

The logo for NMC Insights, featuring the text 'nmc Insights' in white lowercase and uppercase letters respectively, set against a large purple circle. This circle overlaps with two smaller circles, one pink and one teal, which are also overlapping each other. The entire graphic is positioned on the left side of a dark blue background that has a white curved shape on the far left edge.

nmc
Insights

Professionals who left the NMC register in 2024/2025

June 2025

NMC Research and Evidence

Context and Objectives

nmc
Insights

After reading this report, you will better understand the reasons why professionals left our register in 2024/2025 as well as any trends over time and demographic patterns.

This report combines NMC leavers survey analysis with additional NMC and external research.

826,418 professionals were on our register as of 31 March 2024. In 12 months to 31 March 2025, 28,789 professionals have left our register (3.5% of the register). **6,732 leavers replied to our survey** between April 2025 and March 2024 - a response rate of 26%.

This year's report features **additional insight** work conducted by the NMC Research team, including

An **in-depth analysis** of those who left the register and requested a Certificate of Current Professional Status (**CCPS**)

A non-systematic **desk scan** on why people leave their job in the UK (all jobs).

6,732

professionals who left our register and replied to our survey

28,789

professionals who have left our register

826,418

professionals on our register

Who

While broadly representative of our register with many women nurses, more leavers are White, over 51 years old, had been on our register for over 30 years and were educated in the UK.

Those who left the register since March 2024 and replied to our leavers survey are **representative of our entire register** with a vast majority being nurses, a women workforce predominantly, who are not disabled.

88%
nurses
- 93% -

91%
women
- 89% -

89%
no disability
reported
- 94% -

We had a representative number of replies from **all 4 nations**: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

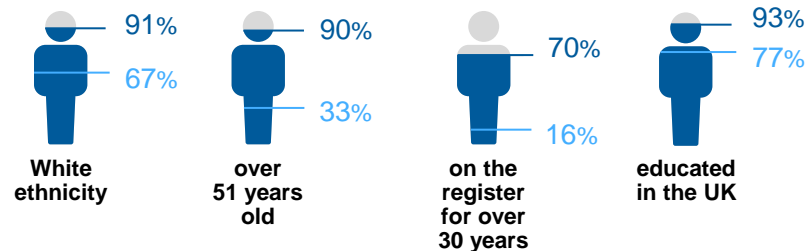


nmc
Insights

leavers who replied to our survey between April 2024 and March 2025

professionals on our register as of 31 March 2024

Some characteristics were overrepresented compared to people on our register.



Section 1 of this report will explain that this is mostly due to a **vast majority of leavers moving into retirement.**

This report highlight only cohorts that stand out compared to the overall trend.

Response patterns linked to age and time on the register mean we'll consistently reference cohorts and personas.

Who

	Generation Z Born between 1997 and 2012		Millennials Born between 1981 and 1996		Generation X Born between 1965 and 1980		Baby Boomers Born between 1946 and 1964	
Age by NMC	21 to 30 years old		31 to 40 years old		41 to 50 years old		51 to 60 years old	
How we categorise in this report	gen Z		millennials		gen X		senior	
	< 3 years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	15 to 20 years	20 to 30 years	30 to 40 years	40 to 50 years
Time on register	< 3 years	3 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	15 to 20 years	20 to 30 years	30 to 40 years	40 to 50 years
How we categorise in this report	recent joiners		early careers		mid-careers		late careers	

Structure

Section 1

-

Why have professionals left our register this year?

Section 2

-

Are professionals leaving when they intended to?

Section 3

-

What does the future hold?



Why have professionals left our register this year?

Senior leave our register to retire and make up the majority of leavers. **Millennials and Gen X** tend to **leave for health reasons**. **Gen Z** tend to leave following **burnout and exhaustion**.

