National Workforce Stocktake of Mental Health Peer Support Workers in NHS Trusts

Report V1.3 1st September 2020

Contents

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Introduction

The National Workforce Stocktake and Benchmarking Study of Mental Health Peer Support Workers was undertaken between January and April 2020, with the objective of providing a comprehensive snapshot of the size and shape of the Peer Support Worker profession's contribution to mental health services in England on 30th September 2019. It ran alongside a separate data collection on the prevalence of Social Workers within mental health services in England.

The project was commissioned by Health Education England (HEE) and undertaken by the NHS Benchmarking Network. The workforce stocktake aimed to provide a detailed profile of Peer Support Workers employed within NHS mental health services and the associated delivery context including the following themes:

- Service provision and activity
- Workforce size
- Workforce demographics
- Workforce key performance indicators including sickness, vacancies and temporary staffing

A total of 55 NHS provider organisations took part in the project, equivalent to 100% of all NHS Mental Health Trusts in England. A full participant list is detailed in the appendix to this report. Of the 55 organisations who participated in the project, a total of 21 organisations (38%) reported that they did not directly employ any Peer Support Workers within their mental health services on 30th September 2019. The focus of the report is therefore on the remaining 34 providers (62%) who shared data on the profile of the mental health Peer Support Workers.

It should also be noted that a parallel data collection took place across Local Authorities as these organisations are key partners in the delivery of mental health services and employ Peer Support workers who contribute to mental health services. The data collection across Local Authorities had not received contributions from all Authorities by the end of March when the collection was suspended due to the impact of Covid-19. The data collection may be resumed at some point in future if conditions allow. The project also invited data contributions from mental health providers in the independent and charity sectors where Peer Support Workers are also employed to support mental health services. Analysis of the position from these sectors is included in this report for the small number of organisations who were able to provide data.

The NHS Benchmarking Network would like to express our thanks for the contribution made to the project by members of the project's oversight group, Health Education England, and the NHS providers who participated in the project. Particular thanks are due to; Mark Trewin, Sue Hatton, Debbie Hilder, Sarah Mahoney, Phil Hough, Simon Hough, Karen Morse, Nick Armitage, Samira Heinkel, Ania Kosicka, and Jill Clark.

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Background: Peer Support Workers and their role within the NHS mental health workforce

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Peer Support Workers within the NHS mental health workforce

Peer Support Workers (PSWs) are individuals with personal lived experience of mental health challenges, built on shared experiences and empathy, who support those receiving services, working towards the individual's wellbeing, giving hope and supporting recovery. PSWs occupy a unique position in that their role welcomes the lived experience perspective into the very fabric of traditionally professionally driven services, as well as into the education and training requirements of the health and social care workforce.

Peer Support Workers currently represent a small part of NHS services' mental health multi-disciplinary teams. The NHS Long Term Plan makes clear proposals to expand access to mental health services and recognises people with lived experience as a core part of an enhanced offer to service users and carers. The Long Term Plan includes significant expansion of this role in the NHS with 4,730 PSWs planned over the next five years. This project aims to establish a robust baseline against which subsequent growth can be tracked, as well as supporting workforce development activities, and education and development plans.

Health Education England (HEE) are leading on delivery of the workforce components of the NHS Long Term Plan and aim to increase the number of Peer Support Workers employed in mental health services through their New Roles workstream. HEE are working to help organisations successfully introduce Peer Support Workers into their mental health teams, with the end goal of enabling more recovery focused and person-centred care. This initiative forms a key element of HEE's New Roles work in mental health.

The chart to the right identifies the mental health environments where Peer Support Workers are typically employed. The chart illustrates that paid Peer Support Workers are predominantly employed within community health service teams (77% of all PSWs), with a smaller proportion found within inpatient settings (16% in adult and older adult core inpatient services, and 7% in specialist inpatient environments such as forensic, rehabilitation, and perinatal care). This information was collected as part of the NHS Benchmarking Network's 2019 mental health benchmarking data collection and does not include the provision of volunteer / unpaid Peer Support Workers within NHS mental health services.

The NHS Benchmarking Network have been collecting data on Peer Support Worker numbers in NHS mental health services since 2016/17. This data confirms incremental growth of the PSW discipline in England from a position of 48 staff in 2015/16, 111 staff in 2016/17, and 153 staff in 2017/18.

Paid Peer Support Workers within NHS mental health services

- Inpatient Core ■ Inpatient Specialist ■ Community Services

16%
7%
77%

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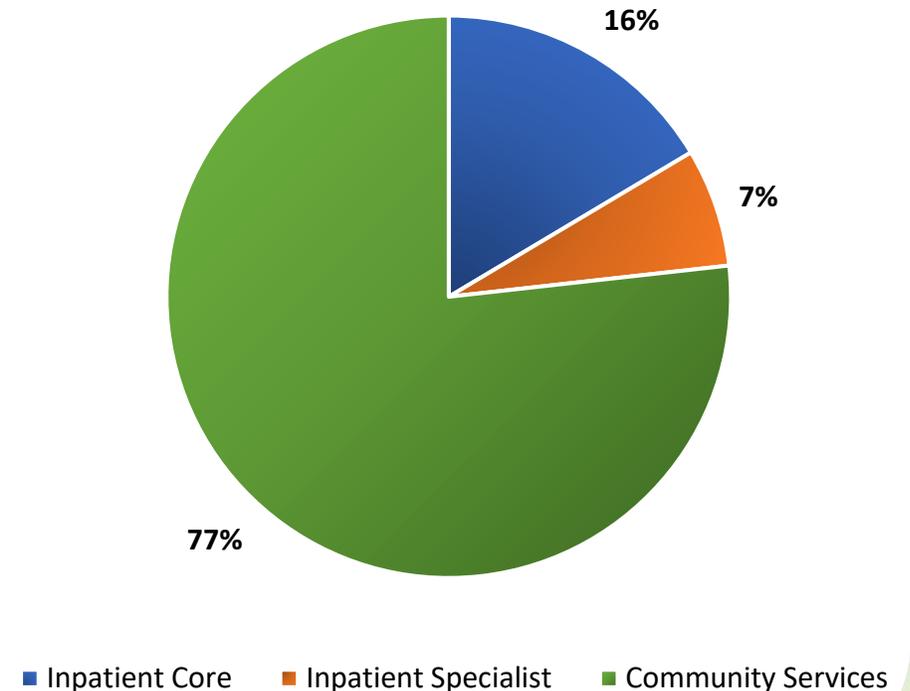
Peer Support Worker project findings

NHS workforce profile
Additional sectors

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NHS – Peer Support Workers

The data collection census on 30th September 2019 received responses from every Mental Health Trust in England, though not all of those organisations have paid Peer Support Workers within their multi-disciplinary teams. Organisations were asked to quantify the Peer Support Workers positioned within their mental health services on the date of the census, and provide additional information on the employing organisation for these staff and the demographic profile of staff employed.

Across the entirety of English Mental Health Trusts, 862 paid (headcount) Peer Support Workers were reported to be working within mental health services on the census date.

The accompanying infographic details the employing organisation of these staff, with approximately 86% directly employed by the NHS and the remaining 14% employed by external parties – for example, organisations within the voluntary sector.

With a number of providers unable to quantify the WTE input provided by their Peer Support Worker staffing, particularly for unpaid staff, this report will primarily utilise headcount figures in order to compare results per provider and to ascertain a robust overall commentary on how Peer Support Workers contribute to mental health services in England.

862 Peer Support Workers (Headcount) working within NHS mental health services at 30th September 2019

of which:

**Employed by NHS:
742 (86%)**

**Employed by an external organisation:
120 (14%)**

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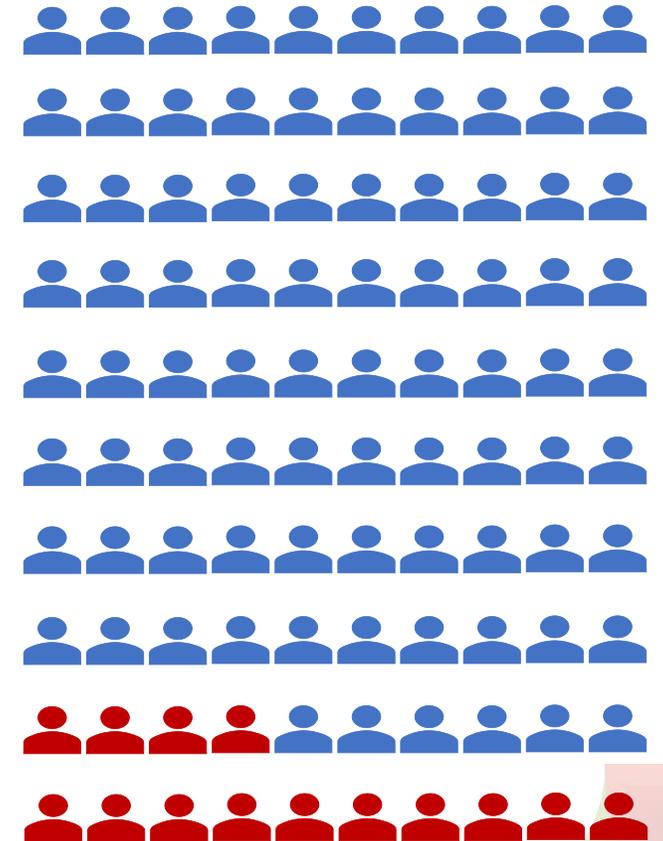
NHS employed Peer Support Workers (Headcount)

Total number of NHS employed Peer Support Workers (Headcount)

Legend: NHS Orgs | Mean = 13 | Median = 5
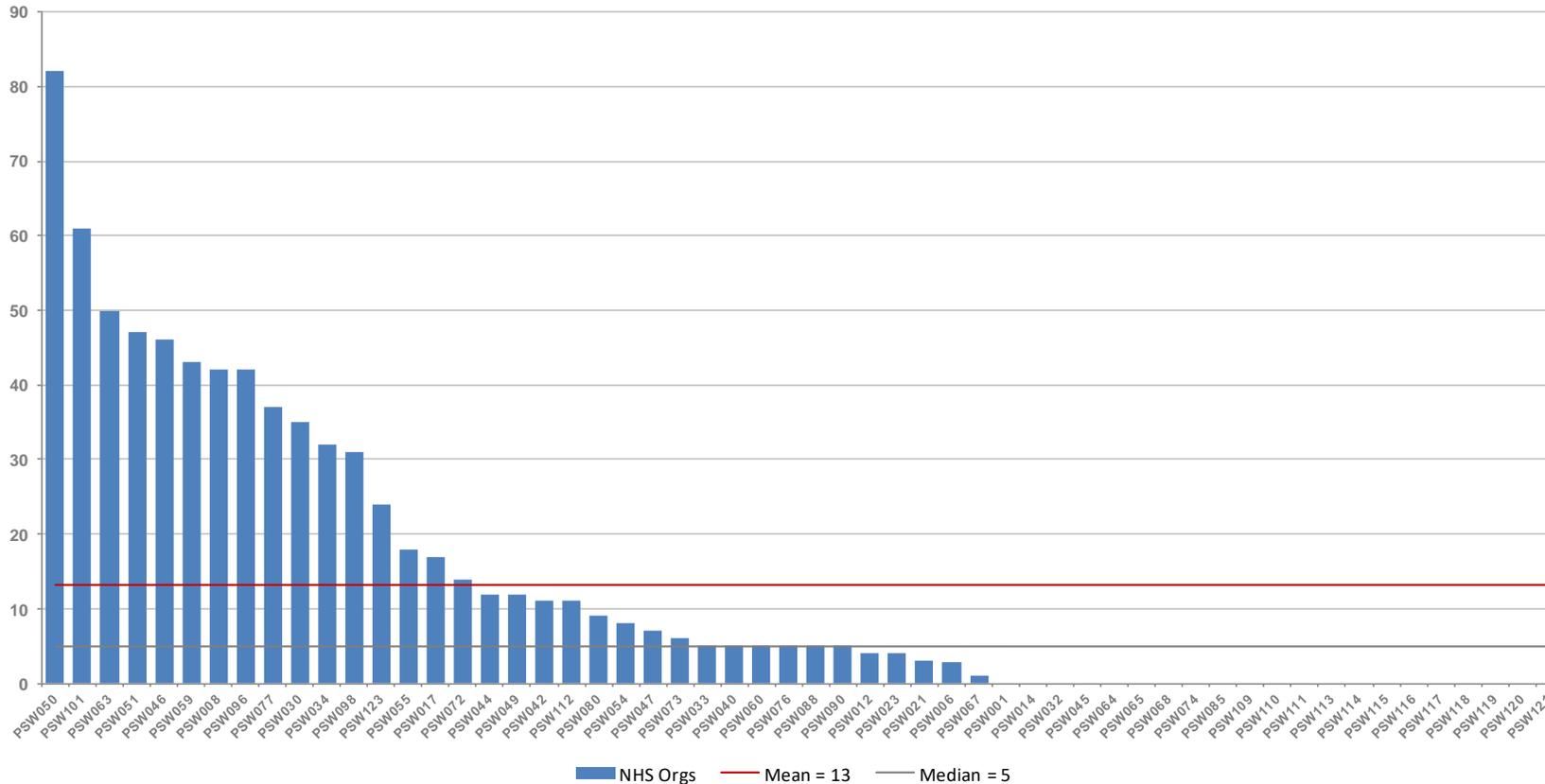
The total number of NHS employed Peer Support Workers per organisation is detailed within the chart opposite.

