have been job satisfaction, nursing as a career and job security issues. In particular, there has been a marked improvement in views concerning the degree to which nurses in Wales perceive that nursing will offer them a secure job for years to come, up from 60% in 2007 to 80% in 2009, in 2005 this figure was 70%.

³⁰ Buchan J (2009) Funnel Vision. *Nursing Standard*. Vol 23 (25).

Table 8.1: Views of all respondents vs. NHS in 2009 & 2007 (percentages UK figures in brackets)

| | | All | | NHS | |
|----------------------------|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | 2007 | 2009 | 2007 | 2009 |
| Career progression | | | | | |
| 11 | NOT difficult to progress from current grade | 21 (21) | 22 (25) | 21 (20) | 21 (26) |
| 14 | Have a good chance to get ahead in nursing | 28 (26) | 29 (34) | 27 (24) | 28 (33) |
| 20 | Career prospects becoming MORE attractive | 21 (19) | 18 (23) | 20 (17) | 17 (22) |
| 22 | Opportunities for nurses to advance careers have improved | 43 (38) | 40 (47) | 40 (34) | 37 (45) |
| Bullying/Harassment | | | | | |
| 37 | Confident would be treated fairly if reported being harassed by a colleague at work | 55 (54) | 50 (56) | 53 (51) | 48 (54) |
| 33 | Bullying and harassment is not a problem at work | 59 (57) | 54 (58) | 57 (54) | 52 (55) |
| 23 | Manager supports me when needed | | 59 (64) | | 58(62) |
| Working hours | | | | | |
| 31 | Satisfied with choice over length of shifts worked | 63 (62) | 59 (62) | 60 (60) | 59 (60) |
| 36 | Satisfied with input in planning times of work | 66 (64) | 64 (66) | 64 (62) | 62 (65) |
| 34 | Feel able to balance home and work lives | 58 (59) | 57 (61) | 55 (56) | 54 (58) |
| | Happy with working hours | | 71 (72) | | 70 (71) |
| Job satisfaction | | | | | |
| 4 | Most days enthusiastic about job | 80 (79) | 78 (81) | 79 (77) | 77 (80) |
| 25 | Satisfied with present job | 62 (58) | 61 (64) | 59 (54) | 59 (62) |
| 26 | Proud to work in this organisation | 50 (47) | 50 (56) | 44 (42) | 48 (54) |
| 32 | I feel my work is valued | 55 (55) | 50 (56) | 50 (50) | 47 (53) |
| Nursing as a career | | | | | |
| 1 | Recommend nursing as a career | 53 (51) | 57 (62) | 51 (49) | 54 (60) |
| 2 | Nursing is a rewarding career | 78 (79) | 76 (82) | 77 (78) | 76 (81) |
| 17 | Don't want to work outside nursing | 37 (37) | 41 (45) | 36 (36) | 40 (44) |
| 19 | Would NOT leave nursing if could | 50 (51) | 50 (53) | 49 (49) | 49 (52) |
| Pay | | | | | |
| 3 | NOT paid for less effort if left nursing | 14 (13) | 16 (13) | 13 (12) | 15 (13) |
| 10 | Well paid considering work | 20 (19) | 21 (23) | 17 (16) | 19 (21) |
| 15 | Nurses NOT poorly paid in relation to other professions | 6 (6) | 6 (6) | 7 (6) | 7 (6) |
| Quality of care | | | | | |
| 24 | Quality of care is good | 84 (81) | 80 (82) | 83 (79) | 79 (81) |
| Job security | | | | | |
| 8 | Nursing will continue to offer a secure job for years | 47 (38) | 72 (73) | 44 (34) | 72 (73) |
| 13 | NOT worried may be made redundant | 57 (44) | 61 (62) | 56 (40) | 61 (63) |
| 30 | Find it easy to get another job using my skills | 38 (36) | 32 (41) | 35 (33) | 30 (39) |
| Training | | | | | |
| 12 | Able to take time off for training | 51 (49) | 45 (51) | 49 (45) | 40 (48) |
| 21 | Employer provides opps to keep up with job devts | 58 (55) | 53 (58) | 54 (50) | 43 (55) |
| Workload | | | | | |
| 5 | Workload is NOT too heavy | 17 (18) | 16 (15) | 15 (15) | 14 (12) |
| 9 | NOT under too much pressure at work | 22 (22) | 18 (20) | 21 (19) | 16 (18) |
| 27 | NOT too much time is spent on non-nursing duties | 31 (35) | 29 (33) | 28 (30) | 26 (29) |
| 28 | Sufficient staff to provide good standard of care | 33 (33) | 35 (35) | 28 (27) | 30 (30) |
| 29 | NOT too busy to provide level of care would like | 30 (32) | 28 (30) | 27 (27) | 23 (25) |
| 35 | Nurse staffing levels have got better in the last year | 14 (14) | 14 (18) | 13 (12) | 12 (15) |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Looking at the variation between the NHS and other health employers in Wales, the only areas where nurses working for NHS employers respond more negatively are:

- the degree to which nurses perceive opportunities for nurses to advance their careers to have improved (40% of all respondents to 37% of NHS respondents)
- the extent to which they feel their work is valued (again 50% vs. 47%)
- In relation to training in Wales nurses in the NHS respond significantly more negatively than other nurses, for example 40% say they are able to take time off for training compared to 45% of all nurses and 43% say their employer provides opportunities to keep up with developments related to their job compared to 53% of all respondents
- Similarly, in relation to workload fewer NHS nurses in Wales respond positively. In particular, in relation to being too busy to provide the level of care they would like and perceptions of whether or not there are sufficient staff to provide a good standard of care.

The only area where NHS nurses in Wales respond more positively (and here only marginally) is in relation to job security more that they will not be made redundant (62% compared to 61% of all nurses) and more say they feel nursing will continue to offer a secure job for years to come (77% to 75% of all nurses).

In 2007 in Wales a different picture to that reported for all UK respondents emerged. In 2005 in Wales responses were significantly more negative in relation to career progression issues than was the case across the rest of the UK but in 2007 there was less difference here following significant reduction in satisfaction with career progression issues in England in the last two years. Now, again, the views of nurses in Wales are significantly more negative than those of nurses working in England on all items bar the perceived difficulty in progressing from their current grade where more nurses in Wales positive.

The following sections look at how views of nurses have changed across the UK highlighting current and recent changes in response among nurses in Wales³¹.

There are some significant differences in views between nurses in Wales and the rest of the UK. These include:

- Nurses in Wales are significantly more negative about their opportunities for career progression than other nurses in the UK. For example, just 28% of NHS nurses in Wales feel they have a good chance to get ahead in nursing, compared to 33% of nurses across the whole UK
- Fewer nurses in Wales respond positively to the statement '*bullying and harassment is a problem where I work*'. Just 54% disagreed with the statement compared to 58% of nurses UK wide
- Nurses in Wales are also less likely to say they would recommend nursing as a career (57% compared to 62% of UK wide nurses)
- Not as many nurses in Wales feel able to balance their home and work lives (57% compared to 61% of UK nurses)

³¹ Separate results have only recently been possible for Wales.

- One of the largest differences between nurses in Wales and elsewhere in the UK is in numbers who respond positively to the statement ‘*I am able to take time off for training*’ (45% to 51% of UK wide nurses). In addition fewer respondents in Wales say they feel supported by their manager (59% compared to 64% across the UK)
- The only items where nurses in Wales are more positive is in numbers saying they are well paid for the work they do (16% compared to 13% of UK nurses).

It is apparent from Table 8.2 that nurses in Wales are more negative in their views of job satisfaction than nurses in any of the other three countries of the UK on all dimensions.

Table 8.2: Issues concerned with job satisfaction by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Most days enthusiastic about job | 77 | 81 | 78 | 79 | 80 |
| Satisfied with present job | 59 | 62 | 61 | 63 | 62 |
| Proud to work in this organisation | 48 | 54 | 50 | 53 | 54 |
| I feel my work is valued | 47 | 53 | 51 | 48 | 53 |
| Quality of care is good | 79 | 81 | 83 | 85 | 81 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 487 | 2014 | 577 | 415 | 3493 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Staff nurses (56%) tend to feel less satisfied with their jobs than other staff groups (64%). Nurses in NHS hospitals (59%) are also less likely to feel satisfied than other employer groups.