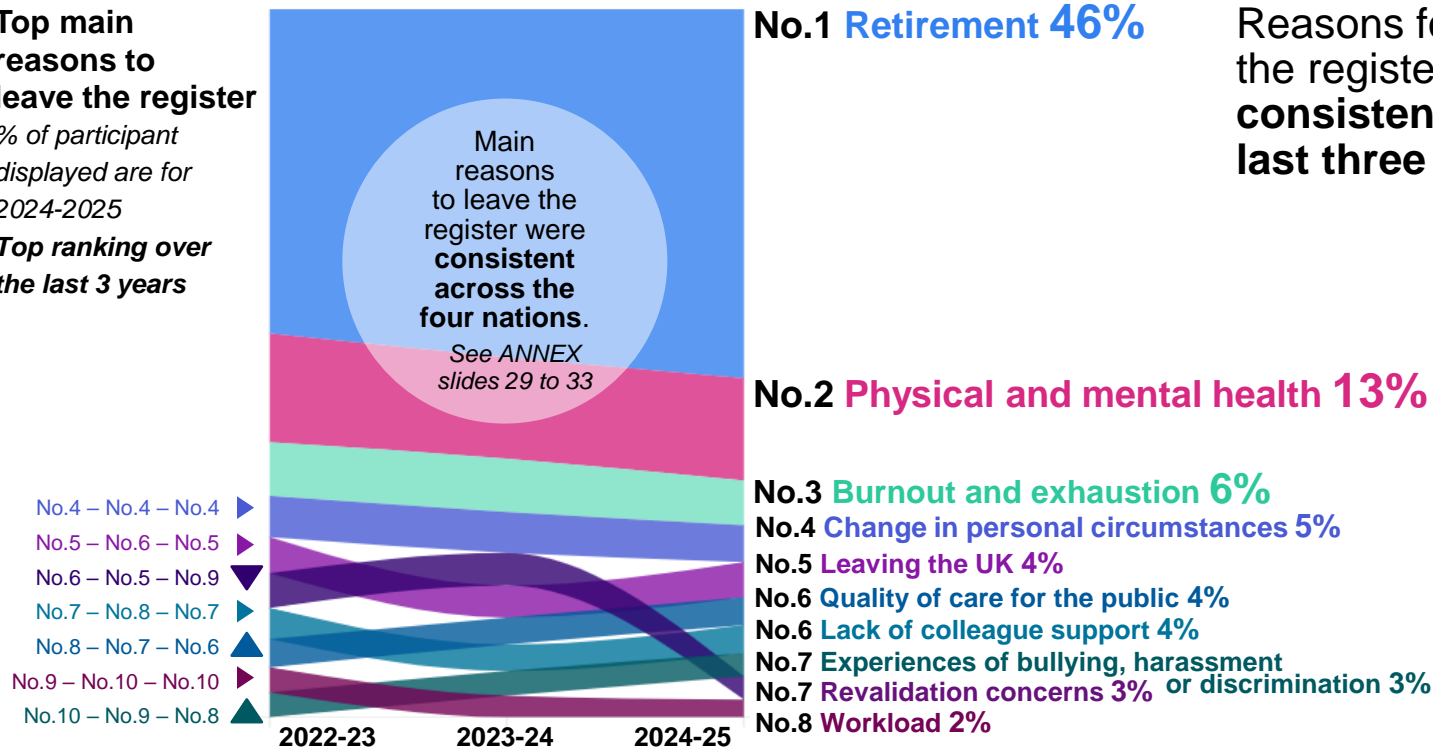
Section 1

Retirement continues as the leading reason for leaving the register - wellness also stays prominent

Top main reasons to leave the register

% of participant displayed are for 2024-2025

Top ranking over the last 3 years



Reasons for leaving the register remain consistent over the last three years

- For many it was to retire. For a good share it related to their **physical or mental health**, and **burnout or exhaustion**.

A smaller portion reported a **change in their personal circumstances** whilst others were planning to or had already left the UK.

Top 5 reasons to leave vary based on generation and career length

No.1

A significant proportion of **senior** and people **in their late career** selected "**retirement**" as a main reason to leave.

No.2

Gen X and **people in their mid-career** were significantly more likely to highlight "**my physical and mental health**" as a main reason to leave.

No.3

A notable proportion of **gen Z** selected "**burnout or exhaustion**" as a main reason to leave.

No.4

EU educated professionals, **nursing associates**, **millennials**, **recent joiners** and those in their **early career** are more likely to select "**change in personal circumstances**" as a main reason to leave.

No.5

Those who are educated **outside the UK**, **gen Z**, **millennials**, **recent joiners**, those in their **early career**, those who are from **Asian or Black ethnicity** and who had **full-time positions** are more likely to choose "**I am leaving/have left the UK**" as a main reason to leave the register.

I worked as a nurse for 46 years 8 months 1 day. Time for something else.

Female nurse, senior, in late career

nmc Insights

I have enjoyed my career and miss working but my physical condition now makes it impossible.

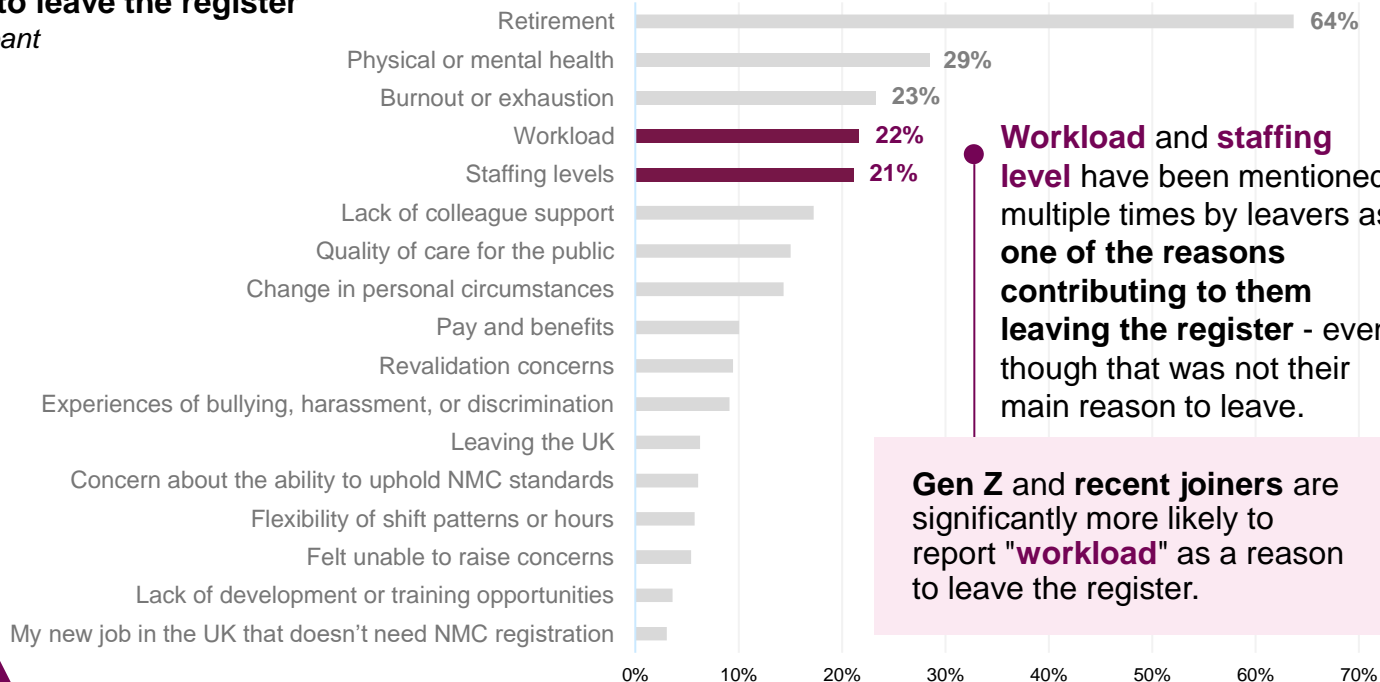
Female nurse and midwife, gen X, in mid-career

