

National hospital pharmacy staffing survey 2006

Authors NHS Pharmacy Education and Development Committee

Purpose To provide data on aspects of staffing levels amongst hospital pharmacy staff.

Scope All NHS hospitals in Great Britain.

Method A questionnaire (Annex 1) was sent to each hospital or NHS Trust by the education pharmacist in each region. Non-responders were followed-up with repeated requests.

Results 213 pharmacies responded out of 224 identified and surveyed (95%). All 11 non-responders were in England (8 general hospitals, 3 community trusts).
In addition to extending data collected in previous years, this report adds data on bandings under Agenda for Change and on non-professional staff.

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Previous reports

Similar reports were issued on 20th December 1996, covering the period August 1995 - July 1996; 20th December 1998, covering the period August 1997 - July 1999; 20th May 2000 covering the period August 1998 - July 1999; 28th February 2002 covering August 2000- July 2001; 1st March 2003 covering August 2001 – July 2002 and 3rd July 2004, covering the period August 2002-July 2003.

Copies of this and earlier reports are available at www.nhspecd.nhs.uk

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Summary

Rationale:

In response to demands from various sources for accurate data on the current state of recruitment and retention in hospital pharmacy, the NHS Pharmacy Education and Development Committee undertook a survey of all NHS hospitals in England, Scotland and Wales.

Methods:

The methodology and style were similar to surveys completed over the last 11 years; education pharmacists issued and collected questionnaires in their region and checked on response rates. The survey included all pharmacy staff.

There was a high response (95%); only 11 out of 224 pharmacies did not reply after repeated requests. Three of these were community trusts and the remainder were general hospitals. Four were in NW England and four in SW England.

The survey asked for point prevalence data on a particular date (31st May) and is therefore different from other surveys which require a post to be unoccupied for some time (usually 3 months) before declaring it vacant. Previously this survey used 31st July as the chosen date because it represented a consistent low point in staffing levels each year. May was chosen this year to match more closely the Department of Health figures for 3-month vacancies (April) while hoping that most AfC assimilations would have happened.

Because of the complexities of the Agenda for Change (AfC) job evaluation exercise, this survey considered posts available and those occupied by permanent or locum staff. It also asked for information on posts known to be under threat because of reorganisation.

What was already known:

Previous surveys have demonstrated considerable numbers of vacancies within the hospital pharmacy service and have shown that recruitment is a significant problem. They have suggested that retention may also be an important problem.

What this report adds:

There has been a considerable increase in pharmacist posts (34%) and technician posts (41%) since 2003.

Since 2003 there has been an increase in the proportion of middle-grade pharmacist posts and a decrease in juniors.

The proportion of pharmacist posts that are vacant has dropped (perhaps by 2-5% of the establishment) but the number of vacancies has changed very little. There were 711 pharmacist and 541 technician posts vacant or filled by locums. Vacancies were formerly chiefly in junior posts but are now more common in middle-grade posts.

Comparisons may be made between regions with regard to the distribution of AfC bands and the extent of vacancies.

Results.

Key and explanatory notes.

All data refer to whole time equivalents and to Great Britain unless otherwise stated.

AfC 6	Agenda for Change band 6
AC	Administrative and clerical grades
ATO	Assistant technical officer (now referred to as assistant)
MTO	Medical technical officer (now referred to as technician)
m5	MTO Whitley grade 5
SATO	Senior assistant technical officer
Trainee	Trainee technicians (MTOs) are now designated preregistration pharmacy technicians
Whitley A-C	Whitley grades A to C
WTE	Whole time equivalent

2006a or AfCa denotes inclusion of pharmacist band 8b and technician band 5 as 'senior'.

2006b or AfCb denotes that pharmacists 8b are 'middle' and technicians 5 are 'junior'.

2003L Posts count as filled if occupied by permanent or locum staff.

2006P Posts count as filled only if occupied by a permanent member of staff.

Geographical regions of England, where abbreviated:

NSC	Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire
SE	South East
SW	South West
TV	Thames Valley
NE	Northern region
NW	North West
WM	West Midlands

Table 1. Summary data for all staff groups.

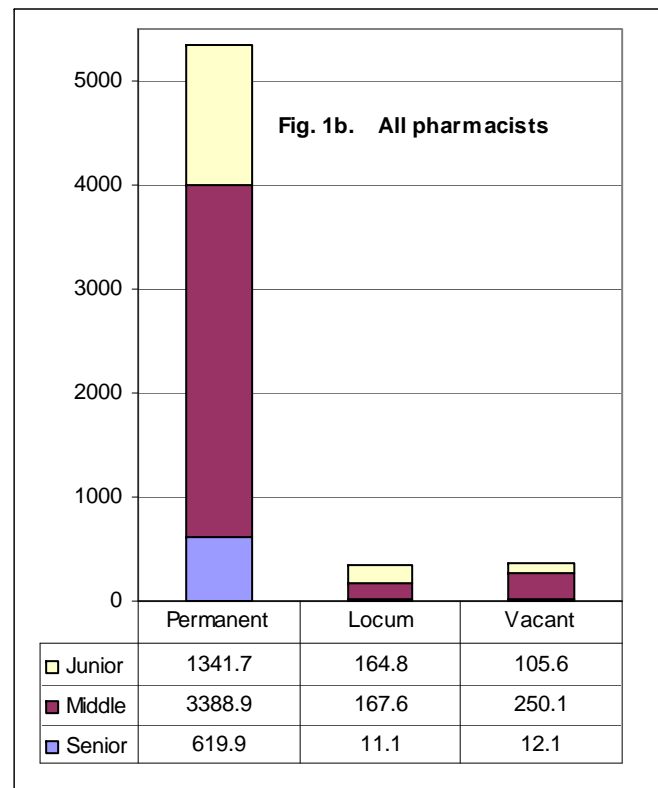
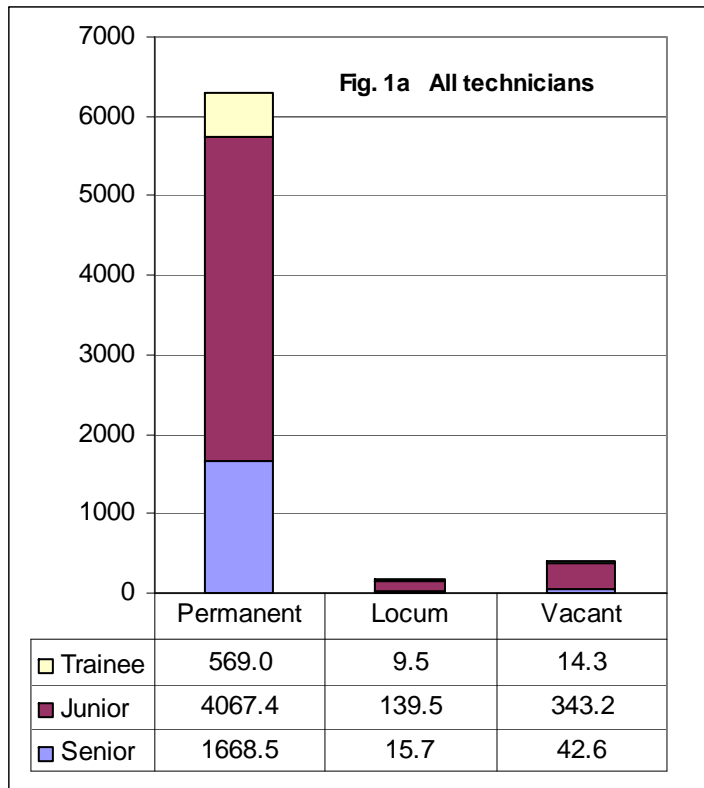
	Established posts (WTE)	Posts occupied (permanent)	Posts occupied by locum	Total posts occupied	Posts vacant	vacant / locum	Posts threatened
Senior pharmacists	643.1	619.9 (96.4%)	11.1 (1.7%)	631.1 (98.1%)	12.1 (1.9%)	23.2 (3.6%)	14.1 (2.2%)
Middle pharmacists	3806.5	3388.9 (89.0%)	167.6 (4.4%)	3556.4 (93.4%)	250.1 (6.6%)	417.7 (11.0%)	62.0 (1.6%)
Junior pharmacists	1612.1	1341.7 (83.2%)	164.8 (10.2%)	1506.5 (93.5%)	105.6 (6.5%)	270.4 (16.8%)	46.4 (2.9%)
Total pharmacists	6061.7	5350.5 (88.3%)	343.5 (5.7%)	5694.0 (93.9%)	367.7 (6.1%)	711.2 (11.7%)	122.4 (2.0%)
Senior technicians	1726.8	1668.5 (96.6%)	15.7 (0.9%)	1684.2 (97.5%)	42.6 (2.5%)	58.3 (3.4%)	21.3 (1.2%)
Junior technicians	4550.1	4067.4 (89.4%)	139.5 (3.1%)	4206.9 (92.5%)	343.2 (7.5%)	482.7 (10.6%)	63.6 (1.4%)
Trainee technicians	592.9	569.0 (96.0%)	9.5 (1.6%)	578.6 (97.6%)	14.3 (2.4%)	23.9 (4.0%)	34.7 (5.8%)
Total technicians	6869.7	6304.9 (91.8%)	164.7 (2.4%)	6469.6 (94.2%)	400.1 (5.8%)	564.8 (8.2%)	119.5 (1.7%)
Total prof. staff	12931.4	11655.4 (90.1%)	508.2 (3.9%)	12163.6 (94.1%)	767.8 (5.9%)	1276.0 (9.9%)	241.9 (1.9%)
Assistants	3282.7	2984.2 (90.9%)	53.9 (1.6%)	3038.0 (92.5%)	244.7 (7.5%)	298.6 (9.1%)	57.6 (1.8%)
Clerical	1096.8	1049.1 (95.7%)	27.7 (2.5%)	1076.8 (98.2%)	20.0 (1.8%)	47.7 (4.3%)	31.1 (2.8%)
Misc.	183.9	164.6 (89.5%)	4.5 (2.4%)	169.0 (91.9%)	14.8 (8.1%)	19.3 (10.5%)	9.7 (5.3%)
Total support staff	4563.4	4197.8 (92.0%)	86.1 (1.9%)	4283.9 (93.9%)	279.5 (6.1%)	365.6 (8.0%)	98.4 (2.2%)
Total all staff	17494.8	15853.2 (90.6%)	594.3 (3.4%)	16447.5 (94.0%)	1047.3 (6.0%)	1641.6 (9.4%)	340.4 (1.9%)