Over the last decade there has been a fairly steady increase in the numbers of NHS nurses that are positive about nursing as a career. In 2009, the majority of NHS nurses (77%, UK 81%), see ‘*nursing as a rewarding career*’³². In 2007, it was one of the few items concerned with careers that did not witness a downturn.

Table 8.3: Issues concerned with nursing as a career by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Recommend nursing as a career | 54 | 61 | 54 | 53 | 60 |
| Nursing is a rewarding career | 76 | 81 | 77 | 75 | 81 |
| Don't want to work outside nursing | 40 | 45 | 41 | 48 | 44 |
| Would leave nursing if could | 30 | 22 | 26 | 28 | 24 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 493 | 2030 | 576 | 414 | 3513 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

A similar trend is found in responses to ‘*I would recommend nursing as a career*, with an increase in positive response over the last decade. In 2009 twice as many respondents would recommend nursing as a career compared to 1997. But more nurses consider nursing to be a rewarding career, than would recommend it as a career. Again the downturn seen in 2007 has been reversed.

³² The figure for 2002 (56%) is not reported. The item was placed in a different position and this clearly this affected its interpretation. Since this point all items have been placed in the same order each year.

In responding to ‘*I would not want to work outside nursing*’, across the UK there had been a gradual reduction in numbers responding positively since 2001 up to 2007, but this trend has now reversed with a large increase in positive responses from 32% in 2007 to 40% in 2009. This shift may be affected by current national economic climate. In times of recession, nurses may feel more positive about the benefits of working in a public sector profession.

Across the UK, there has been little change in response to the item ‘*I would leave nursing if I could*’ over the last 10 years. Not surprisingly, given that more say they are satisfied with their present job, hospice and practice nurses are less likely to say that they would leave nursing if they could.

It is in relation to job security that the most dramatic changes in views have taken place over the last few years. Up to 2005, views became steadily more positive, before declining in 2007, albeit not to the extent recorded in England. For example, the proportion of members agreeing that ‘*nursing will continue to offer me a secure job for years to come*’ more than halved between 2005 and 2007 (from 71% to 59%) and today it has improved to 82% – views in relation to job security are clearly very volatile at the moment.

Table 8.4: Issues concerned with job security by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|------------|-------------|------------|------------------|----------------|
| Nursing will continue to offer secure job for years | 71 | 72 | 82 | 70 | 73 |
| NOT worried may be made redundant | 61 | 62 | 74 | 61 | 63 |
| Find it easy to get another job using my skills | 30 | 40 | 36 | 33 | 39 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 485 | <i>2010</i> | <i>564</i> | <i>410</i> | 3469 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

The shift in nurses’ perceptions about job security is not restricted to those in the NHS. Hospice/charity sector nurses, nurses in independent hospitals and care homes all responded more pessimistically about their job security in 2007, suggesting that insecurity in the public sector impacts across the whole health economy, not just the NHS. In 2009 hospice, independent hospital, and care home nurses are all more pessimistic about job security than NHS nurses or practice nurses.

Older nurses feel more vulnerable to redundancy than their younger colleagues. For example 68% of NHS nurses aged under 40 say they are not worried about redundancy compared to 60% of nurses aged 40 plus.

Nurses whose income accounts for more than half their household earnings are also more likely to be concerned about redundancy than nurses whose income accounts for a half or less of their household earnings.

Statements regarding bullying and harassment include ‘*bullying and harassment is not a problem where I work*’ and ‘*I am confident I would be treated fairly if I reported being harassed by a colleague at work*’. We have also included ‘*my manager supports me when I need it*’ as a further indicator of support in the workplace more generally.

Nurses in Wales are less positive in relation to these issues than nurses in the rest of the UK. Approximately a half (48%) say they are confident they would be treated fairly if they reported being harassed at work by a colleague but this compares unfavourably with 54% UK wide.