I never wanted to leave the NMC or UK midwifery but it became impossible to stay and have a good quality of life.

Female midwife, gen Z, recent joiner

Concerns about workload influence professionals' reasons for leaving

All reasons to leave the register
in % of participant



Workload and staffing level have been mentioned multiple times by leavers as **one of the reasons contributing to them leaving the register** - even though that was not their main reason to leave.

Gen Z and recent joiners are significantly more likely to report "**workload**" as a reason to leave the register.

”

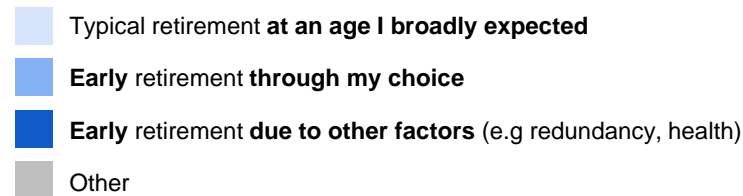
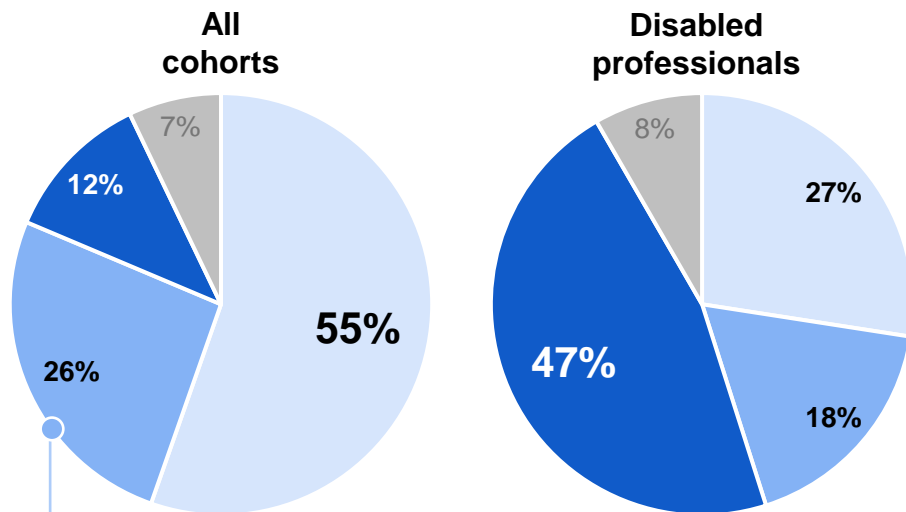
Patients are coming to hospital sicker than ever and the amount of patients one nurse looks after now is dangerous. This is not even including the corridor patients. I was worried I would lose my PIN due to making a mistake because we were so short staffed. This is why I made the decision to leave.

Female nurse, Gen Z, in early career

Q12: Using the list below, please tell us the reasons why you left the NMC register. You can select up to five reasons.
Base: 2024/25 N=6,732

Over half of those who retire are leaving the register when they expected

Statement from those who left for retirement
in % of participant



Amongst those who selected "retirement" as a main reason to leave, **the majority (55%) are retiring as expected.**

● **Disabled professionals are more likely to retire earlier than planned due to other factors (47%).**

Despite most retiring when expected - **1 in 4 people** choose to take an **early retirement**

Retired due to ill health following a catastrophic fall causing a spinal cord injury and subsequent mental health issues.

Female nurse, Gen X, who reported a disability

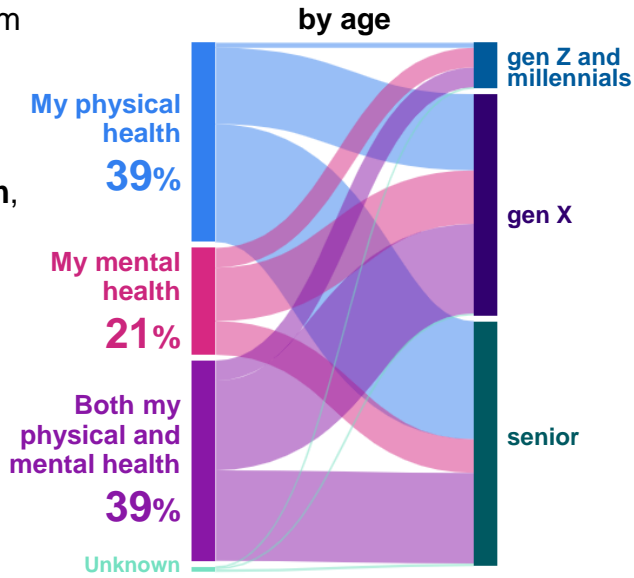


Those who left our register highlighted the impact of the profession on their health

