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## Focus on GPs and their Practice Workforce

(Revised September 2015)



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# Focus on GPs and their Practice Workforce

## 1. Introduction

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The purpose of this report is to provide the most up-to-date and detailed view of the current GP practice workforce within NHS Wales using a variety of data sources. The report also sets out some recommendations that help address some of the data shortfalls.

### 1.1 What data do we have on the GP workforce?

#### 1.1.1 Data on GPs

There are two main sources of GP workforce data in Wales:

##### 1. The Medical Performers list.

This is a database of GPs who are able to practice in NHS Wales. The Medical Performers list is maintained by Shared Services Partnership (SSP) and was found to be the most up-to-date and comprehensive source of information on GPs. It includes all GPs, Registrars, Retainers and Locums who are registered in Wales.

##### 2. Exeter system.

This is a database of all patients registered with a NHS GP, which enables payments to be made to GPs as part of their General Medical Services (GMS) Contract. Welsh Government use the Exeter system to obtain data for their publication via Health & Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC).

There are two main differences between these two lists: the Exeter system excludes registrars, retainers and locums and only include GPs currently practicing and; the Medical Performers list includes all GPs that are **able** to practice in NHS Wales regardless of whether they currently practice in NHS Wales.

In order to create an accurate list of how many GPs work in Wales, both lists have been combined.

The Medical Performers list is used as the master list because it is the most up-to-date data and contains a list of Locum GPs. The Exeter list is used to remove

GPs from the Medical Performers list that are not actively working in Wales and receiving a payment for work.

### **Combined List**

The Combined List of 2,925 GPs includes:-

- 1,979 GPs who are included on both the Exeter System (as at Sept 2014) and Medical Performers list (as at May 2015)
- Any GPs whose date of inclusion on the Medical Performers list is after September 2014
- Any Salaried GPs, Registrars, Retainers and Locum GPs who are included within the Medical Performers list as at May 2015. However, there is no guarantee that any of these GPs are currently working in GP Practices within Wales.

The Combined List excludes 50 GPs on the Medical Performers List who were suspended, contingently removed, or application was being processed as at May 2015.

The Combined List also excludes 69 GPs who are assumed to be working outside Wales. This includes any GPs who are on the Medical Performers List as a Partner, Returner, Clinical Fellow or Armed Forces GP, and were not included in the Exeter System as at September 2014, and had a date of inclusion on the Medical Performers List of pre September 2014

The Combined List is based on headcount of GPs only. Data on FTE is not currently recorded on either the Medical Performers list or the Exeter System and 2014 data is not reported on the Stats Wales website due to issues with the data. The average FTE of 2012 and 2013 has been used to calculate the participation rate. However, the data within these years on Stats Wales may not be 100% accurate.

### **1.1.2 Data on GPs in Training<sup>1</sup>**

There are currently 473 GPs in Training as at June 2015. Although the average attrition rate for GPs is 8%, the Welsh Deanery anticipate that that up to 280 newly qualified GPs will enter the workforce by 2018.

### **1.1.3 Data on GP Practice Staff<sup>2</sup>**

There is an Annual Return which is completed by all organisations on 30<sup>th</sup> September each year. This data collection captures workforce data on practice staff. The information contained in the Annual Return is by Practice, and contains Headcount and Total Hours by:

- Advanced Level Nurses
- Extended role nurses
- Practice nurses
- Direct Patient Care Support Workers
- Admin & Clerical Workers
- Other staff paid by GP Practice.

### **Definition of Nursing Roles**

Advanced Level Nurses include Advanced Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Practitioner, Prescribing Nurse, Nurse Clinician, Nurse Manager, Practice Development Nurse and Assistant Practitioner. These nurses have high levels of clinical skill, competence and autonomous decision-making.

Extended Role Nurses & Specialist Nurses include nurses who have received additional training in a specialist area such as Diabetes, Asthma, Learning Disability, Mental Health and Sexual Health.

Practice Nurses include all other qualified nurses employed by the practice.

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<sup>1</sup> GP Trainee Data supplied from the Welsh Deanery

<sup>2</sup> All organisations have submitted their most recent data, as at Sept 2014, however, Hywel Dda LHB have not carried out their 2014 data collection so their data is as at Sept 2013.

## 2. Overview of the data

### 2.1 GP Workforce by Organisation

Table 1 shows that ABMU UHB and C&V UHB have the highest percentage of GPs (higher than the NHS Wales average) and the lowest percentage of support workers within it GPs workforce.

BC UHB has the lowest percentage of GPs, whilst BC UHB and AB UHB have the highest percentage of support workers within its GP workforce.

HD UHB nursing workforce is the only organisation that has a greater percentage (15%) than the NHS Wales average (13%).

**Table 1: Summary of GP Practice Workforce in NHS Wales**

		Staff Group			Total Workforce
		GPs	Nurses	All Support Workers	
NHS Wales	Headcount	2,925	1,227	5,878	10,030
	% of Total Headcount	29%	12%	59%	100%
By Organisation	AB UHB	27%	11%	62%	100%
	ABM UHB	34%	12%	54%	100%
	BC UHB	26%	12%	62%	100%
	C&V UHB	35%	11%	54%	100%
	CT UHB	30%	11%	59%	100%
	HD UHB	29%	15%	56%	100%
	Powys tHB	27%	12%	61%	100%

Table 2 below shows the breakdown of the GP practice workforce by role. The role of the GP relates to their primary role as recorded on the Medical Performers list.

