



occupop

The State of Hiring in the

**Healthcare
Industry**

2023

Welcome

Welcome to Occupop's State of Hiring in the Healthcare Industry Report, a comprehensive evaluation of the hiring trends, challenges, and nuances of hiring in the Healthcare industry in 2023.

We conduct research from different industries to learn more about how companies attract, hire, and retain their teams and the current challenges facing each sector.

This year we have focused on understanding how organisations are responding, adapting and building following the COVID-19 pandemic, and understanding the shifts in balance in hiring across each and every specialism in this industry.

In this State of Hiring in the Healthcare Industry report, we've researched and collated industry statistics, trends and observations from our own data and also externally available data to help you develop and optimise your hiring strategy in the coming year. Attracting top talent requires a strategic and agile approach and must be an organisational priority.

We hope you'll find this report insightful and will use it as a benchmark for building a successful hiring strategy in Healthcare over the coming year, and how to successfully adapt and modify recruitment tactics in what continues to be, a challenging employment market for Healthcare employers.

Any thoughts or questions, please feel free to get in touch with us.

- Eoghan Scully



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Table of Contents

Healthcare Hiring Trends Results & Findings.....05

Pulse of the Healthcare Market.....10

Healthcare Hiring Challenges.....14

Recruitment for Healthcare - Changing tactics.....18

Future Outlook.....29



About this Report

The results and findings in this report were drawn from the hiring activities of over 125 Occupop customers in the medical and healthcare sector in the past year. It covered multiple healthcare lines of business including hospitals, health facilities, care centres and nursing homes, of different sizes based in the UK and Ireland. We collect data in October each year and compare it directly to the previous 12 months.

We hope you find this report interesting and that it provides you with a benchmark to formulate your healthcare recruitment strategy this year.



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About Occupop

Occupop is a powerfully simple recruitment software built for small and medium businesses. We help businesses be great at hiring through our simple philosophy – to make recruitment incredibly easy and accessible to everyone at work. So, businesses can hire the best people and build the best teams.

At Occupop, the automation and digitisation of the recruitment process for healthcare companies has been our key area of focus for the past 6 years. We have helped healthcare companies like the HFH Healthcare, Care Outlook, GPDQ, Health Harmonie and more across the UK, turn manual, laborious volume hiring processes into efficient, candidate friendly digital experiences.

In the past 12 months alone, we've helped healthcare companies not only through the challenges of operating post pandemic, but ensuring they thrive in years to come.



Healthcare

Hiring Trends

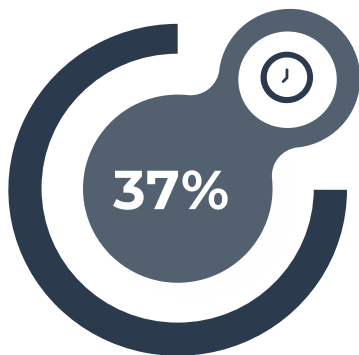
Results & Findings

Demand for Healthcare Talent



Increase in number of applications in 2022

Represents the number of people applying to jobs in a sector over the previous 12 months in healthcare.



Increase in total number of people hired in 2022

Represents the number of people hired in the healthcare sector over the previous 12 months.

Healthcare Jobs

33% increase

Total Job Openings

Total job openings represent the total number of healthcare job openings activated across the Occupop network over a 12 month period.

19 Applicants

Average number of applicants per hire

Occupop defines the number of applicants for a job up to the point of that job being filled divided by the number of jobs created.

Healthcare Assistant

Highest number of applicants for a single job posting

Represents the job receiving the most applications in healthcare.

