

**RCN/RCPCH/Council of Deans
Children's Nursing Workforce Project**

April 2008

Aims of the study

As a result of discussions held in 2006 the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) and the Council of Deans (CoD) jointly prepared a web-based questionnaire in order to begin to establish an overall national picture of current and projected workforce requirements for children's and young people's services and the impact the NHS deficits were having on the children's nursing workforce. The main aims of the study were to establish the effect of the NHS deficits on children's services.

Methodology

A questionnaire was designed through consultation with the project team members and from all stakeholders. A copy of the questionnaire can be seen in Appendix 1. The survey was undertaken as a web-based exercise. A list of Directors of Nursing was obtained from the RCN. A letter signed by the heads of all three organisations was sent to everyone on the list with the web address for undertaking the survey in June 2007

Response

Four hundred and seventy two letters were written to Directors of Nursing. A total of 79 responses were received despite extending the deadline on several occasions – a response rate of only 17%. It is possible that this response rate underestimates the coverage of the survey. For example, the survey recorded 6492 wte registered nurses in 2007. This compares with the estimated 13,543.28 registered children's nurses in England reported in the 2002 survey, suggesting that the reach was greater than the response rate suggests. A list of the hospitals who responded can be found in Appendix 2. Many of the hospitals which responded were relatively large children's units; it is possible that the smaller units are under-represented in the survey.

Possible reasons for poor response rate

1. In view of recent organisational and structural change across the NHS the Directors of Nursing list was out of date.
2. The Directors of Nursing list contained names of people that were not responsible for children's nurses or duplicated responsibilities with others in list.
3. Not having email addresses for the Directors of Nursing. To undertake a web-based survey from a letter with a web address was not user friendly
4. The web-based survey was not particularly easy to use. It was difficult for respondees to understand the save function which allowed you to complete the survey in stages rather than in one go.
5. The questionnaire was too long and complex.
6. The request to complete the questionnaire coincided with other (more important and/or compulsory) questionnaires, for example, the child health mapping questionnaire.

Results

Because of the low response rate, all results should be treated with caution. However some interesting trends appear to be emerging from the data collected. Fifty six out of 79 (71%) lead nurses were classified as band 8, the appropriate grade for this position. Three relatively small units had lead nurses at Band 7

Changes in services

Lead nurses were asked to provide details of changes to services that had occurred since 2005. A summary of data collected can be seen in Table 1. Further detail can be seen in Appendix 3. 59 out of 79 (74%) reported at least one change. The majority of services reported the introduction of new services and expanding services.

Table 1: Nature of changes occurring since 2005

Nature of change	No. of changes
New service	105
Closed service	9
Reduced capacity	7
Expanding service	6
Closed service transferred to CHPs*	2

*CHP = community health partnership (Scotland)

Changes in the nursing workforce

Lead nurses were asked to provide a breakdown of the number of registered children's nurses, registered adult nurses, non-registered nurses and specialist nurses¹ caring for children in their services two years before the survey (2005), the time of the survey (2007) and an estimate for a year later (2008). The data collected relating to 2005 and 2007 is presented in Table 2. This data suggests that the whole time equivalent (WTE) nurses caring for children has increased overall between 2005 and 2007. This is true even in relation to adult nurses working with children.

Table 2: Comparison of nursing workforce in 2005 and 2007

Number of Responses = 79			
Nurses	WTE 2005	WTE 2007	% Difference
Registered Nurses (Child)	5933	6492	9%
Registered Nurse (Adult)	1183	1366	15%
Non-registered nurses	1225	1426	16%
Specialist Nurses ¹	400	517	29%
Grand Total	8741	9801	12%

For 2008, many respondents were unable or reluctant to provide estimates; therefore, we have made comparisons only with those who gave figures for both years. These show the following increases/decreases (Table 3). Data presented in Table 3 suggests that the posts that are likely to be *lost* are specialist nurse posts.

¹ Specialist nurses = advanced neonatal nurse practitioner, nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists and nurse consultants. (NB these nurses were excluded from other categories for the purpose of this questionnaire.)

Table 3: Comparison of actual workforce in 2007 and predicted nursing workforce in 2008

Nurses	No. of Responses	WTE 2007 (actual)	WTE 2008 (predicted)	% Difference
Registered Nurses (Child)	62	4332	4775	10%
Registered Nurse (Adult)	35	774	815	5%
Non-registered Nurses	59	972	1042	7%
Specialist Nurses ¹	58	438	385	-12%
Grand Total		6516	7017	8%

In relation to registered nurses Table 4 provides an overview of the predicted changes between 2007 and 2008. This data suggests that Band 7 nurses and Band 8b nurses are most at risk.