Nursing staff only make up 12% of the GP practice workforce while admin and clerical make up 47%. Of the GP practice workforce, Locum GPs (5%) are the second highest group of GPs working in GP practices after Partners (17%).

Direct patient care support workers account for 9% of the GP practice workforce.

## 2.2 GP Workforce by Job Role

**Table 2: Summary of GP Practice Workforce by Job Role in NHS Wales**

Job Role	Headcount	% Headcount of Total Workforce	FTE	Participation Rate
<b>GPs:-</b>				
Locum	523	5%	n/a	
Other	4	0%	n/a	
Partner	1,733	17%	n/a	
Registrar	307	3%	n/a	
Retainer	24	0%	n/a	
Salaried GP	334	3%	n/a	
<b>Total Number of GPs</b>	<b>2,925</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>2,720*</b>	<b>0.93</b>
<b>Nursing Staff:-</b>				
Advanced Level Nurses	140	1%	108.1	0.77
Extended Role Nurses	167	2%	107.7	0.64
Practice Nurses	920	9%	576.4	0.63
<b>Total of Nursing Staff</b>	<b>1,227</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>792.2</b>	<b>0.65</b>
<b>Support Workers:-</b>				
Direct Patient Care Support Workers	875	9%	472.0	0.54
Admin & Clerical	4,691	47%	3,278.6	0.70
Other Workers	312	3%	101.5	0.33
<b>Total of Support Workers</b>	<b>5,878</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>3,852.1</b>	<b>0.66</b>
<b>Total GP Practice Workforce</b>	<b>10,030</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7,364.5</b>	<b>0.75</b>

Source: GPs - Combined List.

Source: Nursing and Support Staff - ANC4 (General Practice Staff Return)

\*The FTE is calculated by the Headcount multiplied by the participation rate. The participation rate is a measure of part-time working and is calculated using the average FTE of 2012 and 2013 divided by the Headcount of 2014, as published on Stats Wales, which excludes Locums, Registrars and Retainers.

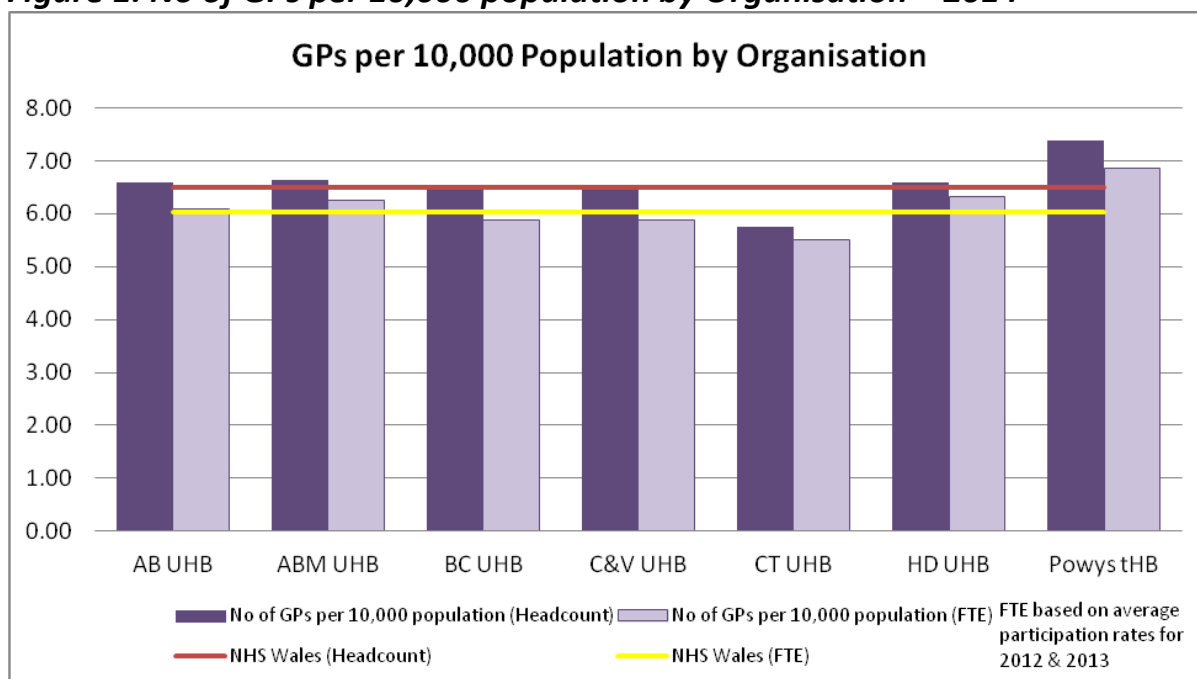
### 3. GP analysis

The data in Section 2 relates to all GPs (Partners, Salaried GPs, Registrars, Retainers, Returners, Locums and Clinical Fellows) who are currently included on the *Combined List*.

#### 3.1 GP Population Analysis

Figure 1 shows that Powys tHB has the highest number of GPs per 10,000 population at 7.38 GPs whilst CT UHB have the lowest number of GPs per 10,000 population at 5.76.

**Figure 1: No of GPs per 10,000 population by Organisation – 2014**



Source: Stats Wales.

Table 3 shows that Wales has the lowest number of GPs per 10,000, compared to England and Scotland. Out of the 7 organisations in NHS Wales, CT UHB, BC UHB and C&V UHB have less than the Wales average of 6.5 GPs (Headcount) per 10,000 population.