23% increase

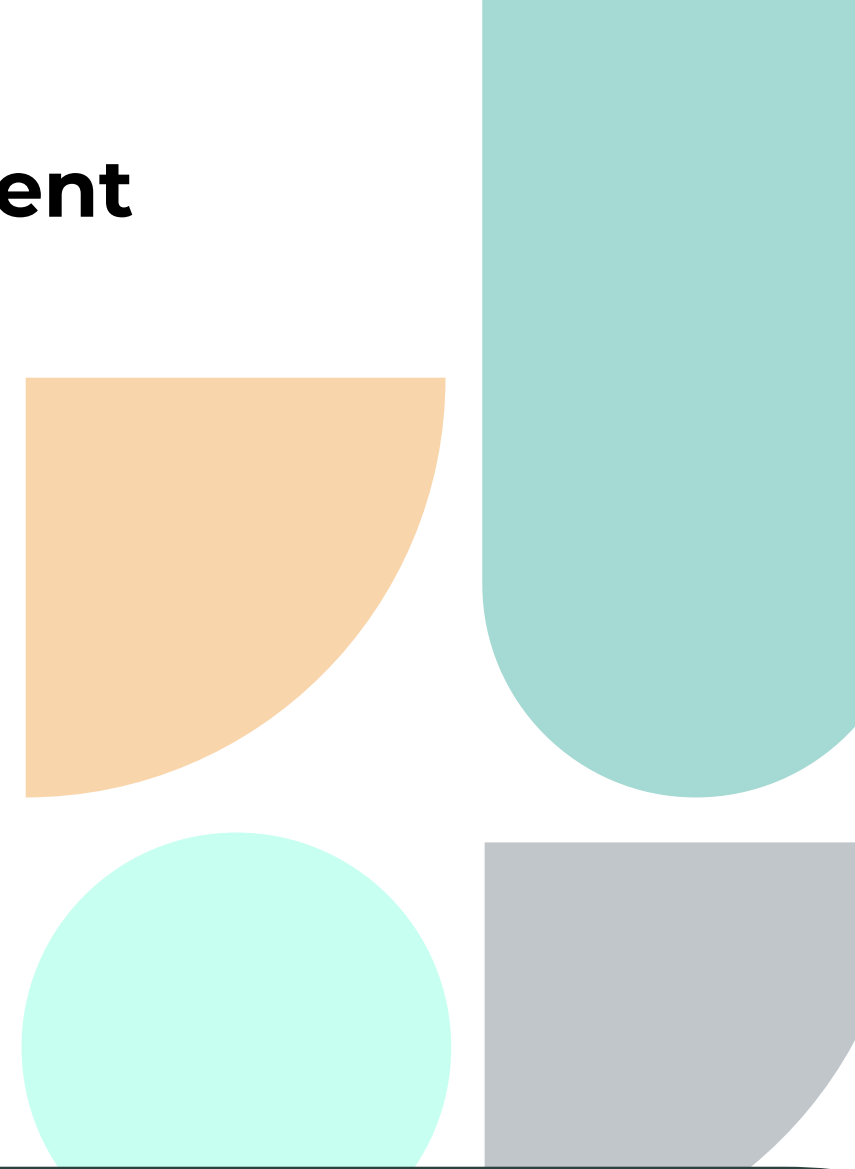
Rate of jobs listed to filled

Represents the number of jobs listed in healthcare divided by those being filled over the previous 12 months.

4% Increase

Rate of change in average no. of applicants to jobs

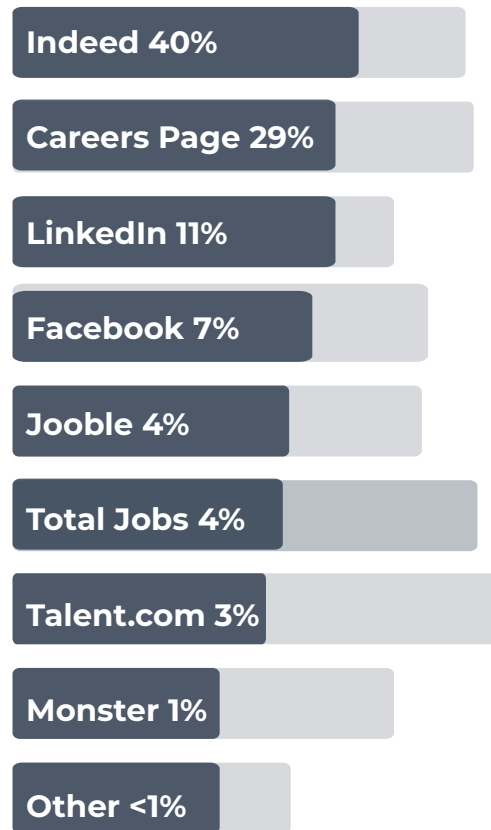
Represents how mobile the healthcare talent pool is.



Hired Source Insights

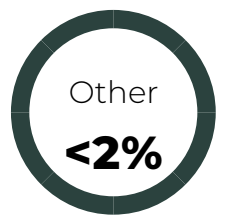
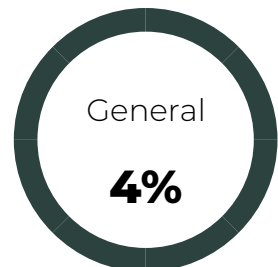
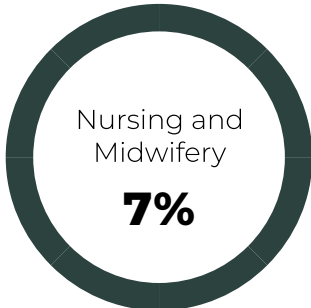
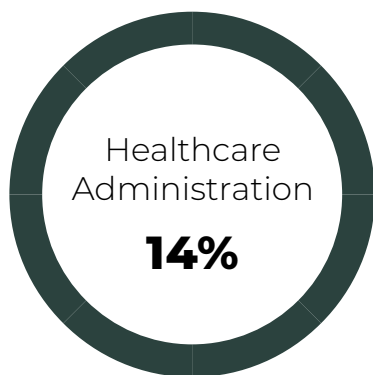
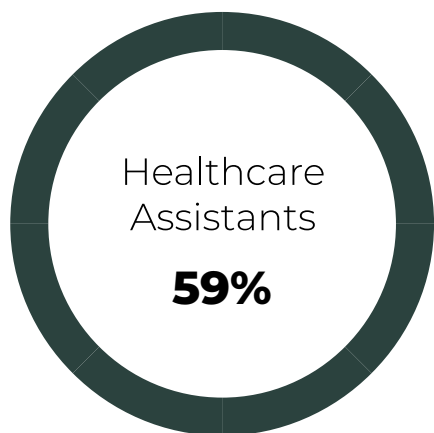
Best source of hires by channel in healthcare

