

NHS National Services Scotland (NSS)

Meeting:	NSS Staff Governance Committee (SGC)
Meeting date:	Tuesday, 2 September 2025
Title:	NSS Workforce Plan and End of Year Report 2024/25
Paper Number:	SG/25/42
Responsible Executive/Non-Executive:	Serena Barnatt, Director of HR and Organisational Development
Report Author:	Aileen Stewart, Associate Director, HR

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to present to the NSS Staff Governance Committee the NSS Workforce Plan 5 Pillars Action Plan 2024/25 End of Year Report as at 31 March 2025 for scrutiny and discussion.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 As the responsible officer, I am assured that the NSS Workforce Plan and 5 Pillars Action Plan is being appropriately progressed, managed and escalated as necessary through established NSS processes.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the NSS Staff Governance Committee scrutinise the NSS Workforce 5 Pillars Action Plan 2024/2025 End of Year Report, focusing particularly on key achievements as at 31 March 2025.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 As part of our commitment to monitoring progress against the 3-Year Workforce Plan, it was agreed an annual report will be presented to the Staff Governance Committee. This paper will:
 - 3.1.1 Provide an update on delivery against the 2024/25 5 Pillars Action Plan.
 - 3.1.2 Outline proposed actions for inclusion in the 2025/26 5 Pillars Action Plan.
 - 3.1.3 Include a refreshed and comprehensive workforce data set to support strategic workforce planning.

- 3.2 This approach ensures continued alignment with our strategic objective for workforce sustainability.
- 3.3 Throughout FY 2024/25, NSS has demonstrated strong progress across a wide range of workforce priorities, with a clear focus on strategic alignment, operational efficiency and employee experience.
- 3.4 Key achievements include:
 - 3.4.1 High compliance with statutory and mandatory training targets, reflecting a strong culture of learning and accountability.
 - 3.4.2 Successful implementation of key workforce plans, refreshed policies and strategic frameworks such as the Anchors Workforce Plan and the NSS Workforce Plan.
 - 3.4.3 Enhanced support mechanisms through redeployment, occupational health, and retirement planning ensuring all staff are well supported through transitions and career stages.
 - 3.4.4 Improved engagement via iMatter, with increased response rates and high completion of action plans, indicating continued commitment to listening and acting on staff feedback.
 - 3.4.5 Robust governance and monitoring through monthly People Report and interactive dashboards, enabling data-driven decision-making across Directorates and committees.
- 3.5 There are several actions which remain in progress at the end of 2024/25 and will now roll forward into FY 2025/26. All these actions are well positioned for completion with clear plans and national alignment. They include:
 - 3.5.1 Development of an NSS Attraction Plan (paused to align with Anchors Plan previously)
 - 3.5.2 Further scoping of employability priorities through the Integrated Service Plans process
 - 3.5.3 Completion of the Personal Development and Performance Review (PDPR) e-learning module and review of the PDPR process (pending national policy updates)
 - 3.5.4 Implementation of the Public Protection Policy and Once for Scotland Policies
 - 3.5.5 Rollout of the Band 5 Nursing Review and Protected Learning initiatives in line with the Agenda for Change (AfC) Non-Pay Elements of the 2024/25 pay agreement nationally
 - 3.5.6 Continued implementation of the NSS Wellbeing Framework and Anti Racism Action Plan
- 3.6 As part of the 2025/26 planning cycle, the following new actions have been identified and will be incorporated into the NSS 5 Pillars Action Plan alongside those we have indicated will be carried forward to 2025/26:
 - 3.6.1 Plan: Support the delivery of a unified “One NSS” approach to processes and services

- 3.6.2 Attract: Explore the development of structured career pathways to enhance recruitment and retention
- 3.6.3 Employ:
 - 3.6.3.1 Implement legislation changes related to Disclosure and Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme
 - 3.6.3.2 Apply updates to the Employment Rights Act to ensure compliance with evolving employment legislation.
- 3.7 Overall, NSS continues to build a resilient, inclusive and future ready workforce underpinned by joint collaboration between HR, Directorates and other partners.

4. Impact Analysis

4.1 Quality and Value

- 4.1.1 The NSS Workforce Plan 2024/27 and the Workforce 5 Pillars Action Plan provides the key focus for delivery of our core NSS strategic objective of workforce sustainability.

4.2 Equality and Diversity, including health inequalities

- 4.2.1 Equality and Diversity requirements are included in the expected outcomes against the Workforce 5 Pillars Action Plan and where appropriate equality impact assessments are carried out e.g. Workforce Policies.

4.3 Data Protection and Information Governance

- 4.3.1 There are no data protection and information governance implications directly associated with this paper.

5. Risk Assessment/Management

- 5.1 All issues which are of concern, and which represent a risk to NSS are reviewed and discussed at NSS Partnership Forum and picked up as appropriate through the NSS Risk management process.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 All financial implications are considered as part of our Integrated Service Planning and annual Budget Summit.

7. Workforce Implications

- 7.1 The NSS Workforce 5 Pillars Action Plan underpins the aims of the strategic objective of workforce sustainability. The plan ensures that the key actions identified for delivery as part of the NSS Workforce Plan 2024/27 are met and maintains an effective workforce for the future that meets the needs of our service requirements.

8. Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 8.1 There are no climate change and environmental sustainability implications identified as a result of this report.
- 8.2 The NSS Workforce 5 Pillars Action Plan 2024/27 includes activity linked to the sustainability plans for NSS particularly in line with employability, Anchors Plan, digital first approach and travel requirements.

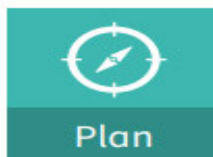
9. Route to Meeting

- 9.1 The NSS Workforce Plan and 5 Pillars Action Plan is published on the NSS website.
- 9.2 This report has been previously considered by the following groups:
 - 9.2.1 Executive Management Team on 25 August 2025
 - 9.2.2 NSS Partnership Forum on 26 August 2025

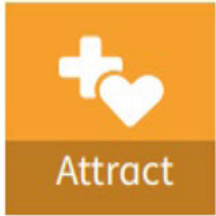
10. List of Appendices and/or Background Papers

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – NSS 5 Pillars of Our Workforce Journey Action Plan – Progress Report for Year Ending 31 March 2025
- 10.2 Appendix 2 – Additional Data Information

NSS 5 PILLARS OF OUR WORKFORCE JOURNEY ACTION PLAN




PILLAR	THEME	ACTION	LINKED PLANS	DELIVERABLE DATE	ACTION OWNER(S)	PROGRESS As at 31 March 2025
	Workforce Planning	Submission of refreshed 3-year local Directorate Workforce Plans and projections.	NSS ADP NSS Recovery Plan NSS Financial Plan NSS Workforce Plan	Q3/4 2024/25 (Q3/4 annually)	Directors/ HR BPs	All Directorates have submitted their Integrated Service Plans (ISPs) and 5 Pillar Action Plans as part of the 2024/25 planning cycle. This process will be refreshed and restarted for the next planning year.
	Workforce Planning	Refreshed 3-year NSS Workforce Plan and projections.	NSS ADP NSS Recovery Plan NSS Financial Plan NSS Workforce Plan	Q4 2024/25 (Q4/Q1 annually)	HR	NSS has developed a refreshed 3-year workforce plan with projections, which will be reviewed annually throughout the ISP process.
	Workforce Planning	External publication of our Workforce Plan and projections.	NSS Workforce Plan	October 2024	HR/NSS Comms Team	Action completed. The NSS Workforce Plan and 5 Pillar Action Plan has been published on both our external website and HR Connect, our internal portal.
	Workforce Planning	Review of the NSS Clinical Workforce Overview.	NSS Workforce Plan	December 2024	Clinical	The Clinical Lead reviewed the clinical workforce overview in

						October 2024. As the overview was less than a year old and showed limited progress, no changes were made. This action will be refreshed, with a further review planned by the end of the next fiscal year.
	Workforce Planning	Develop and launch remaining 6 steps Workforce Planning e-learning modules.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2026	HR	For delivery in 2026.
	Workforce Planning	Implement Workforce Planning e-learning reporting.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2026	HR	For delivery in 2026.
	Recruitment and Marketing	Develop and implement an NSS Attraction strategy.	Great Place to Work (GPTW) Plan NSS Workforce Plan	Q1 2024/25	HR ER&R Recruiting Managers	Roll forward to next year's plan. Work on the draft Attraction Plan has been paused to ensure alignment with the Anchors Workforce Plan and avoid duplication. It has been clarified that an Attraction Plan, not Strategy, is required. Development is expected to resume and be completed by March 2026.
	Recruitment and Marketing	Enhancement of social media strategy to ensure we are maximising posts appearing on social media channels.	NSS Workforce Plan	Q3 2024/25	HR Recruitment/ Comms	Recruitment and Marcomms now collaborate weekly to enhance our social

						media strategy and attract more candidates. This has led to an increase in job advert visibility across platforms and is now embedded as a business-as-usual process.
Recruitment and Marketing	Achieve disability confident leader accreditation.	NSS Workforce Plan	Q2 2024/25	HR Recruitment		NSS has achieved the Disability Confident Leader Accreditation, valid until September 2027.
Recruitment and Marketing	Support the appointment for candidates with a disability by working with Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living (GCIL) and other disability inclusion partners.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW Plan	March 2025	HR OD/ Recruitment Equality Lead		We supported the appointment of a candidate through the GCIL programme. This two-year initiative began in 2024. Next cohort is not planned until 2026 and we will review at that time.
Recruitment and Marketing	Implement candidate survey for unsuccessful candidates following interview.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	HR Recruitment		A new recruitment survey targeting unsuccessful candidates has been launched. Insights from this will help improve the candidate experience. A separate survey for successful candidates is already in place.
Recruitment and Marketing	Develop and implement candidate guidance.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	HR Recruitment		We have developed and implemented candidate guidance, now included in all NSS recruitment adverts.