This is not a benchmarked position but has been included to highlight the variation in the number of Peer Support Worker employees by provider, inclusive of a cohort of eight organisations employing more than 40 Peer Support Workers within their mental health services. Many of these organisations have had programmes that have been established for some years to recruit and develop PSWs.

It is worth noting that 38% of the participating organisations did not employ any paid Peer Support Workers within their mental health services. Therefore, whilst the mean national average position recorded is 13 Peer Support Workers per organisation, the median rate of 5 Peer Support Workers illustrates the wide variation across providers and the differing extent to which they utilise Peer Support Workers as part of their overall mental health multi-disciplinary teams.

NHS employed Peer Support Workers - benchmarked

Total number of NHS employed Peer Support Workers (Headcount) per 100,000 registered population
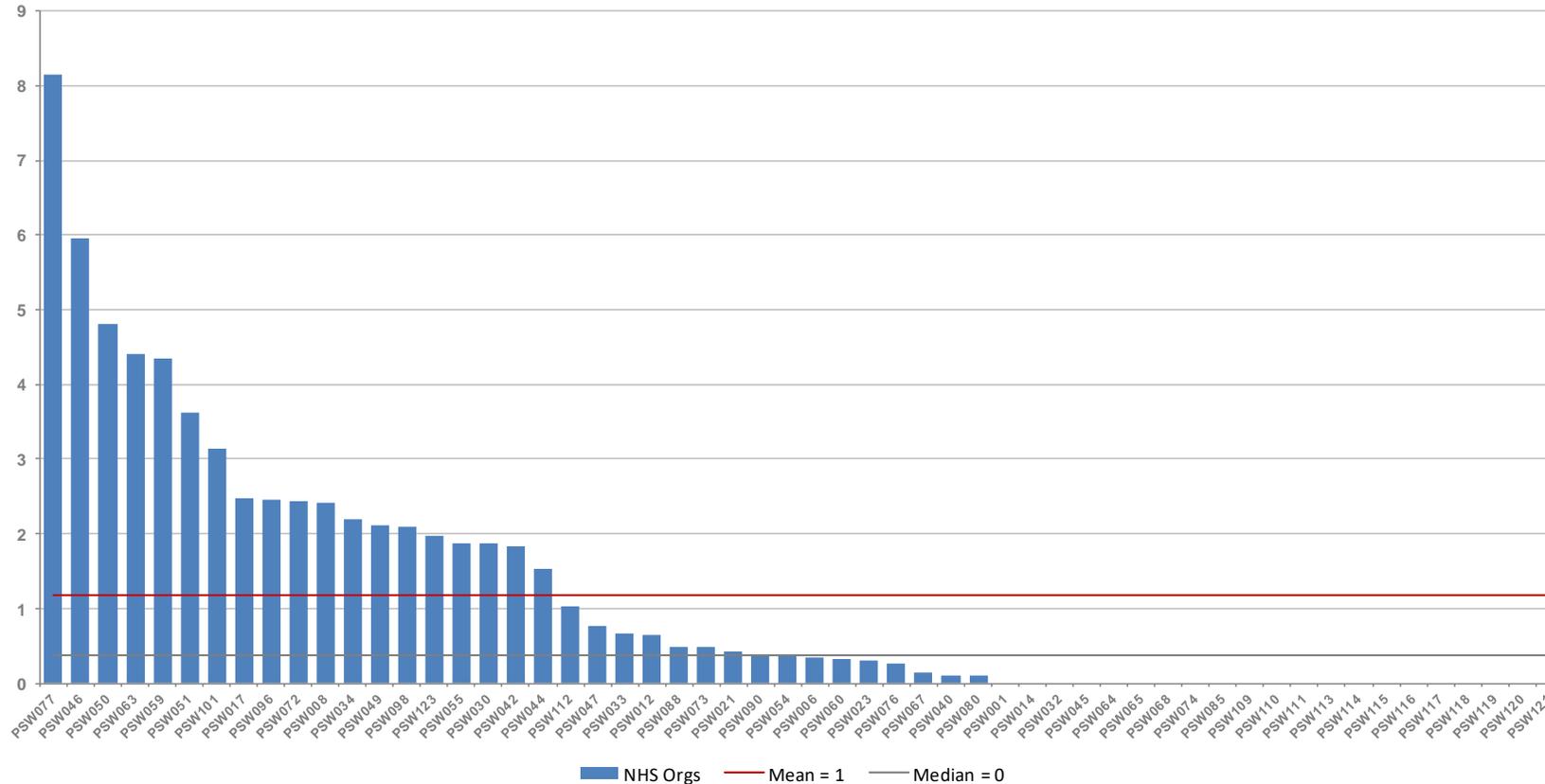
On average, NHS Trusts employ 1 Peer Support Worker within their mental health teams when headcount data is benchmarked per 100,000 registered population, though this varies from 0 to 8 per 100,000 population across NHS organisations. The median average (mid-point of the distribution) is 0.4 PSWs per 100,000 population.

It should be noted that this data does not include either of the following:

- Mental health Peer Support Workers who are working within NHS services but who are employed by external organisations (e.g. providers within the voluntary sector)

- Peer Support Workers in other areas of healthcare (i.e. outside of mental health although these numbers are expected to be very small)

To contextualise the number of Peer Support workers employed in the NHS comparisons can be made with Adult Acute inpatient services where 42 WTE staff of all disciplines are employed per 100,000 populations, and Community Mental Health Teams where 82 WTE are employed per 100,000 population. PSWs are estimated to comprise less than 1% of the NHS's clinical team workforce in mental health services.

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NHS employed Peer Support Workers by region

The regional variation in the number of mental health Peer Support Workers directly employed by the NHS in England is illustrated by the map opposite. The map only shows NHS-employed Peer Support Workers, and not the overall provision of Peer Support Worker input to mental health services where this may be provided through external organisations.

Wider analysis of mental health service needs and provision by the NHS Benchmarking Network generally confirms a clear North / South split in the data. Analysis of mental health Peer Support Worker provision shows a more complex position as indicated by the darker blue colouring on the map (highest provision), and light blue areas (lowest provision). Whilst the North West of England has a relatively low number of Peer Support Workers per 100,000 registered population, other areas such as the east of England and South East have a higher Peer Support Worker to population ratio.

In some areas, more local regional variation is very evident, for example in London where there is a mix of high and low Peer Support Worker numbers in neighbouring geographical footprints. This suggests that different commissioning arrangements and extent of prioritisation of PSW roles has impacted on the current extent of PSW provision.

NHS employed Peer Support Workers per 100,000 registered population

0   8

Greater London

Channel Islands

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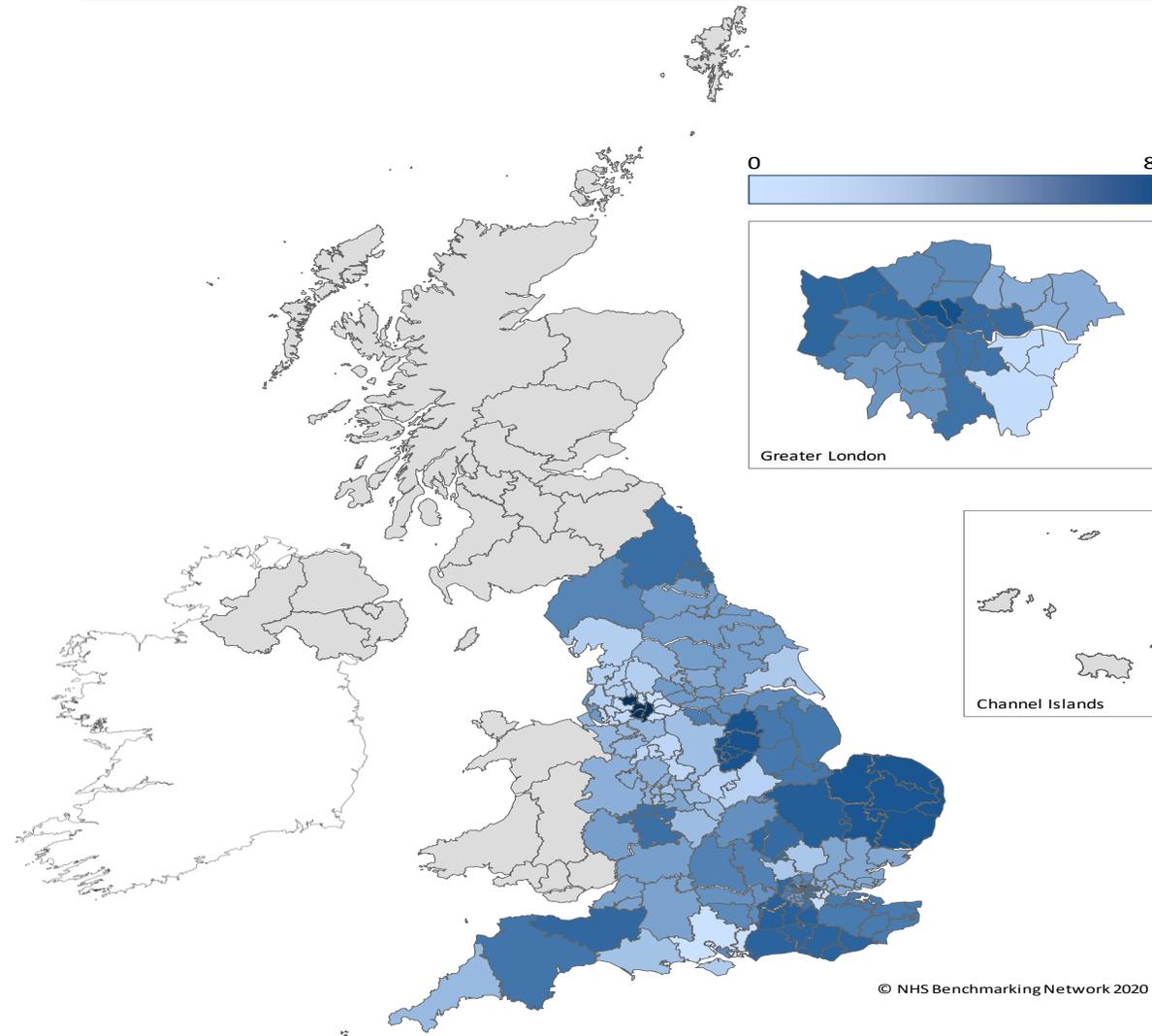
Peer Support Workers reported in other sectors

In addition to the 862 Peer Support Workers reported as working within the NHS a total of 92 additional PSW staff were identified by other organisations as contributing to mental health service delivery.