Represents which channels work best for attracting healthcare applicants in 2022



Demand for Healthcare Jobs

Represents the breakdown of applications across key roles within the healthcare sector.



Healthcare Hiring Trends

How we're looking at data

The data used in this report is sourced from businesses across the Occupop network, making it a powerful resource for SMBs when planning their own hiring strategy in 2023. We deep dive into SMB hiring metrics across the healthcare sector obtained from over 125 healthcare lines of business including hospitals, health facilities, care centres and nursing homes, of different sizes based in the UK and Ireland. We collect data in October each year and compare it directly to the previous 12 months. We focus on the UK trends for three common SMB hiring metrics:

- Total Job Openings
- Applicants per Hire
- Hired Source Insights

Main Highlights

The four main highlights for this year's report are:

- Recruitment is high on the agenda with a 37% increase in the number of people hired in the sector in 2022.
- Job openings are very busy for healthcare companies with nearly a 33% increase this year, we also saw a jump of nearly a quarter in the rate of jobs listed to filled

- Applicant numbers and number of people hired have jumped by over a third this year
- Indeed and company Career Pages are the top two channels to obtain healthcare talent with March being the busiest month for healthcare hires

1. Total Job Openings

Total job openings represent the total number of job openings live across the Occupop network in a 12 month period. We take a look at the raw job open numbers – and they're a great indicator of the health of the economy.

From our data we can see job openings continue to rise for healthcare companies in 2022 with a 33% increase over the course of the year. Furthermore we also saw a jump of nearly a quarter in the rate of jobs listed to filled. This means there is more jobs being listed, than the talent supply to fill them.

From this data we can see that firstly recruitment is still high on the agenda this year, but employers in healthcare continue to struggle to find the talent they need, and it remains a highly competitive sector to source and retain top performers. More job openings mean there's more competition when you're listing a new role. Does that mean we'll see less candidates now with a more diluted talent pool? Well, let's find out.

2. Applicants per Hire

Overall, the number of applications across the entire healthcare sector as a whole has jumped by over a third this year (36%). That's quite a significant uptick, a positive trend and a good sign for SMBs looking to hire right now.

Occupop defines the number of applicants per hire as, succinctly, the number of applicants for a job up to the point of that job being filled. When we take a look at what happened over the course of 2022, we can see that for every person hired there are on average 19 applicants per role.

3. Hired Source Insights

From our data Indeed and company Career Pages once again rise to the top as the two dominant channels to obtain healthcare talent, followed closely by LinkedIn. March was the busiest month for companies hiring in this sector, but we saw the biggest amount of candidate activity in the form of applications in July of this year.

So, what's going on here?

Firstly, let's take a quick look at the UK job market. According to latest data from the UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS), this year data is showing full recovery and in September the number of payrolled employees reached an all-time high of 29.7 million employees. But currently, there is also a lot of noise in the wider hiring market around recession jitters, inflation, interest rate hikes, and layoffs.

Despite widespread predictions to the contrary especially post pandemic, the healthcare hiring market is still coming in hot. As mentioned in our data we saw an increase of 33% in new jobs added. It's also worth looking at the total number of people hired which came in with an increase of 37% on last year's numbers.

In short, this is a unique period of time where we have a tight labor market, with notable job growth, but while many sectors have started to announce hiring freezes and talks of recession are on the rise, the job market remains highly active. Many employers are eager to hire, and we don't see this trend changing anytime soon in healthcare, even as talks of layoffs and recessions are on the rise elsewhere.





Pulse of the Healthcare Market

Healthcare Hiring Challenges

The numbers



100,000

clinical vacancies are unfilled in the NHS and the UK

Attrition rates on nursing degrees have soared, with one in three students dropping out in 2020, with funding and pandemic upheaval being likely causes of these retention issues.

400

heads of stressed NHS staff in the UK are leaving per week, citing burnout and PTSD after 2 years of battling covid.

52%

of advertised physician posts were filled in the past year

30% More

elective care capacity

The government has instructed the NHS to deliver 30% more elective care capacity than it was delivering before the pandemic by 2024–25.

