



England

# Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey 2023

Key Findings

September 2024



# Snapshot taken autumn 2023

## Survey aims

Deliver an overview of the community pharmacy workforce.

Provide data to inform decisions where community pharmacy workforce can contribute to supporting clinical service expansion in community pharmacy, for the benefit of patients.

## Survey output

A reported overview of the workforce from community pharmacy contractors' submissions.

## Your Next steps

Access the data at [Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey - data.gov.uk](https://community-pharmacy-workforce-survey.data.gov.uk)

Use the data to inform future investment in education and training, and effective workforce planning.

**Prepare for 2024 survey, in the autumn.**



# Survey principles and data trends

- The survey is returned by contractors\* and reflects the staffing model for a typical week.
- There may be some double-counting, e.g. locum workforce and pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians.
- The survey is not a census and cannot report on workforce information for individuals.
- Data from 87% of pharmacy premises could be used from the 2023 to develop the data trend.
- The 2023 survey questions that contractors completed are available in the crib sheet of the Frequently Asked Questions available on the [Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey website](#).
- The publication of the data includes detail on the approach to calculations and the caveats.
- Access the data at: [Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey - data.gov.uk](#) and also as a dashboard.
- \*Contractors who do not submit a response are followed up via the usual contracting monitoring routes



# Definitions and context

- **Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)** is the recognised approach to describe workforce hours because it reflects the available workforce to deliver patient care.
- **Headcount (HC)** is used to indicate number of individuals in each role within the workforce.
- **Vacancy rate** is calculated as FTE vacancies/establishment (staff in post + vacancies). Respondents are asked to include only those posts which are long standing, i.e. > 3 months and without anyone appointed to post.

The vacancy rate for foundation trainee pharmacists and pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians are not requested based on experience gleaned from earlier surveys and the current model of training.

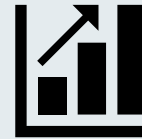
- Pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians may be using a former job title while completing their training , e.g. dispensing assistant so there is no vacancy in the establishment.
- Foundation trainee pharmacist vacancies are fixed-term training posts. Therefore, data received has the potential not be a true reflection of established staffing. The capacity for foundation trainee pharmacists can be identified through the posts submitted via the National Recruitment Scheme (Oriol).
- **Locum workforce:** Locums were reported as pharmacy technicians or pharmacists who are either (i) part of the workforce model or (ii) fill a session due to the employed pharmacy technician or pharmacist being unavailable. Locum pharmacy technicians and pharmacists are included when referring to all pharmacy technicians and pharmacists.

# Reported findings



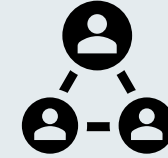
The number of **all pharmacists** reported (as headcount) continues to be in the region of 27,000 (27,487)

**Pharmacy technician** figures show reduction from 6,544 in 2022 to 5,436.



Overall increase to 1,494 (37% or 407 FTE) in the number of **Independent Prescribers**.

Growth (21% or 419 FTE) in the number of **pharmacy technicians** working in an accuracy checking role.



The reported numbers of **total workforce have increased 4%** from 2022, using FTE. The largest increases are trained medicines counter assistants (39%), pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians (33%) and pharmacy delivery drivers (26%).



FTE figures indicate an expansion in **locum pharmacists\*** (11%). The submitted data implies locum pharmacists are working fewer hours compared to employed pharmacists. For all pharmacists, participation is similar to 2022.



**Trainee roles increased**, reported as FTE:

Pre-registration trainee pharmacy technicians (33%)

Foundation trainee pharmacists (20%)

The growth in foundation pharmacists warrants further exploration



The highest 2023 reported **vacancy rates**:

Accuracy checkers 27% (down from 37%)

Pharmacists 18% (up from 16%)

Trainee DAs 18% (up from 17%)

Trainee MCA 18% (down from 24%)

\*Locums were identified as pharmacists who are either (i) part of the workforce model or (ii) fill a session due to the employed pharmacist being unavailable. There might be some possible double-counting of the locum workforce. Locum pharmacists are included when referring to all pharmacists.



# Next steps

- The data is available at: [Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey - data.gov.uk](https://data.gov.uk/dataset/community-pharmacy-workforce-survey)
- Use the data to inform future investment in education and training, and effective workforce planning, across all sectors of pharmacy
- Prepare for the 2024 survey, in the autumn
- Find out more on the [Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey webpage](#)
- Read [Frequently Asked Questions](#) about the 2023 survey
- Contact [england.pharmacyteam@nhs.net](mailto:england.pharmacyteam@nhs.net) with any additional enquiries

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## Thank You



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