

NMC Covid-19 temporary register

Snapshot analysis



Introduction

In March 2020, we established a Covid-19 temporary register to support the UK's response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Covid-19 temporary register is made up of three cohorts of people: those who left our permanent register in the last three years, those who left our permanent register in the last three to five years and eligible overseas registration candidates.

In August 2021 we sent a survey to 13,043 people on our temporary register asking about their experience of joining the temporary register, employment and likelihood of joining the permanent register.

3,690 people responded (a response rate of 28.3 percent).

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our survey. Your insight gives us a better picture of the temporary register to support the ongoing Covid-19 workforce and response planning.



I Summary

Those on the temporary register **mainly joined to support during the pandemic** – something that most of those that we heard from have been able to do.

Where people are no longer working, this was **most likely due to employer demand**. However around a quarter of respondents cited stress, lack of support or poor culture as the reason.

One in seven of those responding to the survey told us they are **highly likely to join the permanent register** (with a third in total open to the idea).

Most respondents said they had been **working part time**, and for those looking to stay on they want to continue with similar working patterns.

Most respondents' experience of joining the temporary register was **straightforward and they felt supported**.

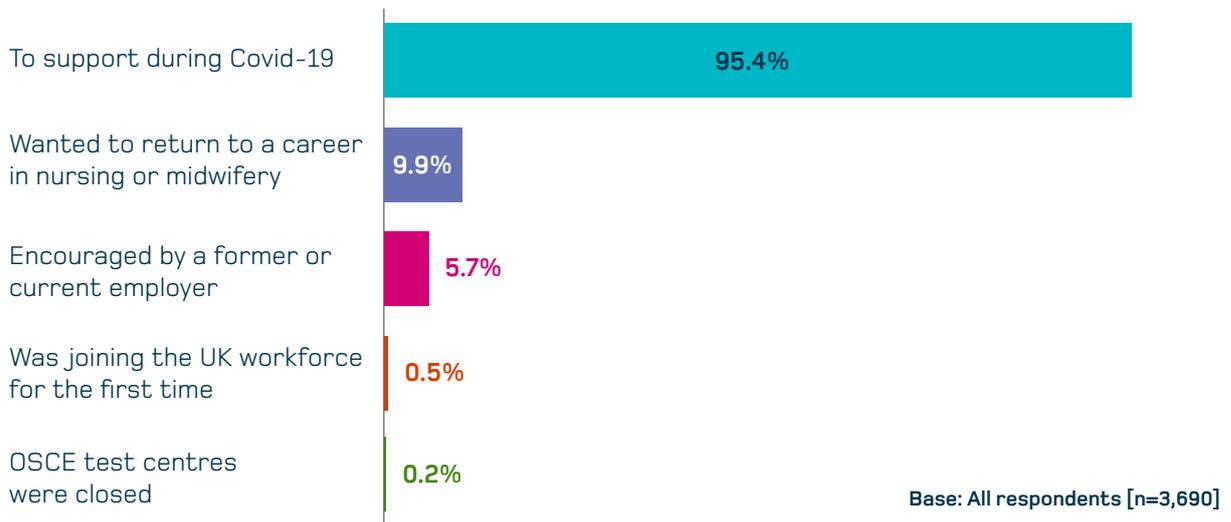
A positive experience on the register was not driven by day-to-day job factors but instead by whether professionals felt that they were able to apply their expertise meaningfully during a health crisis.

Deployment and scope of practice

Reasons for joining the temporary register

We asked respondents to tell us why they joined the temporary register. The majority chose wanting to support during the Covid-19 pandemic as a reason for joining.

Figure 1
Reasons for joining the temporary register*



“Having retired from midwifery I was not sure how I could help in the pandemic, but the register allowed me to use my knowledge and expertise in a positive and rewarding way at vaccination centres.”

Midwife aged 61–65



“I felt at a very difficult time, during the pandemic, joining the register gave me the opportunity to do what I am skilled at.”

Nurse aged 66–70



“During the pandemic I felt bad that I was retired and wasn’t able to help...I was happy to start working again and be able to help during a time where nurses were most needed.”