Senior pharmacist = AfC 8c-9 & Whitley F-H
 Middle pharmacist = AfC 7-8b & Whitley D-E
 Junior pharmacist = AfC 6 & Whitley A-C

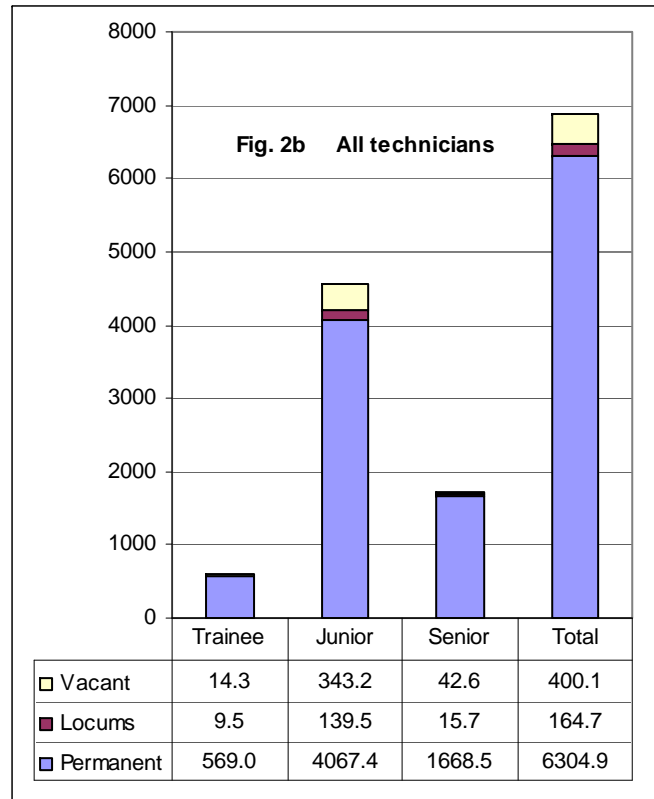
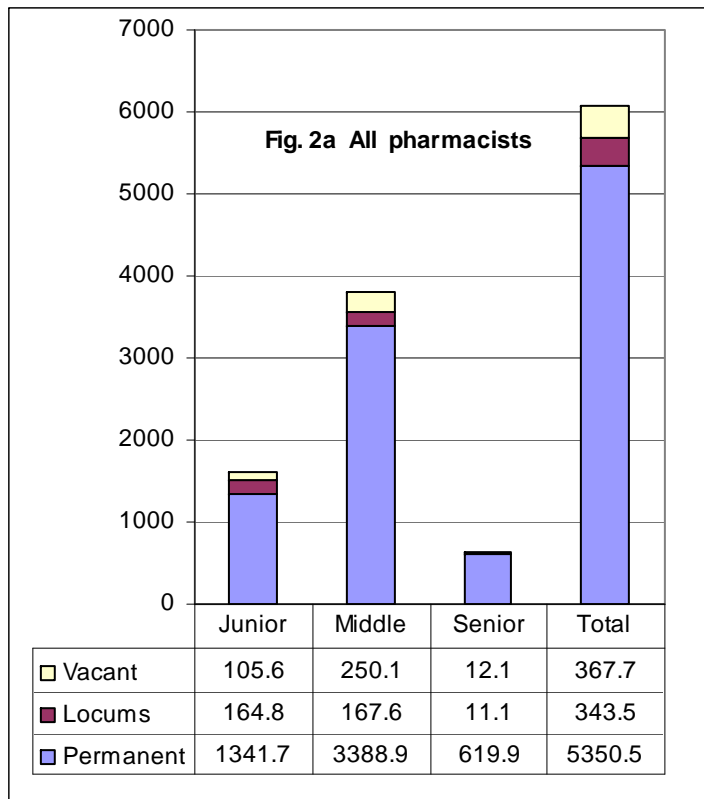
Senior technician = AfC 6-8a & Whitley 3-5
 Junior technician = AfC 4-5 & Whitley 1-2
 Trainee technicians are now designated preregistration pharmacy technicians

Miscellaneous includes: ATO/assistant grades above AfC 3 or below AfC 2; some clerical above AfC 4; some graduates in various roles; other Whitley grades.