Data submission numbers returned from non-NHS organisations are:

- Independent sector: 4

- Local Authority: 41

- Voluntary sector: 3

These 48 additional data submissions revealed the following additional Peer Support Worker staff headcount directly employed by each responding organisation:

- Independent sector: 2 staff (from 2 data submissions)

- Local Authority: 53 staff (from 7 data submissions, i.e. 34 Authorities reported not employing Peer Support Workers in mental health services)

- Voluntary sector: 37 staff (from 2 data submissions)

The pie chart opposite confirms the overall relative share of Peer Support Worker staffing directly employed in mental health services. The NHS is the lead provider and accounts for 89% of all staff employed from the organisations who were able to make a data submission to the project. **Please note that all subsequent analysis in this report relates to NHS employed staff.**

Peer Support Workers (Headcount)

4.4%
6.4%
0.2%
89.0%

- NHS
- Independent sector
- Local Authority
- Voluntary sector

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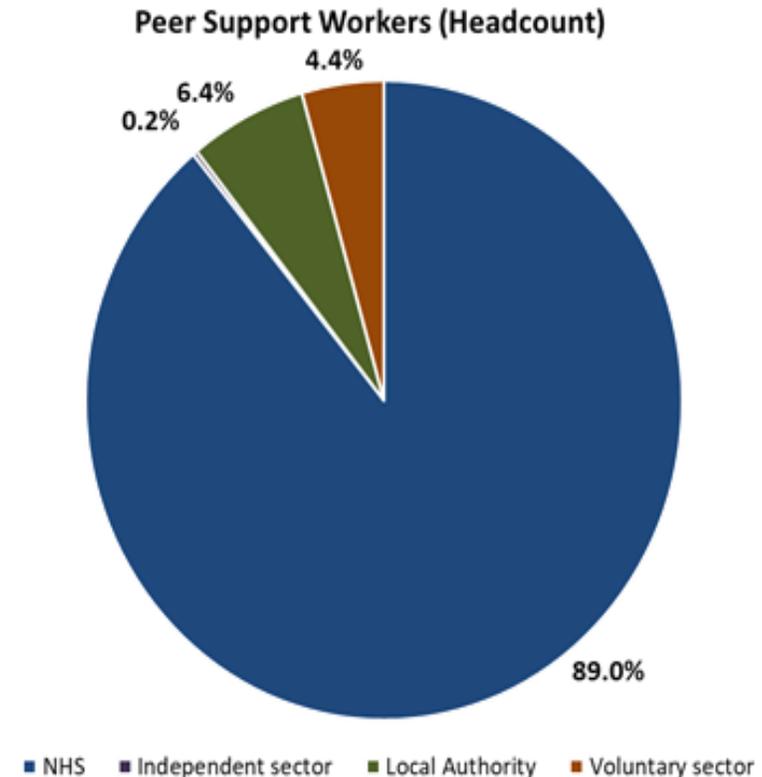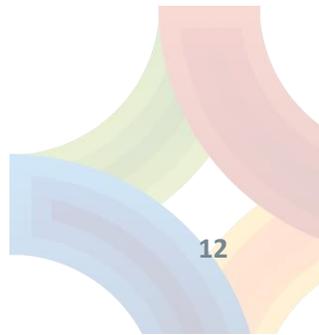
Service models

Service Models

Mental Health Trusts provide a range of services to working age and older adults, and many also provide support through CAMHS to children and young people. Of the organisations who utilised Peer Support Workers within their mental health service teams, 96% confirmed that staff were employed within services supporting working age adults.

Peer Support Worker involvement in services for children / young people and older people was considerably lower, with Peer Support Worker representation confirmed in 32% of CAMHS and 30% of older adult NHS services. The lower prevalence in targeted services for younger and older people may reference capacity and safe-guarding concerns, but is perhaps more likely indicative of Peer Support Workers working in services they may have had contact with as part of their own care. This is supported by the age profiling, shown later in the report which aligns closely with the working age adult group rather than young adults or older people. It should ne noted that the reasons cited for the relative lack of capacity in both children and young peoples services and older adult services are not exhaustive, and will include a series of local factors that have influenced this position.
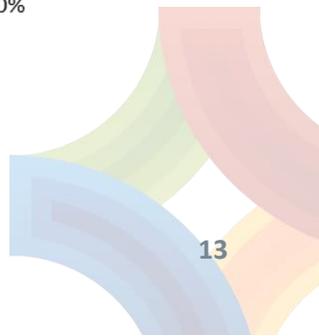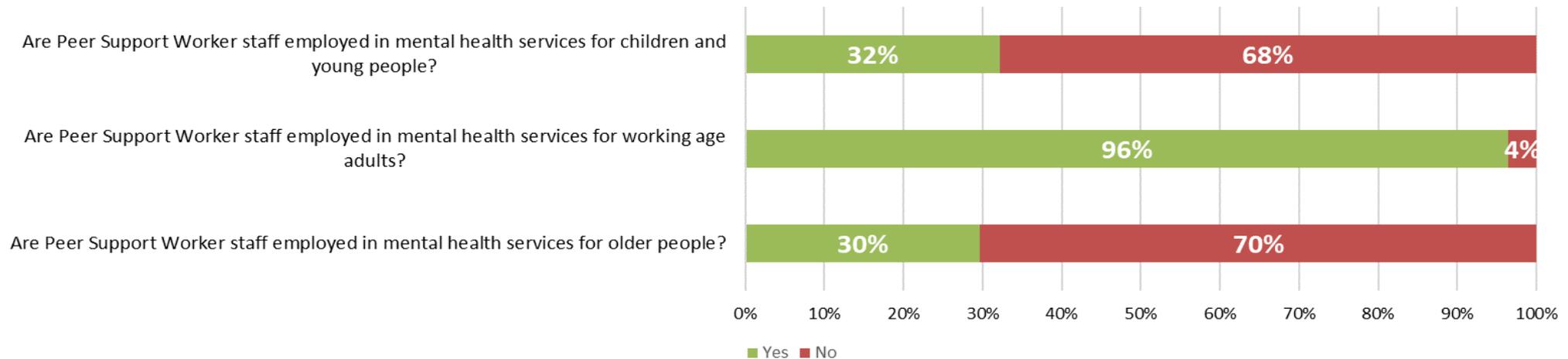
Employment arrangements

Are Peer Support Worker staff employed in your services or accessed through partnership arrangements (including secondment)?

- Partnership Model
- Mix of both
- Directly employed
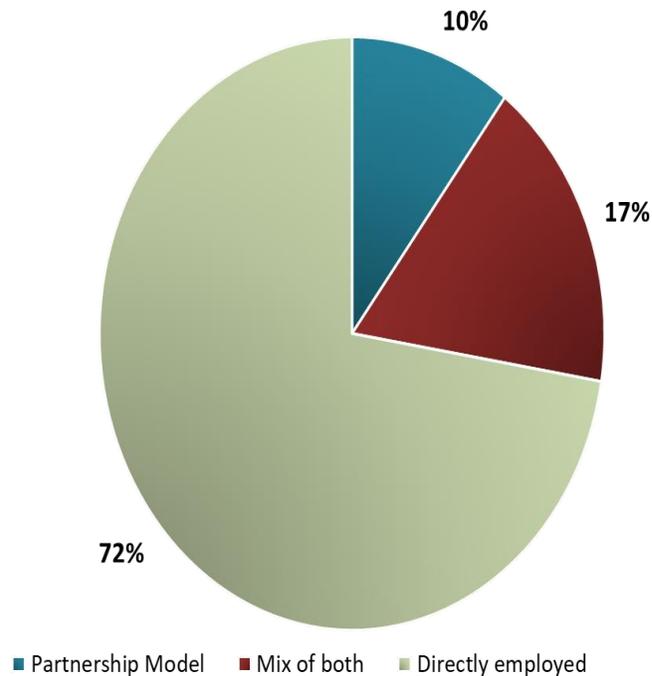
Employment arrangements

72% of respondents advised that their mental health Peer Support Workers are directly employed, with only 10% of organisations accessing staffing solely through wider partnership arrangements with other providers.

The remaining 17% employ a mix of both directly employed and partnership employment arrangements.

Transfers

Almost all participants reported that Peer Support Workers had been directly employed to local services rather than becoming employed due to a wider process of transferring into services via a partnership arrangement or other contractual vehicle. Only 7% of submitting organisations recorded that staff had been transferred from another organisation at any point. Of the respondents who had transferred staff, all had done so solely via TUPE rather than through secondments or a combination of the two methods.

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Peer Support Worker supervision

Pie chart showing: 20% Team Manager (orange), 4% Senior Peer Support worker (dark red), 76% Mix of job roles providing supervision (yellow)

Legend:
- Team Manager
- Occupational Therapist
- Senior Peer Support worker
- Nurse
- Social worker
- Mix of job roles providing supervision
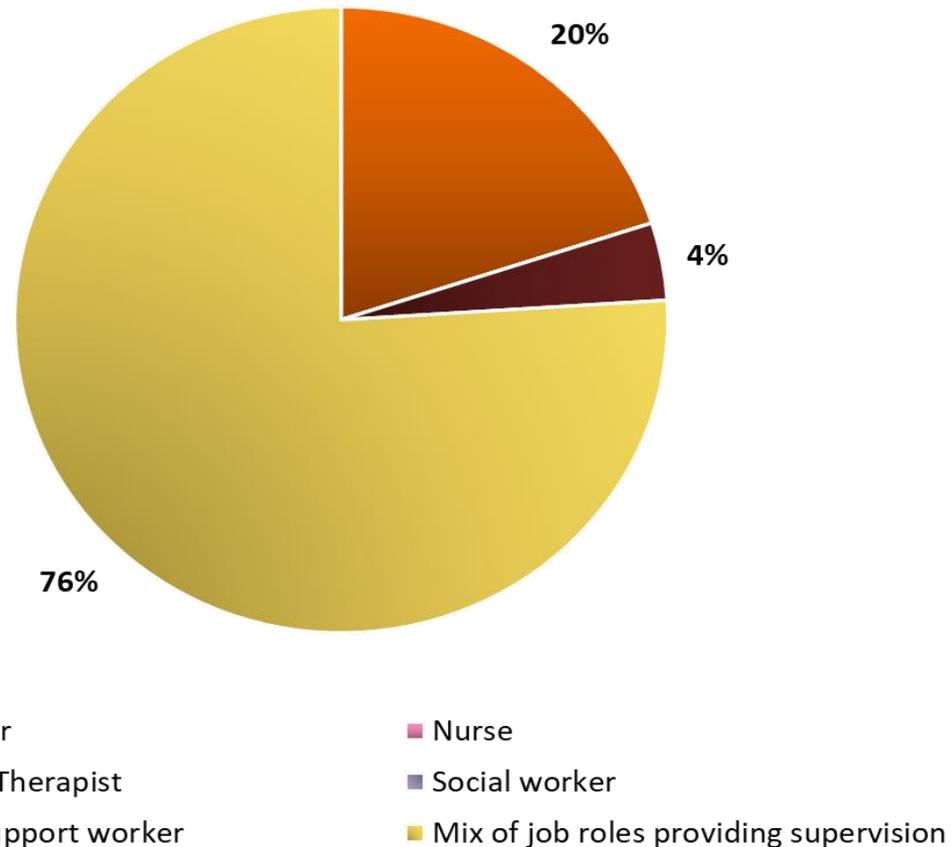
Supervision of Peer Support Workers does not have a standardised model but demonstrates considerable diversity in local arrangements. Over three quarters of respondents reported that Peer Support Workers working within their mental health services were supervised by professional from a mix of job roles which could include Occupational Therapist, Mental Health Nurse, Social Worker, Team Manager, or Senior Peer Support Worker. The variation in local supervision arrangements highlights the lack of established protocols for managing and supervising Peer Support Workers, and also suggests pragmatic arrangements may be the dominant factor in considering how best to integrate PSW staff within local mental health services and provide ongoing supervision and management support.