Recruitment and Marketing	Explore and research the emerging trend of AI in recruitment.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2026	HR Recruitment	For delivery in 2026.
Recruitment and Marketing	Implement strategy for 'hard to fill posts' in NSS to support managers.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	HR Recruitment	A strategy for "Hard to Fill" posts has been rolled out across NSS, offering targeted support to recruiting managers facing challenges in filling specific roles.
Armed Forces Talent	Work collaboratively with NHS Scotland Armed Forces Talent Programme to support service leavers into roles.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW Plan Anchors Strategy	Q1 2024/25	HR/OD	NSS is actively engaged with the NHS Armed Forces Talent Management Programme, supporting service leaders into employment. We currently host a service leaver via a paid internship and have successful nominations for Veterans Awards.
Anchors	Implement Anchors Workforce Plan for NSS.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW Plan	March 2025	HR	The Anchors Workforce Plan has been implemented as part of the NSS Anchors Strategic Plan. Its deliverables are aligned with the NSS Workforce Plan to ensure consistency and avoid duplication.
Employability	Complete scoping work via Directorates to understand employability priorities for the coming year.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW Plan	Q2 2024/25	HR & Directorates	Roll forward to next year's plan. Initial scoping has begun through the ISP process. However, further detail and engagement with

						Directorates and HR Business Partners are needed to fully understand and define NSS's employability priorities.
	Apprenticeships	Develop career pathway to support apprenticeships into NHS Careers.	NSS Workforce Plan NSS Anchors Plan GPTW Plan	Q1 2024/25	HR	Career pathways have been developed for Biomedical Scientists and Payroll staff. Based on the outcomes of the budget summit and ISP submissions, further pathways will be identified and added to the next year's plan.
	Leadership Development	Delivery of Leadership and Management Development Training.	ADP GPTW NSS Workforce Plan	Q4 2024/25	HR L&D/OD	Action completed. The NSS Leadership Programme and All Access Pass Leadership Development Programme has been successfully delivered. We also have in place the NSS Management Hub which provides all our leaders with a wealth of leadership information and topics. We will continue to provide this programme as a business-as-usual service.
	Board Development	Undertake Board Diagnostic Tool.	NSS Workforce Plan	Q4 2024/25 (annually)	NSS Board/HR	The Board Diagnostic Tool was undertaken supported via Board Services, with the group session facilitated by NHS

						Education for Scotland. This is an annual activity which will be refreshed and added to next year's plan.
Appraisal and PDP	Roll-out and educate managers of KSF requirements.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	HR OD/L&D All Directorates		Roll forward to next year's plan. Most of this action has been completed, including the launch of a new Line Manager Induction Programme in March 2025. The remaining element – the development of the PDPR (Personal Development and Performance Review) e-learning module, is currently in progress. The Learning and Development Team is working closely with Marcomms on a supporting communications plan.
Succession Planning	Design and implement Talent Management and Succession Planning Framework to support NSS Workforce Strategy.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW Plan	March 2025	HR OD/All		Action completed. We successfully designed and implemented a Talent Management and Succession Planning Framework during 2024, which was reviewed by our Staff Governance Committee during December 2024.
Statutory and Mandatory Training	Staff undertake requirements for Statutory and Mandatory training >90%.	GPTW NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025 (annual/monthly reporting)	All Directorates		We continue to actively monitor organisational and Directorate level

			Directorate Objectives			progress in the completion of statutory and mandatory training and reporting through our People Report and GPTW Plan.
	Appraisal and PDP	All NSS staff have objectives, Personal Development Plans and Appraisals >90%.	GPTW NSS Workforce Plan Directorate Objectives	March 2025 (annual/monthly reporting)	All Directorates	We ensure that all staff have up-to-date objectives, personal development plans (PDPs) and appraisals in place. This is monitored through our People Report and GPTW Plan.
	Appraisal and PDP	Review the current Performance Appraisal and Development Review process including reporting requirements to increase and measure effectiveness using digital resources entailing scoping and a presentation of the options.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW	March 2025	HR OD/All	Roll forward to next year's plan. PDPR Review; A new Once for Scotland Policy on PDPR was paused by Scottish Government, will implement once policies released later in 2025.
	NMAHP Framework	Continue to prepare for the nursing, midwifery and allied health professionals (NMAHP) Development Framework.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	Clinical/HR	A soft launch of the framework website has taken place to gather feedback on available resources. With full implementation spring 2025.
	Public Protection	Develop and implement the Public Protection Policy and ensure compliance with the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland Act).	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	HR	Roll forward to next year's plan. The draft policy has been paused to provide further clarity of requirements and has been rescheduled to 2025/26. Adult Support and Protection is one of the nine topics



						included in the Once for Scotland mandatory learning passports.
Health and Care Staffing	Implementing Health and Care Staffing reporting to ensure compliance with national reporting requirements.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	HR Clinical SNBTS Directorate	Action completed Reporting has been implemented for Safe Staffing to ensure compliance with national requirements, particularly within Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service and Clinical areas.	
Once for Scotland Policies	Consult and implement Once for Scotland Policies Phase 3.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW Plan	March 2025	HR E&R	Roll forward to next year's plan. The consultation phase and soft launch have been completed. Once we have formal communications from the Scottish Government regarding the 'go live' date, policies will be launched.	
Implementing Non Pay Elements of 2023/24 Pay Deal	Implementation of working hours reduction 36.5/36 hours per week over next two years.	NSS Financial Plan NSS Workforce Plan	March 2026	Finance HR PTC/PIPS	Action Complete.	
Implementing Non Pay Elements of 2023/24 Pay Deal	Implement Band 5 Nursing Review.	NSS Workforce Plan NSS Financial Plan	March 2025	HR PTC Finance	The process has been implemented in line with national guidance.	

<p>Implementing Non Pay Elements of 2023/24 Pay Deal</p>	<p>Implement Protected Learning.</p>	<p>NSS Workforce Plan NSS Financial Plan</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>HR PTC/L&D/ PIPS</p>	<p>Roll forward to next year's plan. Multiple workstreams have been established across Health Boards to support implementation. NSS has formed a short-life working group aligned with national efforts and will proceed once further guidance is received.</p>
<p>Supplementary Staffing</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and review supplementary staffing and fixed term contracts across NSS.</p>	<p>NSS Workforce Plan Financial Plan</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>HR Finance Directorate</p>	<p>Supplementary staffing arrangements are monitored via the monthly People Report and reviewed by various NSS committees. The Vacancy Management Group oversees all fixed term contract arrangements and agency staffing requests. All fixed term contracts undergo a risk assessment both prior to commencement and at contract end. This action will be refreshed and continued in next year's plan.</p>
<p>Retirement</p>	<p>Review and improve retirement and pension support.</p>	<p>NSS Workforce Plan</p>	<p>Q3 2024/25</p>	<p>HR</p>	<p>In collaboration with Payroll, updates have been made to the pension and retirement support pages on HR Connect to enhance</p>

						retirement support for employees. These now include signposting to external organisations such as the Scottish Public Pensions Agency. Additional planning for retirement workshops has been added to the Corporate Learning and Development programme.
	eRostering	Implement eRostering.	NSS Workforce Plan Financial Plan ADP	March 2026	HR	Roll forward to next year's plan. NSS is on track to deliver the eRostering solution to AfC staff by 1 April 2026. Work is ongoing to add staff on Medical and Dental contracts. The eRostering solution will provide NSS staff with access to the Once for Scotland rostering solution. Working towards modern, fit for purpose systems to support staff with an effective digital estate.
	Wellbeing	Share best practice of the NSS Wellbeing Framework and align to the Improving Wellbeing and Working Culture Framework. Identify gaps and solutions and promote use of the wellbeing hub.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW Plan	Q2 2024/25	HR ER&R/HWL Directorate Wellbeing Leads	Roll forward to next year's plan. Action is ongoing. This action is partially complete, and an action that will be continually reviewed year on year in line with the framework. Focus has been on Digital and