Nurse aged 56–60



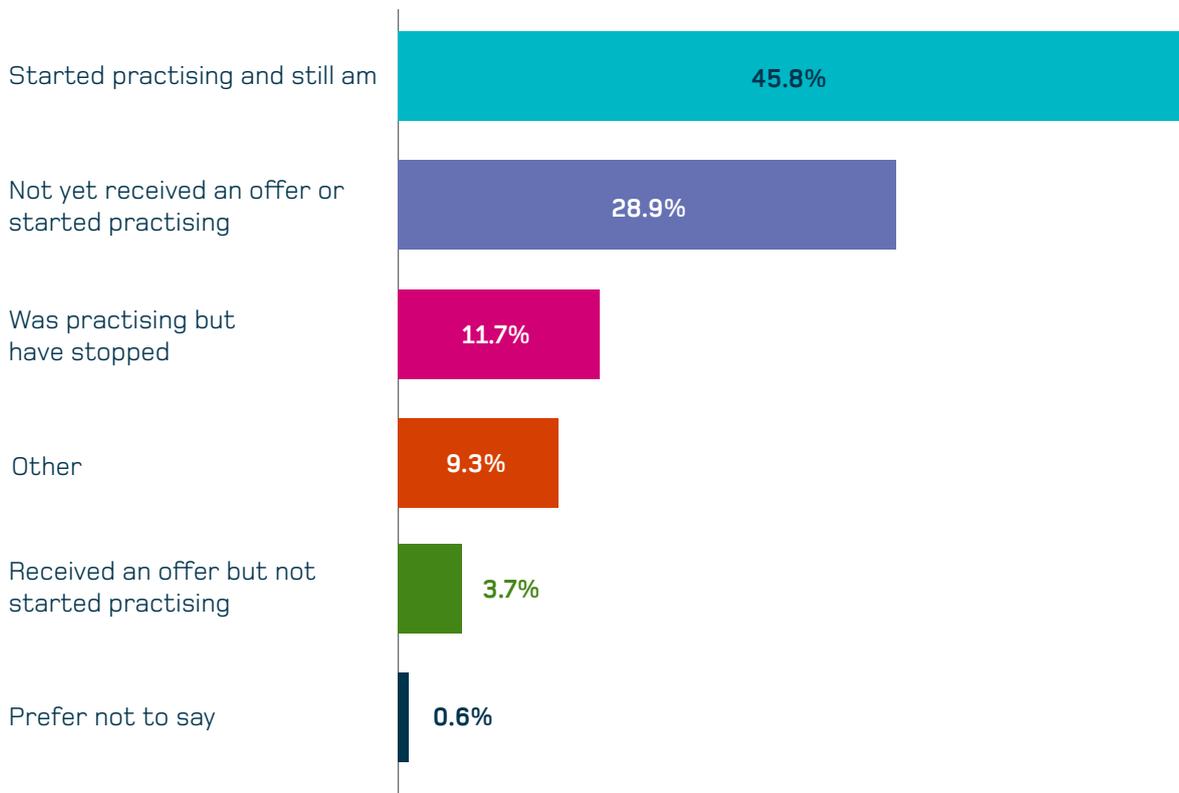
Employment

Over half of the respondents currently on the temporary register had practised since joining the temporary register - with two fifths still practising at the time of response.

Almost a third had not yet received an offer of employment or started practising. A smaller number had received an offer, but had not started practising.