Figures 1a and 1b. WTE posts by grade and occupancy



Figures 2a and 2b. WTE posts by occupancy and grade



Tables 2a and 2b and figures 3-5. WTE Pharmacist posts by grade.

Table 2a	Pharmacist AfC posts								Pharmacist Whitley posts								
Band or grade	9	8d	8c	8b	8a	7	6	Total AfC	smp	h	g	f	e	d	c	a/b	Total Whitley
Established posts	52.9	124.9	246.3	611.1	1005.3	1087.1	1180.8	4308.3	9.0	23.6	52.3	134.2	430.6	672.5	256.1	175.2	1753.4
Permanently occupied	50.7	119.1	226.9	547.5	922.0	903.1	986.9	3756.1	11.0	25.4	48.4	138.5	399.2	617.1	217.7	137.1	1594.4
Locums	0.0	3.0	4.0	11.5	37.2	84.8	120.5	260.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	9.4	24.7	27.2	17.2	82.6
Vacant	2.2	2.8	15.4	52.1	46.2	99.1	73.5	291.2	-2.0	-1.8	3.9	-8.4	22.0	30.7	11.2	20.9	76.5
Vacant/locum	2.2	5.8	19.4	63.6	83.4	184.0	193.9	552.2	-2.0	-1.8	3.9	-4.3	31.3	55.4	38.4	38.1	159.0
Threatened	2.0	2.4	8.2	17.0	19.9	13.4	41.4	104.2	0.0	0.5	1.0	0.0	2.5	9.2	1.0	4.0	18.2

Table 2b	Pharmacist AfC posts								Pharmacist Whitley posts							
	9	8d	8c	8b	8a	7	6	smp	h	g	f	e	d	c	a/b	
Established posts	52.9	124.9	246.3	611.1	1005.3	1087.1	1180.8	9.0	23.6	52.3	134.2	430.6	672.5	256.1	175.2	
Total % occupied	95.8	97.8	93.8	91.5	95.4	90.9	93.8	122.2	107.6	92.5	106.3	94.9	95.4	95.6	88.1	
% permanent	95.8	95.4	92.1	89.6	91.7	83.1	83.6	122.2	107.6	92.5	103.2	92.7	91.8	85.0	78.3	
% locums	0.0	2.4	1.6	1.9	3.7	7.8	10.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	2.2	3.7	10.6	9.8	
% vacant	4.2	2.2	6.2	8.5	4.6	9.1	6.2	-22.2	-7.6	7.5	-6.3	5.1	4.6	4.4	11.9	
% vacant or locums	4.2	4.6	7.9	10.4	8.3	16.9	16.4	-22.2	-7.6	7.5	-3.2	7.3	8.2	15.0	21.7	
Threatened	2.0	2.4	8.2	17.0	19.9	13.4	41.4	0.0	0.5	1.0	0.0	2.5	9.2	1.0	4.0	
% threatened	3.8	1.9	3.3	2.8	2.0	1.2	3.5	0.0	2.1	1.9	0.0	0.6	1.4	0.4	2.3	

Figures 3a and 3b. Pharmacist posts.

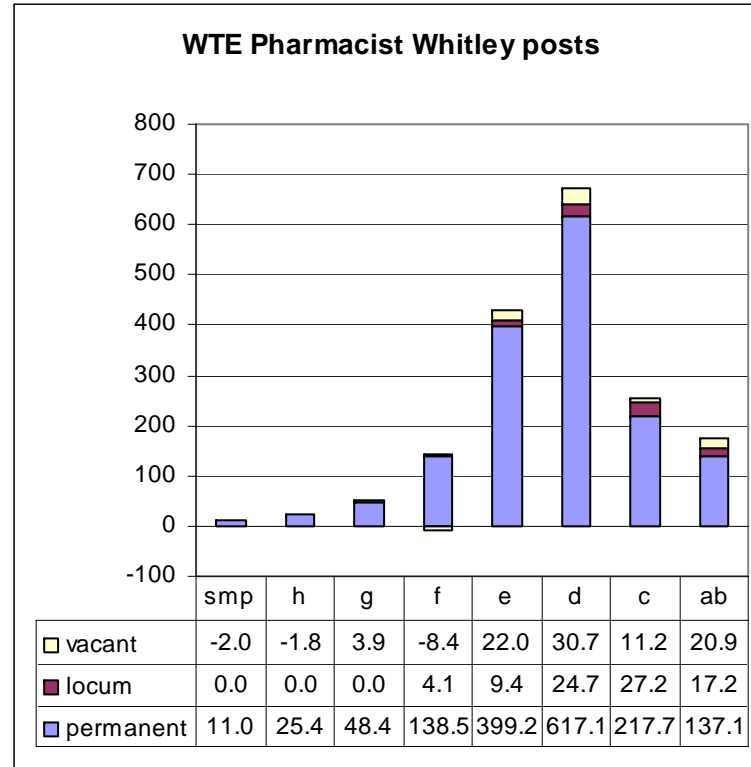
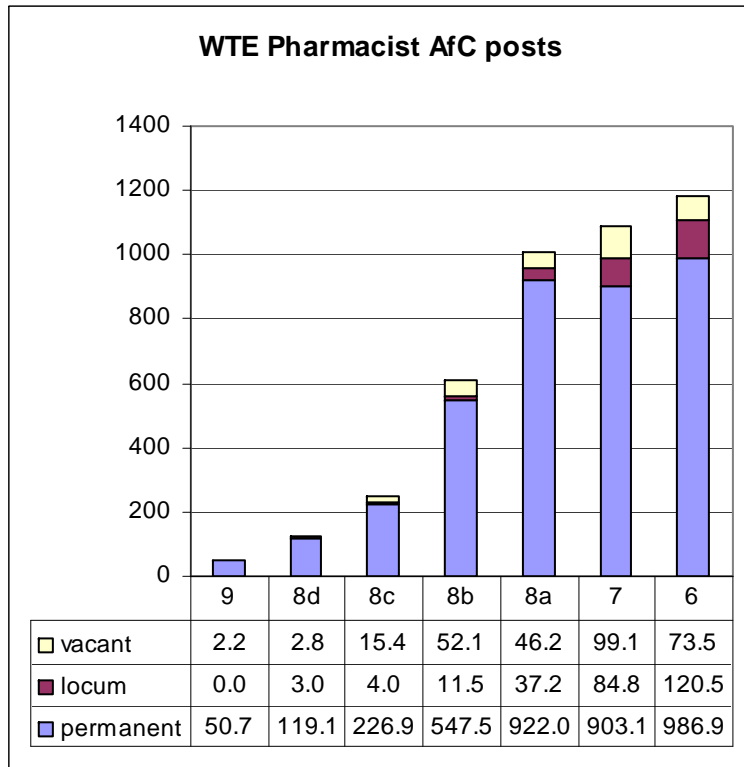
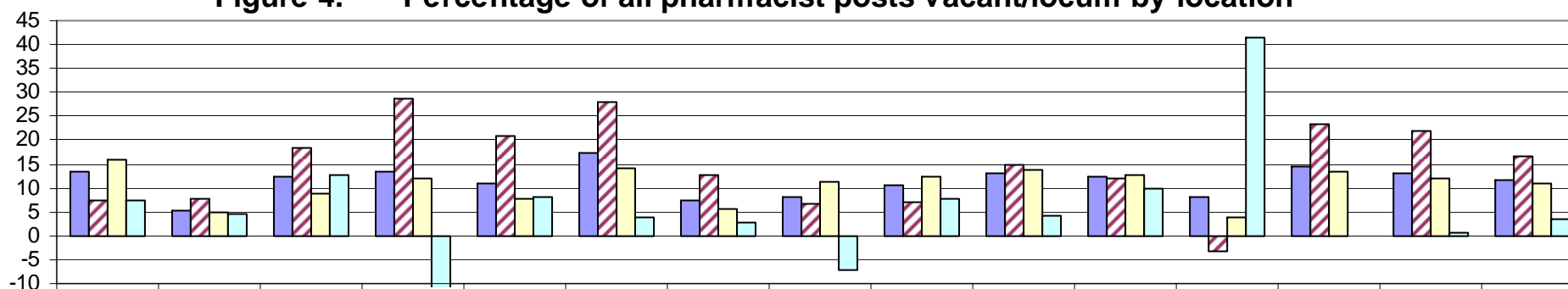
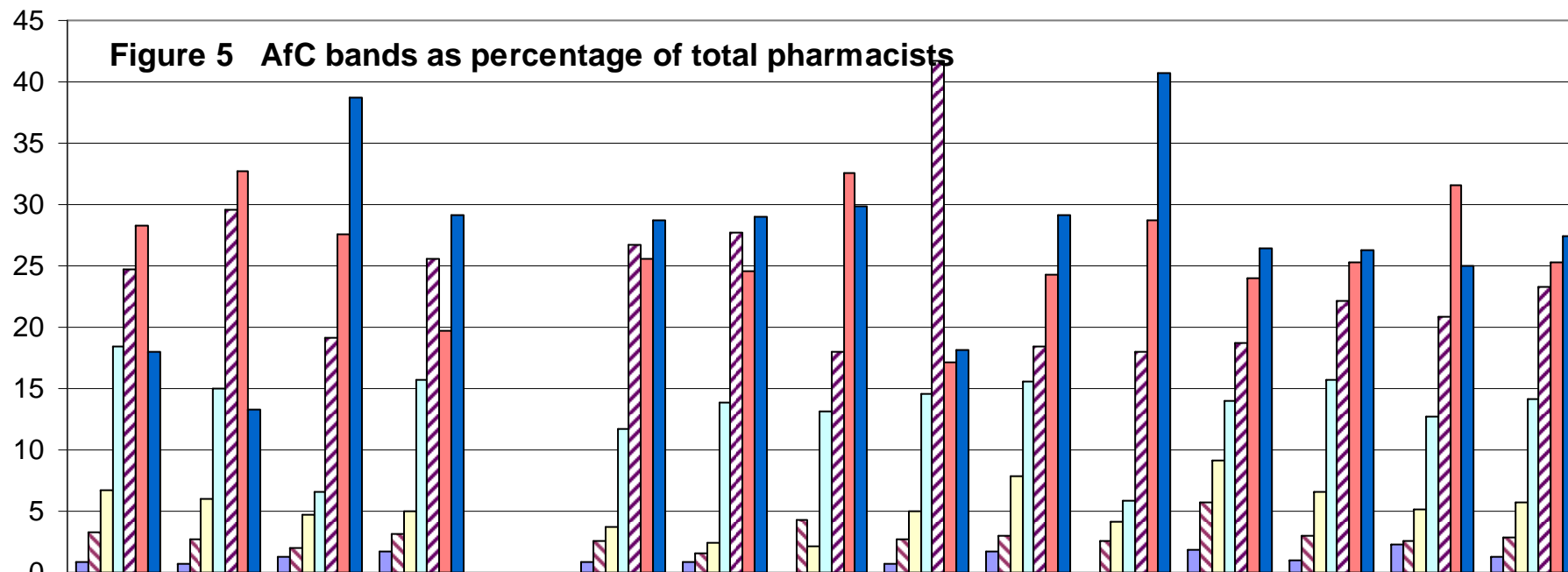