						<p>Spiritual Wellbeing with a sharing of best practice and ideas across the organisation.</p> <p>Wellbeing focussed as part of Staff Governance Seminar and Annual Review.</p>
iMatter	Implementing iMatter survey and Directorate/NSS action plans.	ADP GPTW Plan NSS Workforce Plan	Q1&2 2024/25	HR ER&R All Directorates	<p>We have implemented iMatter across NSS with this year demonstrating an increased response rate of 80% and an Employee Engagement Index of 78%. All action plans were developed and uploaded onto the Webropol system with a 99% completion rate from all the Directorates. This action will refresh and roll forward to next year.</p>	
Anti-Racism	Implementing the NSS Anti-Racism Plan.	NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	HR E&D All Directorates	<p>Roll forward to next year's plan. The plan was presented to the NSS Partnership Forum during February 2025 and approved by the Board in March 2025 This will be further developed through the Anti-Racism Planning Group and progress reported through the</p>	

					relevant governance committees.
Staff Wellbeing	Review and reduce overtime across NSS.	Financial Plan NSS Workforce Plan GPTW	March 2025	All Directorates Finance	Overtime is currently being recorded and monitored via our monthly Directorate finance reports which are delivered through our Business Controllers. Directorates work closely with our HR Business Partners to ensure overtime is reducing across the Directorates where possible.
Staff Wellbeing	Ensure NSS staff utilise annual leave provision. Review on quarterly basis (25% utilisation per quarter).	GPTW Plan NSS Workforce Plan	Quarterly Review March 2025 (annual/monthly reporting)	All Directorates	We have continued to monitor the utilisation of annual leave across NSS and within the Directorates, which is reported via the monthly People Report through the various governance committees, and through the use of an interactive people dashboard. The annual leave position as at the end of FY 2024/25 indicates that overall, approximately 3% (compared to 5% for FY 2023/24) of annual leave was outstanding from our workforce at the end of FY 2024/25, which indicates an

						improvement over last year with 97% of leave being planned and taken within the fiscal year itself.
Staff Wellbeing	Monitor and reduce sickness absence.	ADP GPTW NSS Workforce Plan Financial Plan	March 2025 (annual/monthly reporting)	HR All Directorates		NSS sickness absence rate has marginally increased across the current fiscal year, FY 2024/25 compared to the previous year FY 2023/24, ending the year at 4.37%, up from 4.26% at the end of FY 2023/24. The year to date figure is above the national target of 4%, breaching by 0.37 percentage points.
Staff Wellbeing	Analysis of workforce data covering anxiety, stress and depression and implement solutions to support staff to remain at/or return to work.	NSS Workforce Plan GPTW Plan	Q2 2024/25	HR		Roll forward to next year's plan. This action is partially complete. We have undertaken a deep dive analysis into anxiety, stress and depression, and a presentation was provided to the NSS Wellbeing Group. This will inform interventions we can put in place to support staff.
Reward and Recognition	Review the NSS Recognition Framework to ensure remains relevant.	GPTW Plan NSS Workforce Plan	March 2025	HR		We have undertaken a review of the NSS Recognition Framework, and a decision was made to continue with our current position for our Long Service Awards

						and Recognising Excellence Events for 2025/26. Action completed.
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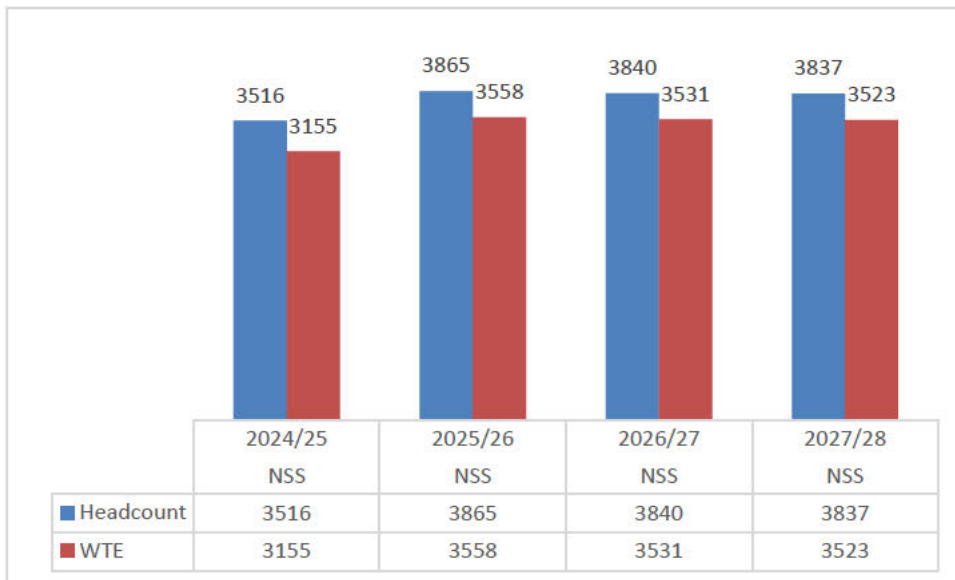
Appendix 2 – Workforce Plan and 5 Pillars Action Plan 2024/25

Additional Data Information

1. Plan

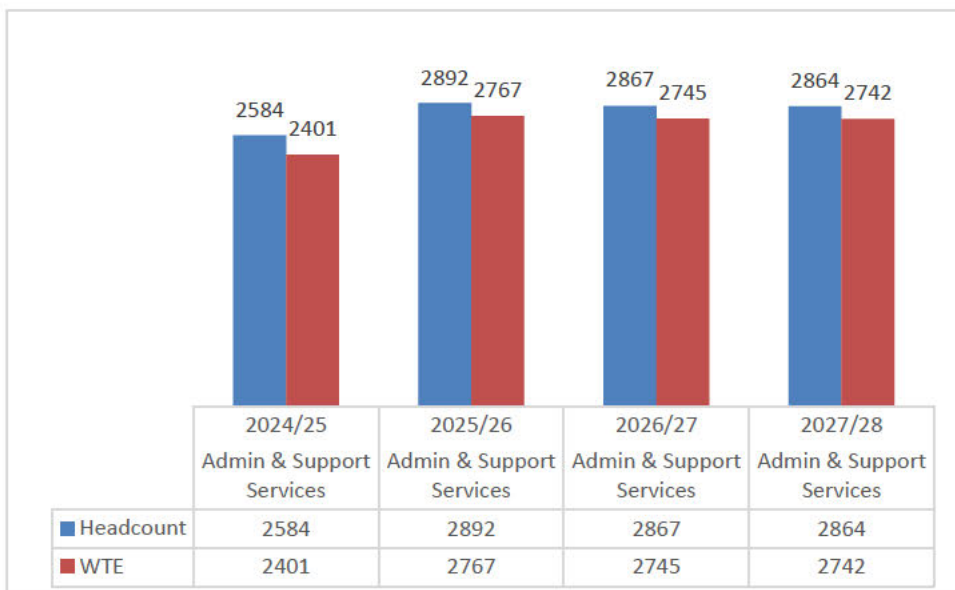
Workforce variance between current year and projected next three years

Fig.1: Overall NSS Workforce



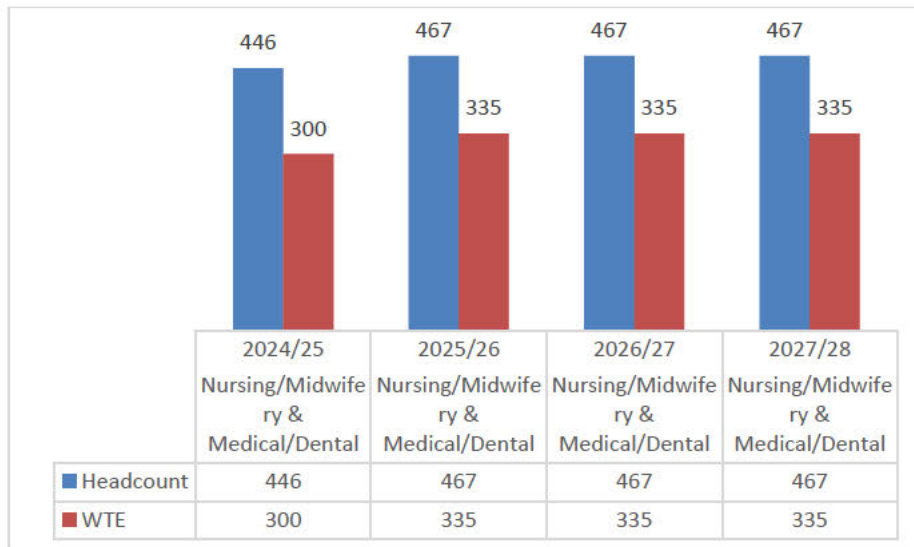
The overall workforce for NSS is forecasted to increase by approximately **9.5%** for headcount and **12%** for WTE starting FY 2025/26. The levels are forecasted to be maintained with minimal drop to numbers over the course of FY 2026/27 and FY 2027/28. Most of the growth is in the Digital transformation workforce (Fig.1).