Table 3 also shows the variance between the Headcount and FTE of GPs per 10,000 population for NHS Wales is 0.44. 4 organisations (AB UHB, BC UHB, CV UHB and Powys tHB) have a larger variance than NHS Wales suggesting that there are more GPs working part-time in these organisations.

**Table 3: No of GPs per 10,000 population by Country and Organisation (Source: Stats Wales)<sup>3</sup>**

Country	GPs per 10,000 population	Organisation	GPs per 10,000 population (Headcount)	GPs per 10,000 population (FTE)	Variance (Headcount & FTE)
Wales	6.5				
England	6.6	AB UHB	6.60	6.09	0.51
Scotland	8.1	ABM UHB	6.64	6.29	0.36
		BC UHB	6.45	5.90	0.54
		C&V UHB	6.49	5.91	0.58
		CT UHB	5.76	5.52	0.24
		HD UHB	6.59	6.33	0.26
		Powys tHB	7.38	6.85	0.53
		Wales	6.50	6.06	0.44

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<sup>3</sup> The FTE of GPs has been calculated by multiplying the 2014 headcount with the average participation rate for 2012 and 2013.



### 3.2 Gender & Age Analysis

Table 4 shows that AB UHB and C&V UHB have the highest percentage of female GPs in their workforce, whilst Powys tHB has the highest percentage of male GPs.

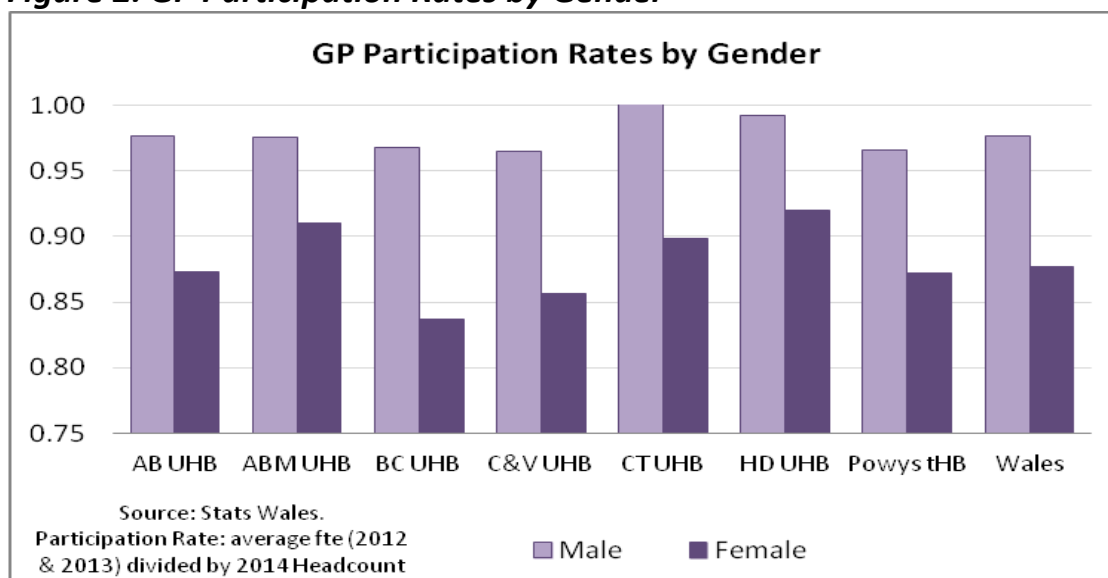
**Table 4: Analysis of GPs by Gender and Organisation**

Organisation	No of GPs	Gender	
		Female	Male
AB UHB	523	56%	44%
ABM UHB	560	55%	45%
BC UHB	600	49%	51%
C&V UHB	472	59%	41%
CT UHB	257	53%	47%
HD UHB	370	49%	51%
Powys tHB	143	45%	55%
All Wales	2925	53%	47%

Source: Combined List

Figure 2 below shows CT UHB has the highest participation rates for male GPs, whilst HD UHB has the highest participation rate for female GPs. Powys tHB has the lowest participation for male GPs at 0.96 and C&V UHB has the lowest for female GPs at 0.86.

**Figure 2: GP Participation Rates by Gender<sup>4</sup>**



<sup>4</sup> The participation rate is a measure of part-time working, it is the ratio of full-time equivalence (FTE) to headcount (HC). FTE is not currently available for 2014 due to data issues.

Figure 3 below shows that the female workforce is younger than the male workforce. 57% of the female GPs are aged 30-44 years as compared to 34% for Male GPs. The highest percentage of male GPs are aged 60 years and above, at 18%, whilst the highest percentage of female GPs is aged 35-39 years, at 21%.

The reason why there are more males aged 50+ than females is because historically there were a higher proportion of male GPs in training.