Table 4: Comparisons of 2007 and estimated 2008 Registered Nurses

Number of Responses = 62			
Grade	WTE 2007	WTE 2008	% Difference
5	2450	2912	19%
6	1226	1253	2%
7	564	511	-9%
8a	70	76	9%
8b	20	19	-5%
8c	2	3	50%
Grand Total	4332	4774	10%

For non-registered nurses Table 5 provides an overview of the predicted changes between 2007 and 2008. There appears to be a plan to increase non-registered nurses. Posts at Band 4 appear to be most at risk.

Table 5: Comparisons of 2007 and estimated 2008 Non-Registered Nurses

Number of Responses = 59			
Grade	WTE 2007	WTE 2008	% Difference
1	52	62	19%
2	415	459	11%
3	310	334	8%
4	195	187	-4%
Grand Total	972	1042	7%

Table 6 outlines the predicted changes between 2007 and 2008 for specialist nurses. The number of nurse practitioners is likely to increase while the number of nurse consultants may decrease.

Table 6: Comparisons of 2007 and estimated 2008 Specialist Nurses

Number of Responses = 58			
Nurse Type	WTE 2007	WTE 2008	% Difference
ANNP & ANP	64	75	17%
CNS	333	250	-25%
NC	15	16	7%
NP	26	43	65%
Grand Total	438	384	-12%

Key: ANNP = advanced neonatal nurse practitioner; ANP = advanced nurse practitioner; CNS = clinical nurse specialist; NC = nurse consultant; NP = nurse practitioner

Data in Table 7 suggests that overall there are an increasing number of registered adult nurses caring for children. The biggest increase relates to Band 6 nurses. (NB the grades in this table are a mixture of agenda for change (AfC) and "old" grades.)

Table 7: Comparisons of 2007 and estimated 2008 Adult Nurses

Number of Responses = 35			
Grade	Adult WTE 2007	Adult WTE 2008	% Difference
5	472	453	-4%
6	220	286	30%
7	64	59	-8%
8a	4	4	0%
8b	1	1	0%
E	3	3	0%
F	6	6	0%
H	1	1	0%
Grand Total	771	813	5%

Conclusion

This paper presents the results of a survey that set out to ascertain the effects of NHS deficits on the children's nursing workforce. The response rate for this study was very small and the smaller hospitals/units appear to be under-represented but the data provides a useful snapshot. Bearing this in the mind the following conclusions can be drawn, that:

- many new children's services have opened and several services have expanded; with only a very few services closing
- the number of nurses (WTE) working with children seems to have increased in the past two years
- while nursing posts are increasing overall there seems to be a reduction in the number of specialist nurses with Band 7 and 8b nurses appearing to be most at risk
- the apparent decrease in the number of specialist is of concern; whether there is an impact on the quality of nursing care as a result of this needs monitoring

- there appears to be an increase in the number of non-registered nurses working with children
- the number of nurse practitioners may increase while the number of nurse consultants appear likely to decrease
- an increasing number of registered adult nurses appear to be caring for children

The Way Forward

- Some of the trends identified need exploring further. This will be particularly important in the light of current and proposed service reconfigurations and as the impact of medical staffs compliance with the European working time directive become apparent.
- So that the trends identified can be explored further a robust database of lead children's nurses is currently being compiled. This database will be used to undertake targeted questionnaires in the future.

Project Steering Committee

Dr Sue Hobbins, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Dr David Shortland, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Martin McColgan, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

Dr Alison Twycross, Royal College of Nursing

Other contributors

Professor Dame Jill McLeod-Clark, Council of Deans

John Thain, Royal College of Nursing

Jane McLean, Royal College of Nursing

Fiona Smith, Royal College of Nursing

Appendix 1: The Questionnaire

Organisation Name _____

1. Are children and young people admitted or cared for within your organisation? Yes No

If no, you do not need to complete the rest of this questionnaire, but we would be grateful if you could complete your details in question 3b and return the form to Lynn Bell by Fax to 020 7323 7901.