Fig.2: Administrative Services and Support Services



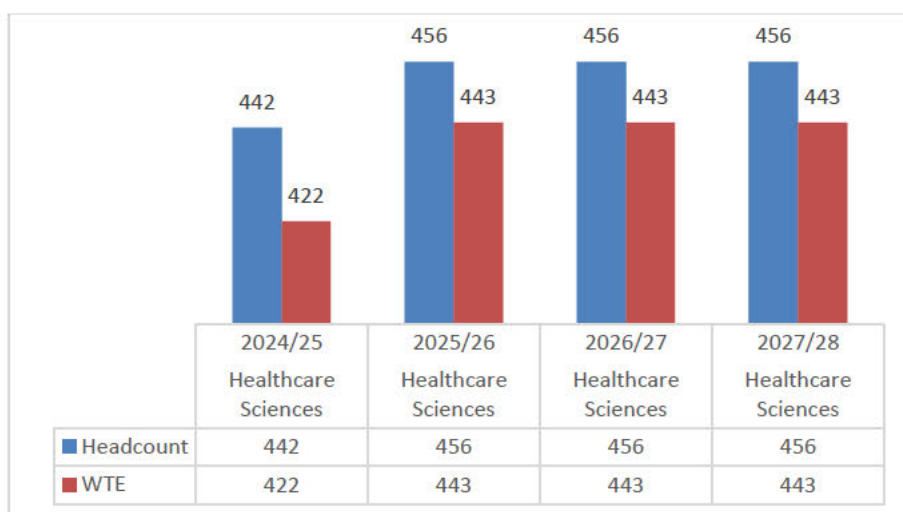
Given the nature of the services we deliver, the two job families; Administrative Services and Support Services, make up the majority of the NSS workforce. The two job families combined are projected to increase their headcount by **11.9%** and WTE by **15.2%** for FY 2025/26 which should then be maintained for the further two years of FY 2026/27 and FY 2027/28 based on current projection. (Fig.2).

Fig.3: Nursing/Midwifery and Medical/Dental



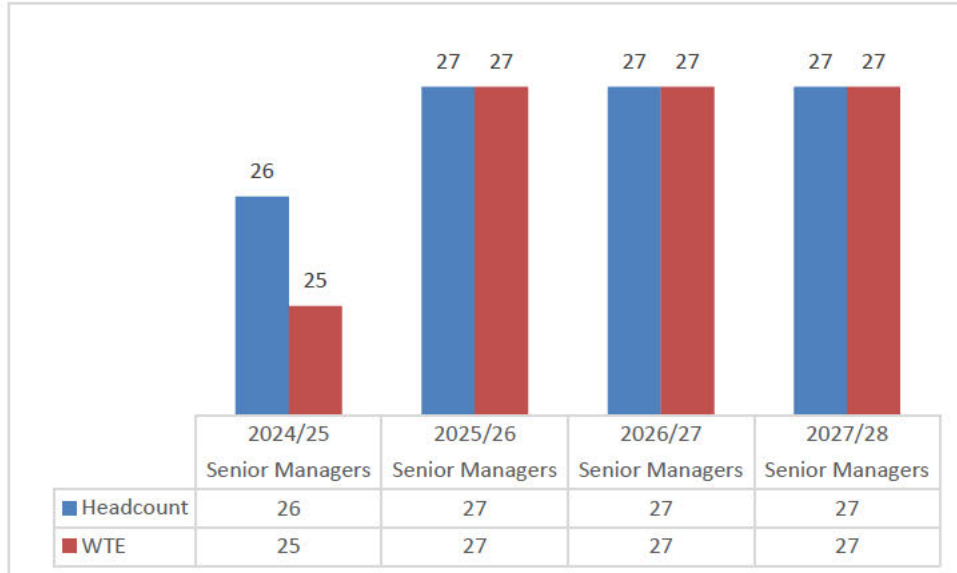
Nursing/Midwifery and Medical/Dental job families comprise of the clinical staff within NSS and make up for **12.7%** of the overall workforce. The headcount for this cohort of staff is projected to increase by **4.7%** for headcount and **11.6%** for WTE for FY 2025/26. Thereafter the workforce is forecasted to be maintained for the following two years of FY 2026/27 and FY 2027/28. (Fig.3).

Fig.4: Healthcare Sciences



Healthcare Sciences make up **12.5%** of the NSS workforce. The job family is projected to increase by **3.2%** for its headcount and **5%** for its WTE for FY 2025/26. The workforce for this job family is projected to be maintained for FY 2026/27 and FY 2027/28. (Fig.4).

Fig.5: Senior Managers



Senior Managers make up a very small percentage (<1%) of the overall workforce. The job family comprises of Executive/Senior Manager grades and some Non-executive roles. Senior Managers have been projected to increase by **4%** in headcount and **8%** in WTE for FY 2025/26 and the levels are going to be maintained for the further two years, FY 2026/27 and FY 2027/28. (Fig. 5).

2. Attract

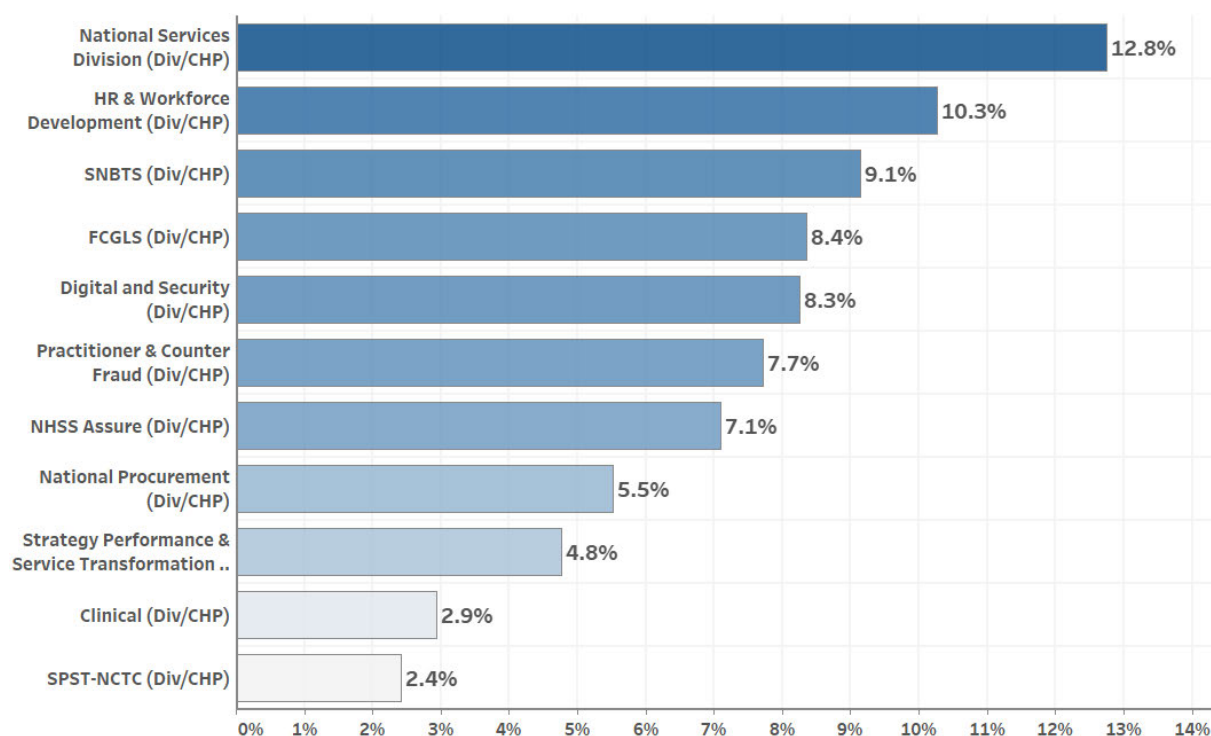
Staff Turnover

Turnover indicates a year-end position of 7.9% for NSS for FY 2024/25, which is lower than the agreed target of 12%, and lower than FY 2023/24, which was 9.7%.