Where specific roles were identified by providers, 20% of organisations confirmed that their Peer Support Workers were under the supervision of team managers and 4% were supervised by Senior Peer Support Workers.

No organisations reported that their Peer Support Workers were supervised solely by nurses, occupational therapists or social workers, but supervision may be provided by these job roles as part of a mixed supervisory offering.

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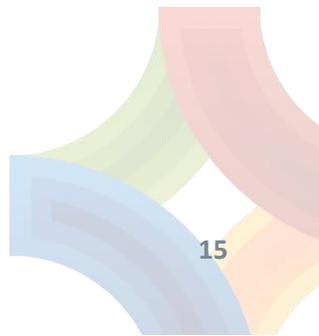
Peer Support Worker line management

Legend:
- Team Manager
- Occupational Therapist
- Senior Peer Support worker
- Nurse
- Social worker
- Mix of job roles providing line management
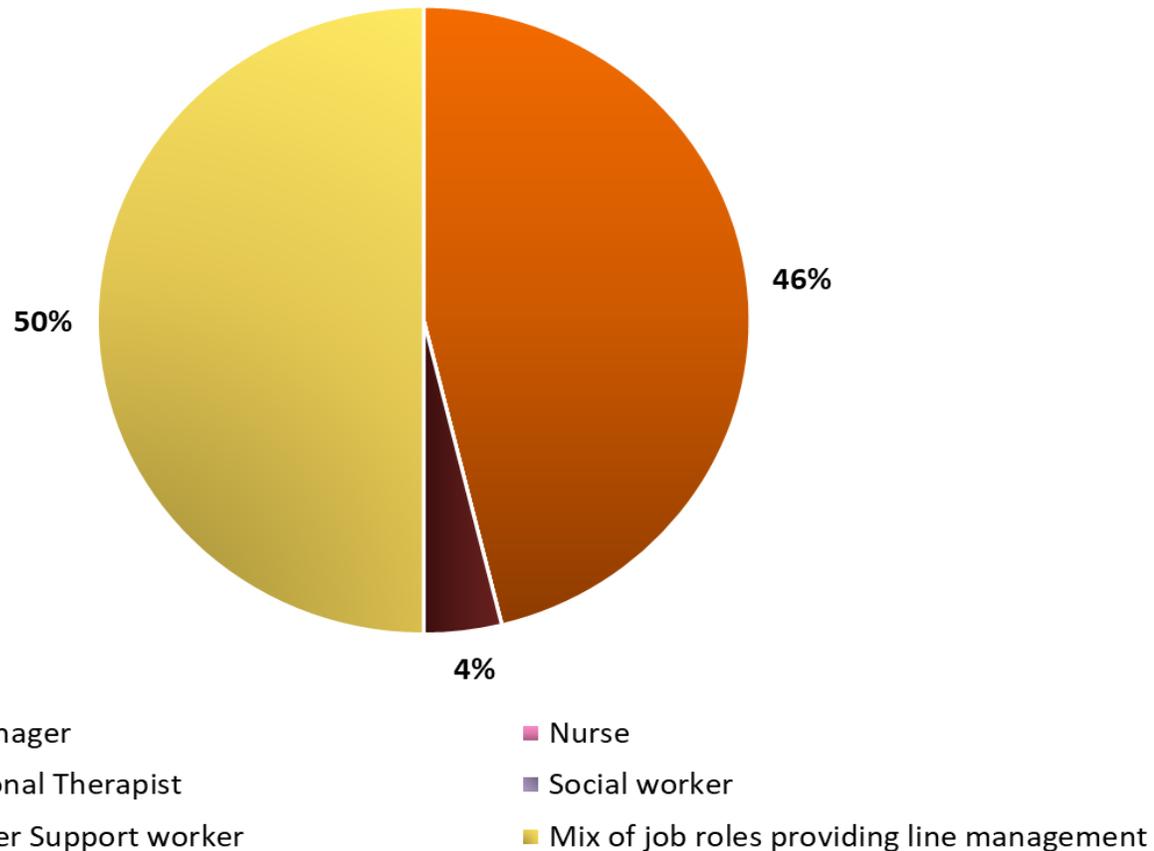
In addition to supervision arrangements the census also explored how Peer Support Workers receive line management within mental health services.

The census data showed that in almost half of respondents, Peer Support Workers are line managed by team managers. While some of these team managers may also provide supervision, the previous page showed only 20% of respondents had team managers taking full supervision responsibility.

In 4% of organisations' Peer Support Workers in mental health services were line managed by senior Peer Support Workers.

The other 50% of organisations reported line management by a mix of job roles again suggesting a series of pragmatic arrangements had been put in place to integrate PSW staff into mental health teams.

Workforce composition

Peer Support Workers – paid / unpaid

23%

77%

- ■ Paid Peer Support Workers
- ■ Unpaid Peer Support Workers
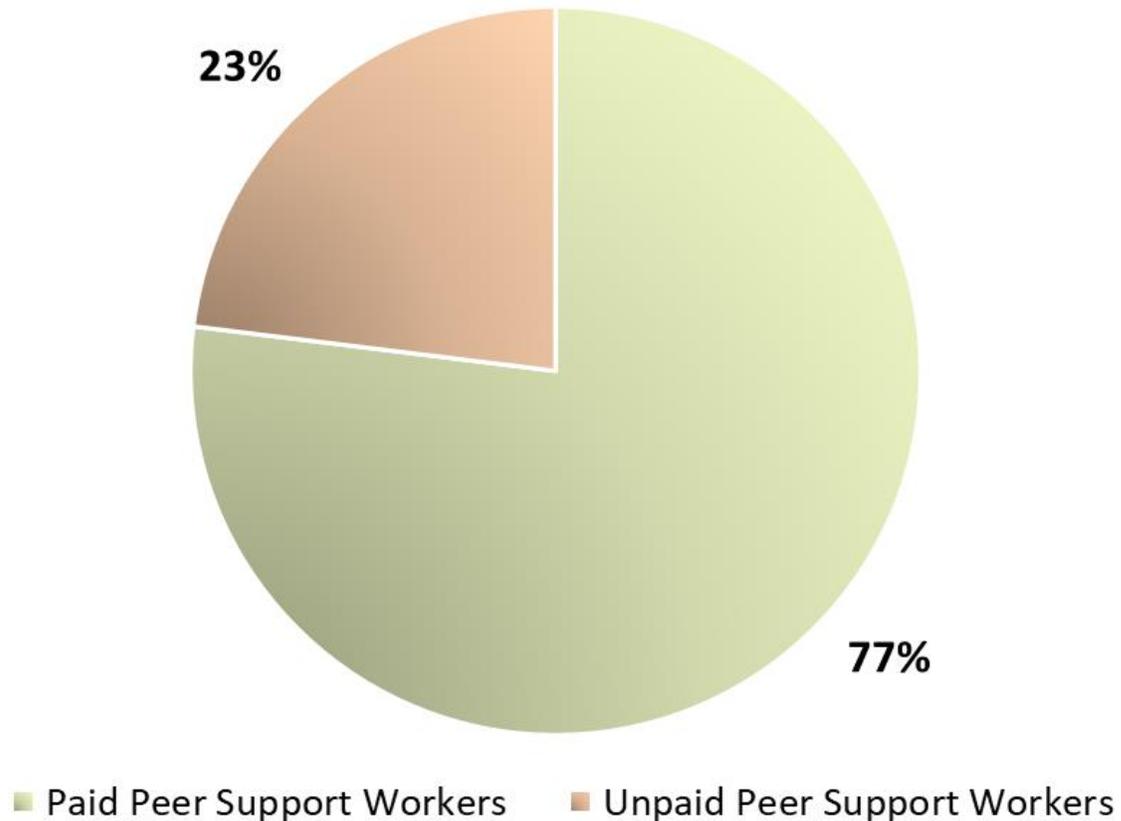
Of the 742 NHS employed Peer Support Workers in post on the census date of 30th September 2019, over three quarters (77%) were paid employees.

The remaining 23% of Peer Support Workers were recorded as unpaid and undertaking the role on a voluntary basis.

Fewer than half of the organisations who directly employed unpaid Peer Support Workers were able to quantify their WTE contribution, highlighting the fluctuation of their involvement in mental health multi-disciplinary teams and the problems of quantifying input if staff employment data from the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system was not always available. This suggests there may be more flexible, or less formal, arrangements with unpaid staff.

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Paid Peer Support Workers – workforce composition

12%
4%
3%
81%
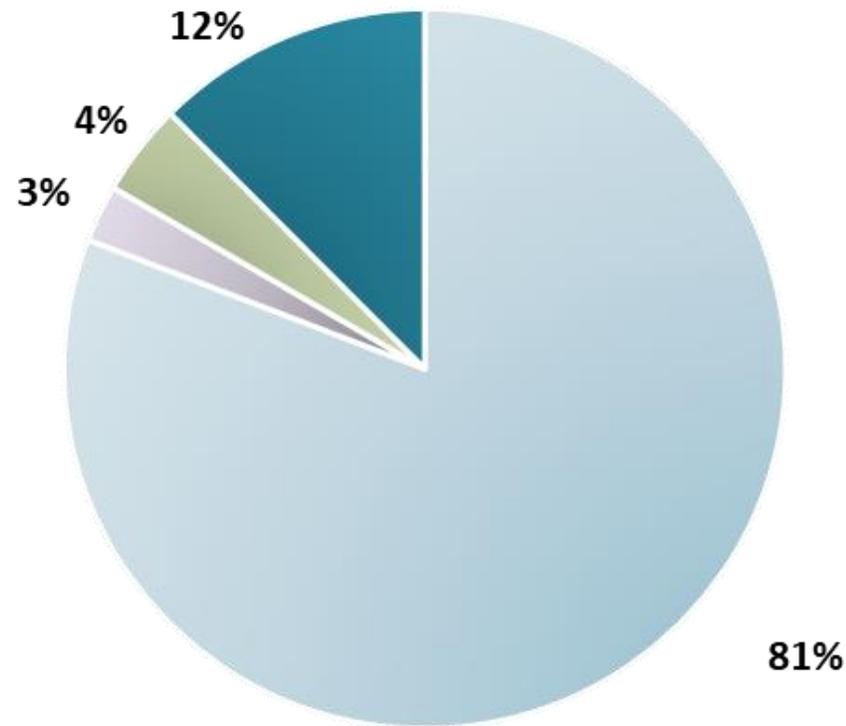
■ Peer Support Worker (paid)
■ Trainee Peer Support Worker (paid)
■ Peer Support Worker Coordinator / Manager (paid)
■ Other (paid)

Participants provided additional data on the seniority of their paid Peer Support workforce and whether they were employed in management, practitioners, or training posts.