17.1%

The national average for registered nurses (RN) turnover last year was 17.1%

18% of GPs

taking early retirement

The number of GPs taking early retirement rose to a four-year high in 2020/21, up 18% from the previous financial year.

27.7%

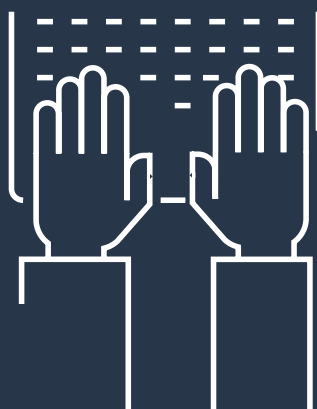
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) turnover sits at 27.7%

1,857 Less

fully qualified full-time GPs

As of July 2022, in real terms, there are 1,857 fewer fully qualified full-time GPs compared to the baseline of September 2015

Almost a third of GPs expect to reduce their clinical hours, with a fifth planning to take early retirement and one in seven wanting to work from home more – all within the next 12 months.



Executive Summary

The defining issues in the NHS now are elective care backlogs, waiting times, burnout, recruitment, and staff retention, all of which have been negatively impacted by the pandemic.

The NHS is in an unprecedented situation. Here are some of the lowlights taken from the '**NHS Backlogs and Waiting Time in England**' report by the House of Commons Committee of public accounts:

Backlogs

6.07 million patients were waiting for elective care as of December 2021, the biggest waiting list since records began.

Waiting Times

64% (3.87 million) of patients have been waiting for less than 18 weeks, compared with the performance standard which requires 92% to have been waiting for less than 18 weeks.

67% of patients with an urgent referral for suspected cancer were treated within 62

days compared with a requirement for 85% to be treated within that time.

The government has instructed the NHS to deliver 30% more elective care capacity than it was delivering before the pandemic by 2024–25. It has provided an additional £8 billion of revenue funding for elective recovery and £5.9 Billion of capital funding.

Burnout

This is defined as a state of emotional and physical exhaustion, usually occurring because of long-term stress in a job. **The NHS Staff Survey 2021** shows that NHS staff are experiencing high levels of burnout.

While burnout has been a longstanding issue in the NHS the '**pandemic has placed a further burden on NHS staff and exacerbated the problem**'.

This pandemic-induced burnout is putting pressure on the NHS with the article from the **Guardian** newspaper revealing that 'stressed NHS staff in the UK are leaving at a record pace of 400 a week, citing burnout and PTSD after 2 years battling covid'.

Recruitment

Over the past 4 years, the government's recruitment strategy has been to increase medical school numbers from 6,000 to 7,500 a year in England. **A record number of new trainees have accepted placements** to become GPs and begin specialist general practice training in 2021/2022', according to data by Health Education England.

According to the **latest figures highlighted in the 50,000 Nurses Programme Delivery Update**, (dated 7th March 2022) the NHS is currently on course to meet its 50,000 targets by 2024. Specifically, government statisticians estimate that 'by March 2024, the programme will have delivered between 42,000 and 61,000 additional FTE nurses, based on current plans.'

According to this **report from the BMJ**, more than 100,000 clinical vacancies are unfilled in the NHS and the UK currently has fewer doctors and nurses per 1,000 people than most countries in Europe. Just 52% of advertised physician posts were filled in 2021.

Our data shows a surge in healthcare recruitment activity: there has been 33% increase in numbers of healthcare job openings on jobs boards and a 36% increase in healthcare job applicants versus last year.

Retention

GP shortages remain a big issue in the sector, with the pandemic having an incrementally negative effect on staff retention and staff availability. According to **Pulse's latest survey**, 'Almost a third of GPs expect to reduce their clinical hours, with a fifth planning to take early retirement and one in seven wanting to work from home more – all within the next 12 months.

Attrition rates on nursing degrees have soared, with one in three students dropping out in 2020, with funding and pandemic upheaval being likely causes of these retention issues.





Hiring Challenges

Healthcare Recruitment and Retention Challenges: Gaps & Insights

The UK has a challenging target of recruiting 50,000 more nurses by 2024. Staffing was a key issue for the NHS even before the pandemic, and has only intensified post-pandemic in an environment of staff burnout and overwhelming elective care backlogs.

Nurse recruitment target of 50,000 heads is no longer enough.

It is no surprise to hear therefore that the Chief Nursing Officer for England believes that the government's target of 50,000 nurses is no longer enough. Speaking at a recent event organized by the League of St Bartholomew's Nurses she said that the 50,000 target was the "right ambition at the time" and was "sufficiently challenging". However, she later added: "Do I think 50,000 is enough? No, I don't. And I think that there's another round of that, that we need to do".