Near a **third of leavers** shared that their physical or mental health contributed to them leaving the register. (slide 9)

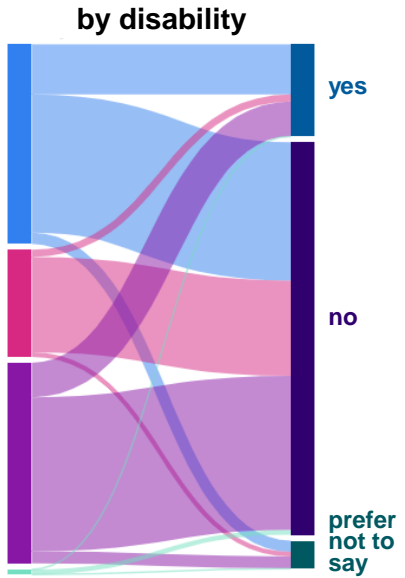
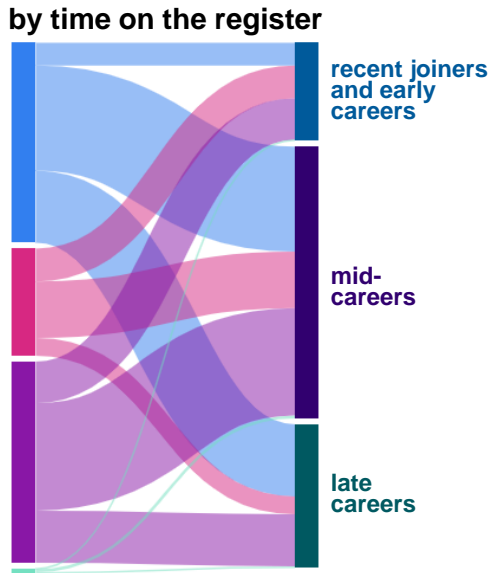
● Amongst them, **physical health** was a strong factor, and **mental health** remained substantial.

Health factors contributing to people leaving *in number of participant*



Gen Z and millennials are more likely to leave due to **mental health**.

Senior, those in their **late career**, who are **disabled**, identify as **female or Black** are more likely to leave due to **physical health**.



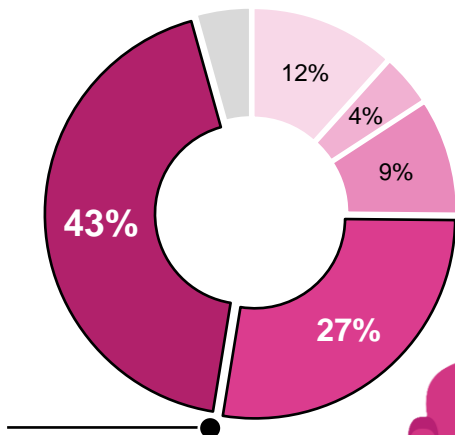
Many of those who left partly due to poor health felt their work was a contributory factor

Impact of the profession on physical and mental health

[amongst the cohort who reported poor health as a reason to leave]

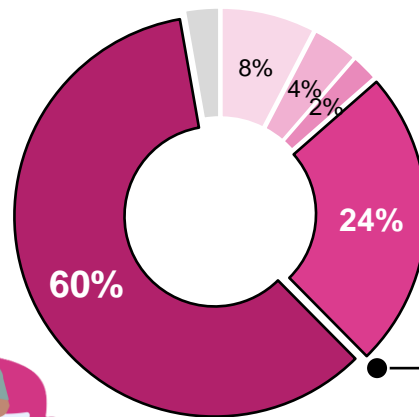
in % of participant

Impact on physical health

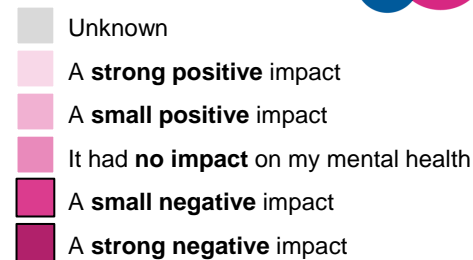


70% of leavers who reported poor health as a reason to leave said their role as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate had a **negative impact on their **physical health**.**

Impact on mental health



84% of leavers who reported poor health as a reason to leave said their role as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate had a **negative impact on their **mental health**. This includes **over 60% who said the negative impact was strong**.**