The areas with the most significant turnover for FY 2024/25 are (Fig. 6):

- National Services Division (NSD) – 12.8% (new Directorate reporting started April 2024)
- HR and Workforce Development (HR) – 10.3% (15.7% last year)
- Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service (SNBTS) – 9.1% (10.5% last year)

Fig.6: Year-End Turnover by Division



Of the **259** employees who left, **17%** were on a fixed term contract and **83%** were on a permanent contract.

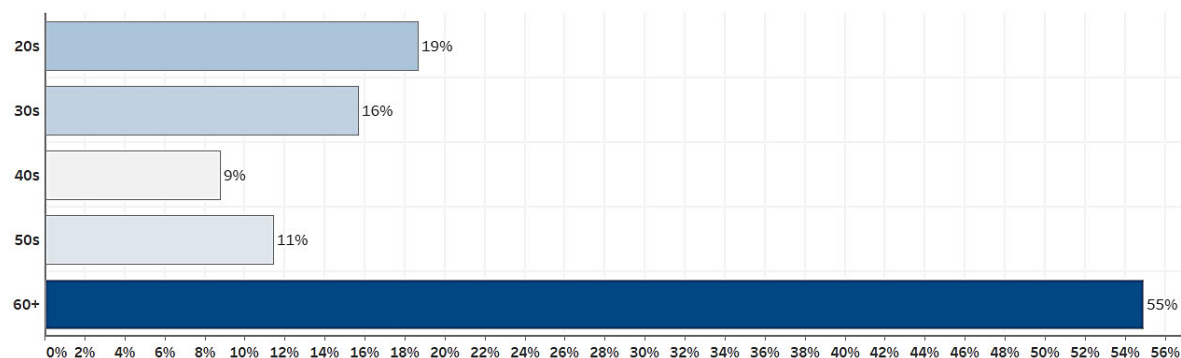
Turnover by Age

Turnover for the fiscal year FY 2024/25 indicates high turnover for those in their 60s and 20s, with **55%** for those aged 60 and over and **19%** for those in their 20s. This suggests staff are leaving at the beginning or end of their career, whereas the middle age brackets are of expected levels and relative distribution.

Further analysis of the leavers showed that **15%** of leavers in FY 2024/25 left for 'New employment with NHSScotland'; of which **5%** were in their 20s, **36%** in their 30s, **31%** in their 40s, **21%** in their 50s and **8%** were aged 60 and over.

Retirement accounts for **70%** of leavers for those aged 60 and over. The 'End of Fixed Term Contract' reason was present for **7%** of leavers, whilst 'Other' and 'Voluntary Resignation – Other' (similar definition to 'Other') accounted for **40%** of the staff members who left this fiscal year.

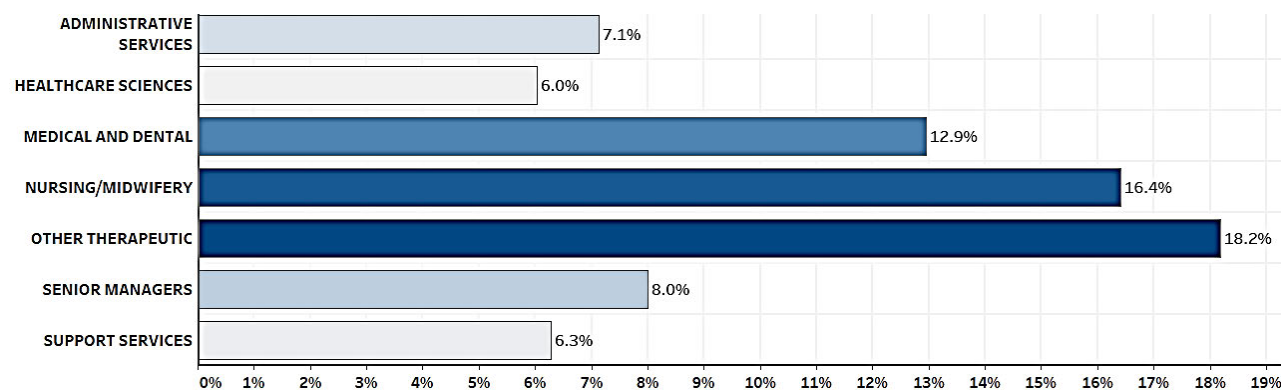
Fig.7: Year-End Turnover by Age Group



Turnover by Job Family

Turnover within the job families indicates a high volume within the ‘Other Therapeutic’ job family (comprising of a small cohort of senior Pharmacy employees) at **18.2%** compared to **0%** last year’. There are small cohorts of staff in these job families, so this accounts for the rise in percentage from the previous year. All other job families decreased their turnover compared to last year by an average of **two** percentage points. Medical and Dental turnover decreased from **16.8%** to **12.9%** compared to last year and Senior Managers dropped from **11.3%** to **8.0%**.

Fig.8: Year-End Turnover by Job Family



Our Retirees

The average number of retirees is **62** per fiscal year (see fig.9) over a 10-year period and in that period, **49%** of all retirees belonged to the ‘Administrative Services’ job family (see fig.10). Given the make-up of the NSS workforce it is not surprising to see the largest number of retirees in this job family. Within the Administrative Services job family, the ‘Office Services’ job sub family contributed **76%** of retirees over this 10-year period.

At the end of fiscal year FY 2024/25, there were **74** retirees, an increase of **48%** compared to the previous fiscal year. **67%** of the **74** retirees belonged to the ‘Administrative Services’ job family.

The effects of the McCloud judgment on pensions could be a factor NSS will need to consider going forward, as some staff may choose to retire earlier.

Fig.9: Retirement Trend by Financial Year

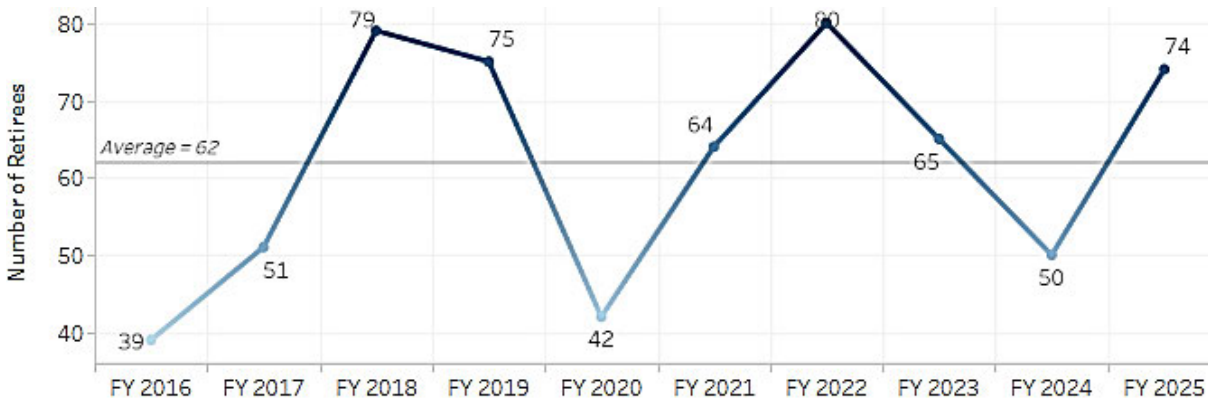
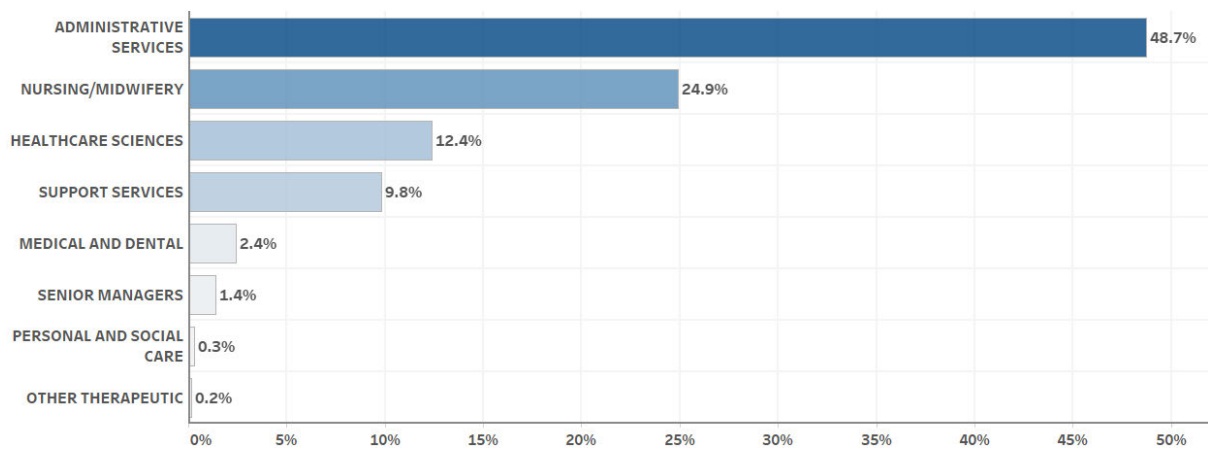


Fig.10: Retirees by Job Family (10-year period)



The average age of retirees at the end of the fiscal year FY 2024/25 is **63**, which is **one** year more than the average age of retirees over the last 10 years. Of the **74** people that retired in FY 2024/25, **68%** were female and **32%** male, compared to **74%** female and **26%** male last year.