Abolishment of nursing bursaries hampering recruitment

This white paper analysis by James Goddard presented on the House of Lords Library website, titled, 'Nursing Students: what is the government doing to encourage recruitment?' suggests that recruitment efforts are indeed being hampered by the removal of the nursing bursary in 2017 and transfer to a student loan scheme. Figures from UCAS revealed that after these changes' applications for nursing courses in 2018 had declined by around a third compared to the 2016 figure.

The government has attempted to soften the blow since then offering new and existing nursing and midwifery students from September 2020, a non-repayable grant of £5,000 a year with extra booster payments of £3000 in addition to the loan.

Even so Ms May, the Chief Nursing Officer for England speaking in October last year still believes the removal of the student nurse bursary in England was "fundamentally the wrong decision", implying that this was making it harder to recruit and retain nursing students.

Early retirement

According to a **Pulse survey**, the number of GPs taking early retirement rose to a four-year high on 2020/21, up 18% from the previous financial year. Half of the existing GP workforce plan to retire on or before age 60. 1 in 8 plan to retire before 55. Burnout and workload were the main reasons cited along with a tax-punitive pension scheme.

Missed hiring targets for Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) Doctors

According to the **BMA**, the overall number of FTE GPs has not grown noticeably since 2015; in fact, during this period the number of GPs has reduced significantly.

Back in February 2020, the government stated they were looking to **recruit an extra 6000 GPs by 2024**. Numerically, the government is on target to meet its goal, hiring 1541 doctors between March 2020 and March 2021, but on an FTE basis (37.5 hours a week) fully qualified FTE GPs only increased by 110.7 during the period.

The number of GPs choosing to work part-time has also been increasing since 2017 and this is thought to be because doctors are looking for better work-life balance to 'reduce stress, ill-health and burnout'.

As of July 2022, in real terms, there are 1,857 fewer fully qualified full-time GPs compared to the baseline of September 2015. This trend is set to continue as a recent survey from the BMA of over 2,500 respondents revealed that over half of them planned to work fewer hours post-pandemic. 42% plan to work more flexibly and from home.

Expansion of Medical School Numbers by 5,000 to 14,500 graduating a year

In an October 2021 **white paper from the Medical Schools Council**, the body has called for significant expansion in medical school numbers. Key points from the paper include:

- The number of medical students should be increased by 5,000 making a total of 14,500 graduates per year.

- Places should be allocated to areas with the capacity to provide high-quality clinical placements and to those regions where the shortage of doctors is most acute.
- The expansion should address recruitment to roles where the shortages are most pressing.
- Future expansion should ensure the widest possible participation and offer a range of routes into the profession including graduate entry, apprenticeship schemes, access and conversion courses, and other novel approaches in addition to traditional entry for school leavers.

This is a significant recruitment challenge, but this is not due to a lack of applicants as there are currently many more applicants than placements available. While there is scope to increase the capacity for universities to host medical schools, (only 40 out of 150 currently do), the limiting factor in any growth agenda is access to clinical placements, particularly in primary care settings.

The report also identified shortages in clinical academic staff too, who, along with biomedical scientists and NHS colleagues, are responsible for course design, leadership, and delivery. However, clinic academic staff numbers have not increased over the last decade yet the numbers of medical practitioners in consultant

and general practice have increased significantly and so have medical school place and student numbers. Also, a significant proportion of clinic academic staff remain close to retirement.

Staffing at UK care homes a third less than needed

In a survey published by **UNISON** care homes are missing almost a third of the staff (31%) they need and more than one in four have closed their doors to new admissions in a deepening labour crisis that is “putting safety and dignity at risk”.

Omicron absences are running at 14% on top of an 18% vacancy rate – a sharp increase on estimates before the pandemic – the survey reports that many beleaguered healthcare workers quit jobs, often for better paying roles in retail or warehouses. The picture is even worse for domiciliary care, with two-thirds of providers forced to decline families' new requests for help because they are short of carers.

A report by the National Care Forum (NCF), described the situation in social care has become “grim, difficult and relentless”, with reference to the amount of care workers off sick with Covid on top of a rising number of vacancies.



Recruiting in

Healthcare

Changing Tactics

Recruiting in Healthcare Changing Tactics

In its 2019 manifesto, the government set itself a challenging target of recruiting 50,000 more nurses by March 2024. The government's main tactics to achieve this headline target were:

- Increased domestic and international recruitment
- Increased training capacity and new intake
- Boosting retention rates

Recent evidence suggests some of these tactics are working:

Speaking in the **Nursing Times** earlier this year, Chief Nursing Officer, Ruth May said that, 'numbers of nurses being recruited from overseas annually had risen from around 5,000 to 6,000 before the pandemic, to an expected 20,000 in this financial year.'

The government outlined two significant risks around these projections and their ability to stay on target and these were uncertainty around:

1. How many nurses will complete their courses and go on to employment that is covered by the target'
2. Retention of currently employed nurses which is the most significant area of uncertainty around the programme. It is expected to be negatively impacted by the pressures of the pandemic and the 'outcomes of the McCloud remedy, which allows some staff to retire on more favourable terms than was previously anticipated to be the case.' It is expected that this could serve to temporarily increase the leaver rate.