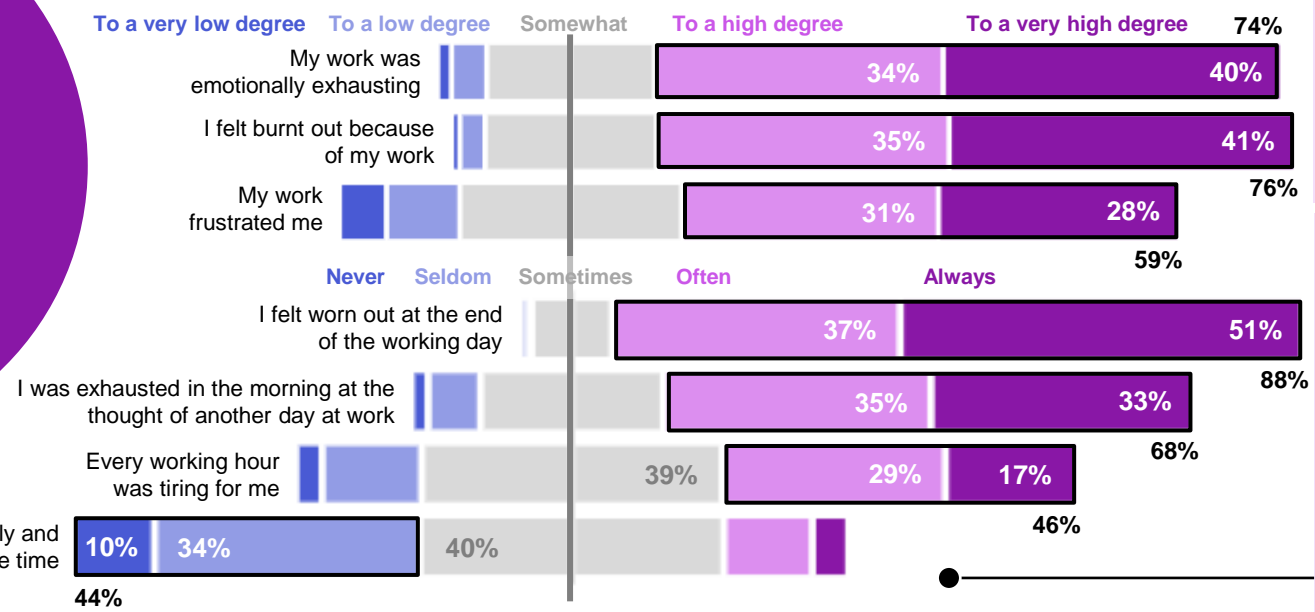


Many leavers feel tired, exhausted, burnt out, and frustrated from their job - particularly gen Z and millennials in their early careers

Near 1 in 4 leavers selected "burnout or exhaustion" as one of their reason to leave. (slide 9)

Percentages reported in this slide are amongst this sample only.

Impact of the profession on health and life in % of participant



Gen Z, millennials and recent joiners and those in their early career were more likely to reply "to a very high degree" to these three statements.

Gen Z, millennials and recent joiners and those in their early career were more likely to report negatively: many amongst these cohorts replied to "often or always" feel worn out, exhausted and tired, and many "never or seldom" have energy for friends and family.

Q16: Please tell us how to what extent you felt the following: My work was emotionally exhausting / I felt burnt out because of my work / My work frustrated me Q17 please tell us how often you felt the following: I felt worn out at the end of the working day / I was exhausted in the morning at the thought of another day at work / Every working hour was tiring for me / I had enough energy for family and friends during my leisure time **Base:** N=1,567



All UK workers encounter challenges around mental health, stress/burnout, pushing them to leave their job

Several pieces of **commercial research** conducted over the last six years highlighted that **a large proportion of UK workers had the intention to quit their job**. Reasons range from wanting a better pay and benefits, a better job satisfaction, a better work-life balance, experiencing poor management, discomfort talking about mental health, feeling undervalued and experiencing stress.

2019

A 2019 employee sentiment research conducted by [IIP](#) (Investors in People) showed that in the UK, one in three workers report being unhappy at work which with 45% of workers looking to move jobs in 2019. The top three reasons that people are changing jobs is because they want **better pay** (25%), **don't feel valued** (16%) and have **work-related stress** (16%).

2020

2021

A 2022 Research from [PWC](#) reported that nearly a quarter (23%) of UK workers expected to change jobs in the next 12 months.

2022

A 2022 Research from the [CIPD](#) (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) 6.5 million people in the UK were expect to quit their job in the next 12 months. **Better pay and benefits** are the main motivators to leave, but people are also looking for increased **job satisfaction** and **better work life balance**.

2023

2024

A 2024 Research from [Unmind](#) (provider of mental health solutions) [revealed](#) over two-thirds (67%) UK workers having left or considered leaving their job **because of a bad manager**. With almost 5 in 10 (46%) employees **not feeling comfortable talking to their manager about mental health**.

2025



Are professionals leaving when they intended to?

Many professionals **leave our register earlier than planned**, often between 1 to 4 years earlier.

Section 2

Most leavers stopped practising when their registration expired or a few months before

When people stopped practicing their most recent role

in % of participants

— 2022-23
— 2023-24
— 2024-25

3 or more years before their registration expired

2% - 2% - 3%

24% - 24% - 22%
When their NMC registration expired

1 to 12 months before their registration expired

49% - 46% - 49%

2 to 3 years before their registration expired

6% - 6% - 7%

1 to 2 years before their registration expired

16% - 18% - 17%



Near half of leavers (49%) who replied to our survey this year stopped practising 1 to 12 months before their registration expired.

Nearly a quarter (22%) stopped practising at the point of expiration.

This is consistent with the past 2 years' trend.

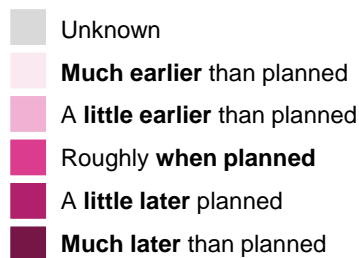
Near half of professionals left earlier than planned

In 2024-25, **47% left earlier than planned and 33% as planned.** This is consistent with the previous year's proportions (2023-24).

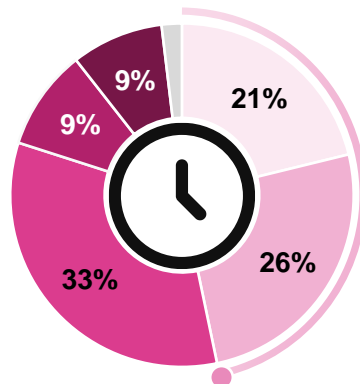
A mix of **external pressure** and **negative personal experiences** pushes professionals to leave earlier than planned.

