

The NMC register Northern Ireland mid-year update

1 April –
30 September 2024



Welcome to our mid-year report on the NMC register and what it tells us about the nursing and midwifery workforce in Northern Ireland.

The big picture

Overall, the number of nursing and midwifery professionals on the NMC's register in Northern Ireland has increased to **29,213**. That's **488 (1.7 percent) more** registered professionals than six months ago, and **4,445 (17.9 percent) more** than five years ago.

However, there has been a decrease in the numbers of professionals joining the register for the first time in Northern Ireland. In the last six months, **705** people joined the register – this is a decrease from **776** for the same period last year (**-9.1 percent**).

Domestic recruitment has also fallen. There have been **18.6 percent (-120) fewer** UK educated joiners to the register compared to the same period last year.

A look at international recruitment in Northern Ireland

Our data relating to internationally educated professionals in our four nation reports, such as this one, can never be definitive because professionals may not yet have a registered UK address at the point of registration. This means there may be international professionals working in Northern Ireland who aren't yet included in this data because they have yet to provide us with their UK address. We encourage all international joiners to our register to update their details through [NMC Online](#) at the earliest opportunity.

29,213

professionals on the register in Northern Ireland



In the last six months

An increase of

488

+1.7%



Nurses

27,544

+1.8%



Midwives

1,324

-1.0%



Dual registrants

343

+3.3%



Nursing Associates¹

2

N/A



In the last six months, compared to April-September 2023

705

joined the register

-9.1%



471

left the register

+17.2%



¹ The nursing associate role was introduced in 2019. Nursing associates can only practise in this role in England.

Nonetheless, our country-specific international data is a good indicator of trends over time. It shows an upward trend in the number of international joiners in Northern Ireland has continued in the six months to September 2024.

India remains the largest source of international recruitment in Northern Ireland, over the last six months.

A more ethnically diverse register

In Northern Ireland we're also seeing a gradual change in the ethnic profile of the register largely due to the increasing numbers of international professionals joining.

The proportion of all registered professionals from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds² has continued to grow and reached **13.9 percent** on 30 September 2024. This is **0.8 percentage points higher** than six months ago (13.1 percent), and **5.5 percentage points more** than five years ago (8.4 percent).



² The NMC recognises that language in this area is constantly changing and that the people included within such broad terms encompasses diverse ethnic groups. We regularly keep the language that we use under review.

Top non-UK countries of education as of September 2024, change in the last six months

- 1 India**
1,591 ↑ +10.4%
- 2 Philippines**
1,295 ↑ +3.5%
- 3 Zimbabwe**
273 ↑ +9.2%

13.9%

of register in Northern Ireland from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. In 2019, **8.4%** of register in Northern Ireland from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.



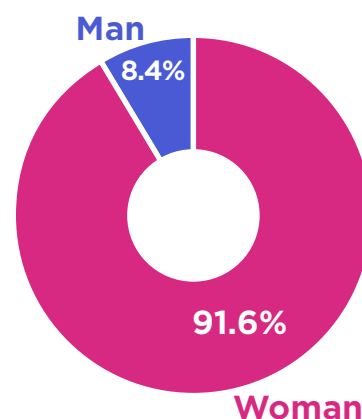
As of September 2024

43 years, 7 months

average age of professionals in Northern Ireland



Gender split of the register



Overall retention remains steady

Similar to the UK picture, the number of leavers in Northern Ireland has increased, from **402** people last year to **471** this year – **an increase of 17.2 percent**.

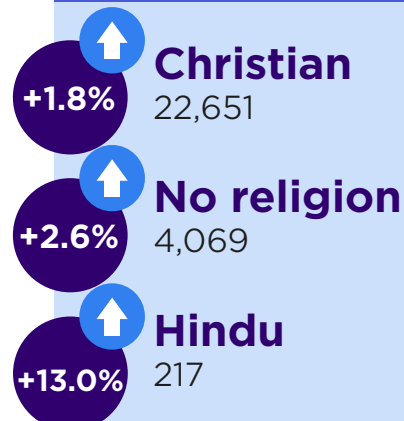
Our data shows a steady increase in people leaving within three to five years of being on the register. In the last six months, **31** people left (up from 22 in March 2024), and when looking at September 2023, 12 people left.

