

**FAIR PAY  
FOR NURSING**

# Cost of living survey



## Scotland summary

# Introduction

In January we surveyed our members, asking them how the cost of living is impacting their lives. With over 1,000 responses from members in Scotland, the results paint a stark picture of the financial challenges facing nursing staff and the impact this is having on their wellbeing, personal lives and work.

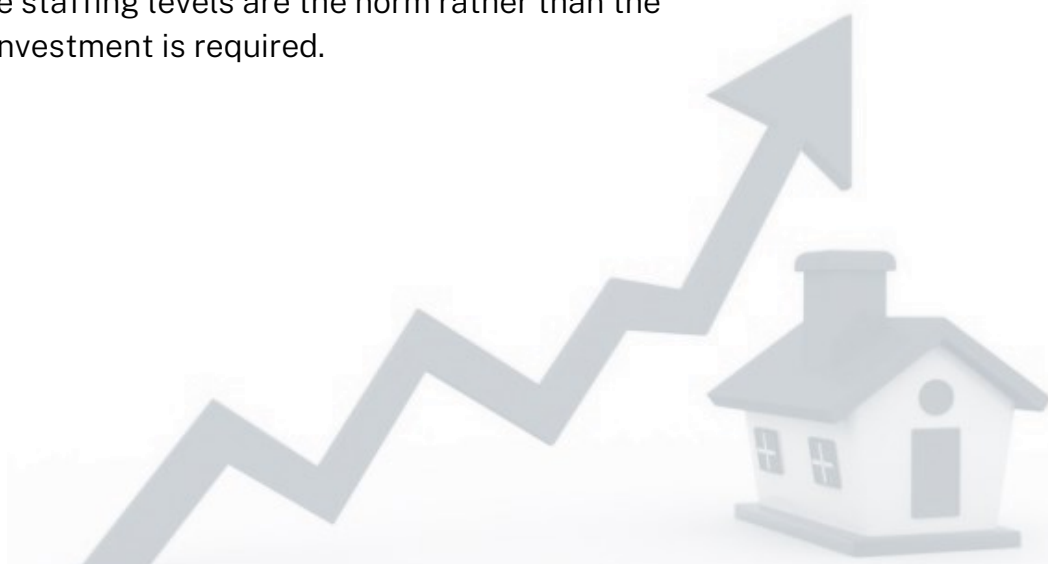
75% of respondents say they are financially worse off compared to 12 months ago. While 38% report they are just about able to meet essential living costs, 22% are struggling with their living costs and increasingly worried about their financial situation. This is despite NHS pay awards being made, after our members narrowly voted to accept the NHS Scotland pay offer in May.

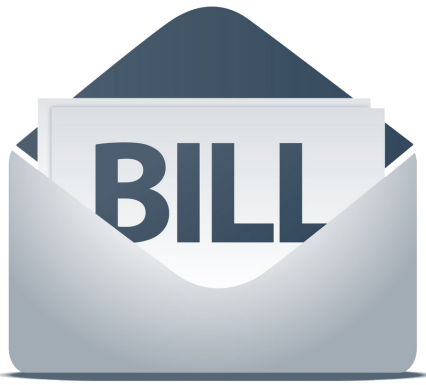
We recognise the financial struggles being faced across society, and the challenging economic situation facing government. But the finding that really drives home the potential consequence of not investing in nursing now, is that 62% have thought about changing their current role due to the cost of living, and of this group 60% have considered leaving nursing altogether.

Nursing is a safety critical profession and with around 5300 unfilled nursing posts in the NHS alone, Scotland cannot afford to lose any more nursing staff. This is not the time to be pulling resources from the nursing workforce. We believe there are solutions, but they require investment now.

This is why RCN Scotland is urgently calling on Scottish government to fund the recommendations from the Agenda for Change (AfC) Review quickly and in full and provide the financial resources to deliver the recommendations that emerge from the Nursing and Midwifery Taskforce.

If we are to see significant improvements in staff retention, increases in the number of people choosing to study nursing, and Scotland's NHS and social care services reaching a point where safe nurse staffing levels are the norm rather than the exception, long term investment is required.





**61%** of respondents describe themselves as being responsible for paying either all household costs, or the main contributor to household costs

**75%** of respondents say they are financially worse off compared to 12 months ago



**38%** of respondents report that they are just about able to meet essential living costs but have not budgeted for unexpected costs

**22%** are struggling with their living costs and increasingly worried about their financial situation



## Members shared which cost saving measures they've taken in the last 12 months



**60%** have used credit or savings for essential living costs



**21%** have faced difficulties managing finances or missed payments (including rent/mortgage, other bill payments, credit or loan payments)



**23%** have gone without food or skipped meals



**31%** have borrowed money from family or friends



**43%** have worked more than their contracted hours



**7%** have withdrawn from or reduced contributions to employer's pension scheme

## Impact on health



**91%** of respondents report that financial concerns are having some impact on their mental health – **36%** report this as being a considerable or very considerable impact

**78%** report that financial concerns are having some impact on their physical health



## Impact on staffing levels

**49%** say that, in the next 5 years, it is likely or very likely that they will leave nursing altogether



Of the **62%** who have thought about changing their current role due to the cost of living, **60%** have considered leaving nursing



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