Table 8.5: Bullying and harassment issues by country (NHS only, percentage agreeing)

| | Wales | England | Scotland | Northern Ireland | All NHS nurses |
|---|------------|---------|----------|------------------|----------------|
| Bullying and harassment is not a problem at work | 52 | 56 | 52 | 58 | 54 |
| Confident would be treated fairly in reported being harassed by a colleague | 48 | 55 | 48 | 52 | 55 |
| Manager supports when needed | 59 | 63 | 56 | 62 | 62 |
| <i>Weighted cases</i> | 488 | 2021 | 577 | 411 | 3497 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Within the NHS, men are more likely to think that '*bullying and harassment is a problem where they work*'.

In addition to the bullying and harassment issues, this year a new more general but related item was included: '*my manager supports me when I need it*'. Six in ten (57%, UK 63%) of nurses agreed that they are supported by their manager when they need it. However, gender and ethnicity (which were correlated with the bullying and harassment items), are not correlated with support from their manager.

8.2 Key points: Chapter 8

In 2007 there was a steep downturn in the confidence of nurses across various aspects of working life. In particular nurses were more negative about job security, training and development and career progression issues, but there was also a dip in nurses' reports of job satisfaction and or feeling valued. Aside from workload, most of these items have improved in 2009, although generally not returning to the levels of satisfaction recorded in 2005.

- More nurses feel enthusiastic about their jobs, feel that nursing is a rewarding career and would recommend nursing as a career than at any time in last 12 years
- There has been a marked improvement in views concerning the degree to which nurses in Wales perceive that nursing will offer them a secure job for years to come, up from 47% in 2007 to 75% in 2009
- Nurses in Wales are significantly more negative about their opportunities for career progression than other nurses in the UK. For example, just 30% feel they have a good chance to get ahead in nursing, compared to 34% of nurses across the whole UK
- Fewer respond positively to the statement '*bullying and harassment is a problem where I work*'. Just 54% disagreed with the statement compared to 58% of nurses UK wide. And in the NHS only 48% said they would be confident of being treated fairly if they reported being harassed by a colleague, compared to 54% UK wide
- Nurses in Wales are also less likely to say they would recommend nursing as a career (57% compared to 62% of UK wide nurses).

Appendices

Appendix A: Sampling and response

In previous years the RCN has undertaken the sampling process using instructions from the research team to draw the sample. However, problems in 2002 and 2003 led the RCN to use the research team to draw the sample directly from the full membership records database. A consistent and reliable method has now been employed for the 2005, 2007 and 2009 surveys which further enhances the reliability of the longitudinal measures that are provided in this series of surveys.

Drawing the sample

The full membership records were provided on 8 January 2009. The annual employment survey sample is selected only from:

1. full category, full newly qualified category and full concessionary category (same as in previous surveys) plus health care assistant (HCA) and HCA concessionary (included this year, not included in the past)
2. those members based in the UK.

This leaves a population of 330,438 members. The profile of this sub-group is:

Table A1: membership breakdown (all UK)

| Type | Number of members | Percentage |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Full | 313012 | 94.7 |
| Full concessionary | 3903 | 1.2 |
| Full newly qualified | 9057 | 2.7 |
| HCA | 2659 | 0.8 |
| HCA (concessionary) | 1807 | 0.5 |
| Gender | No. of Members | Percentage |
| Female | 301068 | 91.2 |
| Male | 28953 | 8.8 |
| Country | No. of Members | Percentage |
| England | 273071 | 82.6 |
| Scotland | 31938 | 9.7 |
| Wales | 14650 | 4.4 |
| Northern Ireland | 10779 | 3.3 |

Source: RCN membership records, January 2009

From this sub-population, a sample of 4,800 fully random records was drawn from all members living in England, 1400 members were drawn from members living in Scotland, 1100 from Wales and 1000 from Northern Ireland. As in 2007 the survey sampled an additional 400 members aged under 30 and this year, to allow further analysis of practice nurses, 300 additional cases identified from records as practice nurses were also included.

