



RCN LONDON SAFE STAFFING REPORT 2015

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RCN London's latest report about the safety of local staffing levels contains evidence of a deepening shortage of registered nurses in the region. It is two years since our first Safe Staffing Report, in which time demand for health services has continued to rise. However the recruitment of nursing staff has fallen well short of the level needed.

The data published in this report shows that the vacancy rate for London nursing is now around 17%. That's up from 14% last year and 11% the year before. The shortage of nurses in London is significantly higher than the rest of the country and shows no sign of improving. There are now more than 10,000 nursing vacancies in the capital.

The good news for patients is that London employers have continued to look for more staff following Sir Robert Francis' warnings about patient safety in 2013. In total we estimate there are around **1400** more nurses working in London compared to a year ago. However this is well short of the 2400 extra posts which employers have created to keep up with rising demand and is a symptom of the difficult underlying problem of supply. The biggest shortfall is at Band 5 where only around 18% of new posts have been filled.

The results of the nursing shortage in London have been clear in 2015. Despite the agency cap, our local trusts are increasingly dependent on temporary and agency staff to plug the gaps. The RCN's 2015 Frontline First Report on agency spending showed London trusts spending £14.7m a month on agency staff, an increase of 150% in two years. The decision to cut back on training places has proved to be a false economy.

London employers are also more reliant than ever on colleagues joining from overseas. In 2015 RCN members across the country campaigned against damaging immigration changes under which non-EU nurses earning under £35,000 a year would be threatened with deportation.

Our campaign work, alongside other concerned stakeholders, forced a U-turn from the Government. This report shows that, where the option has been available, local employers have had little choice but to bring in overseas staff if they are to keep patients safe. The Government should support those staff and value the service they provide.

The shortage we face is partly down to short sighted workforce planning right across the country which saw training posts cut in the past, meaning there are not enough home grown nurses coming through the system. Added to that are the concerns the RCN has been raising for several years now that across nursing we have an aging workforce. Commissioners and workforce planners in London have moved to increase training places, although it will take a few years to have an effect. Importantly, an increase in commissions needs to be fully funded by the Government, not paid for by saddling prospective nurses with potentially huge debt.

Above all, the ongoing pay freeze imposed by the Government means that nursing staff increasingly just cannot afford to live and work in London. Pay has run 10% below inflation since 2010. The Government urgently needs to give nursing staff a pay rise at a level which helps them settle in the capital for the long term, before staffing shortages start to damage the quality of care which London's patients receive.

Bernell Bussue
Regional Director, RCN London
January 2016

TRUST	Total WTE registered nursing vacancies, July 2015	Nursing vacancy rate, July 2015 (%)	Change to WTE registered nursing establishment since July 2014 (%)	Change in total WTE registered nurses employed since July 2014 (%)
LONDON TOTAL	10140	17%	/	/
Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS trust	333	17%	3%	0%
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	185	19%	-1%	2%
Barts Health NHS Trust	1044	19%	13%	15%
Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust	44	12%	4%	25%
Central and North West London Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust	58	3%	-4%	-4%
Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust	237	20%	6%	5%
Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	225	17%	4%	1%
Croydon Health Services NHS Trust	258	20%	2%	3%
East London NHS Foundation Trust	232	17%	30%	18%
Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust	399	22%	5%	0%
Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation	81	6%	3%	1%
Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust	677	14%	0%	3%
Hillingdon Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	114	14%	14%	10%
Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	136	11%	1%	2%
Hounslow and Richmond Community Health NHS Trust	79	25%	3%	2%
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust	573	15%	5%	1%
King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	653	16%	4%	10%
Kingston Hospital NHS Trust	192	20%	10%	-5%
Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust	297	16%	/	/
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	63	13%	8%	10%

TRUST	Total WTE registered nursing vacancies, July 2015	Nursing vacancy rate, July 2015 (%)	Change to WTE registered nursing establishment since July 2014 (%)	Change in total WTE registered nurses employed since July 2014 (%)
North East London NHS Foundation Trust	304	18%	0%	6%
North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	88	13%	-25%	-24%
London North West Healthcare NHS Trust	811	30%	-3%	-12%
Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust	204	16%	7%	4%
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust	197	14%	5%	5%
Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust	528	17%	4%	-4%
Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust	130	11%	1%	0%
Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust	43	11%	2%	1%
South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust	440	26%	9%	0%
South West London Mental Health NHS trust	159	30%	-5%	-15%
St George's Healthcare NHS Trust	477	14%	16%	14%
Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust	2	12%	0%	0%
University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust*	419	15%	/	/
West London Mental Health NHS Trust	242	22%	3%	-7%
West Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust	56	9%	4%	8%
Whittington Hospital NHS Trust	159	12%	3%	6%

Data collected by a Freedom of Information request carried out by RCN London in August 2015. All posts given as whole time equivalent (WTE). Vacancy figures are rounded so may not match total.

University College London Hospitals NHS FT said they could not give an accurate workforce figure for July. Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust did not reply. Figures for both of these trusts are therefore based on estimates from board papers and we have left them out of the year on year comparison.

LONDON'S NHS TRUSTS
HAVE CONTINUED TO
INVEST IN THEIR
WORKFORCE IN 2015....



...BUT THE SUPPLY OF
REGISTERED NURSING
STAFF CANNOT KEEP PACE
WITH RISING PATIENT
DEMAND

17%

IN 2015 THE LONDON NHS
NURSING VACANCY RATE
WAS 17%. THAT'S UP FROM
14% IN 2014.



IN TOTAL THIS MEANS
10,140 LONDON NHS
NURSING POSTS
UNFILLED

10,140



NINE LONDON NHS
EMPLOYERS REPORTED
VACANCY RATES OF 20%
OR MORE, SOME AS HIGH
AS 30%

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REPORT
2015

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LONDON BUDGETED
NURSING
ESTABLISHMENTS GREW
IN 2015 BY 4%, OR
AROUND 2400 POSTS

IN PRACTICE THERE ARE
AROUND 1400 NEW NURSES
WORKING IN THE CAPITAL

1400



BUT THAT MEANS 40%
OF NEWLY CREATED
POSTS REMAINED
UNFILLED

THE LARGEST INCREASE
IN POSTS THIS YEAR
WAS AT BAND 6



BUT 80% OF NEW
BAND 5 POSTS
REMAINED UNFILLED

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