Figure 4. Percentage of all pharmacist posts vacant/locum by location



	WM	Wales	NE	NW	Scots	SE Coast	Trent	SW	Yorks	London	Beds Herts	Essex	NSC	T V	Total
■ All	13.3	5.4	12.3	13.4	11.0	17.2	7.3	8.2	10.7	12.9	12.2	8.2	14.4	13.2	11.7
▨ Junior	7.3	7.7	18.4	28.7	20.9	28.0	12.7	6.6	7.0	15.0	12.0	-3.2	23.4	21.9	16.8
□ Middle	15.9	5.1	8.7	11.8	7.7	14.0	5.5	11.2	12.2	13.8	12.7	3.7	13.5	11.9	11.0
□ Senior	7.4	4.7	12.7	-25.9	8.0	3.7	2.9	-7.1	7.7	4.3	9.8	41.4	0.0	0.8	3.6

Figure 5 AfC bands as percentage of total pharmacists



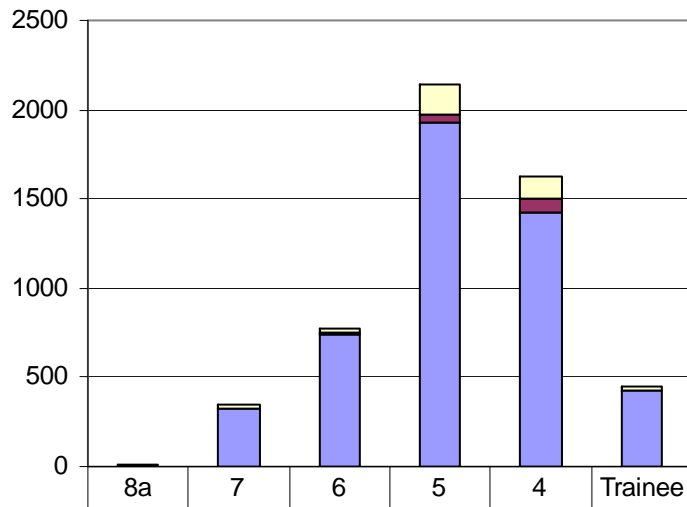
	WM	Wales	NE	NW	Scotland	SE Coast	Trent	SW	Yorkshire	London	Beds & Herts	Essex	NSC	Thames Valley	Total
9	0.8	0.7	1.2	1.7	0.0	0.8	0.9	0.0	0.7	1.7	0.0	1.9	1.0	2.3	1.2
8d	3.2	2.7	2.0	3.1	0.0	2.6	1.5	4.3	2.7	3.1	2.5	5.8	3.0	2.5	2.9
8c	6.6	6.0	4.7	4.9	0.0	3.8	2.4	2.1	5.0	7.8	4.2	9.1	6.5	5.2	5.7
8b	18.4	15.0	6.6	15.8	0.0	11.8	13.9	13.1	14.5	15.5	5.9	14.1	15.7	12.7	14.2
8a	24.7	29.5	19.1	25.6	0.0	26.7	27.7	18.0	41.8	18.4	18.1	18.7	22.2	20.8	23.3
7	28.3	32.8	27.6	19.8	0.0	25.6	24.6	32.6	17.1	24.3	28.6	24.0	25.3	31.5	25.2
6	18.0	13.3	38.6	29.1	0.0	28.7	28.9	29.9	18.1	29.1	40.7	26.4	26.3	24.9	27.4