The Division ‘Practitioner & Counter Fraud’ (P&CF) recorded the highest number of retirees for fiscal year 2024/25 with **21** (19 last year). P&CF have an average of **16** retirees per fiscal year, however, SNBTS have the highest average at **28** per fiscal year.

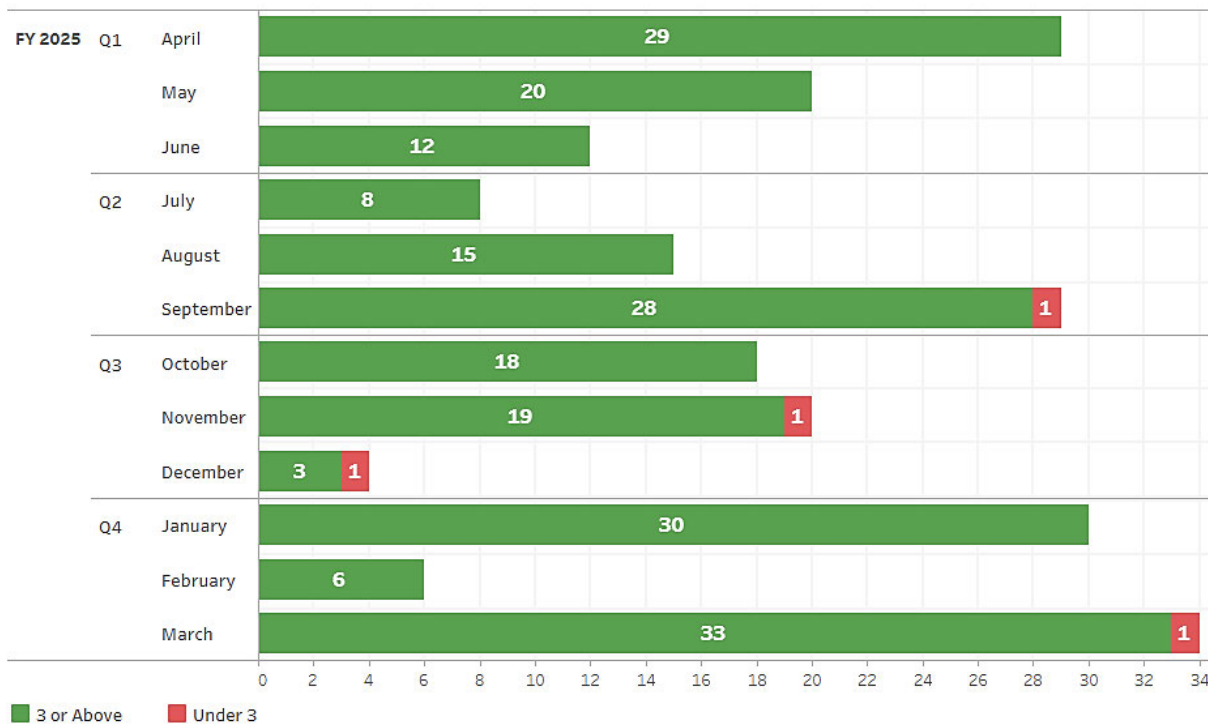
3. Train

Events

Learning and Development hosted **49** events in FY 2024/25, with **1,447** attendees, compared to **46** events and **1,435** attendees for FY 2023/24. Of the **1,447** attendees, **225** completed an evaluation form, of which, **98%** rated the event 'three or above'. Last year for FY 2023/24 there were **270** evaluations, of which **98%** rated the event 'three or above'.

The number of events and attendees in FY 2024/25 and FY 2023/24 are very similar, however there was a notable drop in the number of evaluations completed in FY 2024/25 at **17%** less than the previous year.

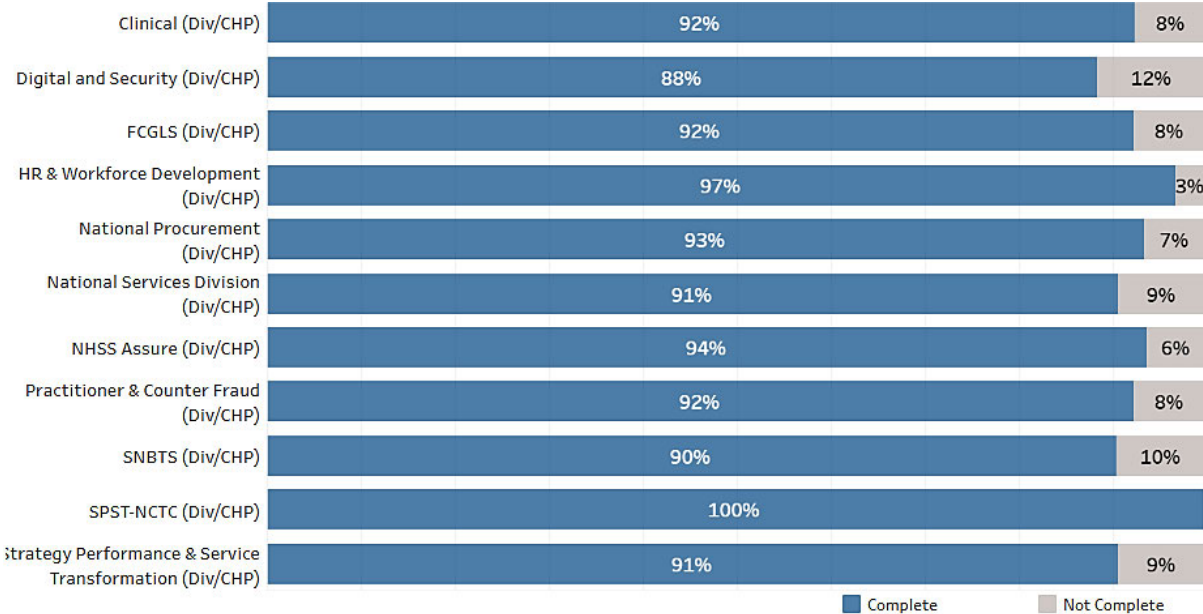
Fig.11: Course Ratings by Quarter and Month



Mandatory and Statutory Training

Overall statutory training compliance for NSS finished FY 2024/25 above the **90%** target at **91%**. Mandatory training compliance for NSS also finished the year equal to the target of **90%** at **90%**. For FY 2023/24 (last year), statutory training compliance finished the year at **86%**, and mandatory training finished at **89%**.

Fig.12: Mandatory and Statutory Compliance by Directorate



4. Employ

Staff in Post

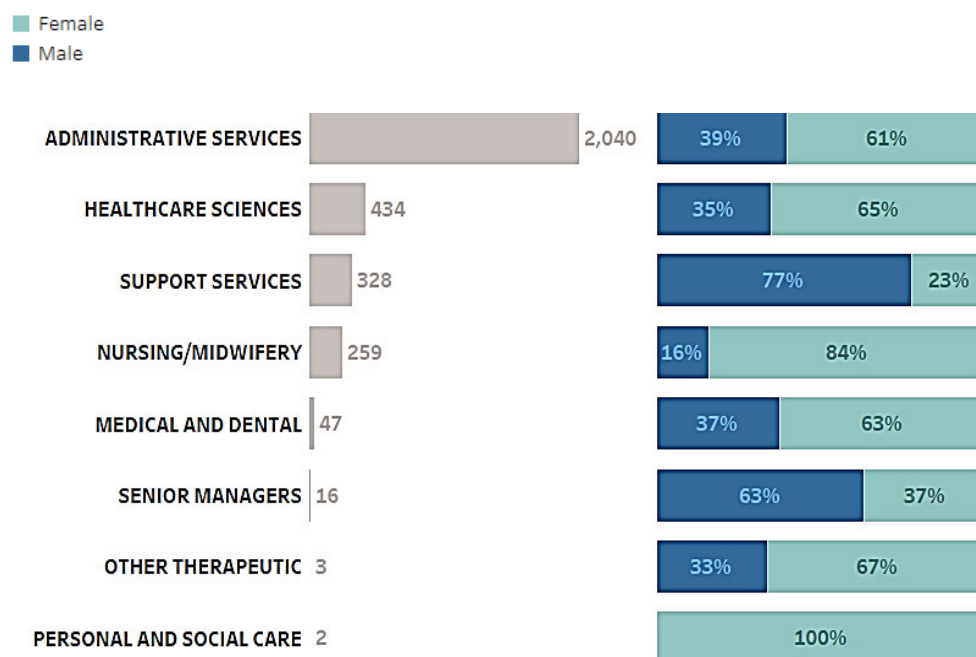
Fig.13 presents the total end of year position for workforce (WTE) for FY 2024/25 by job family and gender. In total **3,130.2** WTE are employed, this excludes any bank/agency staff. Overall, **65.0%** of staff are within the Administrative Services group, **14.0%** within Healthcare Sciences, **8.0%** making up the Nursing/Midwifery job family. On average **79%** of staff within Healthcare Sciences and Nursing/Midwifery support the operation of **SNBTS**. **69%** of the 'Support Services' job family are within **National Procurement (NP)**.

