

For immediate release

10 December 2013

## National NHS Pharmacy Staffing Establishment and Vacancy Survey 2013

- *'NHS service providers' include former PCT provider arm activity, including social enterprises and Community Interest Companies. 'Commissioning organisations' include CCGs, CSUs, NHS England regional and Area Teams, and a bit of LA/HWB activity. Some of the latter may not have been previously captured in PCT data, so numbers may appear artificially raised from last year's figures as a result.*
- *This press release highlights data from **England only**. Data for Northern Ireland are available separately. Scotland and Wales opted not to take part in the 2013 survey.*
- *Vacancy rates indicate vacancies on 31 May 2013; 3-month vacancies are also reported in the full report.*

Results from the May 2013 NHS Pharmacy Staffing Establishment and Vacancy Survey show that in **NHS service providers and commissioning organisations** in England, there has been a slight increase in pharmacists from 7,329 FTE in May 2010 to 7,394 FTE in May 2012 and 7,635 FTE in May 2013 (3.3% increase since May 2012). Pharmacy technician posts have also risen, from 6,436 FTE in May 2010 to 6,629 FTE in May 2012 and 6,741 FTE in May 2013 (1.7% increase since May 2012). The anticipated drop in posts due to NHS financial pressures was not seen.

In **NHS service providers** in England, pharmacist posts have seen increases at Band 6 (9 FTE, 0.7% increase) and Band 7 (96 FTE, 5.3% increase); and pharmacy technician posts have seen increases at Band 4 (33 FTE, 0.9% increase) and Band 5 (14 FTE, 0.8% increase) over the same period, although there are considerable regional variations.

Vacancy rates for junior pharmacists in **NHS service providers** in England have decreased at Band 6 from 24.4% in 2009 to 12.1% in 2012 and 10.6% in 2013, with 3-month vacancy rates at 6.8% in 2013. Band 7 pharmacist vacant posts have decreased from 19.0% in 2009 to 10.1% in 2012 and 9.0% in 2013, with 3-month vacancy rates at 5.4% in 2013. These 3-month vacancy rates are fairly stable but have considerable regional variation. The 2013 vacancy rate for all qualified pharmacy technicians is 6.2% and junior pharmacy technicians at Band 4 is 8.5% in 2013.

These results are based on a 100% response rate from all NHS service providers and commissioning organisations across England.

Susan Sanders, survey facilitator on behalf of the NHS Pharmacy Education and Development Committee said "*The results of the 2013 annual survey provide a useful picture of the pharmacy workforce employed within NHS service providers and commissioning organisations, and trend data for comparison with previous years. It provides a robust evidence base to inform workforce planning and strategy. It is important to ensure that we train the future pharmacy workforce to sustain the recognised input of the pharmacy workforce in delivering on patient safety and medicines optimisation initiatives in this post-Francis era.*

*This work will inform the activities of Health Education England and its Local Education and Training Boards. We need to ensure that an appropriate infrastructure continues to be in place to develop the whole pharmacy workforce delivering NHS services, wherever they may be, in order to secure the provision of safe and effective patient care.*

*I would like to thank all of the respondents for completing the survey".*

The report of the National NHS Pharmacy Staffing Establishment and Vacancy Survey 2013 is now available on the NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee's website at <http://www.nhspedc.nhs.uk/surveys.htm> .

### **Acknowledgement**

The NHS Pharmacy Education and Development Committee thanks Health Education England for providing the resources to make the survey possible.

### **ENDS**

Notes to editors:

#### **NHS Pharmacy Staffing Establishment and Vacancy Survey**

The NHS Pharmacy Staffing Establishment and Vacancy Survey is carried out by the NHS Pharmacy Education and Development Committee (NHS PEDC) in response to demands from various sources for accurate data on the current state of the NHS workforce and recruitment and retention in NHS pharmacy. The data collected help to inform workforce strategy, planning and development by various organisations and shape recruitment and retention initiatives and training plans.

For the sixth time, this year a 100% response rate was achieved from all known NHS service providers and commissioning organisations across England and Northern Ireland. Scotland and Wales opted not to take part in 2013.

Caution must be exercised when comparing 2013 data with 2012 data, particularly in commissioning organisations where some staff groups have been captured which were not captured in previous surveys. Equally, comparisons between apparently 'similar' trusts must be carried with caution as a full understanding of pharmacy services provided is necessary for meaningful interpretation of the data.

#### **About the NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee**

The NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee is a national network of pharmacy colleagues leading on NHS pharmacy workforce development.

The NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee undertakes the NHS Pharmacy Staffing Establishment and Vacancy Survey on an annual basis. See <http://www.nhspedc.nhs.uk/surveys.htm> for previous reports.

#### **NHS Pharmacy Education & Development Committee**

<http://www.nhspedc.nhs.uk/>

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