**Figure 3: Analysis of GPs by Gender and Age Band**

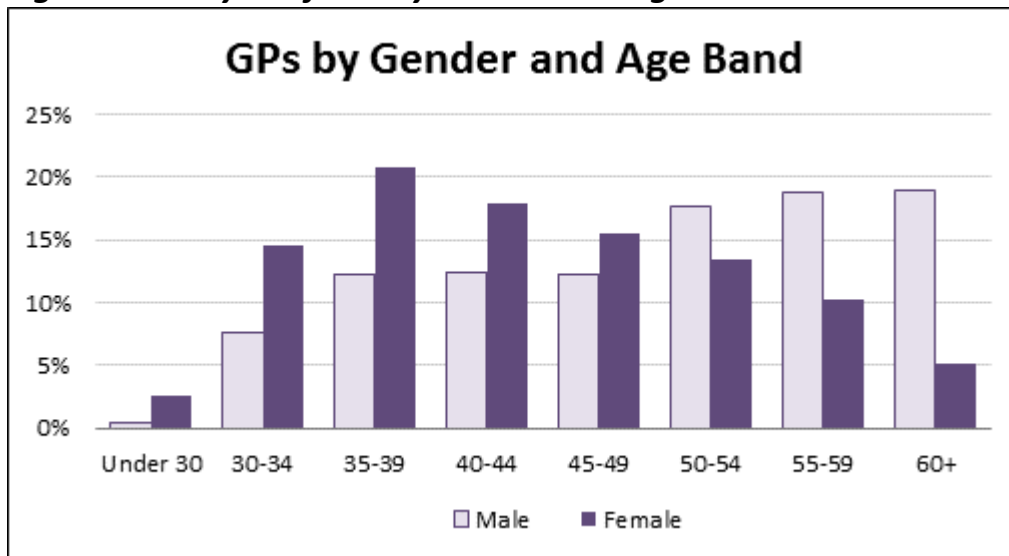
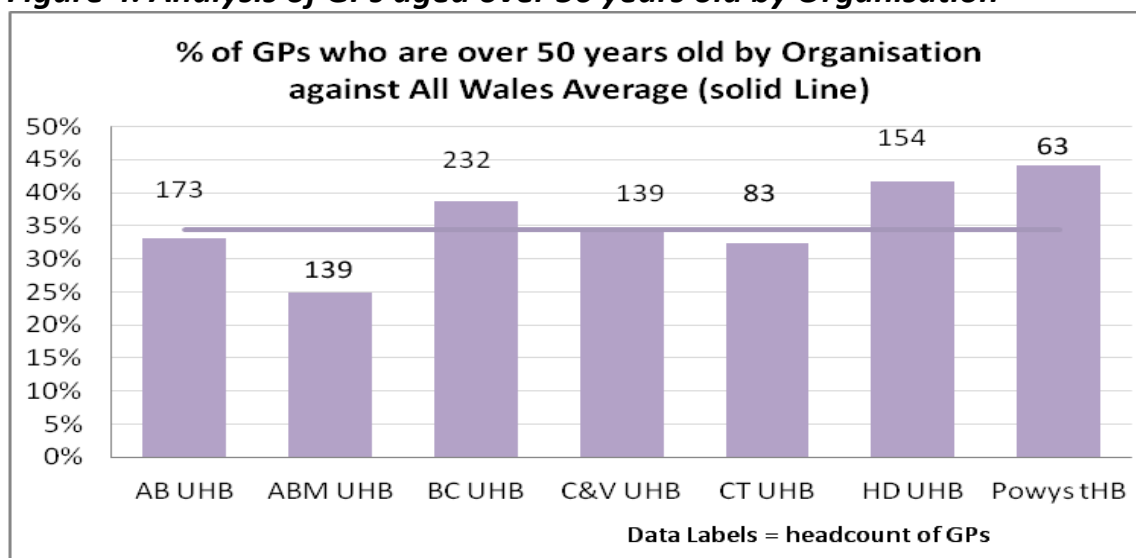


Figure 4 shows HD UHB and Powys tHB have over 40% of their workforce over the age of 50 years old. Powys tHB has the oldest workforce with 44% over the age of 50. The youngest workforce is ABM UHB with 25% of its GPs over the age of 50. BC UHB has the highest number of GPs over the age of 50, 232.

**Figure 4: Analysis of GPs aged over 50 years old by Organisation**



Source: Combined List

Overall the split between male and female is roughly 50:50 but Table 5 shows that there is a disproportionate amount of males who are over the age of 50 compared to females: 49% vs 22%. This disproportion could be due to the average age of women being lower than 50. (See section below)

**Table 5: Analysis of GPs who are over 50 years old by Gender within NHS Wales**

Organisation	Total Male GPs	% of Male GPs over 50 years old	Total Female GPs	% of Female GPs over 50 years old	Total GPs	% of GPs over 50 years old
AB UHB	232	48%	291	21%	523	33%
ABM UHB	255	38%	305	14%	560	25%
BC UHB	308	54%	292	22%	600	39%
C&V UHB	195	46%	277	27%	472	35%
CT UHB	122	48%	135	18%	257	32%
HD UHB	189	56%	181	27%	370	42%
Powys tHB	79	56%	64	30%	143	44%
All Wales	1380	49%	1545	22%	2925	34%