Figure 2

Whether respondents had started practising since joining the temporary register



Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

Scope of practice and setting

'Adult and general care' and 'vaccination centre' were the lead scope and setting of work respectively.

Figure 3
Top four scopes of practice*

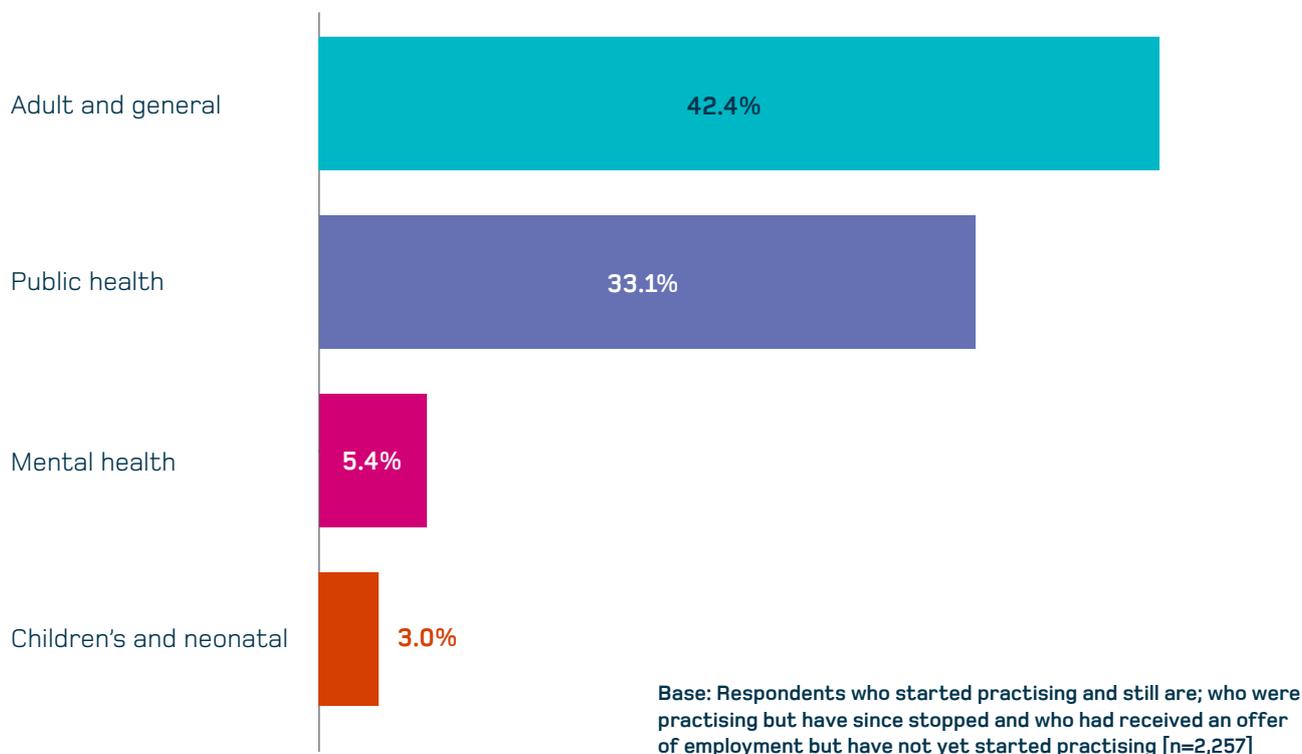
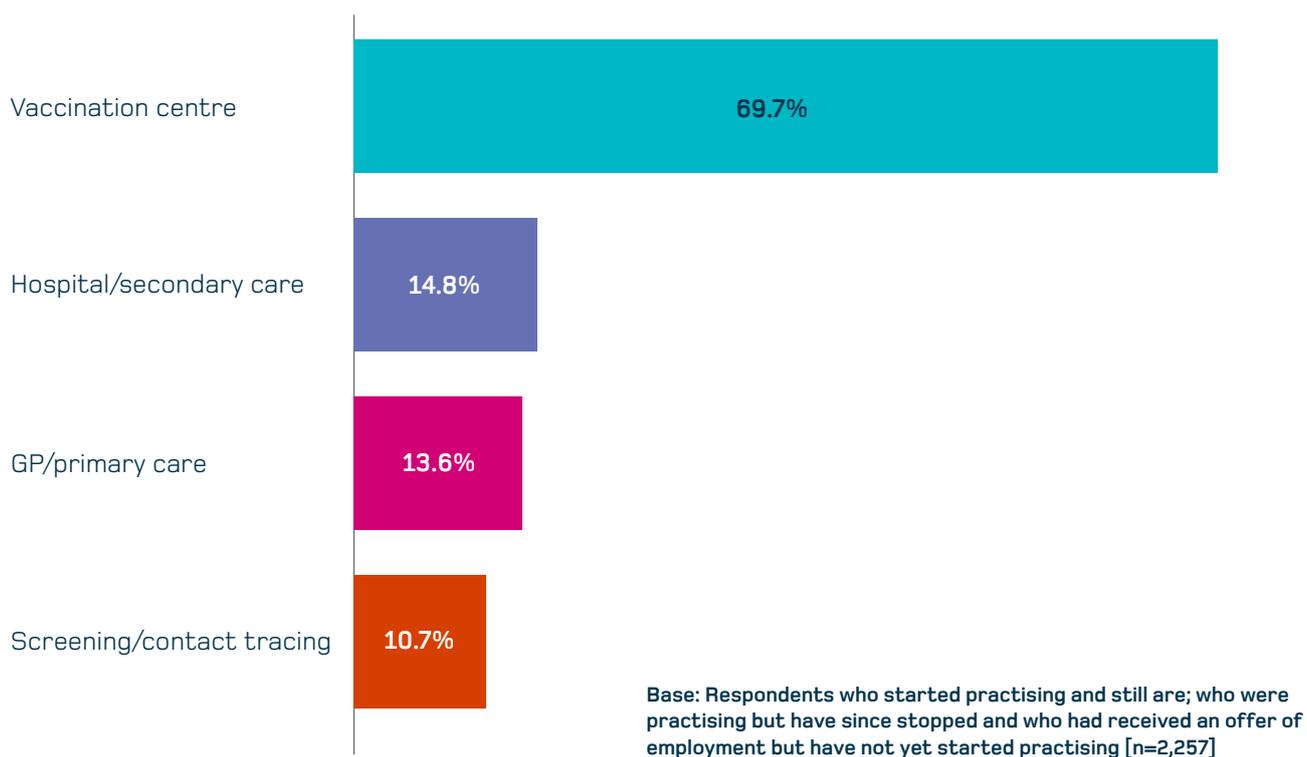