Tactics to address nursing student attrition risk and reality

With **research** showing a spike in nursing student attrition in 2020, (33% dropout rate vs 25% in previous years), there are increasing risks around the 50,000 nurses by 2024 targets.

Since it takes from 2 to 4 years to train a nurse, (depending on the learning route taken), there is little margin for error. If nurse training retention drops and nurse recruitment begins to slip below the 50,000 target, there is not enough time to onboard new nurse trainees to rectify the slippage.

The government has multiple strategies to address this uncertainty, including tackling it head-on by looking at strategies to reduce attrition from student nurse courses.

RePAIR (Reducing Pre-registration Attrition and Improving Retention) Toolkit

In May 2020 the **RePAIR** surveyed student nurses to 'capture the experience of pre-registration nurses, midwives and AHPs (Allied Health Professionals) during the first wave of the pandemic'.

The report titled, '**The Impact of Covid-19 on Students Survey – Key Findings**' established the main reasons behind students thinking about leaving training and these were:

- academic concerns; anxious about catching up on their academic studies.
- being overwhelmed and stressed by the situation they find themselves in;
- and doubting their clinical ability.
- Lack of EEI support

There were 4 recommendations around this:

- 1. Changing Minds:** Retention activity should be targeted according to year and discipline for maximum ROI. Year 1 and Year 2 students, plus Year 3 in the first 6 months were at higher risk of leaving compared to post-grads and pre-registration students on the final 6 months of the programme.

2. Boosting confidence: 72% struggled to complete learning outcomes in the context of online learning and as a result, RePAIR recommends that HEI focus on improving online provision to 'ensure the students are confident that they will be able to achieve the necessary learning outcomes and be clinically competent and confident when they qualify'.

3. Tackling concerns: HEIs and Healthcare Provider Organisations need to collaborate with each other and HEE's regional teams, to support the most troubled student groups which are: 'younger students, BAME students, and those who have reported being overwhelmed and stressed by the situation'.

4. Repeating the study in the new year to see how the second wave impacted outcomes.

Retaining nurses

The DHSC and NHSEI are looking to respond to this uncertainty by launching initiatives that will encourage nurses and other staff groups to remain in the NHS. These initiatives include:



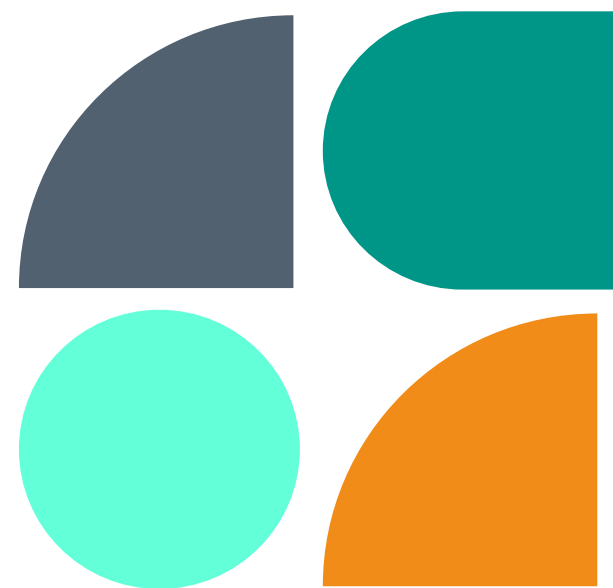
- 'health and wellbeing initiatives, including self-help apps, tools, and guidance for managers to support their teams
- expansion of occupational health and mental health support, including the introduction of 40 mental health and wellbeing hubs
- expansion of flexible working
- greater focus on career development'

A major drive to recruit NHS Reservists

In March 2022 the **government announced** that it was planning to hire thousands of new NHS reservists to support the health service in its battle to overcome covid-19 backlogs. This project was pilot launched in 2021 at five sites and so far 17,000 people have joined up

Amanda Pritchard, NHS Chief Executive has invited the public to sign up as an NHS reservist. There is a broad range of opportunities available. The key elements of the hiring programme are:

- Anyone can register their interest through a new website: <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/we-are-nhs/nhs-reservists>, including new joiners to the NHS and former staff who wish to return.
- Local hospitals and NHS services can then call on the 'NHS reservist community' depending on their staffing requirements and pressures in their area, creating a bank of extra resources for when it is needed.
- No previous experience is necessary with full training provided and NHS reservists will be paid in line with the role they are doing.



Recruiting from different sectors

The 'great resignation' as it has been termed, or that post-pandemic mass desire to change careers presents both a problem and an opportunity for the NHS. While the NHS must work on retention it has at the same time recognized that there may be plenty of workers from different sectors entering the marketplace who could be attracted to the NHS, and who may be suitable for healthcare support worker (HCSW) roles but are unaware of them.