The 'Administrative Services' job family spans its services across all the 11 NSS Directorates, in contrast Nursing/Midwifery features within five of NSS Directorates, and Healthcare Sciences across three.

On average females represent the majority within most job families, except for '**Support Services**' with **77%** being **male**, followed by the '**Senior Managers**' job family with **63%** **male**.

Within the '**Nursing and Midwifery**' and '**Healthcare Sciences**' Job families, **females** represent **84%** and **65%** of the workforce respectively. Overall, **females** represent **59%** of all NSS.

Fig.13: Staff count by Job Family and Gender



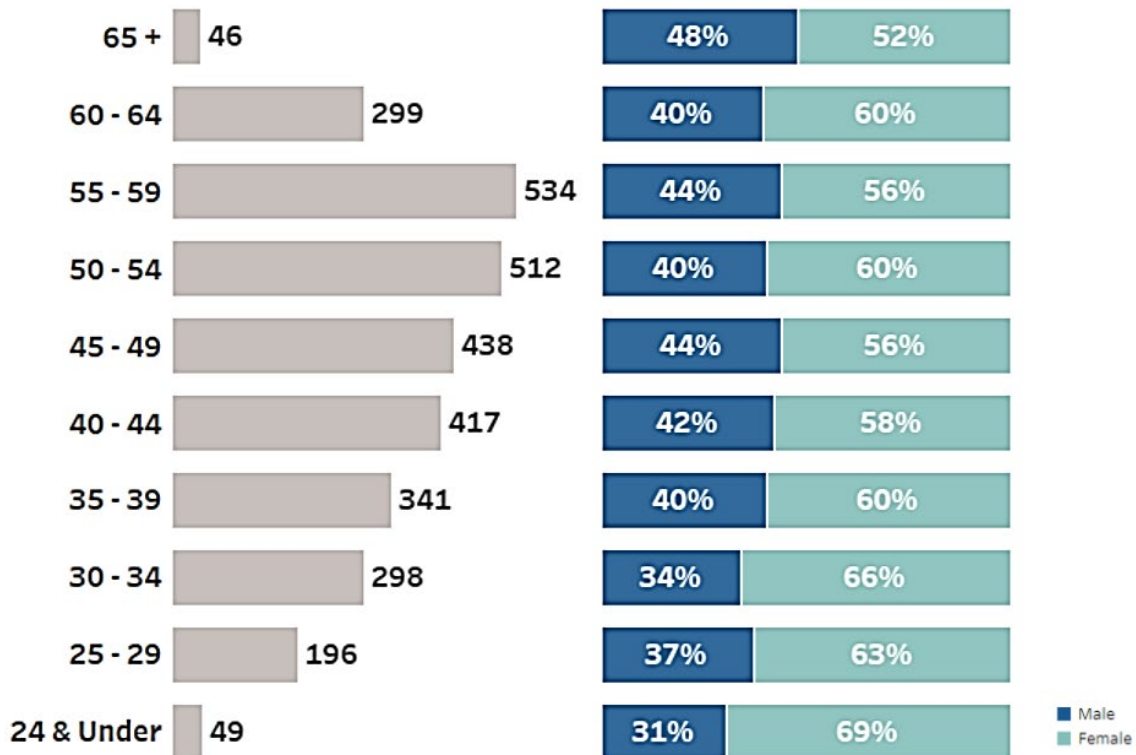
Age Demographics

Age Demographics by Headcount (WTE)

Fig.14. presents the workforce breakdown by age demographics for end of year position of FY 2024/25. Of the current workforce, approximately **11.0%** of staff are aged **60+** years old, **33%** of staff are between **50-59** years old. The highest number of staff for an age group is within the **55-59** age category with **17.0%** of the workforce. The age group **30-49** ranges from **10% to 14%** with approximately **48%** of the workforce within this category. The age group of **24 and under** relates to **1.5%** of the workforce with **25-29** relating to **6.2%**.

Overall, **65.0%** of staff work within the ‘**Administrative Services**’ job family followed by **14.0%** within the ‘**Healthcare Sciences**’ job family and **8.0%** for ‘**Nursing/Midwifery**’ job family, respectively. For the ‘**Healthcare Sciences**’ job family, the average workforce range predominantly consists within the **30-39** category with **34%** of the workforce within this age range.

Fig.14: Staff Count by Age group



The most significant change has occurred within the age profile for the ‘**65+**’ category, which has **decreased** by approximately **50%** in comparison to FY 2023/24.

Females have consistently remained the **highest** category for the last three years across all age groups comprising **59%** of the overall workforce for FY 2024/25.

WTE of Job Family by Band

Fig.15 details the workforce distribution by service area and by pay band in terms of WTE.

- Support Services is predominately within the Band **1-3** pay category, representing **81%** of this service area.
- Within Administrative Services, approximately 33% of the workforce are Band 6-7. Band 8A and above equates to 24% of the workforce, with Band 1-3 representing 14% of Administrative staff.
- For Nursing/Midwifery, Band 1-3 represents 36% of the service area, 30% within the Band 6-7 category and 11% Band 8A and above.

Fig.15: WTE by Job Family and Band

	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	HEALTHCARE SCIENCES	MEDICAL AND DENTAL	NURSING/MIDWIL...	OTHER THERAPEUTIC	PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CARE	SENIOR MANAGERS	SUPPORT SERVICES
Band 1-3	281	97		92				267
Band 4-5	603	24		62				43
Band 6-7	676	245		77		1		8
Band 8+	479	69		29	3	1		10
Executive Managers	1						16	
Medical/Dental	0		47					
T Band	0							

Supplementary Staffing – Agency / Fixed-Term

NSS continue to take a proactive approach to managing the workforce establishment and do this through the Vacancy Management Group (VMG).

At the end of FY 2024/25, there are **38** agency employees, with a **WTE** of **38**. The majority of these are within **National Procurement (16)**, **Digital and Security (DaS) (13)** and **SNBTS (5)**.

22 (58%) of agency contracts are due to end within the next six months of the new fiscal year.

There are a total of **107** employees on **fixed term** contracts, with total **WTE** of **93**. The majority of these are within **SNBTS (33)**, **DaS (22)** and **P&CF (12)**. **34** (32%) of the fixed term contracts are due to end within the next six months.

At the end of FY 2024/25, there are **zero** fixed term employees and **eight** agency employees that have a length of service of more than four years.

Fig. 16: Agency and Fixed Term





Redeployment

In 2024/25 a total of 95 employees were managed through redeployment of which 69 (73%) were successfully redeployed.

Those on redeployment are sourced through the following:

- There were 69 (73%) employees successfully redeployed in 2024/25, including those who came on the register in 2024/25 but redeployed 2025/26:
- Case Management Referrals: eight of which [REDACTED] successfully redeployed
- Organisational Change: 14 of which 12 (17%) were permanently redeployed
- End of Fixed Term Contracts: 56 (81%)

For those redeployed the banding outcomes were:

- Retained Substantive Banding: 63 (91%)
- Redeployed to Lower Band: [REDACTED] with only [REDACTED] requiring pay protection
- Matched to Higher Banded Post: [REDACTED]

The leavers from the redeployment register, 2024/25 into 2025/26 relates to 17 employees, nine of whom left with contractual redundancy as a result of ending Fixed Term contracts and seven leaving without redundancy entitlement.

[REDACTED] removed from the Secondary Pay Protection Register after securing an internal promotion and returning to their substantive salary.

In total £1.9 million was issued out in redundancy payments.