Tables 3a and 3b and Figures 6-8. Technician posts by grade

Table 3a	WTE technician (MTO) posts												
Band or grade	8a	7	6	5	4	Trainee	Total AfC	m5	m4	m3	m2/m1	trainee	Total Whitley
Established posts	15.5	343.6	777.3	2141.5	1624.8	445.1	5347.8	52.2	116.3	421.9	783.8	147.8	1522.0
permanently occupied	15.5	329.4	742.5	1930.7	1426.6	421.4	4866.1	52.2	114.5	414.3	710.1	147.7	1438.8
Locums	0.0	0.6	8.0	42.5	72.5	5.0	128.7	0.0	1.0	6.1	24.4	4.5	36.1
Vacant	0.0	13.5	26.8	168.3	125.7	18.7	353.0	0.0	0.7	1.6	49.2	-4.4	47.1
Vacant/locum	0.0	14.1	34.8	210.8	198.2	23.7	481.7	0.0	1.7	7.7	73.6	0.1	83.2
Threatened	1.7	5.3	14.0	29.3	30.3	34.7	115.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.0	4.3

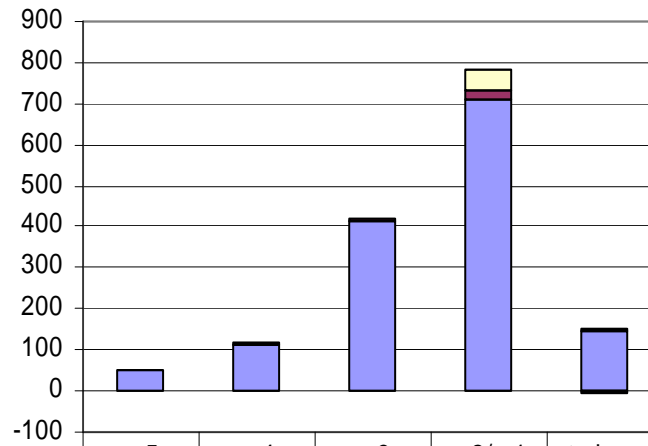
Table 3b	Technician AfC posts						MTO Whitley posts				
	8a	7	6	5	4	trainee	m5	m4	m3	m2/m1	trainee
Established posts	15.5	343.6	777.3	2141.5	1624.8	445.1	52.2	116.3	421.9	783.8	147.8
Total % occupied	100.0	96.1	96.6	92.1	92.3	95.8	100.0	99.4	99.6	93.7	103.0
% permanent	100.0	95.9	95.5	90.2	87.8	94.7	100.0	98.5	98.2	90.6	99.9
% locums	0.0	0.2	1.0	2.0	4.5	1.1	0.0	0.9	1.4	3.1	3.1
% vacant	0.0	3.9	3.4	7.9	7.7	4.2	0.0	0.6	0.4	6.3	-3.0
% vacant or locums	0.0	4.1	4.5	9.8	12.2	5.3	0.0	1.5	1.8	9.4	0.1
Threatened	1.7	5.3	14.0	29.3	30.3	34.7	0.3	0.0	0.0	4.0	0.0
% threatened	10.9	1.5	1.8	1.4	1.9	7.8	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0

Figure 6a WTE Technician AfC posts



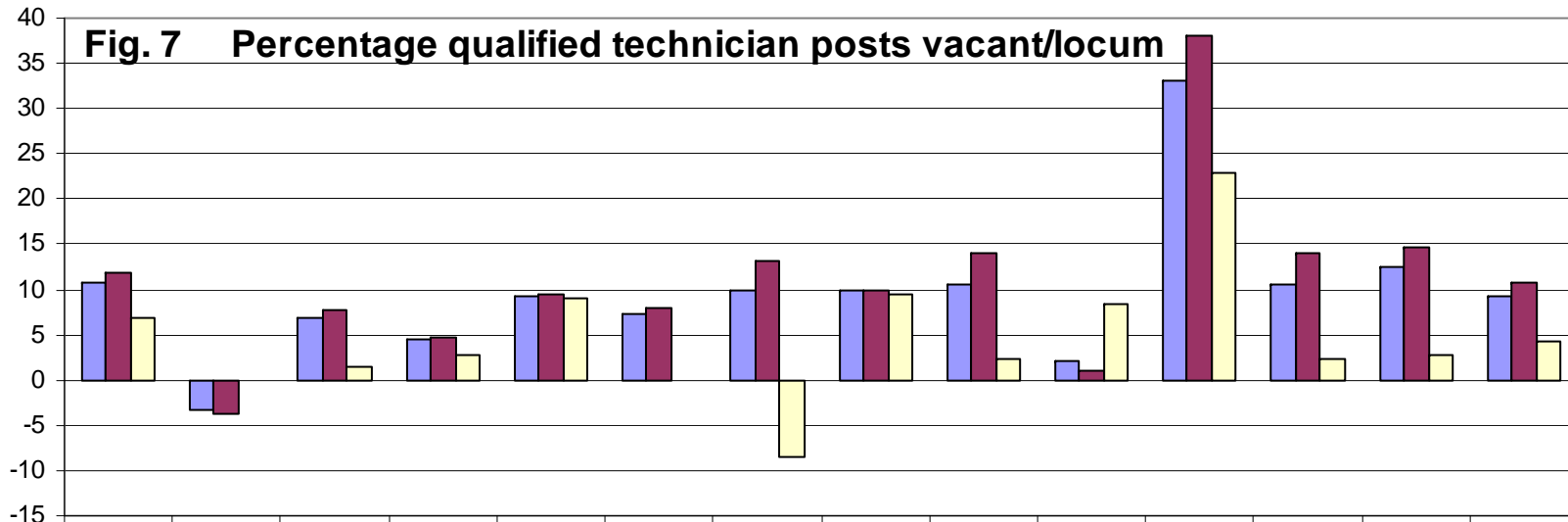
	8a	7	6	5	4	Trainee
□ vacant	0.0	13.5	26.8	168.3	125.7	18.7
■ locum	0.0	0.6	8.0	42.5	72.5	5.0
■ permanent	15.5	329.4	742.5	1930.7	1426.6	421.4