484 paid staff were identified as practising Peer Support Workers, accounting for approximately 81% of the overall sample of paid staff where this data was provided.

Trainee Peer Support Workers represented 3% of this sample with a further 4% employed as Peer Support Worker coordinators / managers.

The 'Other' category accounted for the remaining 12% of the paid Peer Support Worker workforce with respondents detailing a range of positions including Peer Tutor and Peer Coach.

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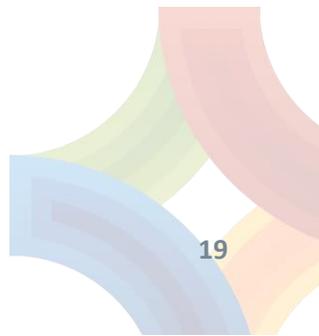
Salary information – Agenda for Change

Agenda for Change - Workforce distribution

Legend: Band 2, Band 3, Band 4, Band 5, Band 6, Band 7
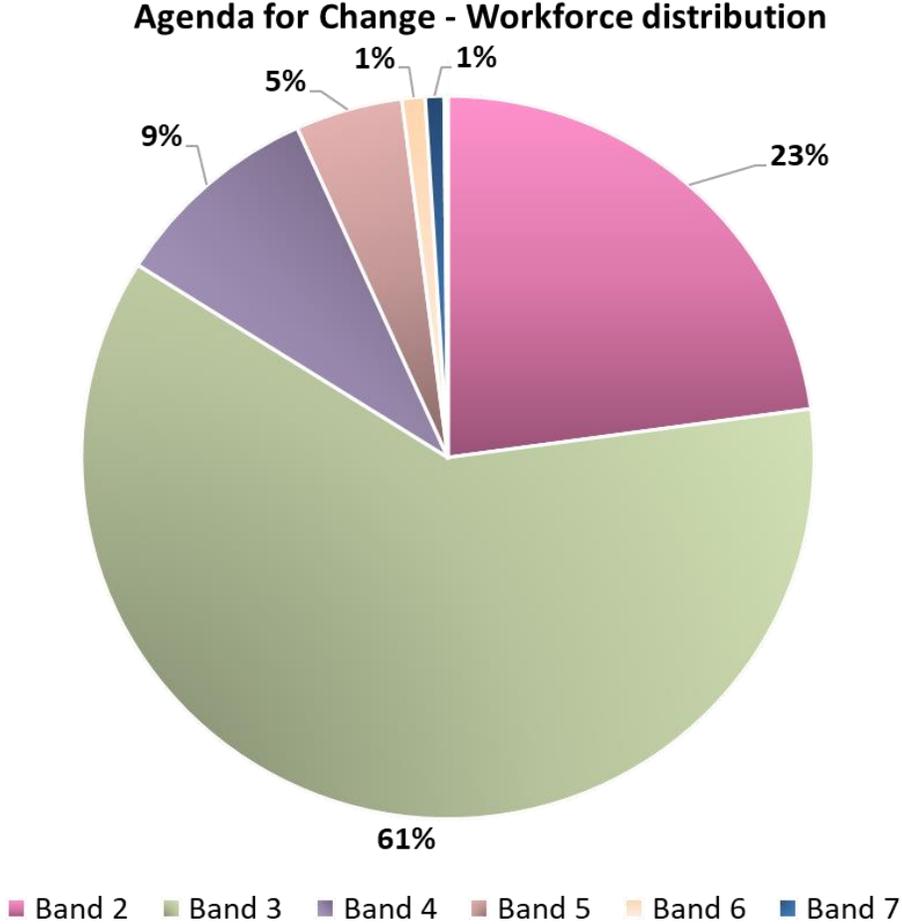
Participating organisations reported that where paid Peer Support Workers were employed directly, 94% of these staff were largely employed in bandings comparable with that of Support Workers – 61% within Band 3 of the Agenda for Change salary scale and an additional 23% recorded within Band 2.

The next largest cohort was Peer Support Workers within Band 4 which represented 9% of the workforce sample. The remaining 7% of staff recorded in Bands 5 – 7. These staff are likely to include more senior posts such as Coordinators and Managers.

No staff were recorded in other bands.

Unpaid Peer Support Workers – workforce composition
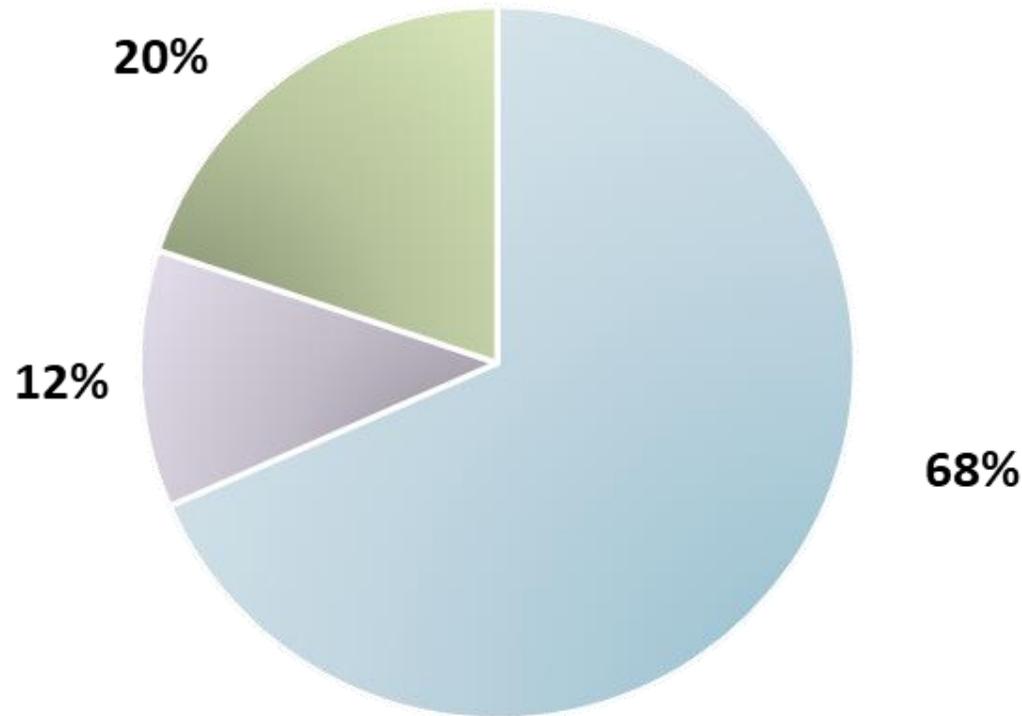
Analysis of data on unpaid staff explored whether staff were identified as trainees or recognised as not undergoing formal training prior to starting a role. As expected within the unpaid cohort there was less evidence of senior positions including managers and coordinators with this group.

Approximately 68% of the 171 unpaid staff reported were employed in Peer Support Worker positions. Trainee Peer Support Workers represented a further 12% of the unpaid Peer Support Worker sample – higher than the trainee proportion of the paid Peer Support Worker cohort.

The 'Other' category accounted for the remaining 20% of the unpaid workforce with respondents detailing positions including peer trainer and senior peer support trainer.

Workforce demographics

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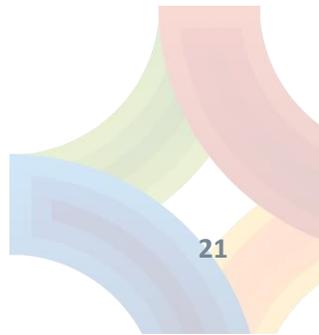
Ethnicity of Peer Support Workers   *n=450*

The workforce census explored the main demographic characteristics of the Peer Support Worker workforce. Ethnicity was reported for 450 Peer Support Workers working within NHS mental health services. Of the staff where ethnicity status was reported, 84% of these workers were identified as from a White / White British background which is consistent with wider England and Wales population profile.

The census data also illustrates that the Peer Support Worker cohort has a higher proportion of Black / Black British employees when compared to UK population statistics (7% compared to 3% of the England and Wales population), whilst it also has a notably lower proportion of Asian / Asian British workers (4% compared to 8% of the UK population). The higher proportion of black workers mirrors the greater proportion of service users from a black background and who then have the opportunity to provide peer support.

Peer Support Workers

- 4%
- 4%
- 7%
- 1%
- 84%

UK

- 2%
- 8%
- 3%
- 1%
- 86%
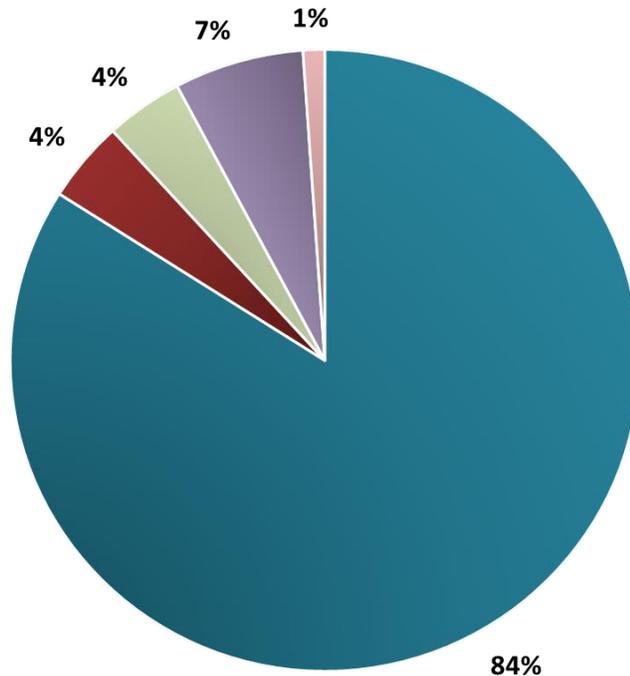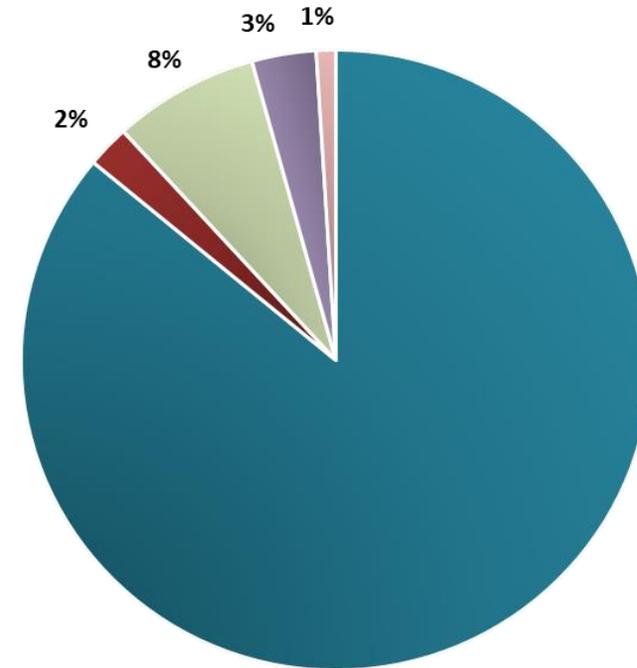
Legend:
- White or White British
- Mixed
- Asian or Asian British
- Black or Black British
- Chinese / Other

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Gender of Peer Support Workers   *n=467*