The number of UK educated leavers has increased by **58 (12.4 percent)**, in comparison to the same period last year. In addition, the numbers of internationally educated professionals leaving remains relatively low but has been steadily increasing over the last five years. In the last six months **49** professionals left the register, in comparison to **38** professionals this time last year (**28.9 percent**).

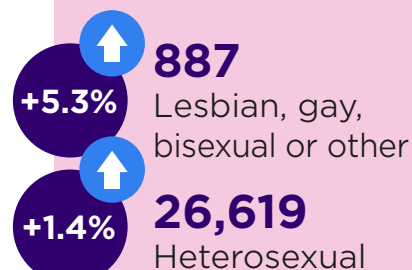
However, it is important to also look at the number of leavers as a proportion of the register. Through this lens, we see that **1.6 percent** of the register left in the past six months. In the same period last year, 1.5 percent left – a marginal rise.



Most common specified religions, change in six months



Sexual orientation, change in the last six months



Length of time since initial registration, change in the last six months³



³ Length of time since first registration does not necessarily mean unbroken or continuous registration. Many registrants leave the register for a variety of reasons, for one or more periods during their careers.

Sharing insights to support the sector

We hope this overview, alongside our comprehensive [data tables](#), will support workforce planning and research in Northern Ireland, ensuring the most effective delivery of services that people and communities across the country rely on for their health and wellbeing.

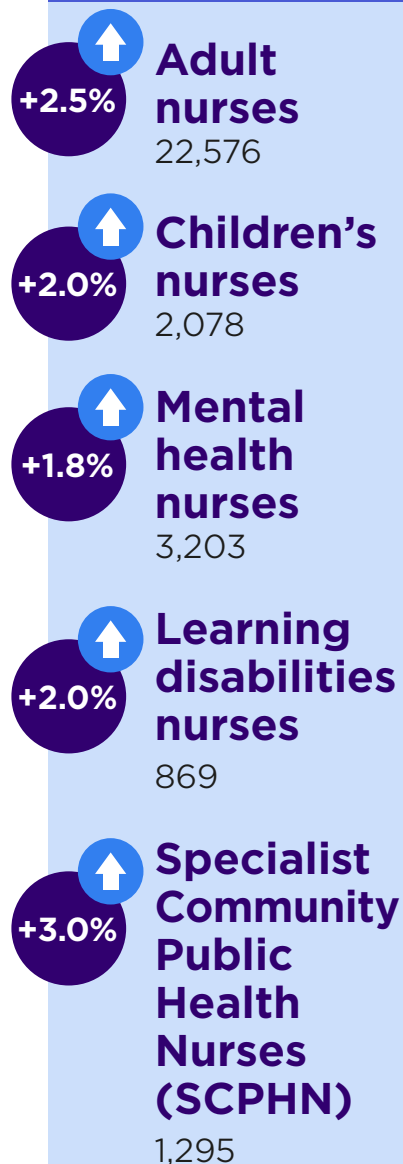
If you have questions about our data or ideas for how we might improve the usefulness of this report, please [get in touch](#).



Kuljit Dhillon
Interim Director
of Strategy and Insight

A stylized, handwritten signature of Kuljit Dhillon in a light purple color.

In the last six months



We shouldn't forget that behind our data are dedicated professionals who provide safe, effective and kind care to people everyday. We're grateful for everything they do for the people and communities they serve.



What we do

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery practice that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the independent regulator of more than 841,000 nurses and midwives in the UK and nursing associates in England, we have an important role to play in making this vision a reality.

We're here to protect the public by upholding high professional nursing and midwifery standards, which the public has a right to expect. That's why we're improving the way we regulate, enhancing our support for colleagues, professionals and the public, and working with our partners to influence the future of health and social care.




Our core role is to **regulate**. We set and promote high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England and quality assure their education programmes. We maintain the integrity of the register of those eligible to practise. And we investigate concerns about professionals – something that affects very few people on our register every year.

To regulate well, we **support** nursing and midwifery professionals and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout professionals' careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address challenges they face. We work collaboratively so everyone feels engaged and empowered to shape our work.

We work with our partners to address common concerns, share our data, insight and learning, to **influence** and inform decision-making and help drive improvement in health and social care for people and communities.

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The nursing and midwifery regulator for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
Registered charity in England and Wales (1091434) and in Scotland (SC038362).

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