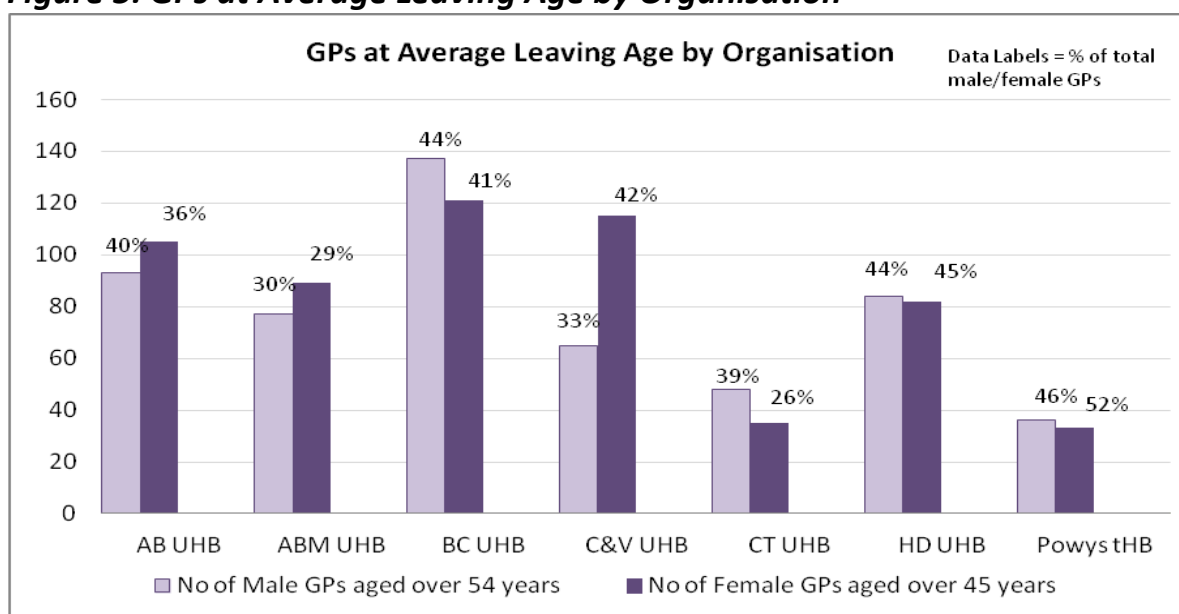
Source: Combined List

Statistics provided by Stats Wales show the average age that males and females leave GP employment is different. For men it is 54 years old and for a woman it is 45 years old.

*Please note this leaving age is not necessarily the retirement age, but the age GPs leave NHS Wales.*

Figure 5 and Table 6 show that BC UHB, HD UHB and Powys tHB have the highest proportion of GPs in NHS Wales who are at risk of leaving GP Practice in Wales within the immediate future, based on GP leaving age. Nearly half the workforce in these organisations could potentially leave the service.

**Figure 5: GPs at Average Leaving Age by Organisation**



Source: Combined List

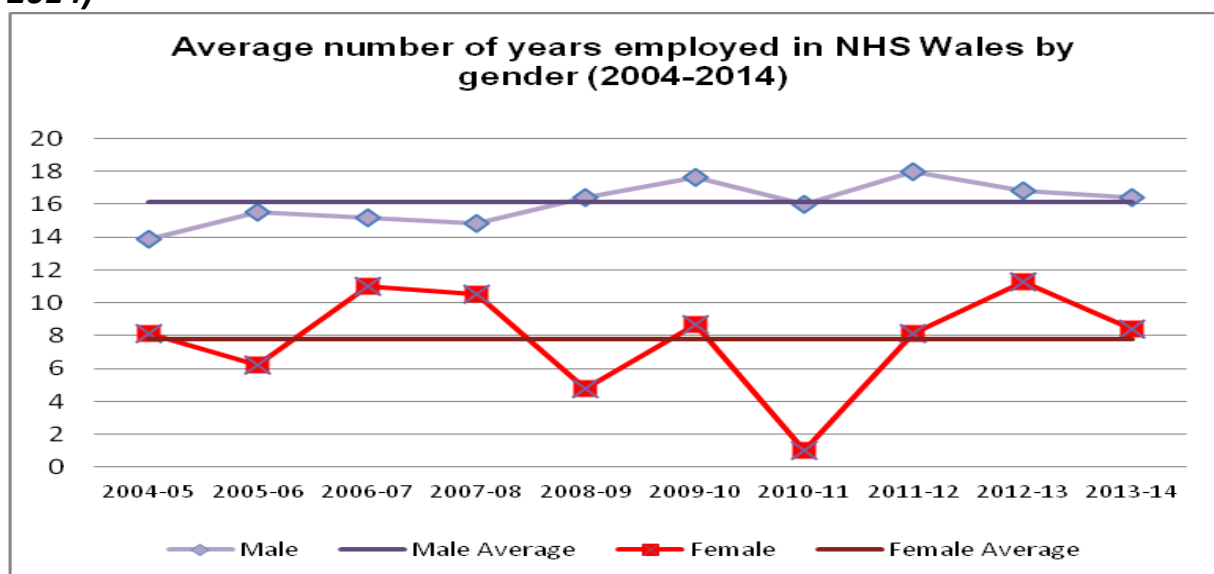
**Table 6: Analysis of GPs who are at Average Leaving Age by Gender and Organisation**

Organisation	Male GPs		Female GPs		Total Workforce	
	Total Male GPs	% of Male GPs over 54	Total Female GPs	% of Female GPs over 45	Total GPs	% GPs over the Average Leaving Age
AB UHB	232	40%	291	36%	523	38%
ABM UHB	255	30%	305	29%	560	30%
BC UHB	308	44%	292	41%	600	43%
C&V UHB	195	33%	277	42%	472	38%
CT UHB	122	39%	135	26%	257	32%
HD UHB	189	44%	181	45%	370	45%
Powys tHB	79	46%	64	52%	143	48%
All Wales	1380	39%	1545	38%	2925	38%

Source: Combined List

Figure 6 below shows the average working career within NHS Wales for both male and female GPs joining the GP workforce in Wales, based on the average joining age and average leaving age of GPs. It can be seen that the average working career within NHS Wales for male GPs work is 16 years, as opposed to 8 years for female GPs. The biggest difference in working career between male and female GPs is 15 years (2010/11), whilst the smallest working career is 4 years (2006/07). This information is not currently available by organisation.