Figure 4
Top four settings*

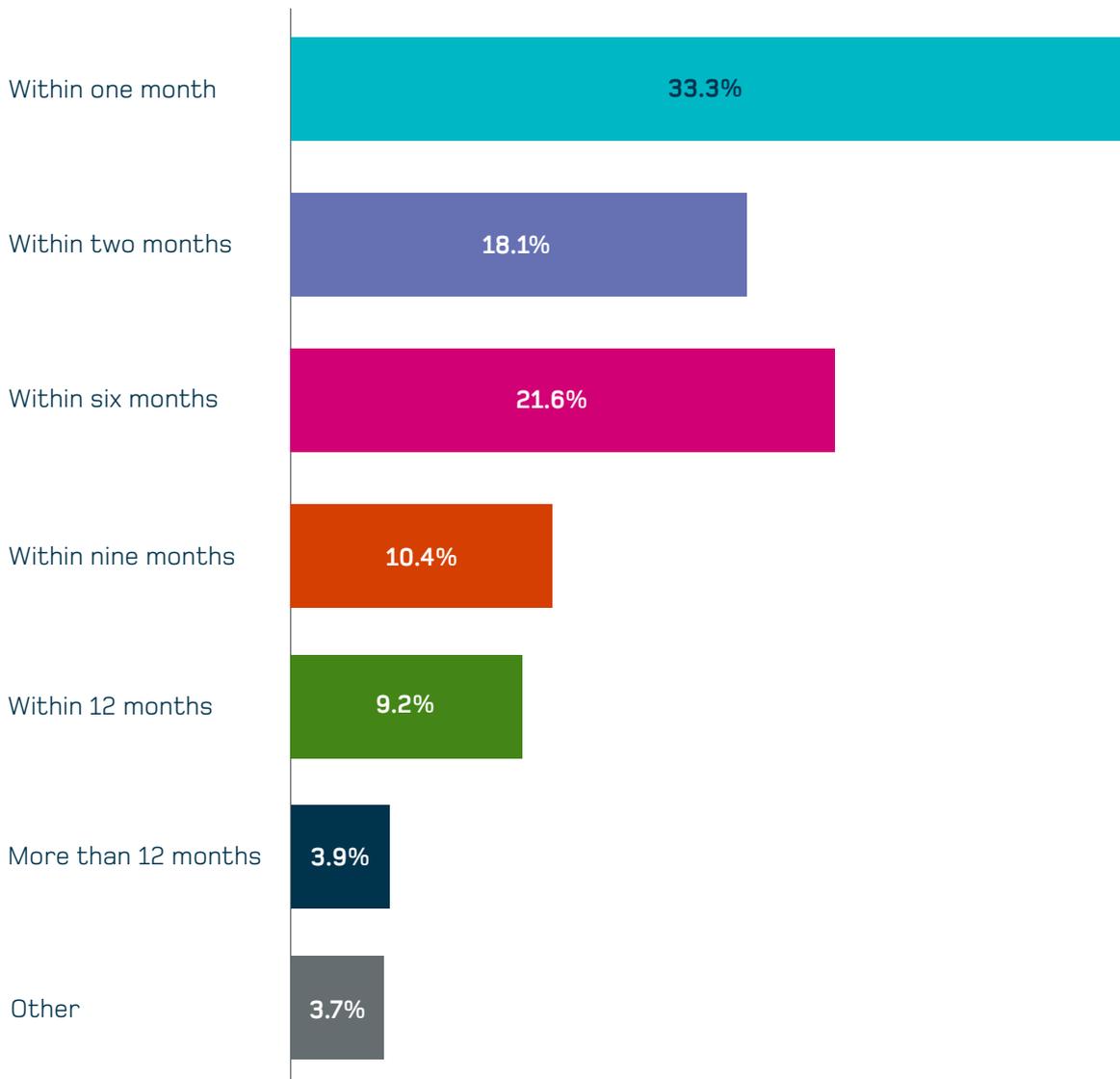


Length of time before starting practising

Over half of respondents who had practised since joining the temporary register said they were able to find work within two months.

Figure 5

Length of time between joining the temporary register and starting practising



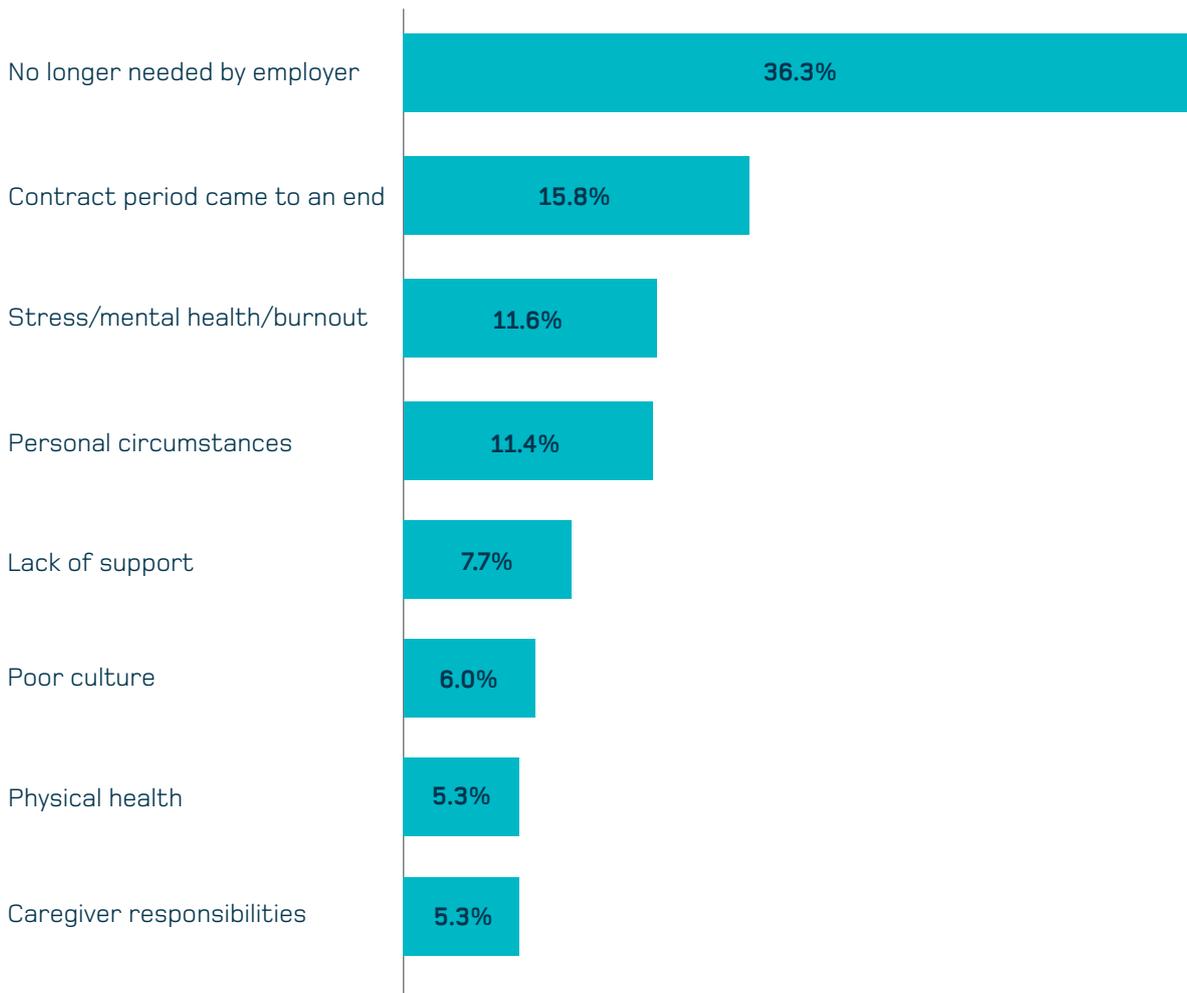
Base: All respondents who started practising and still are; and who were practising but have since stopped [n=2,120]

Reasons why people stopped practising

Many respondents who stopped practising said it was because they were no longer needed by their employer.

However around a quarter cited stress, lack of support or poor culture as a reason.