35%

65%
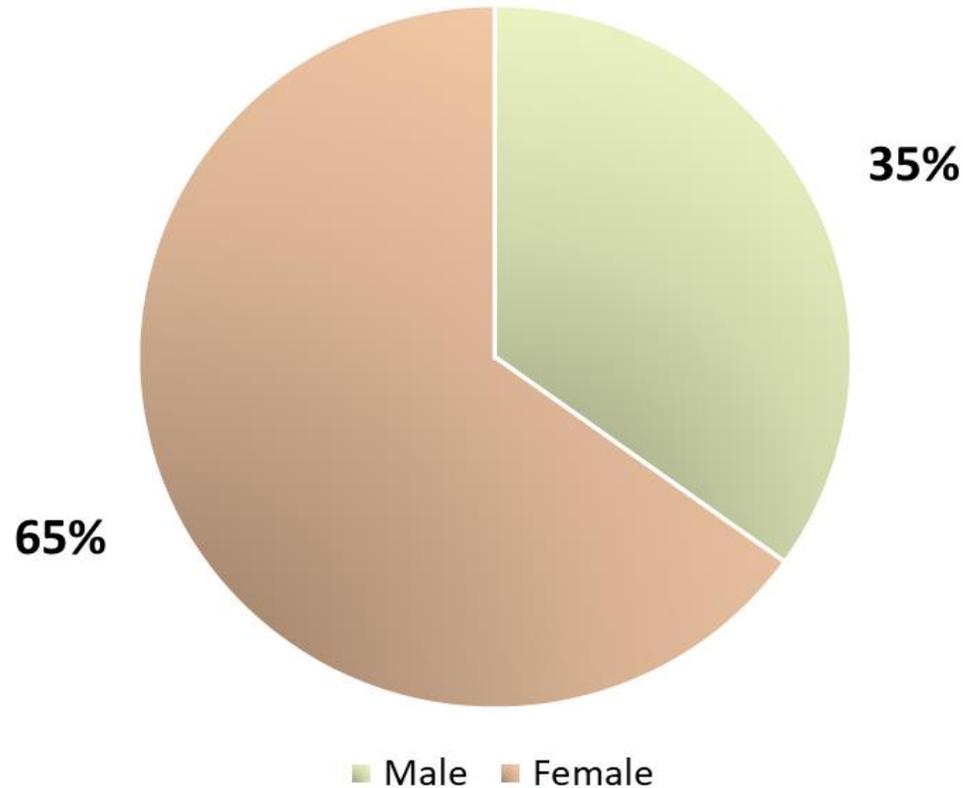
■ Male ■ Female

Of the 467 Peer Support Workers working within NHS mental health services for whom gender was reported, 65% were female.

The remaining 35% of Peer Support Workers (163) were male, with no non-binary employees identified in the census results.

The female / male split within the Peer Support Worker workforce is broadly consistent with wider NHS staff demographics where the female workforce accounts for around 70% of the NHS workforce.

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Age of Peer Support Workers

n=459

Analysis of the age profile of Peer Support Workers confirmed a broad age range without any particular skew being evident. A wide age range of staffing was reported within the 459 responses for Peer Support Workers supporting mental health services. Perhaps the only notable absence is with young people where fewer than 1% of Peer Support Workers were aged 19 or under, perhaps surprising given that 32% of organisations deploy PSWs in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

The dominant age profile of Peer Support Workers tends to be within 30 and 50 years with over half (56%) of staff reported to be aged between 30-49. This may provide evidence on the personal experience of Peer Support Workers and their recovery journey.

■ Age 19 or under   ■ Age 20-29   ■ Age 30-39   ■ Age 40-49   ■ Age 50-59   ■ Age 60 or over

Disability status of Peer Support Workers   *n=343*

50%   **50%**

- ■ Staff who have a reported disability
- ■ Staff who do not have a disability
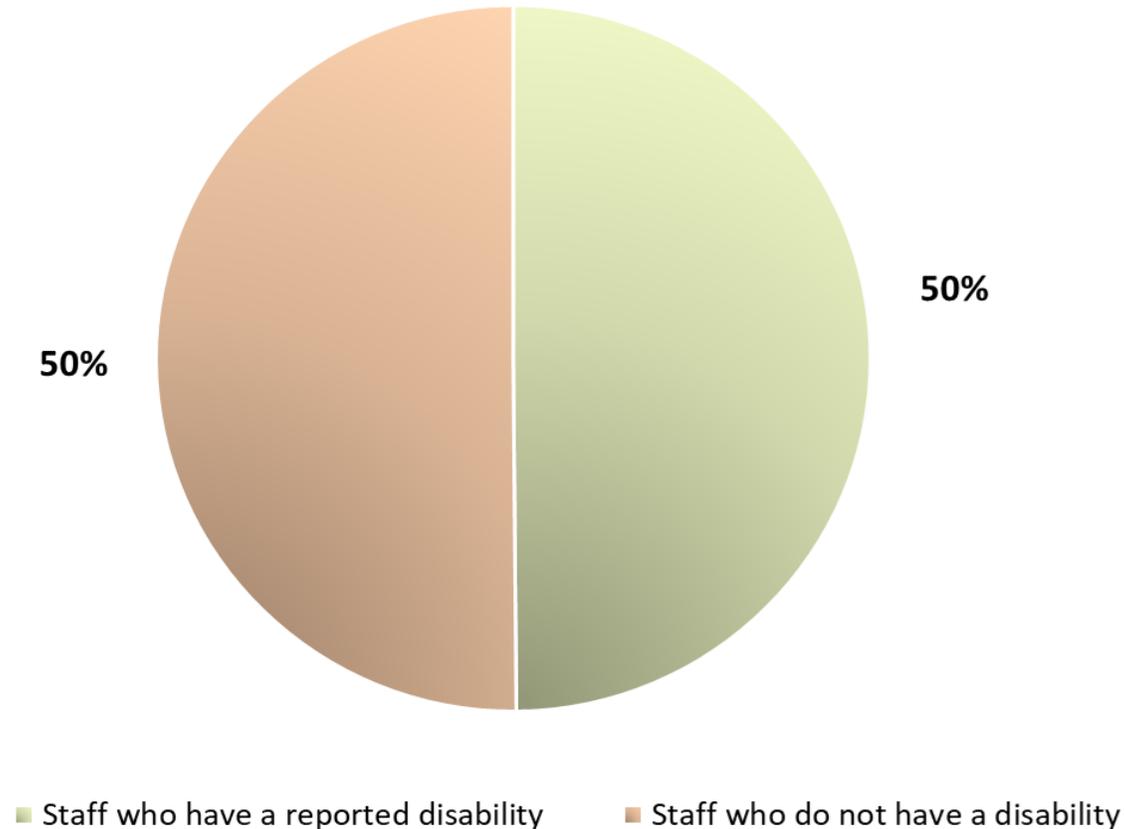
Data on disability status was recorded for 343 Peer Support Workers in post on the census date of 30th September 2019.

The stocktake showed that 50% of these employees had a reported disability and 50% did not. This is a notable finding with 50% of staff highlighted with a reported disability, a position that is considerably higher than comparable evidence for other staff groups within mental health services.

Wider NHS Benchmarking Network workforce census exercises in mental health services suggests that an average of 7% of staff typically report a disability. The profile of Peer Support Workers is therefore considerably different and raises the issue of how reasonable adjustments are made for staff to enable them to make their contribution to mental health services. The data collection did not explore specific types of disabilities but this key finding is highly relevant in considering how local workforce strategies are optimised and how PSWs are recruited and developed in an appropriate manner.

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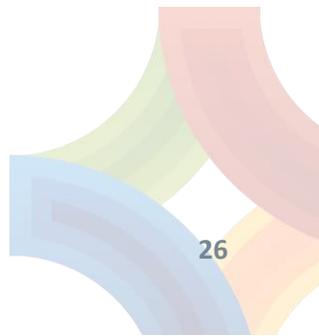
Electronic Staff Record

The census results show that 94% of organisations record all of their paid Peer Support Worker details on ESR systems. In contrast to this position the proportion of organisations storing ESR data in relation to unpaid Peer Support Workers is significantly lower at approximately 30% of providers. This raises the possibility that the number of unpaid Peer Support Workers within NHS mental health services may be understated if routine staff profiling data for unpaid volunteer staff is not routinely available. This may be due to more fluid and perhaps temporary relationships with unpaid staff.

Sickness, vacancies and temporary staffing

Raising standards through sharing excellence
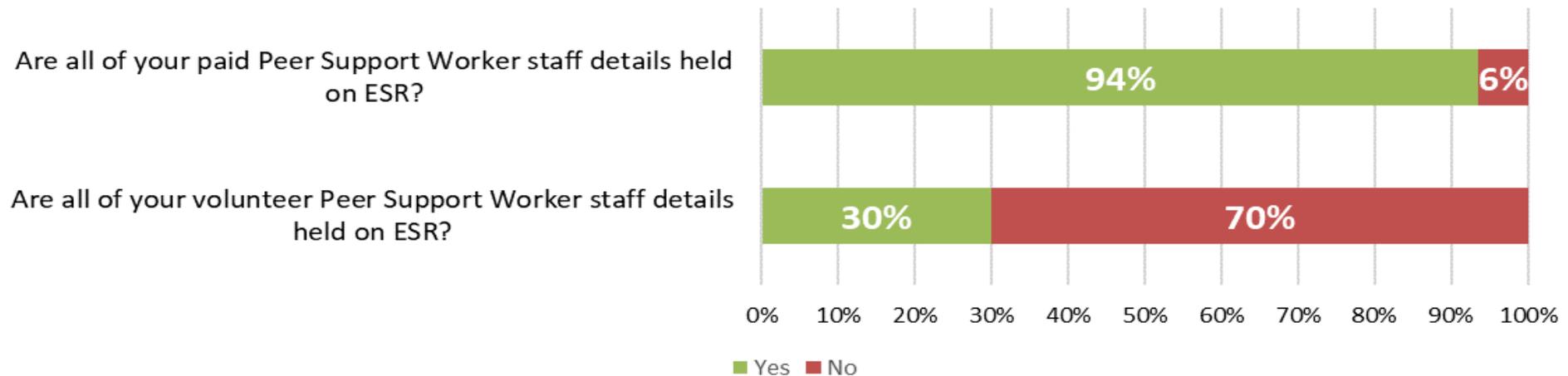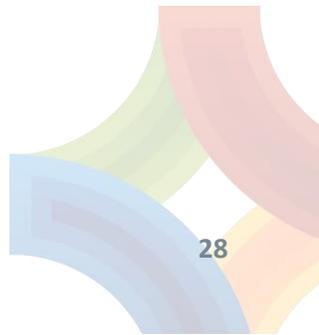
Sickness absence

Total number of staff off sick (WTE) as a % of Total Peer Support Workers working in NHS services at 30th September 2019