**Figure 6: Average number of years employed in NHS Wales by gender (2004-2014)**



Source: Stats Wales

## 4. Annual Practice Return

The data in Section 2 is sourced solely from the Annual Practice Return, which is required to be completed by all organisations. It contains information on total hours and total headcount per practice on the Nursing and Support Workforce, which includes Patient Care Support Workers, Admin & Clerical Workers and Other Support Staff. This data collection does not hold data on the GP workforce.

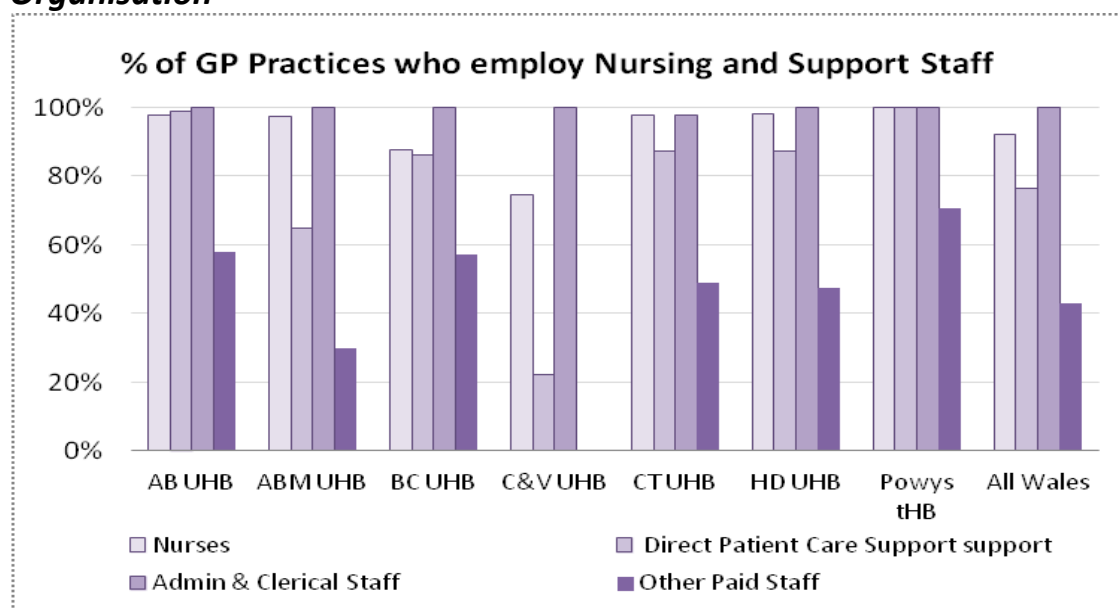
### 4.1 Staff in Post Overview

Figure 7 shows that most practices have Admin & Clerical support and the majority of practices have nursing support. The exception to this is C&V UHB, where only 75% of the practices have nursing support.

Direct patient support workers are more variable across the organisations. ABM UHB and CV UHB are below the Welsh average of 77%. (65% & 22% respectively)

Nearly all practices in AB UHB and Powys tHB employ nursing, admin support, and direct patient support workers.

**Figure 7: Analysis of GP Practices who employ Nursing and Support Staff, per Organisation<sup>5</sup>**



<sup>5</sup> See appendix 1 and 2 for more detailed breakdown

## 4.2 Population Analysis

Table 7 shows that HD UHB has the highest number of nurses per 10,000 population at 5.08 whilst Powys has the highest number of direct patient care support workers at 6.48. C&V UHB has the lowest number of nurses and direct patient care support workers per 10,000 population at 3.22 and 0.42 respectively.

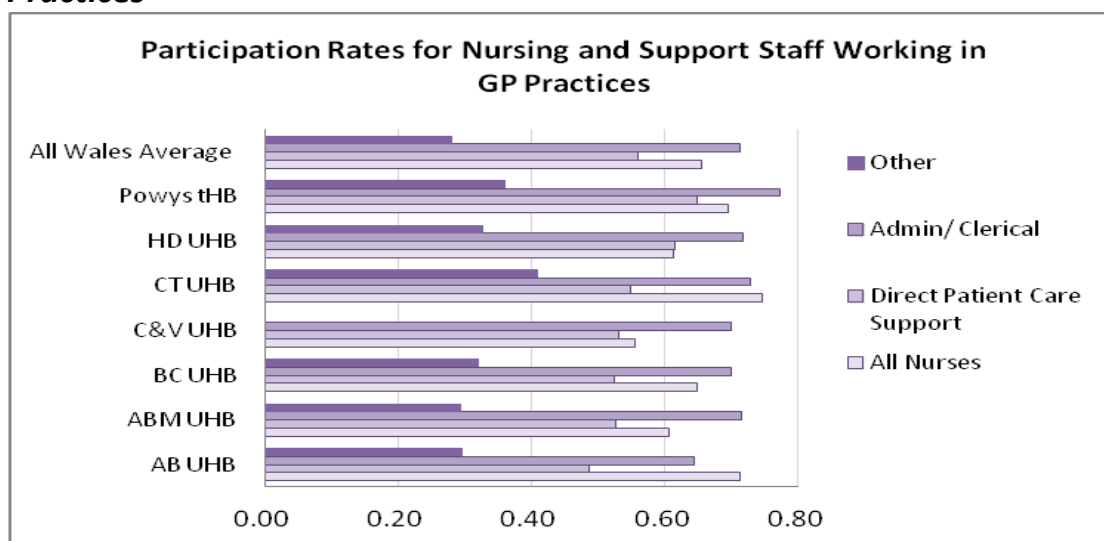
**Table 7: No of Nurses and Support Workers per 10,000 population**

Organisation	Nurses	Direct Patient Care Support	Admin/ Clerical	Other
AB UHB	3.82	3.78	16.11	1.23
ABM UHB	3.90	1.75	15.00	0.69
BC UHB	4.23	4.19	15.48	1.58
C&V UHB	3.22	0.42	14.97	0.00
CT UHB	3.25	2.44	13.72	1.02
HD UHB	5.08	2.53	14.90	1.15
Powys tHB	4.90	6.48	15.98	1.66
All Wales	3.98	2.84	15.22	1.01

Figure 8 and Table 8 show that CT UHB and AB UHB have the highest participation rates for Nurses at 0.75 and 0.71 respectively, whilst C&V UHB have the lowest participation rates for nurses at 0.56.