Figure 6
Top eight reasons for why people stopped practising*



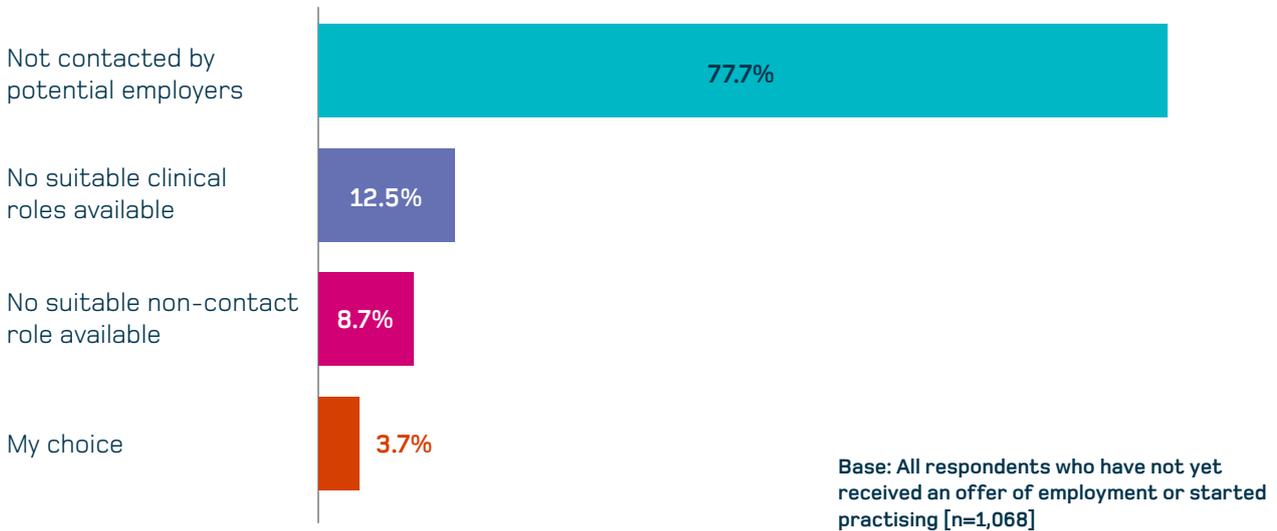
Base: All respondents who were practising but have now stopped [n=430]

Reasons why people had not yet started practising

Over three quarters of those yet to start working report not being contacted by potential employers as a reason.

Figure 7

Reasons why people had not yet started practising*



"I felt there were areas where I would have been useful but was never called; for example helping with the vaccination programme."

Nurse aged 71–75



"I did all the basic training available and vaccine courses but no one got in touch."

Nurse aged 41–50



"I was [initially] contacted by our local employer bank team, so I completed the refresher online training, but [after that] there was no contact."

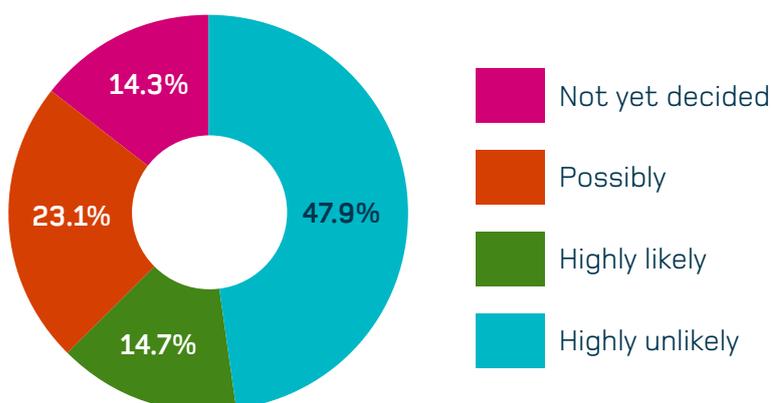
Nurse aged 61–65



Likelihood of joining the permanent register

A third of respondents said they were open to joining the permanent register. Nearly half said they were highly unlikely to join.

Figure 8
Likelihood of joining the permanent register

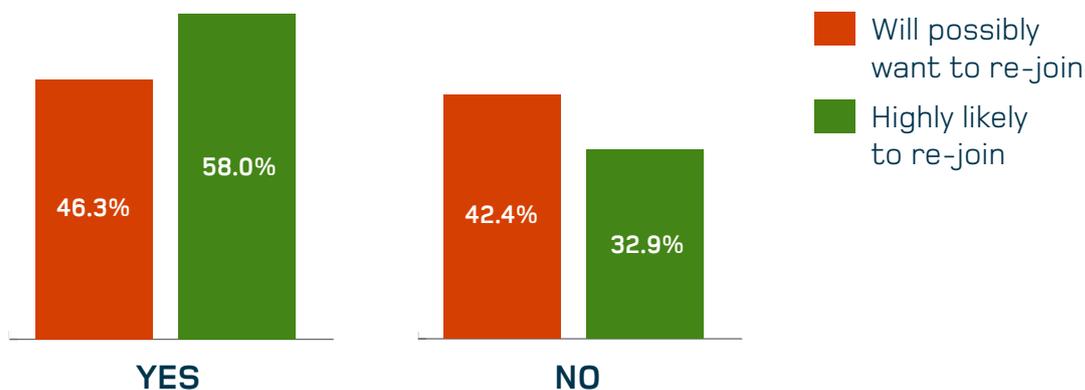


Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

Practice hours of returning professionals

Those who used to be on our permanent register and said they were 'highly likely' to want to re-join it are likely to meet our readmission requirements on practice hours.

Figure 9
Have you worked 450 hours in the last 3 years or 750 hours in the last 5 years?



Base: All respondents who joined the temporary register because they had previously left the permanent register and possibly want to join or readmit to the permanent register [n=844] OR that are highly likely to want to join or readmit to the permanent register in future [n=514].