Those who selected "Quality of care for the public", "Flexibility of shift patterns or hours", "Experiences of bullying, harassment, or discrimination", "Lack of colleague support", "Physical or mental health", "Burnout or exhaustion", "Change in personal circumstances" and "Concern maintaining NMC standards" as reasons for leaving are more likely to **leave earlier than planned**.

When people end up leaving compared to their initial plan
in % of participant

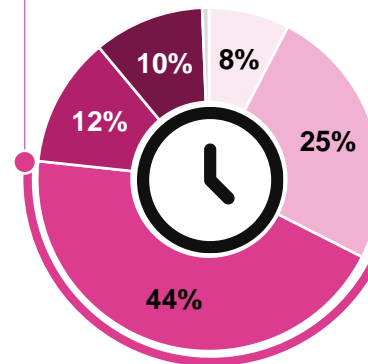


All leavers



Those who **leave to retire** are more likely to leave **roughly when planned**.

Those who leave to retire



I left because of the working environment, not the job. [...] I felt the hospital management were not providing a safe working environment and staffing levels to continue working safely. **Maintaining high standards of care became a battle I couldn't win.**

Female nurse,
millennial,
in mid-career,
ended-up leaving much earlier than planned



I had to delay my retirement due to state pension being paid much later. I had planned to retire at 60.

Female nurse,
senior,
in a late career,
ended-up leaving much later than planned

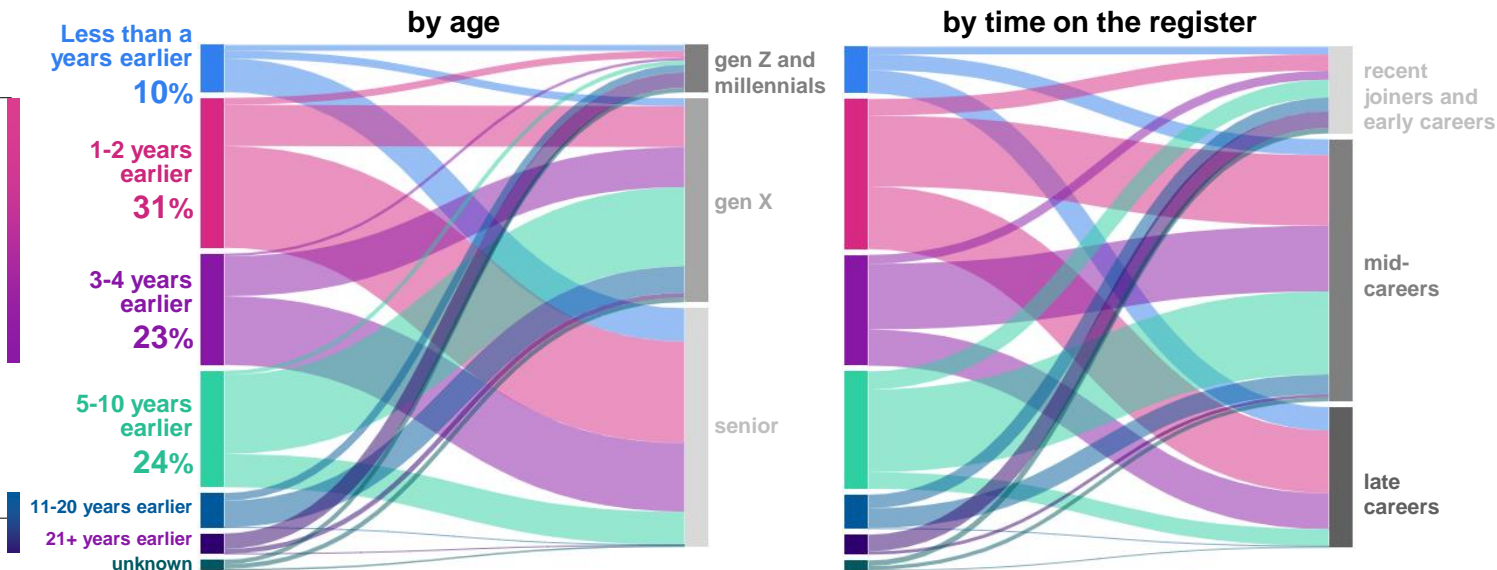
Amongst leavers who ended up leaving earlier than planned, over 50% ended up leaving between 1 and 4 years earlier

Over half of those who left earlier than planned (54%) ended up leaving 1 to 4 years earlier.

Those who left a lot earlier than planned (11 years and over) likely had projected to spend their whole career as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate as many of them were gen Z, millennials or gen X in their early to mid careers.