AB UHB has the lowest participation rate for both the Admin and Direct patient care staff, while Powys tHB has the highest participation rate for both these staff groups.

**Figure 8: Participation Rates of Nursing and Support Staff working in GP Practices<sup>6</sup>**



**Table 8: Participation Rates of Nursing and Support Staff working in GP Practices**

Organisation	Participation Rate			
	All Nurses	Direct Patient Care Support	Admin/ Clerical	Other
AB UHB	0.71	0.49	0.65	0.30
ABM UHB	0.61	0.53	0.72	0.29
BC UHB	0.65	0.52	0.70	0.32
C&V UHB	0.56	0.53	0.70	0.00
CT UHB	0.75	0.55	0.73	0.41
HD UHB	0.61	0.61	0.72	0.33
Powys tHB	0.70	0.65	0.77	0.36
Wales Average	0.65	0.56	0.71	0.28

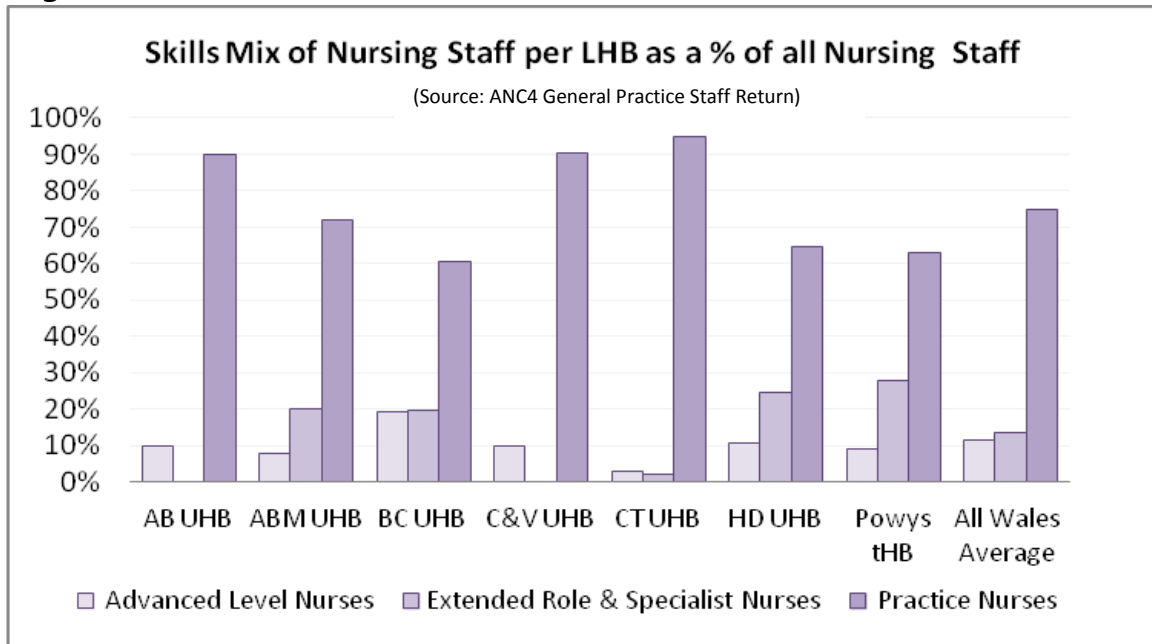
<sup>6</sup> The participation rate is a measure of part-time working, it is the ratio of full-time equivalence (FTE) to headcount (HC).



### 4.3 Nursing Analysis

Figure 9 shows that out of the nursing workforce employed by each organisation, Powys tHB and HD UHB employ the highest percentage of Extended Role and Specialist Nurses (27.7% and 24.6% respectively) and BC UHB employ the highest percentage of Advanced Level Nurses at 19%

**Figure 9: Skills Mix of Nursing Staff as a percentage of All Nursing Staff by Organisation**



The following table shows that BC UHB and HD UHB employ the highest number of extended role and specialist nurses, and advanced level nurses. AB UHB and C&V UHB do not employ any extended role and specialist nurses.

**Table 9: Skills Mix of Nursing Staff employed in GP Practices by Organisation<sup>7</sup>**

Organisation	Headcount				All Nurses as a % of Total GP Workforce
	Advanced Level Nurses	Extended Role & Specialist Nurses	Practice Nurses	Total of All Nurses	
AB UHB	22	0	199	221	11.5%
ABM UHB	16	41	146	203	12.8%
BC UHB	57	58	178	293	12.7%
C&V UHB	15	0	139	154	11.8%
CT UHB	3	2	91	96	11.8%
HD UHB	21	48	126	195	15.8%
Powys tHB	6	18	41	65	12.6%
<b>All Wales</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>1227</b>	<b>12.7%</b>

Table 10 shows 70% of practices in BC UHB and CV UHB have a practice nurse employed, this is 10% lower than the Wales average of 83%.