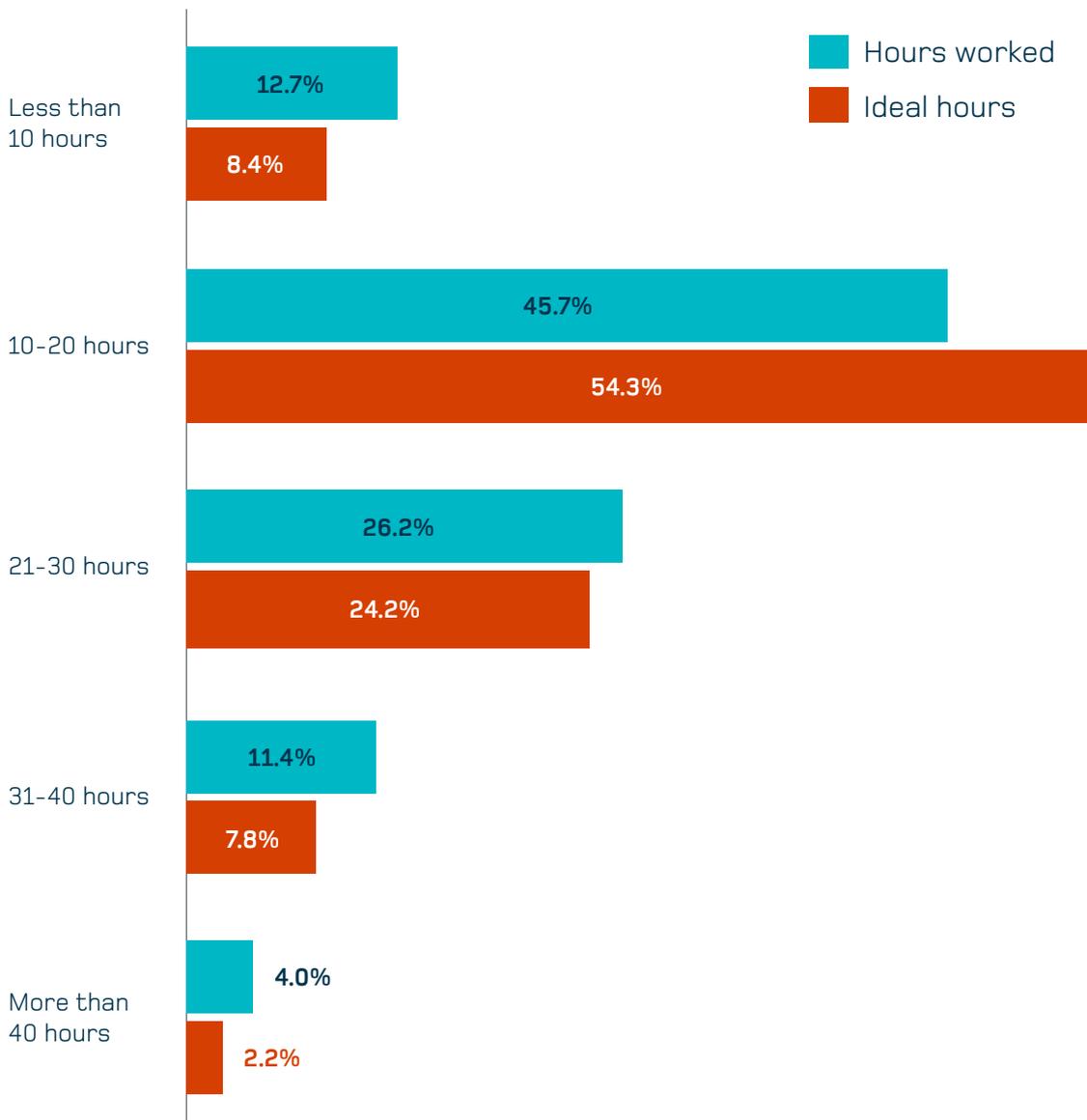
Hours worked per week and ideal hours in future

The biggest group of respondents who said they were 'highly likely' to or 'possibly' want to join or re-join the permanent register were working between 10 and 20 hours per week and said they would ideally like to work those hours in the future.

3.1 percent of this group said they didn't know what their ideal hours would be.

Figure 10

Hours worked per week and ideal hours in the future



Base: All respondents who started practising as a nurse or midwife and still are AND are highly likely to or possibly want to join or readmit to the permanent register in future. [n=694]

What could be done to encourage more people to return to practice?

We asked what more could be done to encourage qualified professionals who have stopped practicing to return to the workforce.

Many respondents felt that addressing long-term systemic issues such as pay and shift pattern length is key to getting professionals back into work.

Others gave day-to-day factors as things to address, including help with training and support with updating skills.

“Better pay. Nurses have always been desperately underpaid. Everyone will need us at some stage, and finally realise our true worth.”

Nurse aged 61–65



“Flexible hours; internal rotation does not suit everyone and long shifts should be a choice, not mandatory.”

Nurse aged 61–65



“Improved working conditions, more flexible working times and positive action being taken around bullying.”

Nurse aged 66–70



“Easier access to updating skills such as training online. I found this daunting and difficult to access help.”

Nurse aged 71–75



“[There were] many requests for information already provided; systems which didn’t talk to each other. Very frustrating.”