Legend: NHS Orgs | Mean = 22% | Median = 18%
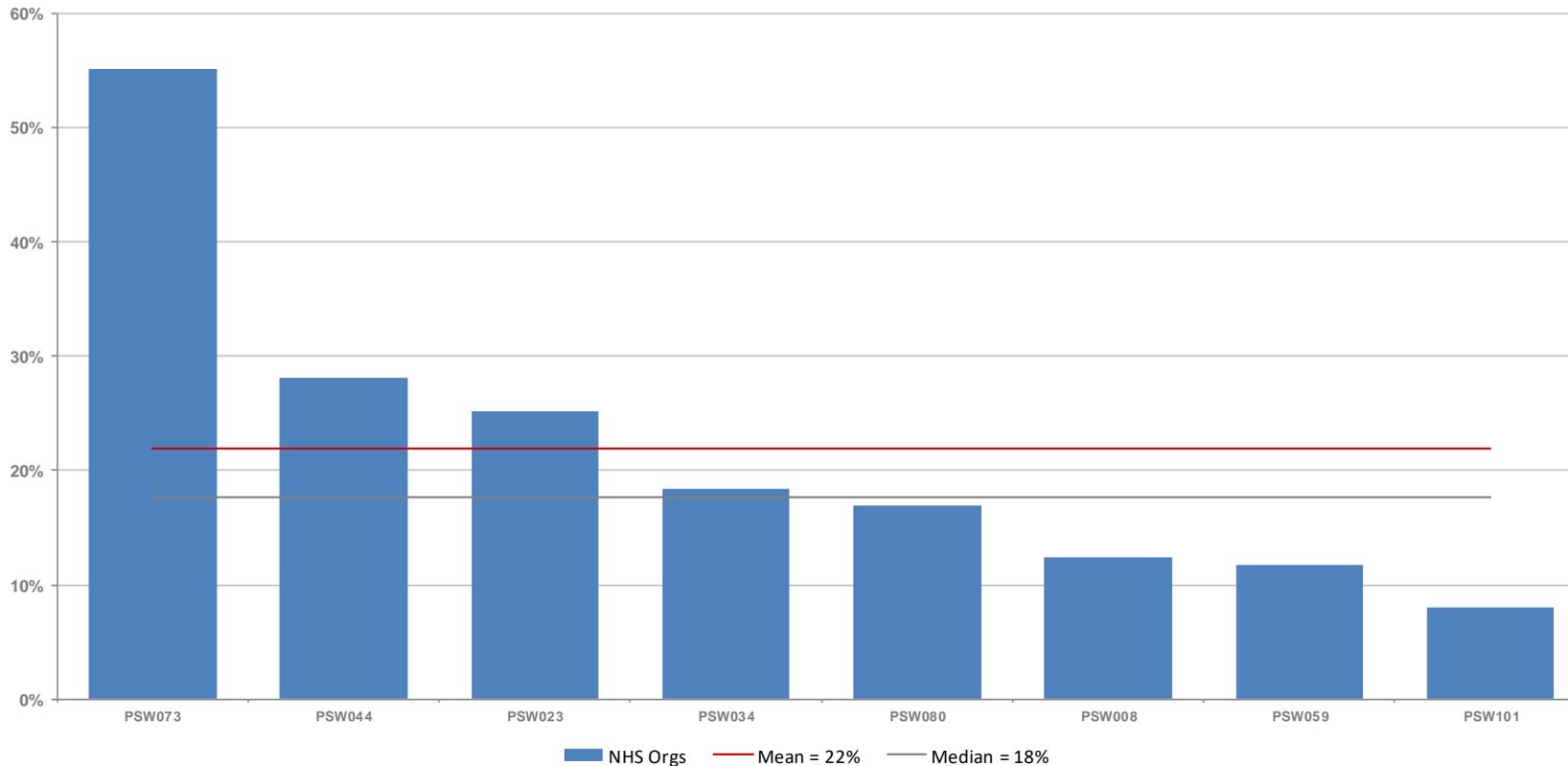
Providers reported an average sickness rate of 22% within their Peer Support Worker workforce on the census date of 30th September 2019, totalling 17 (WTE) Peer Support Workers overall.

Whilst the Peer Support Worker rate is comparatively high compared to other NHS roles (NHS overall sickness absence rate is currently circa 4%), the data could be skewed by the small number of providers who were able to quantify PSW sickness absence data, particularly when compared to the size of the NHS workforce in its entirety, and the small number of staff employed in some organisations.

Wider data collected by the NHS Benchmarking Network confirms an overall sickness absence rate of 6% in Adult mental health services across the UK. This position has changed little in recent years and confirms a higher impact of sickness absence within the mental health sector than elsewhere in the NHS. Within this context the need to ensure appropriate support structures are in place for Peer Support Workers will be important. As the number of PSWs increases in future years, employing organisations should prioritise both the reasonable adjustments agenda and also the need for additional HR support so that PSWs are able to confidently embark on careers in mental health services.

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Vacancies

Total vacancies (WTE) as a % of Total Funded Establishment at 30th September 2019
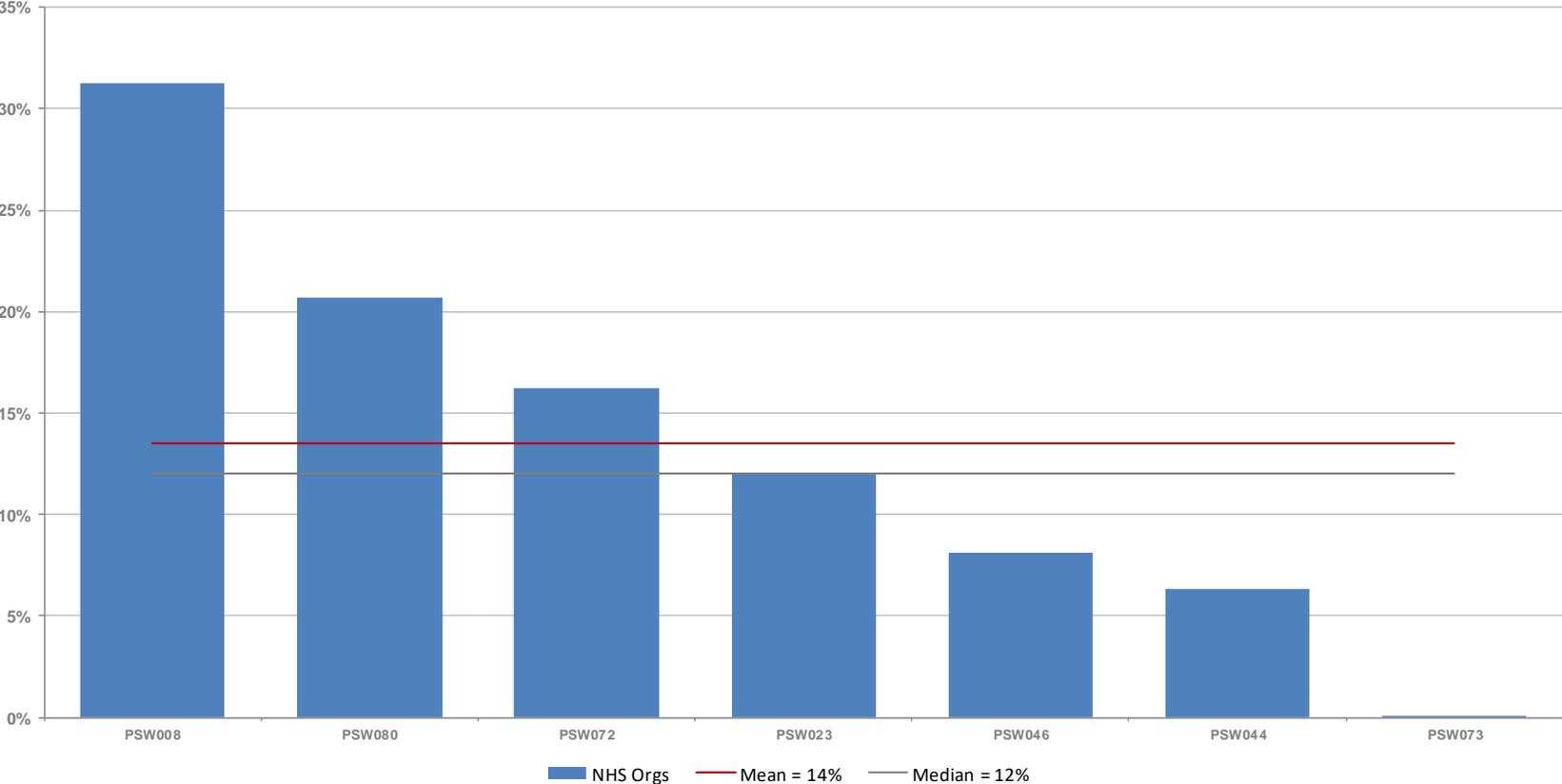
On the census snapshot date of 30th September 2019, participating organisations reported a 14% national average vacancy rate. This equated to 26 (WTE) Peer Support Worker vacancies in total. The 14% PSW vacancy rate compares with an 11% overall NHS vacancy rate.

It is worth noting that this is a snapshot position and therefore these rates are likely to fluctuate over time. Additionally, as with the previous chart only a small number of organisations were able to provide a response to this metric.

Turnover rate (staff leaving services)

Total number of staff who left NHS services (WTE) in the 12 months to 30th September 2019

Legend: NHS Orgs — Mean = 1.6 — Median = 1.0
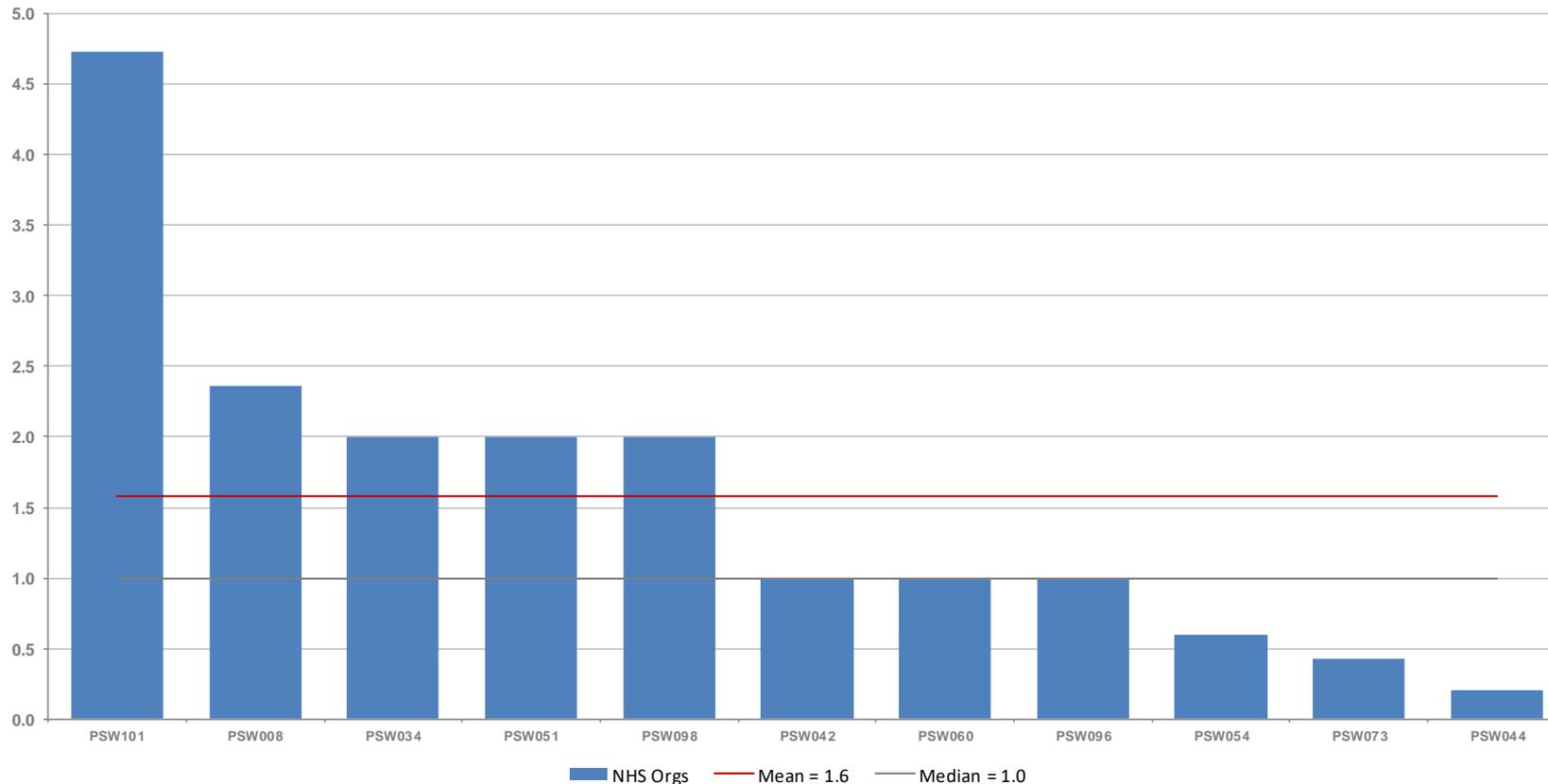
Organisations reported a total of 17 (WTE) Peer Support Workers who had left their organisations in the 12 months to September 2019.