Table A2: age bands (all UK)

| | Number of members | Percentage (all) | Percentage (known) |
|---------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 20-24 | 9997 | 3.0 | 3.7 |
| 25-29 | 24956 | 7.6 | 9.2 |
| 30-34 | 33949 | 10.3 | 12.6 |
| 35-39 | 40683 | 12.3 | 15.1 |
| 40-44 | 46023 | 13.9 | 17.1 |
| 45-49 | 46611 | 14.1 | 17.3 |
| 50-54 | 35276 | 10.7 | 13.1 |
| 55-59 | 20772 | 6.3 | 7.7 |
| 60 plus | 11578 | 3.5 | 4.3 |
| Total | 269845 | 81.7 | 100.0 |
| Missing | 60593 | 18.3 | |
| Total | 330438 | 100.0 | |

Source: RCN membership records, January 2009

The survey was mailed on 5 February 2009 with three reminders. The initial pack consisted of a letter from the Chief Executive & General Secretary, the questionnaire and a reply paid envelope. The first reminder, mailed on 25 February, consisted of a postcard, the second was a full reminder with second questionnaire and reply paid envelope mailed on 10 March, and the final reminder, a letter from Employment Research, was mailed on 25 March 2009.

As the response rate this year was lower than in 2007, a follow-up telephone reminder was undertaken between 8 and 16 April (of all 1780 non-respondents where telephone contact details had been provided).

Response rates

An overall response rate of 49% (52% in 2007) (among the Wales top up) (UK 54%, 2007 59%) was achieved. The overall UK figure is slightly lower than in 2007 and in Wales the aggregate response rate has reduced slightly more. Survey fatigue is undoubtedly an issue in public sector surveys today and perhaps especially in Wales and the smaller home nations as the workforce populations are smaller, so in any sample survey a higher demand is being placed on individual nurses as sample sizes do not vary much with size of population.

Table A3: overall response rates by sample

| | Total mailed | Post Office returns | Not appropriate | Completed forms | Response rate |
|---|--------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| England sample | 4800 | 39 | 2 | 2461 | 52% |
| Northern Ireland sample | 1000 | 4 | 0 | 481 | 48% |
| Scotland sample | 1400 | 6 | 1 | 645 | 46% |
| Wales sample | 1100 | 1 | 0 | 536 | 49% |
| Under 30 top up | 400 | 7 | 0 | 158 | 40% |
| Practice nurse top up | 300 | 0 | 0 | 206 | 69% |
| Total | 9000 | 57 | 3 | 4487 | 50% |
| Anonymous forms (online and id removed) | - | - | - | 358 | 4% |
| Total | 9000 | 57 | 3 | 4845 | 54% |

Source: Employment Research Ltd/RCN 2009

In total there were 571 respondents recorded as working in Wales at the time of the survey, slightly fewer than in 2007 when 755 respondents were identified as working in Scotland.

As in previous years, the response rate for younger nurses is lower, particularly for the 25 to 34 year old groups. They account for 21.3% of respondents, but make up 26.5% of the survey population (see table A2 above). It has been shown before that age is the main variable influencing the response rate, followed by gender and to a lesser extent ethnicity. If the under 30 age group is excluded from the sample then the response rate is just over 53% (UK 60%).

Response weighting

The data presented in the report is based on weighted data both for Wales and the UK. For the full UK report respondents from each country were weighted so that they matched the UK country distribution of nurses. For this report the responses for nurses working in Wales were weighted to ensure that the age profile matched the RCN membership across all nurses living Wales.

Table A5: Age profile – cases before and after weighting

| Age band | Before weighting | | After weighting | |
|-----------|------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Cases | Percentage | Cases | Percentage |
| Under 30 | 58 | 9 | 79 | 13 |
| 30-34 | 56 | 9 | 75 | 12 |
| 35-39 | 89 | 14 | 97 | 16 |
| 40-44 | 110 | 18 | 104 | 17 |
| 45-49 | 121 | 20 | 107 | 17 |
| 50-54 | 94 | 15 | 78 | 13 |
| 55-plus | 83 | 13 | 73 | 12 |
| All cases | 611 | 99 | 612 | 99 |
| Missing | 5 | 1 | 5 | 1 |

Source: *Employment Research/RCN 2009*

Sample statistics and confidence for small sub samples

A key concern of the survey is to provide an accurate measure of nurses' experiences and views. Given that some of the statistics produced in the report are based on some relatively small numbers of respondents, it is worth looking at the reliability of the estimates. For the most part though, large samples are used and we can be very confident that the results are reliable estimates of the population of RCN members.