2. Do you have a children’s lead nurse at a senior level? Yes No

3 (a) Contact Details for Lead Nurse

Name: _____

Position: _____

Band: 7 8a 8b 9 Other specify: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail _____

3 (b) Respondent details if you are not the lead nurse

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail _____

4. Changes to children’s services in your organisation since January 2005

We would like to know about any new children’s services requiring additional nurses i.e. Home Care Team/ Assessment Clinic/ Nurse led clinic/ Specialty development which have been established since January 2005, any that have closed down or any where services have been reduced.

Service	Nature of Change (please tick as applicable)		
	New Service	Closed Service	Reduced Capacity

5. Changes to children's services in your organisation forecast for the next year

We would like to know about planned changes to children's service during the forthcoming year. Are there any new children's services requiring additional nurses expected to be established by January 2008, any that will be closed down or any where services are expected to reduce.

Service	Nature of Change (please tick as applicable)		
	New Service	Closed Service	Reduced Capacity

6. The Children's nursing establishment in your organisation

For your organisation, we would like to know the total number and whole time equivalents of children's nurses working in your children's services, 2 years ago, today and expected a year ahead for each grade/band.

6.1 Registered Children's Nurses (exclude the specialist nurses in 6.2)

Grade	January 2005		Band	January 2007		January 2008	
	No.	wte		No.	wte	No.	wte
D			5				
E			6				
F			7				
G			8a				
			8b				
			8c				
			8d				
			9				

6.2 Non-Registered Nurses, to include Health Care Assistants, Nursing Auxiliaries

Grade	January 2005		Band	January 2007		January 2008	
	No.	wte		No.	wte	No.	wte
A			1				
B			2				
C			3				
			4				

6.3 Specialist Children's Nurses

	January 2005		January 2007		January 2008	
	No.	wte	No.	wte	No.	wte
Advanced Neonatal Nurse Practitioner						
Nurse Practitioner						
Clinical Nurse Specialist						
Nurse Consultant						

6.4 Adult nurses delivering paediatric nursing care in any part of your organisation

Please complete, where appropriate for 2 years ago, today and expected a year ahead details, for each grade/band, of adult nurses delivering paediatric care.

6.4.1

January 2005		
Department	Grade	wte

6.4.2

January 2007		
Department	Band	wte

6.4.3

January 2008		
Department	Band	wte

7. Redundancies of children’s nurses in your organisation

Please only include announced redundancies

Band	Redundancies since January 2005		Redundancies planned before January 2008	
	No.	wte	No.	wte
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8a				
8b				
8c				
8d				
9				

8. Current Vacancies

Please provide a breakdown of the status of current vacancies for children's nurses in your organisation.

Band	Frozen posts i.e. not recruiting.		Unable to recruit – Posts advertised, but unable to fill at interview.		Being recruited – Posts not filled but in the process of appointing or prior to interview.	
	No.	wte	No.	wte	No.	wte
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8a						
8b						
8c						
8d						
9						

9. Student Nurses

9.1 Maximum number of child branch student nurses allocated to your organisation at one time.

	Maximum Number
January 2005	
January 2007	
January 2008	

9.2 Are any reductions in pre-registration child branch students commissions planned in your organisation?

Yes No If Yes, please provide details:

10. Workload indicators in your organisation

We would like to know for your organisation 2 years ago, today, and expected a year ahead, the number of the following:

Indicator	January 2005	Current January 2007	January 2008	Notes
Acute Hospital No of beds/cots				To include all beds on children's ward, PICU, HDU, neonatal cots, SCBU cots
Community Setting Number of children on caseload				
Community Setting Number of children waiting to come on caseload				

11. Training

Does your nursing establishment allow you to meet mandatory and additional training needs of all staff?

	Can meet needs	Percentage allowance provided
Mandatory Training:		
- child protection	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
- moving and handling	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
- basic life support	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
- dealing with aggression	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Additional training	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please return your completed form to Lynn Bell either by Fax to 020 7323 7901, or by post to:

**Lynn Bell
Research Division
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
50 Hallam Street
London
W1W 6DE:**

Appendix 2: Organisations who Responded to the Survey

Aeston Area Health Trust	North Bristol NHS trust
Ashton, Leigh and Wigan Primary Care Trust	Northern Health and Social Care Trust
Barts and The London NHS Trust	Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Bassetlaw PCT	Nottingham University Hospital
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust - Belfast City Hospital	Oxford Radcliffe Hospital NHS Trust
Bexley Care Trust	Oxfordshire PCT
Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust	Pontypridd and Rhondda NHS Trust
Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust	Portsmouth Hospitals Trust
Burton Hospitals NHS Trust	Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Cambridge University Hospitals Foundation Trust Addenbrookes Hospital	Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt nhs Trust
Carmarthenshire NHS Trust	Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
Combined Healthcare Trust North Staffordshire	Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust
Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust	Royal Liverpool Childrens NHS Trust
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust	Royal Surrey County Hospital
Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust	Royal Unit Hospital Bath NHS Trust - General Paediatrics
Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	Royal United Hospital Bath NHS Trust - NICU
Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust	Royal West Sussex NHS Trust
East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust	Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust
East Kent Hospitals Trust	South Birmingham PCT
East Lancs PCT	South Devon Healthcare Foundation Trust
East Sussex Hospitals Trust	South Eastern Trust, Northern Ireland
Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT	South Staffordshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust	South Warwickshire General Hospitals NHS Trust
Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust	Southend Hospital NHS Trust
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust	St Georges Healthcare
Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust	Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust
Hereford Hospital NHS Trust	Swansea NHS Trust
Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Hospitals Trust	Telford and Wreking PCT
Isle of Wight NHS Primary Care Trust	The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust
Islington PCT	University College London Hospitals Foundation Trust
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust	University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Trust
Leicester City PCT	Wandsworth PCT
Lord Wandsworth College	West Lothian Community Health and Care Partnership
Lothian University Hospitals Division- Royal Hospital for Sick Children (Edinburgh)	Whittington Hospital NHS Trust
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust	Winchester and Eastleigh Healthcare NHS Trust
Medway NHS Trust	Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
Newham Primary Care Trust	Worthing and Southlands NHS Trust
NHS Ayrshire and Arran	Wrightington Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust
NHS Fife - Operating Division	Yorkhill Hospital Royal Hospital for Sick Children
NHS Grampian	

Appendix 3 – Nature of Changes

Data presented in Tables A-D provides further detail about the changes to service outlined in Table 1.

Table A: Closed Services

Service	Number
Acute	1
Beds	1
CCN - Camden	1
In-patient unit at Ayr Hospital	1
Looked After Children	1
Neonatal	1
Outpatient service	2
Outreach	2
Respite Care	1
School nursing	1
Total	12

Table B: Expanding Services

Service	Number
Children's Community	1
Clinical	1
Diabetes clinic	1
Outreach	1
Paediatric Day Care & Inpatient Surgery	1
Paediatric Oncology	1
Paediatric Liaison Service	1
Total	7

Table C: Number of Services with Reduced Capacity

Service	Number
Acute	1
Beds	2
CCN - band 5	1
Children's Community	1
Integrated Children's ward	1
Neonatal	1
Total	7

Table D: New Services

Service	Number	Service	Number
A & E	3	HDU	1
Acute	1	Link Nurse for Sickle Cell Disease	1
Alternative to admission	1	Looked After Children	1
Ambulatory	4	Macmillan nurse	1
Assessment	10	national Spinal Surgery	1
Asthma	3	Neonatal	4
Beds	2	Neuroscience Unit	1
Bone Marrow Transplant Service	1	New service	1
Bowel	3	NNU becoming level 3 unit	1
Cancer	5	Nurse Led ADHD Service	1
Child Protection	2	Nurse led clinics	1
Children's Community	1	Nurse led phlebotomy clinic	1
Children's critical care	1	Nursery Nurses	1
children's respite care service	1	Outpatient service	1
Clinical	2	Outreach	2
Cochlear implant	1	Paediatric epilepsy specialist nurse	1
Complex and behavioural needs service	2	Paediatric learning disabilities service	1
Constipation	1	Paediatric nurses in day surgery	1
Consultant led Rapid access	1	Paediatrics	2
Dental Service	1	Palliative	3
Deputy appointed	1	PICU Retrieval Nurse	1
Diabetes clinic	7	Specialist	1
Enteral Feeding Lead Nurse	1	Pilot of RN Child Branch in Special School	1
Epilepsy Nurse Specialist	1	Primary Care CAMHS	1
Epipen-Resuscitation training clinic	1	Respiratory	2
Expansion of Safe Guarding Team	1	Respite care for boys with Muscular Dystrophy	1
Extended Day Case Unit	1	Same Day Admission Unit	1
Family Liaison Manager	1	School nursing	4
Fracture	1	Tissue Viability Nurse Service	1
General Children's Assessment Unit	1	Tracheotomy Clinical Nurse specialist Service	1
Haemoglobinopathy Nurse Specialist	1	Transitional Care Unit	1
	1	Young Person's Unit	1
Total			105