We are seeing evidence from our own data that this initiative is working because we have seen a massive 59% year on year increase in applications for Healthcare Assistant jobs.

To the right are two case studies, from the NHS programme: **Maximising the Effectiveness of recruiting new people to the NHS** - highlighting how the NHS is attracting people looking for a career change due to economic impacts of covid 19.

Case study 1:

Liverpool University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. To address increased HCSW vacancies at their trust, Aintree University Hospital NHS FT developed apprenticeship open days to raise awareness of employment opportunities in the area. They also promoted nursing as a career with local schools and colleges and developed an improved career pathway for existing HCSWs to become trainee nursing associates or registered nursing students.

Case study 2:

North Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust. The trust faced challenges in recruiting HCSWs, including deprivation and mixed educational attainment levels in the area. They addressed this by widening participation and routes to entry by developing a 'Career Confidence' programme. The programme encouraged people to explore the possibility of HCSW roles through a redesigned apprenticeship route, combined with clear career pathways. This included the use of the Care Certificate and science qualifications for staff to transition into Band 5 trainee nursing associate and assistant practitioner roles over 18 months to two years.'

Attract midwives and nurses back to the profession.

The Once a nurse, always a nurse' campaign, a strand of the national 'We are the NHS' recruitment campaign, aims to remind 'nurses and midwives that the fundamental qualities of being a nurse/midwife remain the same and are as valuable as ever'.

This initiative is trying to tap into the latent talent pool of former nurses and midwives who want to return to the NHS but don't really know if they can or how to go about restarting their NHS career. The NHS re-entry portal advises on potential routes back into the NHS, the support available, and interview and application tips.

Routes back into practice

- Return to Practice (RTP) courses on offer at university - where each course is fully funded, with the returner receiving £1,000 to cover costs such as books, travel, and childcare. If employed by an NHS organisation while training, the returner will receive either a salary or £1,000.
- Readmission for nurses who meet the NMC requirements.

We are seeing evidence of the effectiveness of this campaign in our internal data which shows a 7% increase in applications for nursing and midwifery roles versus last year on national jobs boards.



New GP Apprenticeship Route to Launch September 2023

In our previous [report](#), we reported on how Health Education England (HEE) was looking to create an apprenticeship programme, allowing candidates to become doctors without undergoing the traditional medical degree route. In a July [press release](#) Health Education England introduced the new Medical Doctor Apprenticeship to be commenced in September 2023. Key features are:

- The Medical Doctor Degree Apprenticeship involves the same training, at the same high standard as traditional educational routes.
- Apprentices will complete all elements of medical education, academic and practical, including a medical degree, and the Medical Licensing Assessment and meet all requirements set out by the General Medical Council, and will be able to earn a wage while they study.
- The aim is to recruit students from varying backgrounds, who may have struggled to pursue a traditional medical degree education, so that future generations of students, and health professionals, more closely mirror the population that they serve.
- Apprenticeships may also appeal to people who might have gained experience in clinical roles and be ready to start training as a doctor at a later stage in their career.



GMC wrote to doctors who temporarily returned during C-19 to try and get them to stay permanently

In our last report, we noted that many trusts put in the effort to recruit temporary returners to the profession during the pandemic. Data shows that around 25,000 doctors still have the temporary registration authorization in response to the pandemic and over 8,000 are GPs. A survey of these doctors suggests that around 2,000 would consider returning permanently.

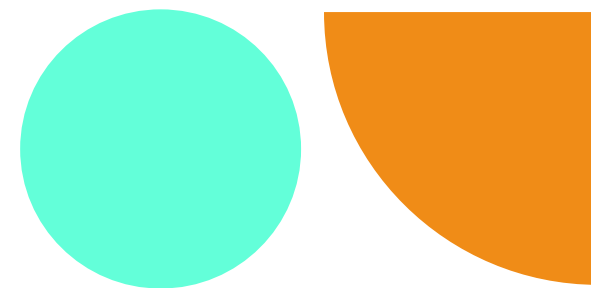
At the time, there was no concrete plan of action, but a recent [press release from Pulse](#) revealed that the GMC has taken the unprecedented step of proactively contacting 8,000 temporary returners, advising them on what they need to do if they want to stay on.

‘The regulator has been informing GPs about how to apply to restore their routine registration and license or retain or relinquish their temporary one. As of the summer, 8,224 GPs held a temporary license, down from 8,306 in October 2020.’

It is understood that this temporary legislation can be revoked at any time and the GMC is in discussions with the government to ensure that sufficient notice is given before it is required to remove registrations.

Winter Access Fund 2021 To Establish Digital Locum GP Banks

In our last [report](#), we talked about how NHS England responded to the desire for flexible working in the medic workforce by establishing new local banks for salaried and locum GPs as announced in the NHS People Plan July 2020. This was meant to create new opportunities for GPs to work flexibly and a new way for trusts to attract and hire medics.