Here we try to give some indication as to the precision of the results given in the substantive parts of the report. The table below gives the approximate margin of error associated with percentage estimates for a 50/50 and 10/90 split for different sample sizes. The worst case in terms of precision of the estimate is for a 50/50 split in the sample.

Table A6: margin of error for estimating the population proportion to be 50/50 or 10/90 for different sample sizes and for a 95% confidence interval

| | Sample size | | | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 200 | 500 | 1,000 | 2,000 | 5,000 |
| Standard error and (margin for 50% estimate) | 3.5 (±7.0%) | 2.2 (±4.4%) | 1.6 (±3.2%) | 1.1 (±2.2) | 0.7 (±1.4) |

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Standard error and (margin for 10/90% estimate) | 2.4 (±4.8%) | 1.5 (±2.6%) | 1.1 (±2.2%) | 0.74 (±1.5%) | 0.4 (±0.8%) |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|

To put it into words, if we were estimating that 10% of ethnic minority nurses hold a particular view and 500 responded to the question the following applies:

We are 95% confident that between 7.4% and 12.6% of ethnic minority nurses hold this view (10% ± 2.6%).

However, when we are looking at larger sub samples, for example all NHS nurses, a more precise estimate can be provided, say 10% ± 1.5%.

Knowledge of the margin of error allows us to specify the likely range of the estimate obtained from the survey data within which the population value lies with a certain level of probability/confidence. It also allows us to say, when two estimates differ by a certain amount, how confident we can be that they indicate different population values.

Clearly, with smaller sub samples, variation in the response increases and the level of precision of the data declines. As a result, reporting differences between groups of sub samples becomes more problematic and prone to error. However, we should also note that the main concern of most surveys is to estimate the magnitude of effects. This means that determining strength of opinion about key issues is as important as whether two results are significantly different from one another.

Appendix B: RCN Employment Surveys

Ball J and Pike G (2007) *Managing to work differently: Results from the 2007 RCN Employment Survey*, RCN, London

Ball J and Pike G (2003) *Stepping Stones: Results from the 2003 RCN Employment Survey*, RCN, London

Ball J and Pike G (2002) *Valued Equally?: Results from the 2002 RCN Employment Survey*, RCN, London

Ball J and Pike G (2001) *Time to Deliver?: Results from the 2001 RCN Employment Survey*, RCN, London

Ball J and Stock J (2000) *All part of The Plan? A stock take of registered nurses in the year 2000*, RCN, London

Robinson D, Buchan J and Hayday S (1999) *On the Agenda: changing nurses' careers in 1999*, IES Report 360, Institute for Employment Studies, Brighton

Smith G and Seccombe I (1998) *Changing Times: a survey of registered nurses in 1998* IES Report 351, Institute for Employment Studies, Brighton

Seccombe I and Smith G (1997) *Taking Part: Registered Nurses and the Labour Market in 1997* IES Report 338, Institute for Employment Studies, Brighton

Seccombe I and Smith G (1996) *In the Balance: Registered Nurse Supply and Demand 1996* IES Report 315, Institute for Employment Studies, Brighton

Seccombe I and Patch A (1995) *Recruiting, Rewarding and Retaining Qualified Nurses in 1995* IES Report 295, Institute for Employment Studies, Brighton

Seccombe I, Patch A and Stock J (1994) *Workloads, Pay and Morale of Qualified Nurses in 1994* IES Report 272, Institute for Employment Studies, Brighton

Seccombe I, Ball J and Patch A (1993) *The Price of Commitment: Nurses' Pay, Careers and Prospects, 1993* IMS Report 251, Institute of Manpower Studies, Brighton

Seccombe I and Ball J (1992) *Motivation, Morale and Mobility: A Profile of Qualified Nurses in the 1990s* IMS Report 233, Institute of Manpower Studies, Brighton

Buchan J and Seccombe I (1991) *Nurses Work and Worth: Pay, Careers and Working Patterns of Qualified Nurses: A Review for the Royal College of Nursing* IMS Report 213, Institute of Manpower Studies, Brighton

Waite R, Buchan J and Thomas J (1989) *Nurses in and Out of Work* IMS Report 170, Institute of Manpower Studies, Brighton