BC UHB and Powys tHB have the highest percentage of Advanced level nurses and CT UHB has the lowest.

**Table 10: Percentage of GP Practices who employ Advanced Level Nurses, Extended Role & Specialist Nurses, and Practice Nurses**

Organisation	Total No of Practices	% of practices who employ		
		Advanced Level Nurses	Extended Role & Specialist Nurses	Practice Nurses
AB UHB	88	19.3%	0.0%	97.7%
ABM UHB	77	16.9%	24.7%	83.1%
BC UHB	114	32.5%	26.3%	70.2%
C&V UHB	67	16.4%	0.0%	70.1%
CT UHB	47	4.3%	4.3%	95.7%
HD UHB	55	21.8%	38.2%	85.5%
Powys tHB	17	35.3%	35.3%	88.2%
<b>All Wales</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>82.6%</b>

## 5. Conclusions

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Although the existing data available does provide a wealth of information on the workforce who are employed in GP Practices, it does not provide the vital information on the amount of the resources which are required to sufficiently deliver a level of service which meets the demand of an aging population with more complex health problems. With the current level of data we are able to identify some interesting statistics, however, it must be noted that there is no way to validate the data sent in from the GP practices.

Overall, 29% of the staff working in GP practices are GPs; the rest are made up of support workers (59%) and nursing staff (12%). These numbers do not include Allied Health Professionals who potentially could and do create additional capacity within the GP practice system.

Different organisations have different workforce profiles and have different workforce issues. For example:

- Powys tHB has the highest number of GPs per 10,000 population but it has the oldest GP workforce, with 44% over the age of 50. The high GP per population statistic is as a result of the rural nature of Powys. The impact of GPs retiring may be felt to a greater degree in small villages around Powys. Powys tHB have one of the richest skill mix of all the organisations; it employs the highest percentage of Extended Role and Specialist Nurses, and the second highest percentage of Advanced level nurses, and the highest participation rate for Admin and Direct patient care staff.
- ABM UHB has the second highest percentage of GPs per 10,000 population, as well as the youngest GP workforce: only 25% of GPs are over the age of 50 compared to the Welsh average of 34%.
- C&V UHB has the highest percentage of GPs, the lowest percentage of the practices which employ nurses and the lowest participation rates for nurses. CV UHB also has the lowest percentage of direct patient support workers employed.

- HD UHB and BC UHB have a similar workforce profile with both having an older GP workforce (42% & 39% of its GPs being over the age of 50) and both having the same GP gender split. Both organisations deploy 'Extended Role and Specialist Nurses' and 'Advanced Level Nurses' to a greater extent than other organisations. It is acknowledged that these organisations are finding it hard to recruit GPs, so potentially the increased use of practice nurses could be a method of providing more capacity in the system.

## 6. What are the data gaps

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- Whole Time Equivalent information for individual GPs.
- Breakdown of roles of Direct Patient Care Support Workers, Admin & Clerical and Other staff employed in GP workforce (ie how many phlebotomists, HCAs, cleaners etc).
- Types of Activity undertaken by GPs and Practice staff.
- Age and Gender information relating to Practice Staff
- Information relating to vacancies
- Information relating to leavers for practice staff – forecasted and actual.
- Retirement information
- Leaving Destination analysis
- Demand forecasts

## 7. Future Actions

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### 7.1 Short term objectives

- Ascertain what information is held on Audit+ relating to activity undertaken in GP practices by each type of staff.
- Obtain and analyse information on GP and Practice Workforce activity where possible.
- Identify whether a data collection exercise should be undertaken across NHS Wales pending a decision regarding an enhanced primary care data collection process eg via HSCIC.
- Identify data definition for FTE of GPs.

### 7.2 Longer term objectives

- Work with relevant partners to validate data and ensure completeness of information relating to all primary care staff.
- Collect data on pharmacy, dentistry and optometry workforce.
- Undertake more detailed analysis of other community staff including Dentists, Optometrists and Pharmacists.

## Appendix

### **Appendix 1: Number of GP Practices who employ Nurses, Direct Patient Care Support Workers, Admin & Clerical, and Other Staff**

Organisation	Total No of Practices	No of Practices who employ			
		Nurses	Direct Patient Care Support	Admin & Clerical Staff	Other Paid Staff
AB UHB	88	86	87	88	51
ABM UHB	77	75	50	77	23
BC UHB	114	100	98	114	65
C&V UHB	67	50	15	67	0
CT UHB	47	46	41	46	23
HD UHB	55	54	48	55	26
Powys tHB	17	17	17	17	12
All Wales	465	428	356	464	200

Source: ANC4 General Practice Staff Return completed by Organisation

### **Appendix 2: Percentage of GP Practices who employ Nurses, Direct Patient Care Support Workers, Admin & Clerical and Other Staff**

Organisation	Total No of Practices	No of Practices who employ			
		Nurses	Direct Patient Care Support	Admin & Clerical Staff	Other Paid Staff
AB UHB	88	98%	99%	100%	58%
ABM UHB	77	97%	65%	100%	30%
BC UHB	114	88%	86%	100%	57%
C&V UHB	67	75%	22%	100%	0%
CT UHB	47	98%	87%	98%	49%
HD UHB	55	98%	87%	100%	47%
Powys tHB	17	100%	100%	100%	71%
All Wales	465	92%	77%	100%	43%

Source: ANC4 General Practice Staff Return completed by Organisation