5. Nurture

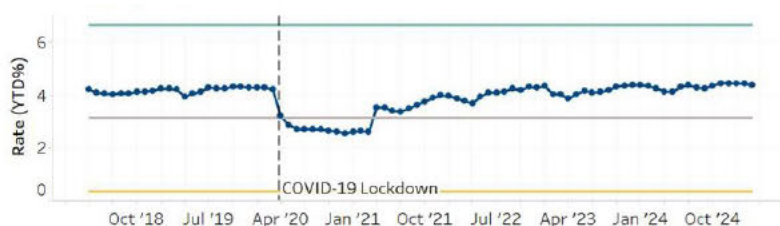
Impact of Staff Absence

NSS sickness absence rate has marginally increased across the current fiscal year, FY 2024/25 compared to the previous year FY 2023/24, ending the year at **4.37%**, up from **4.26%** at the end of FY 2023/24. The YTD figure is above the national target of 4%, breaching by **0.37 percentage points** (Fig. 18).

As demonstrated in the Statistical Process Control (SPC) Chart (Fig.17), sickness absence rates have been increasing gradually since March 2021 as Scotland started easing its lockdown measures. Sickness absence rates for FY 2024/25 have been gradually increasing from **4.14%** in April, to **4.37%** in March. The sickness absence rates are now in line with those reported before the pandemic.

The Directorates of HR, NSD, Assure, P&CF, SNBTS and Strategy, Performance and Service Transformation have finished the year with sickness absence rates between the Mean (3.15%) and Upper Limit (6.7%), while DaS, Clinical and Finance, Corporate Governance and Legal Services are between the Mean (3.15%) and Lower Limit (0.4%). NP has recorded the highest by finishing their sickness absence above the 6.7% Upper Control Limit for FY 2024/25.

Fig.17: Sickness Absence SPC



It has been noted that the highest recorded reason for absence within NSS relates to 'stress/anxiety and depression'. This has led to NSS undertaking a deep dive into why this is the main cause, along with identifying what further interventions and support needs to be put in place for NSS staff. This will be subject to monitoring and review by the NSS Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee and our Health and Wellbeing Group.

Fig.18: 5 Year Comparison for Long Term, Short Term and Total Sickness Rate

Year	Long Term	Short Term	TOTAL
March 2021 (FY20/21)	1.79%	0.81%	2.60%
March 2022 (FY21/22)	2.61%	1.15%	3.77%
March 2023 (FY22/23)	2.54%	1.48%	4.02%
March 2024 (FY23/24)	2.77%	1.49%	4.26%
March 2025 (FY24/25)	2.87%	1.50%	4.37%

Fig.19: Sickness Absence Rate Trend Graph FY 2024/25



Occupational Health

The total number of appointments offered by Occupational Health increased by **5%**, from **772** in FY 2023/24 to **812** in FY 2024/25 highlighting more support offered to staff compared to last year. Of the **812** appointments offered, **67%** were attended, which is **16** percentage points lower than the previous year at **83%** attended. The number of cancellations increased significantly from less than **1%** for FY 2023/24 to **11%** for FY 2024/25. Further breakdown below:

- **9%** were DNA appointments (9% for FY 2023/24)
- **10%** were rescheduled (7% for FY 2023/24)
- **3%** pending appointments (0% for FY 2023/24)

The total number of management referrals submitted to Occupational Health increased by **4%**, from **482** in FY 2023/24 to **503** in FY 2024/25. The average number of days to triage a referral for FY 2024/25 remains at **five days** compared to FY 2023/24. Of the **503** referrals submitted this year (FY 2024/25), **42%** were discharged in an average of **61 days**, compared to **28%** discharged in an average of **22 days** last year (FY 2023/24).

The main reason for management referrals is in relation to '**anxiety / stress / depression / other psychiatric illnesses**' as also highlighted as the main sickness absence reasons. However, looking at the stats the percentage for 'anxiety / stress / depression' related referral has dropped by **eight** percentage points compared to last year, reporting **31%** for FY 2024/25 compared to year before (FY 2023/24) at **39%**. The drop highlights the importance of interventions being taken by the Occupational Health team, Health and Wellbeing group and HR to manage sickness absence main reasons across the organisation and this will continue to be a focus, so we support staff with their wellbeing.

Fig.20: Management Referrals Received FY 2025

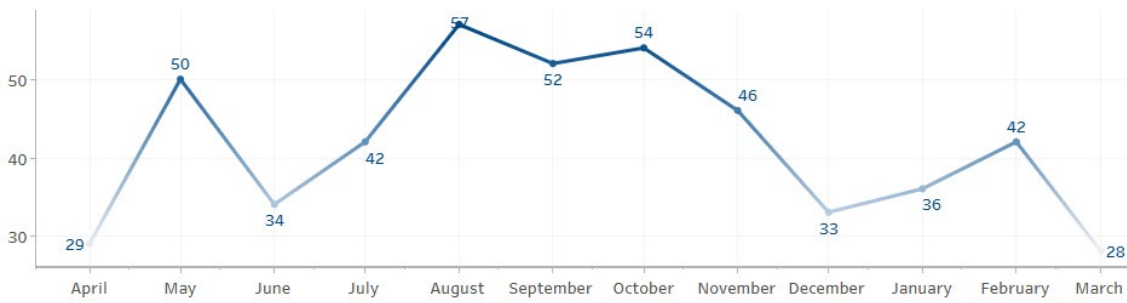
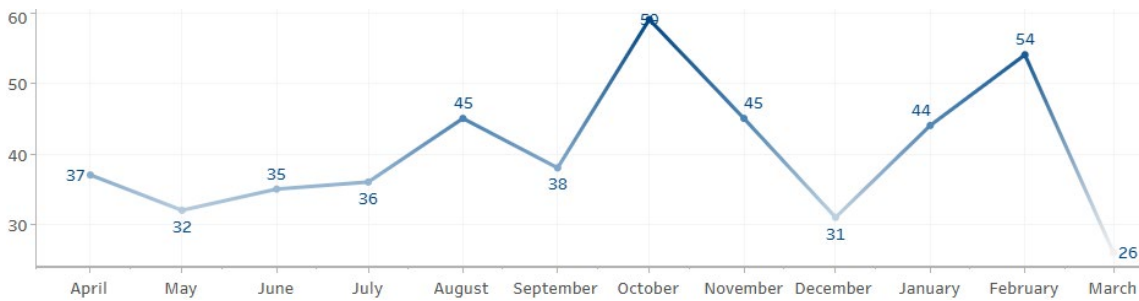


Fig.21: Management Referrals Received FY 2024



Annual Leave

Maintaining the wellbeing of staff is essential for NSS and all efforts are made to enable staff to take annual leave. All staff were encouraged as much as possible to fully utilise their leave entitlement due to the importance of taking time away from work to rest and recuperate.

The annual leave position as at the end of FY 2024/25 indicates that overall, approximately **3%** (compared to 5% for FY 2023/24) of annual leave was outstanding from our workforce at the end of FY 2024/25, which indicates an improvement over last year with **97%** of leave being planned and taken within the fiscal year itself.

Any remaining leave carried over across the organisation generally relates to carry over in lieu of the staff being on maternity leave or a long-term sick leave.

Fig.22: Annual Leave Balance by Directorate

Division	Planned / Taken TOTAL (%)	Remaining TOTAL (%)
Clinical (Div/CHP)	83%	17%
Digital and Security (Div/CHP)	98%	2%
FCGLS (Div/CHP)	94%	6%
HR & Workforce Development (Div/CHP)	97%	3%
NHSS Assure (Div/CHP)	96%	4%
National Procurement (Div/CHP)	98%	2%
National Services Division (Div/CHP)	96%	4%
Practitioner & Counter Fraud (Div/CHP)	99%	1%
SNBTS (Div/CHP)	97%	3%
SPST-NCTC (Div/CHP)	99%	1%
Strategy Performance & Service Transformation (Div/CHP)	97%	3%
NHS National Services Scotland	97%	3%

Annual leave planning and monitoring will continue over the coming year and is featured in the Chief Executive and Directors’ objectives to ensure annual leave is being fully utilised, and an emphasis of any annual leave carryover to be taken within the first quarter of FY 2025/26.

Appraisal, Objective and Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Ensuring staff within NSS have clear goals and objectives / training needs identified for the year ahead and are given the necessary feedback (positive and constructive) for previous years’ performance; the Appraisal, Objective and PDP cycle play a vital role. This is measured via the rolling year compliance rates throughout the year and is presented and reviewed in each monthly corporate report. The year ended on **79%** for Appraisal, **84%** for Objectives and **83%** for PDP.

Fig.23: Appraisal, Objective and PDP Compliance by Directorate