How much **earlier** people left the register than they had planned

in number of participant



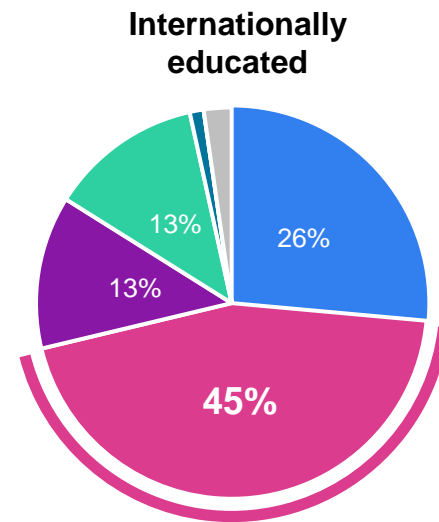
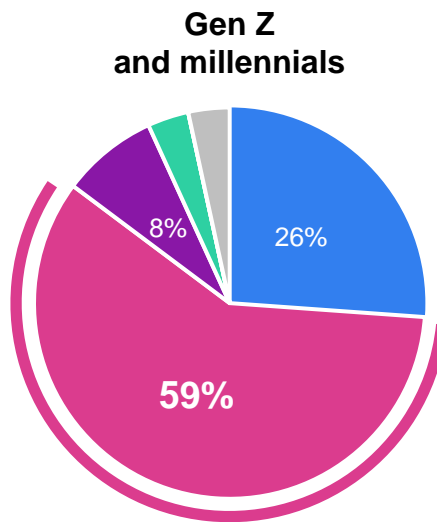
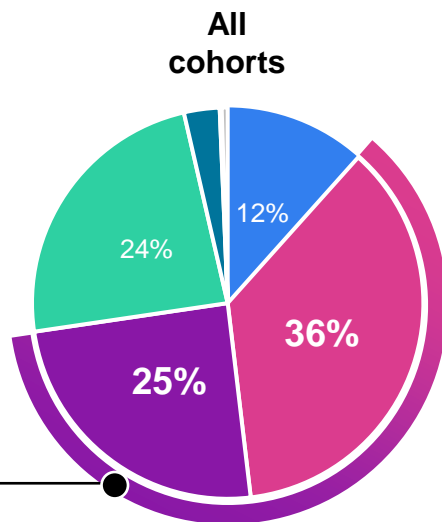
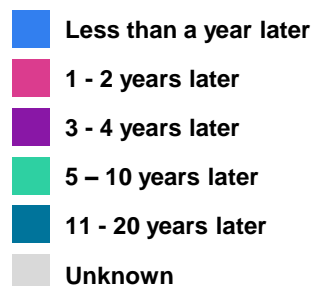
Disabled professionals are more likely to leave **between 9 and 15 years earlier** than planned.

Those who were **internationally educated** are more likely to leave **less than a year earlier** than planned.

Amongst leavers who ended up leaving later than planned, over 60% ended up leaving between 1 and 4 years later

How much later people left the register than they had planned

in % of participant



61% of those who left later than planned ended-up leaving **1 to 4 years** later than planned.

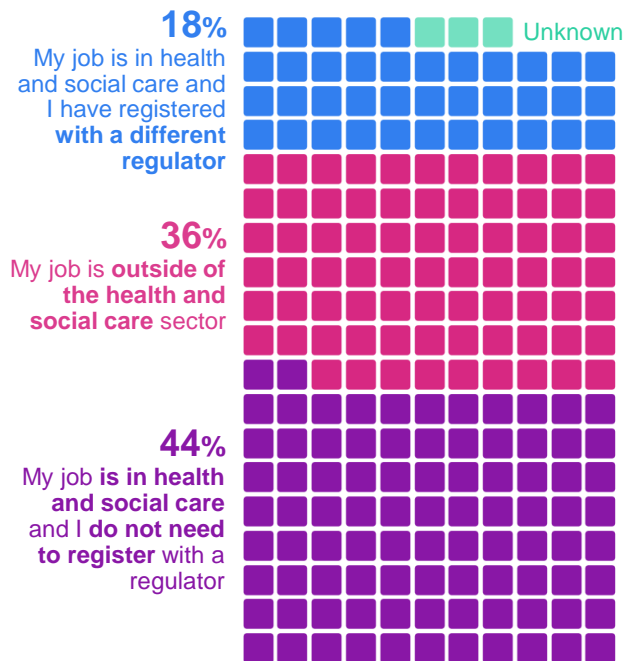
Gen Z and millennials along with those who are **internationally educated** are more likely to leave **1 to 2 years** later than planned.

What does the future hold?

Besides those who were retiring, **some professionals left for another job in the UK** that doesn't need NMC registration, and **some left for another country**. In most cases, **those who leave are unlikely to come back** to a nursing or midwifery career. Most leavers are **unlikely to promote careers** in nursing and midwifery to friends or family.

The insight we have on next destination of leavers is limited

Those with a new job that doesn't need NMC registration - in % of participant



In 2024/2025, **3.1% of leavers** who took part in our survey told us **they have a new job in the UK that doesn't need NMC registration**. This trend was stable since 2022 (3.1% in 2022-23 and 3.2% in 2023-24). Of leavers who didn't retire, this accounts for 6% of professionals reason for leaving the register.

“ [I] changed role to work in the care sector as a care assistant.