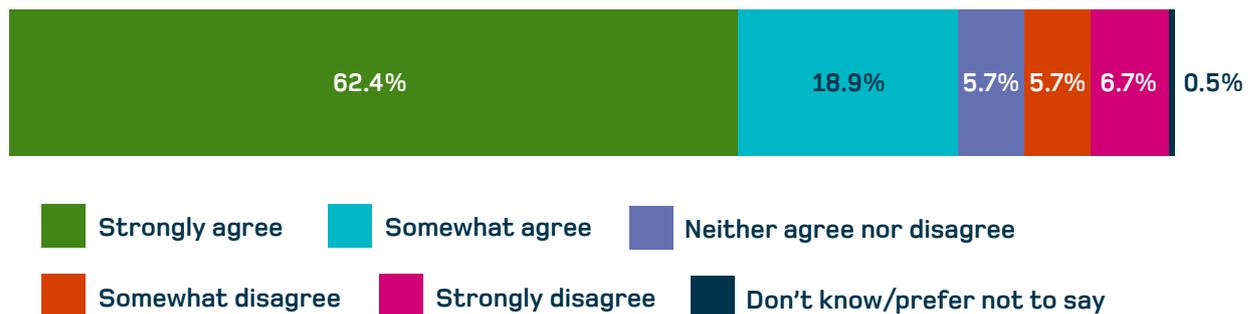
Nurse aged 66–70



Experience of joining the temporary register

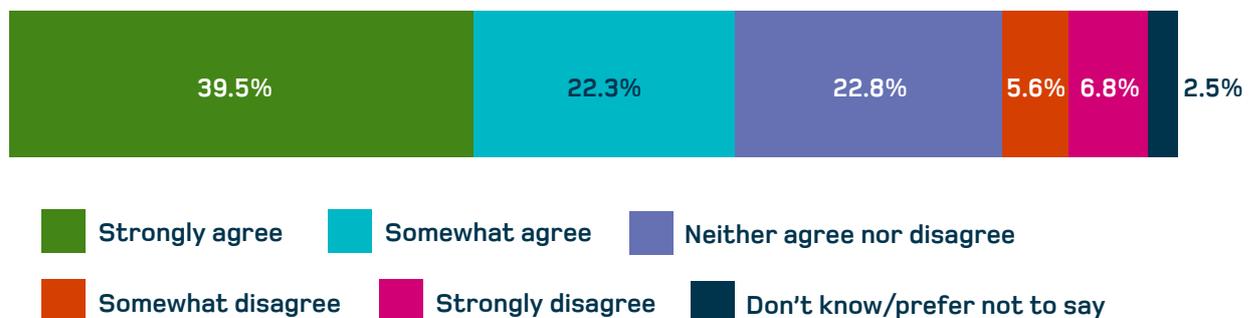
In the survey we gave a series of statements that others have made about their experience on the temporary register and asked respondents to tell us how much they agreed or disagreed with them.

Figure 11
“It was a straightforward process joining the temporary register”



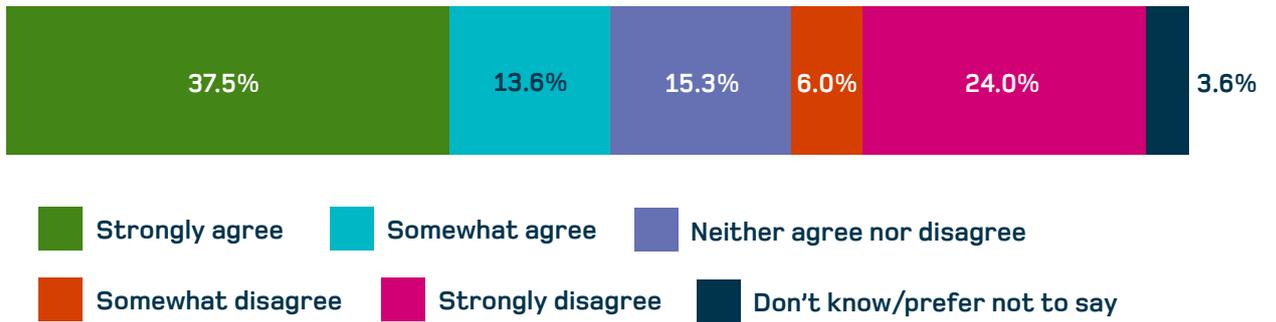
Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

Figure 12
“The NMC gave me the support I needed to enrol or re-register”



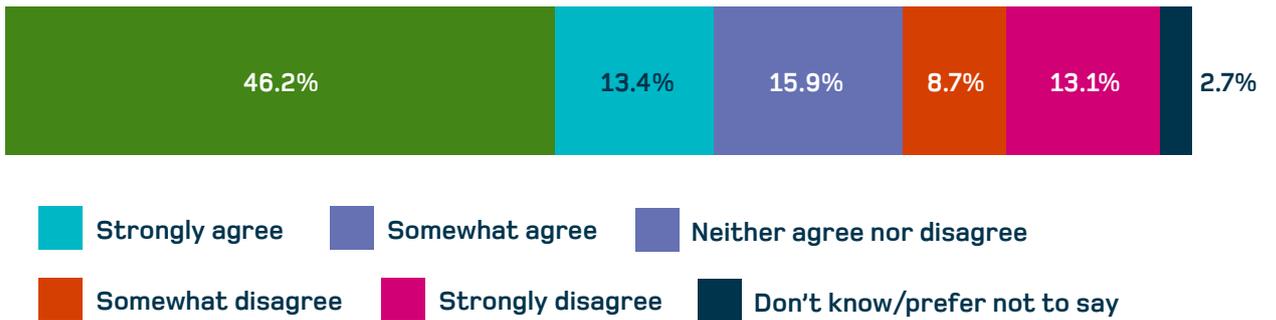
Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

Figure 13
“The Covid-19 temporary register helped me to get back into practising”



Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

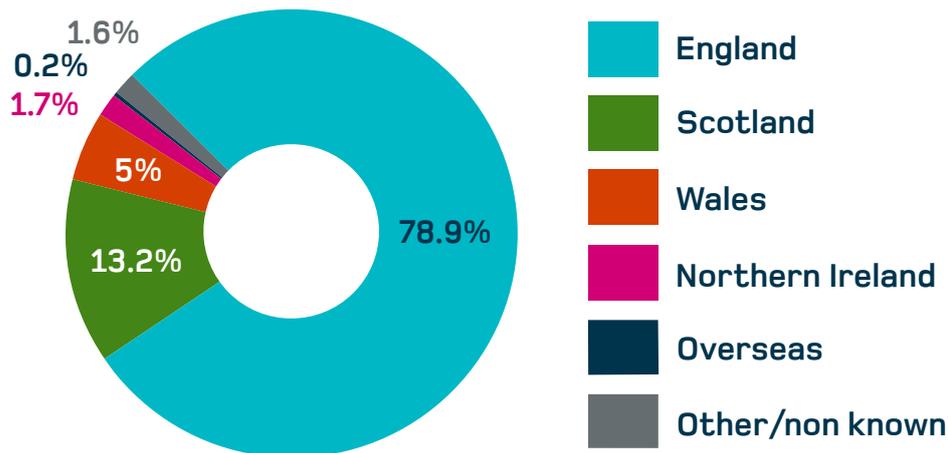
Figure 14
“My experience on the Covid-19 temporary register has been positive”



Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

Geographical analysis

Figure 15
Breakdown of respondents by country

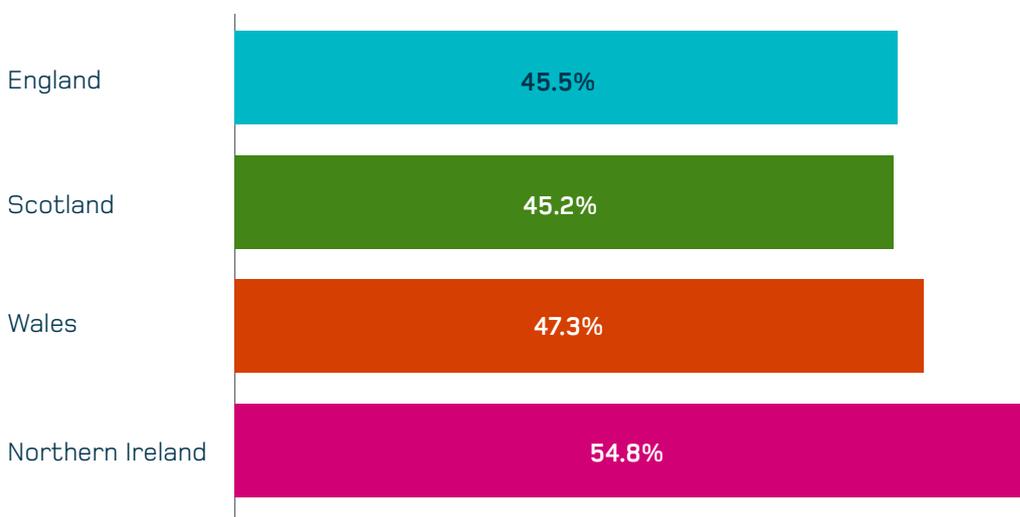


Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

Practising status

The practising status of professionals across England, Scotland and Wales is broadly similar, with around 45 percent of respondents in each country saying they were still practising. Over half of respondents in Northern Ireland said they were still practising. However, the small sample size for this group should be noted.

Figure 16
Percentage of respondents who said they were still practising (by country)



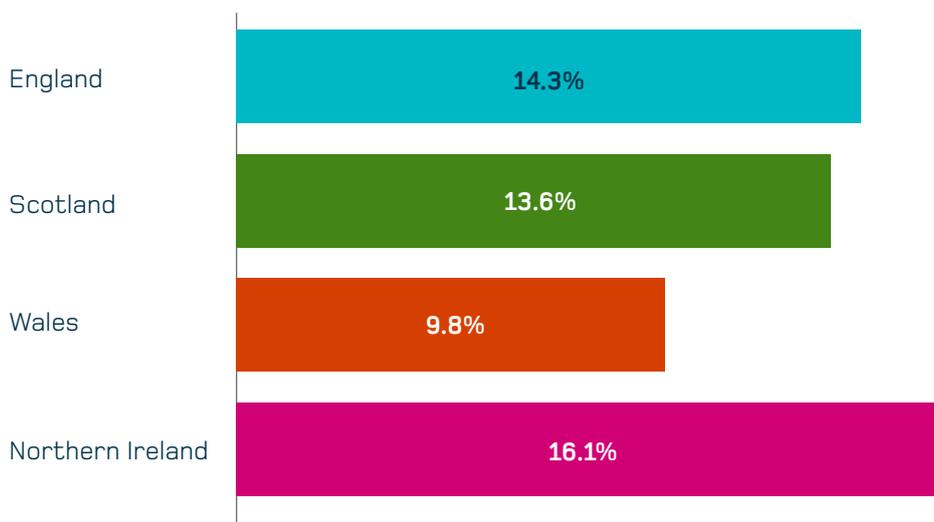
Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

Likelihood of joining the permanent register

The desire to join the permanent register in future was also broadly consistent across the UK, with around 10 to 15 percent of respondents in each country saying they were 'highly likely' to want to do so.

Figure 17

Percentage of respondents who said they were 'highly likely' to want to join the permanent register (by country)



Base: All respondents [n=3,690]

For the latest data on our Covid-19 temporary register, including a breakdown of the temporary register by age and field of practice, see our [registration data reports](#).

NMC Nursing &
Midwifery
Council

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the professional regulator of almost 745,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.

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