According to a [press release](#) earlier this year on the BMA website, the winter access fund 2021 included an expectation that all trusts and regions should set up a digital locum bank model or pool by December 2021. Some sessional GPs and practices have already implemented some form of digital pools, with some regions having evolved their own systems organically. As a result, if a pool already exists it can be grown and enhanced with funding from this scheme. Key features of the digital locum pools:

- Intended to engage local GPs who can deliver additional sessions, connecting them with practices holding vacant shifts.
- Pool should also have the capability to:
 - i. Onboard GPs
 - ii. Conduct pre-employment checks
 - iii. Support induction to practices
 - iv. Support the ability for GPs to enter contracts or terms of engagement
 - v. Allow GP to have greater autonomy and flexibility and control over their workload

Locum GP Handbook

To help with attracting GPs, recruiting them into the digital locum GP banks, and maximising retention when they are there the BMA has created a locum GP Handbook. Aimed at locum GPs, those looking to become a locum GP, and practices looking to employ locum GPs, it contains advice on key topics such as:

- Becoming a locum and finding locum work
- Requirements for working as a locum
- Ways of working as a locum
- Becoming a locum employer

Enabling the Workforce for Elective Recovery

On 5th May 2022 NHS England published the **'Enabling the Workforce for Elective Recovery'** paper which gave the following advice on how employers can boost recruitment and retention. These were:

- “Removing the cap on consultant job plans,” so that employing trusts could pay for additional sessions beyond a standard (10 planned activity, 40 hour) contract;
- “Support education, training, and leadership roles,” which had all been hampered by pandemic medicine and weren't adequately reflected in supporting planned activities in job plans;
- “Enable recently retired staff to return, with job plans that support elective and educational recovery,” not only to deliver elective care but to supervise clinical training and staff development and to agree to contracted roles that suit their experience and preferences;
- “Encourage individuals considering retirement to

return, and support the elective recovery workforce during the next phase of their careers”;

- “Increase capacity during peak periods of leave,” by changes in rostering; and
- “Use NHS reservists—both medical and non-medical,” to cope with surges in activity and demand.

Visa programme for foreign workers to care workers

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has provided councils with additional funds to pay bonuses to retain staff, and late last month it extended the visa programme for foreign workers to care workers, care assistants and home-care workers.

To strengthen the cares staff workforce they have provided £462.5m for recruitment and retention, expanded the health and care visa scheme, and also established the **'Made with Care' recruitment campaign**, which aims to drive people with the right values to apply for and fill paid vacancies in the adult social care sector.



Future Outlook

Future Outlook

The Healthcare sector in the UK is facing not just one but a whole plethora of unprecedented challenges which are a legacy of the pandemic.

Elective care backlogs, waiting lists, and levels of burnout are far exceeding historical highs and are placing huge demands on recruitment and retention.

While the NHS is seemingly meeting many of its recruiting targets relating to doctor and nurse training, extraordinary levels of burnout, staff attrition, early retirement, and GP down-shifting are rendering these targets obsolete.

While acknowledging the government's expectation that it will meet its 2024 nursing recruitment target, the Chief Nursing Officer has recently gone on record saying that given current circumstances the 50,000 target is no longer enough.

The same goes for the GP Hiring target. While the government is expecting to meet its 6000 GPs by 2024 target there is real terms decline in FTE GPs versus a 2015 baseline as over half of them plan to work fewer hours a week. In October last year, the Medical Schools Council recommended a 5000-headcount expansion in medical school numbers to 14,500 graduates a year.

It is not entirely clear exactly how many staff are needed to address the NHS crisis, which given the gravity of the situation is proving concerning to many expert observers.

How the government plans to meet the ambitious targets set out in the Elective Recovery Plan and other NHS Delivery Plans without a long-term workforce plan remains to be seen.

Our data echoes this sentiment and shows that this is a unique period of time where we have a tight labor market, combined with notable job growth and an active job market. Healthcare employers remain eager to hire and even as talks of layoffs and recessions are on the rise, its unlikely to impact the healthcare sector anytime soon, but, duly noted, no industry is immune.

Ultimately, our advice to employers setting recruitment strategies is to be extremely focused. It is a highly competitive market and hiring managers must be prepared and agile with their recruitment and retention strategies. Data will play a big part in terms of identifying key channels for accessing talent and once the candidates are engaged, having a clean and rapid hiring process to ensure the hire is made before a competitor will also play a big part. Once hired, a strong and evolving retention strategy is key to retain key talent.

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Occupop is a beautifully simple recruitment software built for small and medium businesses. We help businesses be great at hiring through our simple philosophy – to make recruitment incredibly easy and accessible to everyone at work. So, businesses can hire the best people and build the best teams.

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