Figure 6b Technician Whitley posts



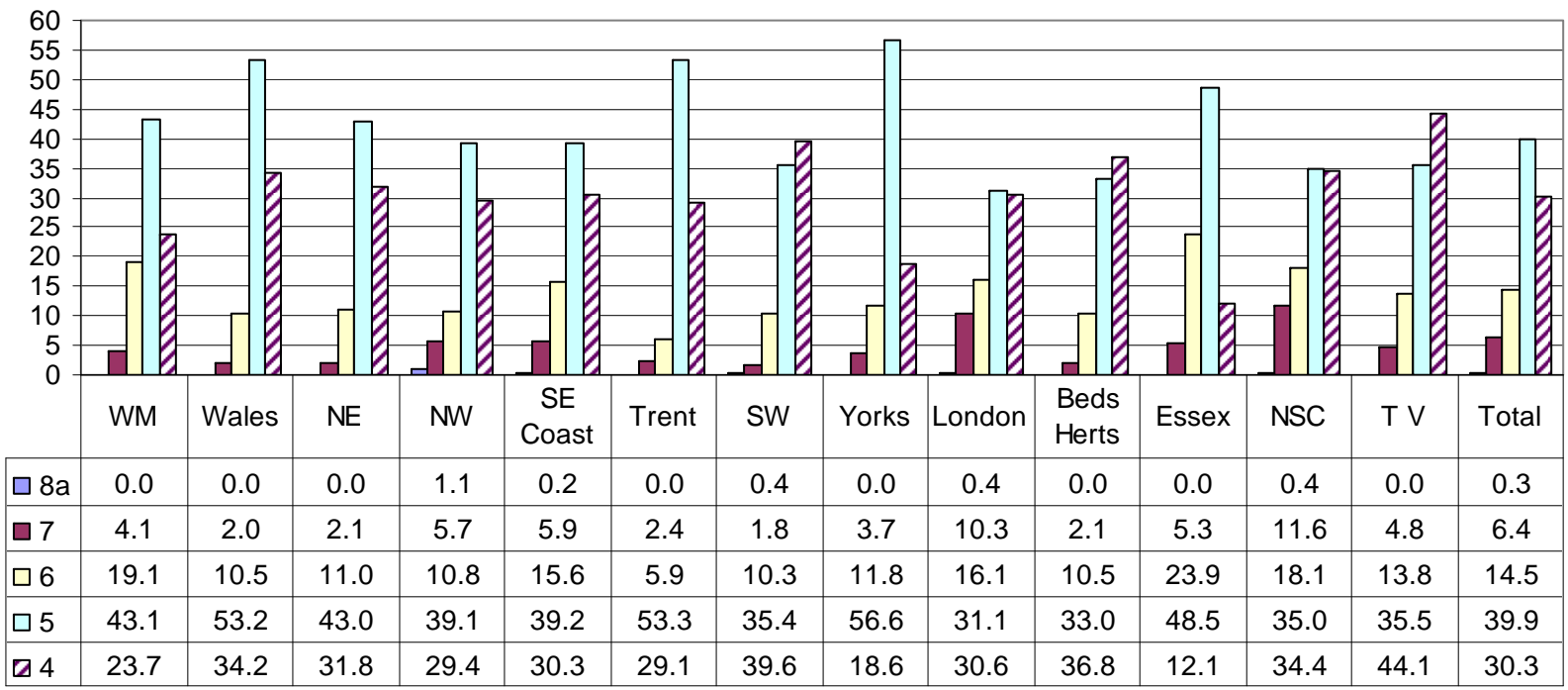
	m5	m4	m3	m2/m1	trainee
□ vacant	0.0	0.7	1.6	49.2	-4.4
■ locum	0.0	1.0	6.1	24.4	4.5
■ permanent	52.2	114.5	414.3	710.1	147.7

Fig. 7 Percentage qualified technician posts vacant/locum



	WM	Wales	NE	NW	SE Coast	Trent	SW	Yorks	London	Beds Herts	Essex	NSC	T V	Total
■ All	10.7	-3.3	6.8	4.4	9.3	7.2	10.0	9.8	10.5	2.2	33.1	10.5	12.4	9.3
■ AfC 4-5	12.0	-3.8	7.8	4.8	9.4	8.0	13.1	9.9	14.0	1.1	38.0	14.0	14.7	10.9
■ AfC 6-8a	7.0	0.0	1.4	2.9	8.9	-0.1	-8.5	9.5	2.4	8.3	22.8	2.4	2.7	4.3

Fig. 8 AfC bands as percentage of qualified technician posts by location



Tables 4a and 4b. Other posts by grade.

Table 4a	WTE Assistant (Asst, SATO, ATO), Administrative and clerical (AC) and miscellaneous posts										
Band or grade	Asst3	Asst2	AC4	AC3	AC2	SATO	ATO	Asst.	AC	Misc.	Total
Established posts	713.0	1867.5	164.7	242.3	359.1	119.5	508.1	74.7	330.8	183.9	4563.4
Permanently occupied	593.0	1737.5	199.0	217.0	329.9	118.9	461.1	73.7	303.1	164.6	4197.8
Locums	9.5	31.4	1.0	9.4	6.1	1.0	12.0	0.0	11.3	4.5	86.1
Vacant	110.5	98.6	-35.3	15.9	23.0	-0.4	35.1	0.9	16.4	14.8	279.5
Vacant/locum	119.9	130.0	-34.3	25.3	29.1	0.6	47.1	0.9	27.6	19.3	365.6
Threatened	7.0	44.8	3.6	11.7	7.0	0.8	5.0	0.0	8.9	9.7	98.4

Table 4b	Asst3	Asst2	AC4	AC3	AC2	SATO	ATO	Asst.	AC	Misc.
Established posts	713.0	1867.5	164.7	242.3	359.1	119.5	508.1	74.7	330.8	183.9
Total % occupied	84.5	94.7	121.4	93.4	93.6	100.3	93.1	98.7	95.1	91.9
% permanent	84.5	94.7	121.4	93.4	93.6	99.5	90.7	98.7	91.6	89.5
% locums	1.3	1.7	0.6	3.9	1.7	0.8	2.4	0.0	3.4	2.4
% vacant	15.5	5.3	-21.4	6.6	6.4	-0.3	6.9	1.3	4.9	8.1
% vacant or locums	16.8	7.0	-20.8	10.4	8.1	0.5	9.3	1.3	8.4	10.5
threatened	7.0	44.8	3.6	11.7	7.0	0.8	5.0	0.0	8.9	9.7
% threatened	1.0	2.4	2.2	4.8	1.9	0.7	1.0	0.0	2.7	5.3

Preregistration pharmacist posts.

There were 642 preregistration pharmacists on one-year contracts and approximately 80 who had six-month contracts during the year 2005-2006.

Analysis and Commentary

Note on all data:

All data refer to whole time equivalents and to Great Britain unless otherwise stated.

2006a or **AfCa** denotes inclusion of pharmacist band 8b and technician band 5 as 'senior'.

2006b or **AfCb** denotes that they are 'middle' and 'junior' respectively and this is the preferred classification based on AfC job profile descriptions. The reason for this classification is discussed in a separate report.

1. Growth in staff.

Tables 5 and 6 illustrate a considerable increase in staffing levels between 2001 and 2006. There are now 54% more pharmacists and 59% more technicians than in 2001. Three-quarters of this increase is recent; there are 34% more pharmacists and 41% more technicians than in 2003. Previous surveys showed that numbers rose more slowly up to 2001. Other staff groups were not completely surveyed in previous years.

	2001	2003	2006a	2006b
Junior	1422	1550	1612	1612
Middle	2082	2436	3196	3807
Senior	426	524	1254	643
Total	3929	4510	6062	6062

	2001	2003	2006a	2006b
Junior	2537	2787	2409	4550
Senior	1421	1668	3868	1727
Total	3958	4455	6277	6277

2. Threatened posts

Tables 1, 2b and 3b show the posts that are under threat from financial or organisational changes imposed on pharmacies (about 2%). Many respondents commented that they were aware of general threats to posts but were not able to relate these to specific posts at the time of the survey.

3. Redistribution of grades.

In May 2006, only three-quarters of posts had been assimilated on to AfC bands. In those areas which had not changed, including the whole of Scotland, it may be seen that there has been a considerable increase in middle grade pharmacists as a proportion of all pharmacists since 2003 and a decrease in junior staff. English and Welsh hospitals often had a mix of AfC and Whitley posts and it might be argued that they could be unrepresentative of the workforce as a whole but tables 7a and 7b show that the GB posts are distributed similarly to the Scottish posts. The changes are evident in both posts available and posts occupied, unlike in some of our earlier surveys, suggesting that posts are more evenly filled than previously and probably tailored to match the type of candidates available for recruitment.

Tables 7a and 7b. Pharmacist posts on Whitley gradings.