This position is not benchmarked, and so does not take account of either the size of the overall workforce or population served. Additionally, it does not detail whether staff who left their organisation then transferred to another service, remaining within the overall NHS workforce.

Only a small number of providers were able to quantify PSW turnover levels. As with previous metrics, the small sample size and the absence of accompanying context (e.g. levels of support available to staff, opportunities for training etc) along with the lack of historical data from which to make robust comparisons, should be taken into account when reviewing this turnover rate within the broader context of NHS mental health services.

Wider staff turnover rates across the whole of UK mental health services averaged 11% for community teams, and 12% for inpatient teams in 2018/19. These benchmarks may provide useful indicators against which the success of keeping Peer Support Workers in post in future years can be measured. Staff turnover rates are often useful proxy measures for staff satisfaction although they should be interpreted in the context of wider HR and service quality metrics.

Training

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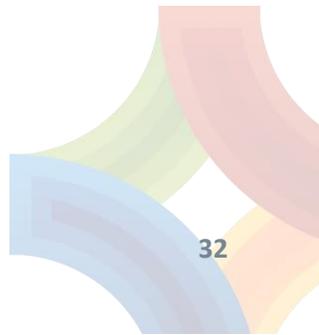
Training

Training of Peer Support Workers

Legend: ■ In-house training by your organisation ■ University course ■ Further Education College course ■ 3rd Sector Provider

X-axis labels: PSW021, PSW077, PSW096, PSW008, PSW067, PSW040, PSW101, PSW049, PSW059, PSW063, PSW050, PSW012, PSW046, PSW017, PSW033, PSW042, PSW098, PSW072, PSW051, PSW054
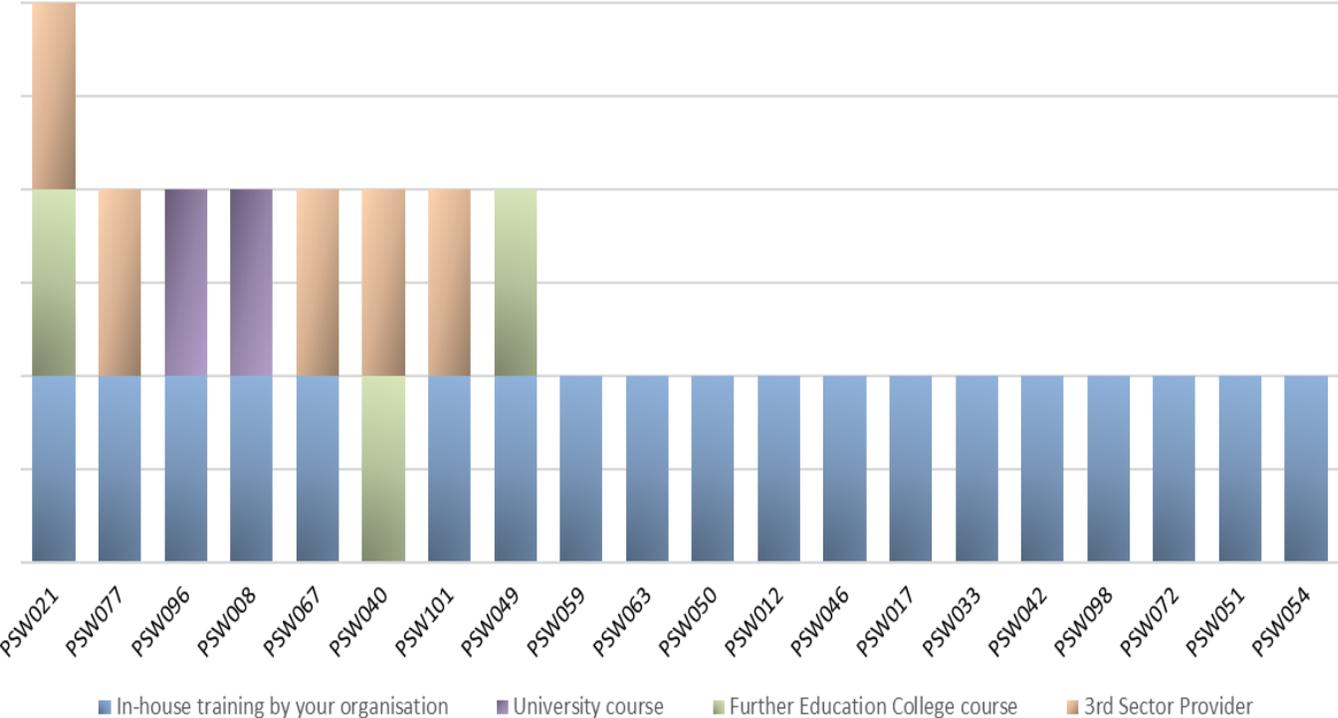
The census explored arrangements for providing Peer Support Worker training. A number of models were observed with the most frequent being the provision of in-house training by mental health providers. A total of 95% of organisations conducted in-house Peer Support Worker training. Only one organisation reported not using this model and instead highlighted utilising a combination of Further Education College courses and training from a 3rd sector provider.

Of the organisations conducting in-house training for their Peer Support Workers, over 60% used solely internal training with the remaining 40% reporting a combination of in-house training and external training, for example - University/Further Education College courses and / or training conducted by a 3rd sector provider. A total of 25% of organisations reported using a 3rd sector provider, 15% reported using a Further Education College, and 10% reported using a University course.

The census also reported that the majority of training was led by someone with lived experience, with this finding confirmed in 80% of provider responses. Peer Support Workers therefore play a lead role in the training and development of PSW staff and the delivery of both structured education and vocational training.

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Conclusions

Raising standards through sharing excellence
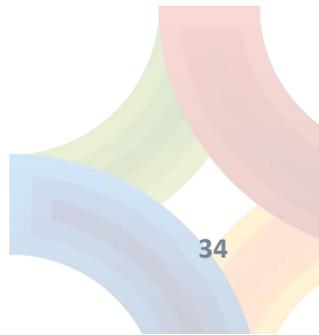
Conclusions

This project provides robust evidence of the size and shape of the mental health Peer Support Worker workforce employed by the NHS. Findings are based on data submissions made by all NHS mental health provider organisations who reported staffing positions at the national census date of 30th September 2019. These findings should be interpreted in the context of the small amount of wider data reported on mental health Peer Support Workers by Local Authorities, the independent sector, and voluntary sector.

1. The majority of NHS mental health Trusts now employ Peer Support Workers as part of multi-disciplinary teams. A total of 34 providers (62%) reported employing paid PSW staff in mental health teams. Over a third (38% - 21 organisations) of NHS mental health Trusts do not currently directly employ Peer Support Workers as part of their mental health multi-disciplinary teams

2. A total of 742 (headcount) Peer Support Workers, directly employed by the NHS, were reported by participants although wide variation was evident in how many staff are employed. PSW numbers ranged from zero (in 21 organisations) to a peak of 82 staff in a large provider Trust. The median average number of staff employed was 5 Peer Support workers supporting NHS mental health services.

3. Peer Support Workers currently account for less than 1% of the total NHS mental health workforce but reference to wider NHS Benchmarking Network data shows that the discipline is expanding each year and has grown from a position of 48 PSW staff when NHSBN first began collecting this data in 2015/16.

4. A further 92 mental health Peer Support Workers were identified in the census from data contributions made by Local Authorities, the voluntary sector, and independent sector. This data is incomplete but confirms that the partner organisations who contribute to the delivery of mental health services in England are also beginning to grow and develop the Peer Support Worker workforce and recognise their importance as a contributor to the mental health multi-disciplinary team.

5. Most paid Peer Support Workers (81%) were listed under the 'Peer Support Worker' job title, though some evidence of training roles and co-ordinator / management positions was also reported and illustrates the more formal structures and career development opportunities emerging in the Peer Support Worker discipline.

6. Less than half of the organisations who directly employed unpaid Peer Support Workers were able to quantify their WTE contribution, highlighting a possible fluidity of involvement in mental health multi-disciplinary teams and potential differences in structure and reporting capability compared to other NHS staff groups. This may also be influenced by the fact that PSWs are relatively new disciplines that have only recently been subject to structured expansion and inclusion in local workforce planning.

7. Additionally, only 30% of organisations record all volunteer Peer Support Worker staff details on their ESR and therefore it is likely that the number of unpaid Peer Support Workers within NHS mental health services understates the overall position.

8. Demographic analysis of the Peer Support Worker workforce confirms a workforce that is two thirds female and has an ethnicity profile that is broadly similar to the wider England and Wales population average – the only exception being Black and Black British staff evident at higher proportions than the wider population, and fewer Asian British staff members. Data is not currently available on the full ethnicity profile of mental health service users in England but will be an important reference point in testing the relative diversity of the PSW workforce when this information becomes available (scheduled for publication by the NHS Benchmarking Network in November 2020). The PSW workforce has a significantly larger cohort of staff who report a disability (50%) than other mental health staff groups. This provides important contextual information to support PSW recruitment and workforce development strategies.

9. Training for Peer Support Workers is predominantly conducted in-house by 95% of organisations, with 80% of training led by someone with lived experience. University, Further Education, and third sector providers are all evident in the provision of wider training and education to PSW staff.

The NHS Benchmarking Network would like to express our thanks to all those who supported this project through the design phase, all participants who supplied data, and the project's oversight group who helped shape delivery of the project and interpretation of project findings. Contact details for NHSBN team members are provided at the end of this report and we welcome responses to the report.

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Appendix

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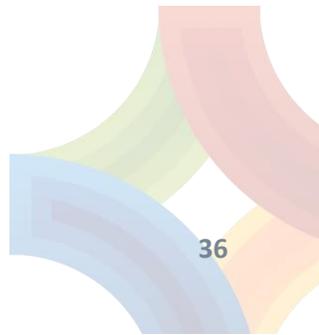
NHS Participants

Participating NHS organisations for 2019 are as follows:

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust	Livewell Southwest
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust
Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust	Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust
Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust	North East London NHS Foundation Trust
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust	North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust
Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust	North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust	Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Nottinghamshire Healthcare
Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust	Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust
Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust	Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust
Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber NHS Trust
Devon Partnership NHS Trust	Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust
Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust	Solent NHS Trust
Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust	Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
East London NHS Foundation Trust	South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust
Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust
Gloucestershire Health and Care NHS Foundation Trust	South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust	Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust
Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Humber NHS Foundation Trust	Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
Isle of Wight NHS Trust	Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust
Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust	Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust	West London NHS Trust
Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust	

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Contact details

Stephen Watkins | Director | NHS Benchmarking Network

0161 266 1997 | s.watkins@nhs.net

Zoë Morris | Programme Manager | NHS Benchmarking Network

0161 266 2057 | zoe.morris@nhs.net

Ellie Fox | Project Coordinator | NHS Benchmarking Network

0161 266 1104 | e.fox4@nhs.net

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