Table 7a. Grades as percentage of total posts available

	Scotland		GB	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
Junior (A-C)	34.6	24.5	34.3	24.3
Middle (D-E)	55.7	63.9	54.0	63.0
Senior (F+)	9.6	11.6	11.6	12.7

Table 7b. Grades as percentage of total posts occupied

	Scotland		GB	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
Junior (A-C)	33.1	23.7	32.1	23.7
Middle (D-E)	56.7	64.7	55.3	63.3
Senior (F+)	10.2	11.6	12.6	13.0

Tables 8a and 8b. Pharmacist posts on AfC bands.

Table 8a. Posts as percentage of total posts available

Junior	27.4
Middle	62.8
Senior	9.8

Table 8b. Posts as percentage of total posts occupied

Junior	27.6
Middle	62.4
Senior	10.0

Table 9. Pharmacist posts available with 2001 as index year.

	2001	2003	2006 (all)	2006 AfC only
Junior	1.00	1.09	1.13	0.83
Middle	1.00	1.17	1.82	1.30
Senior	1.00	1.23	1.51	1.00
Total	1.00	1.15	1.54	1.10

Figure 9

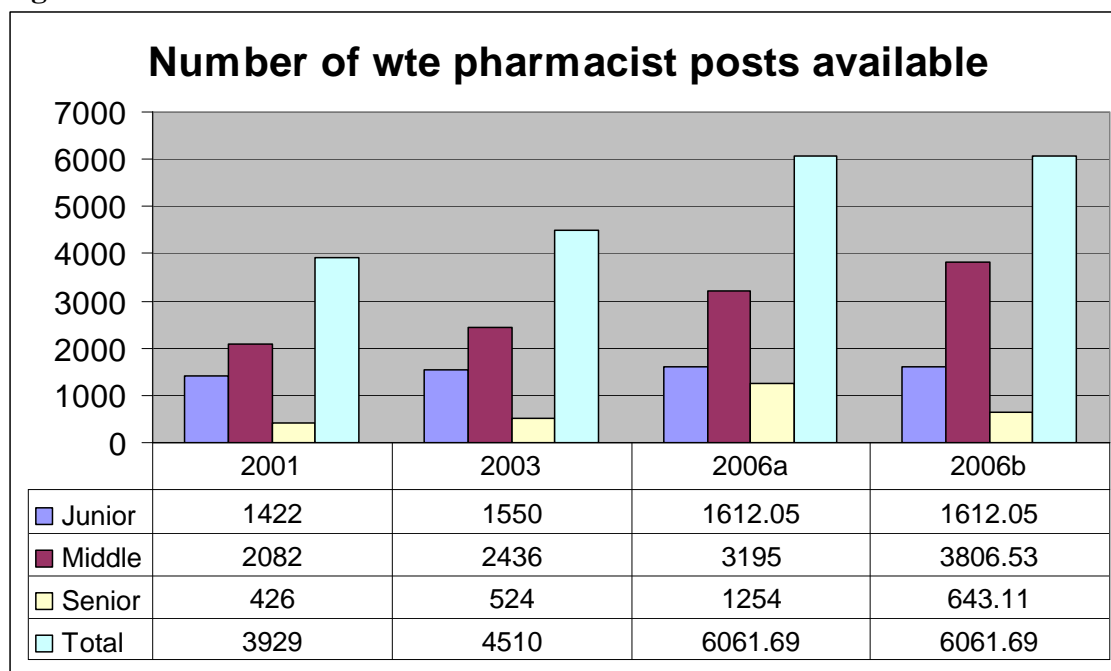


Table 10a. All pharmacist posts available by grade as percentage of available posts.

	2001	2003	2006	2006 AfC only
Junior	36.2	34.3	26.5	27.4
Middle	53.0	54.0	62.8	62.8
Senior	10.8	11.6	10.6	9.8

Table 10b. All pharmacist posts occupied by grade as percentage of all occupied posts.

	2001	2003	2006	2006 AfC only
Junior	33.6	32.1	25.1	27.4
Middle	54.4	55.3	63.5	62.4
Senior	11.9	12.6	11.4	10.0

Technicians show similar trends but it is not clear what constitutes junior and senior since neither counting band 5 as junior nor counting it as senior matches the Whitley distribution which counted MTO1 and 2 as junior.

Tables 11a to 11e. Technician posts.

11a. Whitley grades as % of total posts available				
	Scotland		GB	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
Junior	67.8	58.9	61.9	57.0
Senior	32.2	41.1	38.1	43.0

11b. Whitley grades as % of total posts occupied				
	Scotland		GB	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
Junior	66.6	58.9	61.9	55.0
Senior	33.4	41.1	38.1	45.0

11c. Technician AfC bands as % of total posts available		
	2006a	2006b
Junior	33.1	76.9
Senior	66.9	23.1
	junior=AfC4	junior=AfC4-5

11d. Technician AfC bands as % of total posts occupied		
	2006a	2006b
Junior	32.0	75.5
Senior	68.0	24.5
	junior=AfC4	junior=AfC4-5

11e. Number of wte qualified technicians taking 2001 as index year						
			Whitley and AfC		AfC only	
	2001	2003	2006a	2006b	2006a	2006b
Junior	1.0	1.1	0.9	1.8	0.6	1.5
Senior	1.0	1.2	2.7	1.2	2.3	0.8
Total	1.0	1.1	1.6	1.6	1.2	1.2

4. Vacancy rates.

There has been considerable concern about vacancies for pharmacists and technicians and this has driven the requirement for these surveys over the last 11 years.

Figures 10 and 11 show the trends, expressed as percentages for both groups. The data marked L count a post as filled if it is occupied by a locum, those marked P count as filled only if occupied by a permanent member of staff. Data prior to 2003 are equivalent to the L data for 2003 and 2006.

Figure 10.

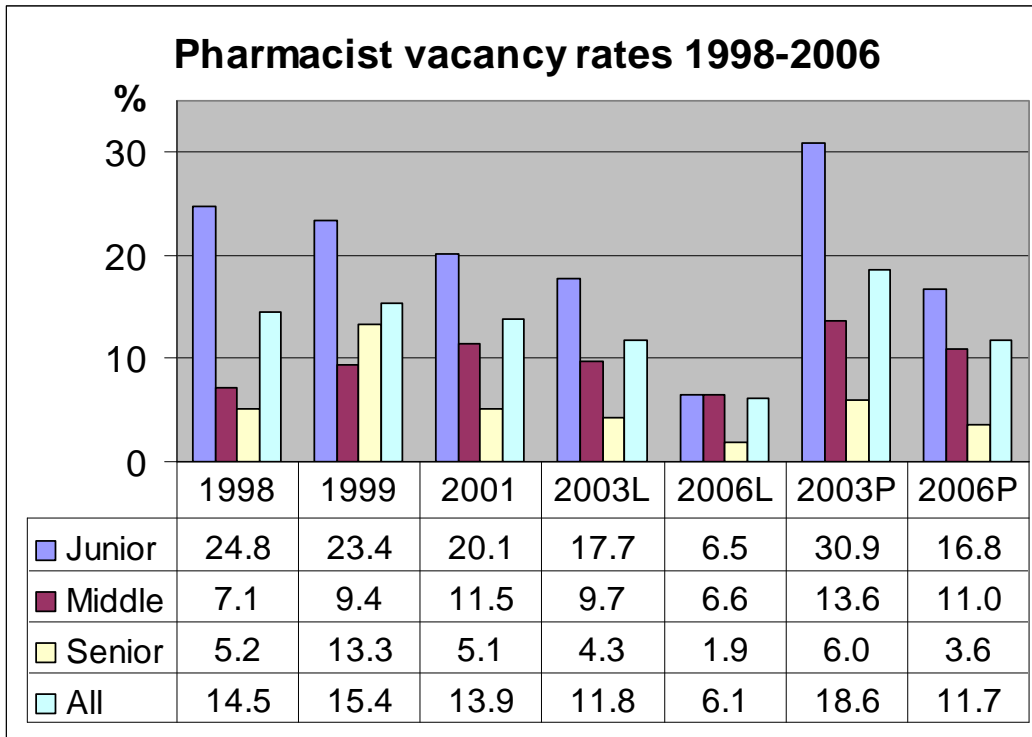
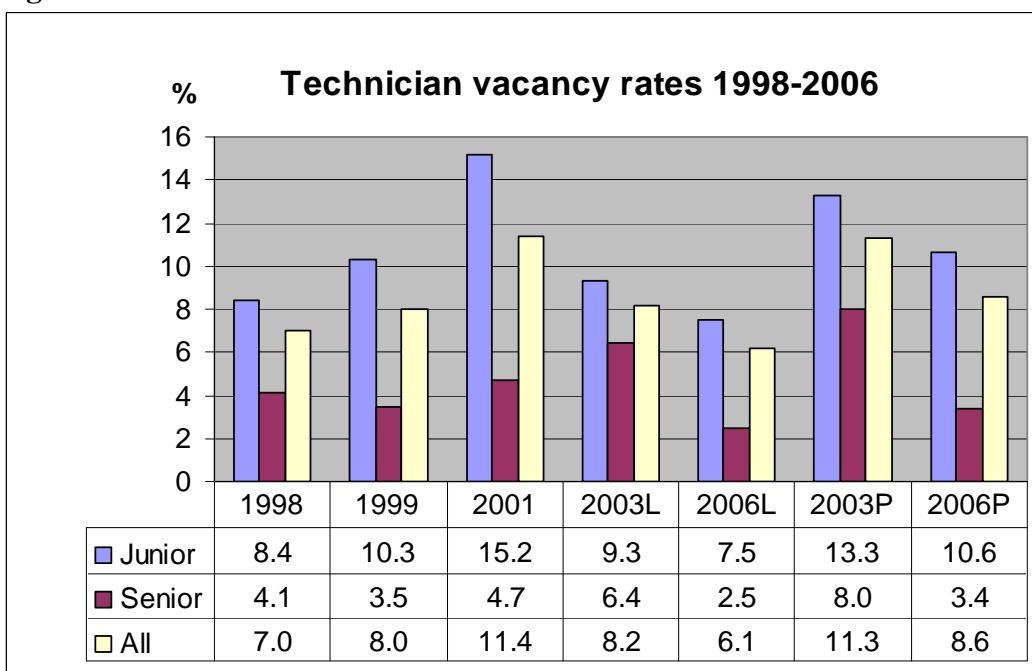


Figure 11.



Although the proportions vary, there is clearly an improvement in the proportion of posts vacant, for example from around 11% of pharmacists to 6% on a like for like basis since 2003. There are several important caveats in interpreting these figures:

The improvement is not so clear if the increase in posts is taken into account. Table 12 shows the number of wte posts vacant. The vacancies, while still reduced overall for pharmacists, have shifted from junior posts to middle grades, where hospitals have recruited locums to cover. This may reflect not only an increase in overall numbers but also a shift in grades in response to poor recruitment such as that we know took place between 1999 and 2001. In those years there was a shift from junior pharmacists to middle grade pharmacists and to technicians. The overall improvement since 2003 is less than 2% of posts.

There is also an effect from the change in survey date which will make this year's estimates low in comparison to previous years. It is reasonable to estimate, from previous surveys, that 150-200 junior pharmacist posts will fall vacant between May and July because of natural turnover at this stage of the employment cycle (8-12% of junior posts). Such a drop-out rate completely counter-balances the apparent improvement in vacancy rates amongst juniors. It will also not necessarily improve the middle grade vacancies greatly since previous surveys have shown that 60% of such leavers did not stay in the hospital service.

Similarly, using similar assumptions based on previous surveys, the overall proportion of posts vacant may have improved by only 2% rather than 5%.

For technicians there is an increase in vacant posts amongst juniors. This may represent a shift from pharmacist posts to technician posts which has not been supported by adequately increased training numbers. There is evidence of this shift from trends in technician-led dispensary services and medicines management technician services, as there was between 1999 and 2001 when there was a major one-off reduction in pharmacy graduates.

Table 12. WTE posts vacant between 1999 and 2006

	1999L	2001L	2003L	2006L	2003P	2006P
Pharmacists, junior	361	284	274	106	478	270
Pharmacists, middle	179	240	236	250	331	418
Pharmacists, senior	59	22	23	12	32	23
Pharmacists, total.	599	546	533	368	841	711
Technicians, junior	241	384	263	343	375	483
Technicians, senior	43	67	108	43	134	58
Technicians, total	284	451	371	386	509	541

National Survey of Pharmacy Department Establishment & Vacancies - May 2006

Trust:

SHA:

Include staff providing mental health and community health services, but not preregistration trainees.

Staff Grade (Whitley)	Funded Establishment (WTEs)	Permanent Staff in Post at 31 May 2006 (WTEs)	Temporary or locum staff in Post at 31 May 2006 (WTEs)	Posts Under Threat from Establishment Cuts after May 2006 (WTEs)	Notes
Pharmacist on SMP Scale above H+3					For Pharmacists on SMP scales on or below H+3 please enter the post against the equivalent grade
Pharmacist H					
Pharmacist G					
Pharmacist F					
Pharmacist E					
Pharmacist D					
Pharmacist C					
Pharmacist B/A					
Technician on SMP Scale above MTO5					For Technicians on SMP scales on or below MTO5 please enter the post against the equivalent grade
Technician MTO5					
Technician MTO4					
Technician MTO3					
Technician MTO2/1					
Trainee Technician					
SATO					
ATO					
Pharmacy Assistant					
A&C All Grades					
Other (not prereg. graduates) please specify					
a.					List the grade of each post that is not covered by the listed grades
b.					
c.					
d.					
e.					
Totals:					

National Survey of Pharmacy Department Establishment & Vacancies - May 2006

Trust:

SHA:

Include staff providing mental health and community health services, but not preregistration trainees.

Staff Grade (AfC Bands)	Funded Establishment at 31 May 2006 (WTEs)	Permanent Staff in Post at 31 May 2006 (WTEs)	Temporary or locum staff in Post at 31 May 2006 (WTEs)	Posts Under Threat from Establishment Cuts after 31 May 2006 (WTEs)	Notes
Pharmacists (excluding Prereg Trainees)					For Pharmacists on SMP scales please enter post against equivalent grade
Band 9					
Band 8d					
Band 8c					
Band 8b					
Band 8a					
Band 7					
Band 6					
Technicians					For Technicians on SMP scales please enter post against equivalent grade
Band 8a					
Band 7					
Band 6					
Band 5					
Band 4					
Trainee Technician					
Assistants					
Band 3					
Band 2					
A&C					
Band 4					
Band 3					
Band 2					
Other (not prereg. graduates) please specify					List the grade of each post that is not covered by the listed staff groups
a.					
b.					
c.					
d.					
e.					