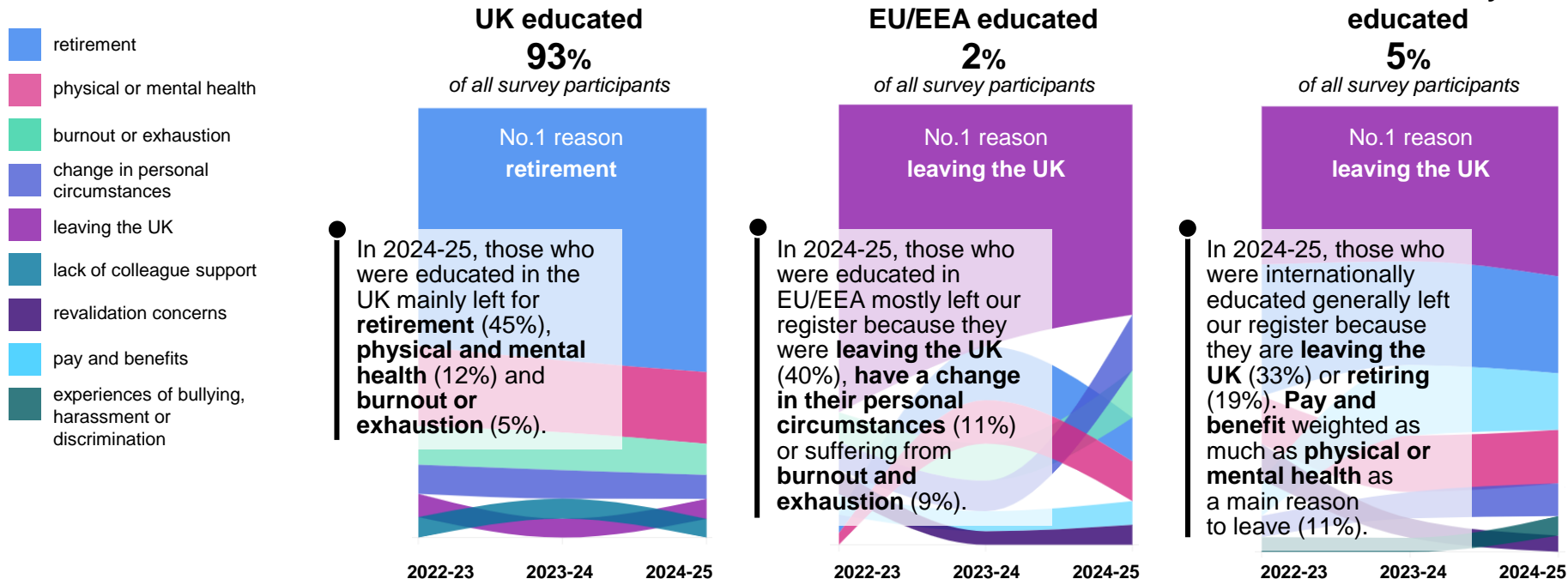
Female nurse, senior, in mid-career

NB: In the options we provided in our survey, we focused on reasons to leave in relation with occupation challenges. **This restricts our level of insight on what people did next.**

Senior and gen X, those who have been **on the register for 30 to 40 years** (mid-career) and those **living in Wales** are more likely to **leave for another non-registered job in health and social care**.

Leavers educated in the UK mainly leave to retire, whilst those educated internationally often leave the UK

Top main reasons to leave the register, by training region over the last 3 years
in % of participant



A small portion left for another country, with strong financial motives

In 2024/2025, **4.4% of leavers requested a Certificate of Current Professional Status (CCPS)**, a document required to work abroad.

In 2023/2024, 3.4% of participants requested a CCPS, so the split was comparable over the 2 years period with a **slight increase this year**.

CCPS requesters were more likely to select:

“a change in personal circumstances”

“pay and benefit”

“I am leaving/have left the UK”

as a reason to leave the register.

Source: NMC CCPS Analysis from our leaver survey

Better pay and better work life balance. Overall a better life in Australia.

Leaver registered as a nurse, used their CCPS certificate to practise in Australia



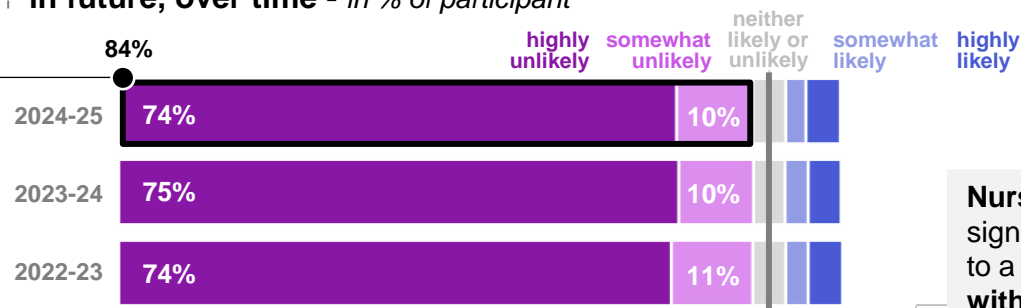
We have conducted an in-depth analysis of CCPS leavers between November 2023 and October 2024, and found out that:

- 1 Those who left and asked for a CCPS tend to be **younger and more diverse** than the whole of the register.
- 2 The majority of CCPS requesters who left are **educated outside the UK** and tend to stay **on our register for less than 10 years**.
- 3 **Better pay and conditions are strong drivers**.
- 4 **Australia is a popular destination** for UK leavers who request a CCPS.
- 5 **Some leave the UK to go back home**, others to experience **somewhere new**.

In most cases, those who leave the NMC register do not intend to return

In 2024-25, **84%** of leavers are **unlikely** to return to a career as a registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate in future. This trend remained the same over the last three years.

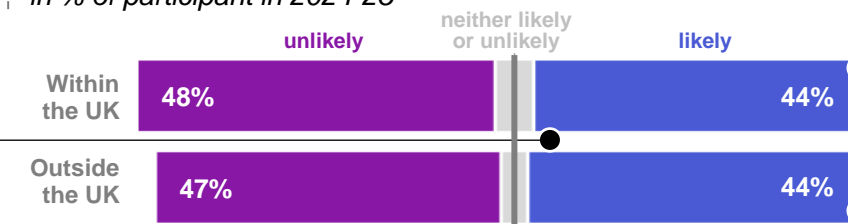
Likelihood to return to a career as a registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate in future, over time - in % of participant



Nursing associates are significantly more likely to return to a registered career in future **within the UK**.

Amongst those who are likely to return it is **evenly split** between those who are **likely to return within the UK** and those who are likely to return **outside of the UK**.

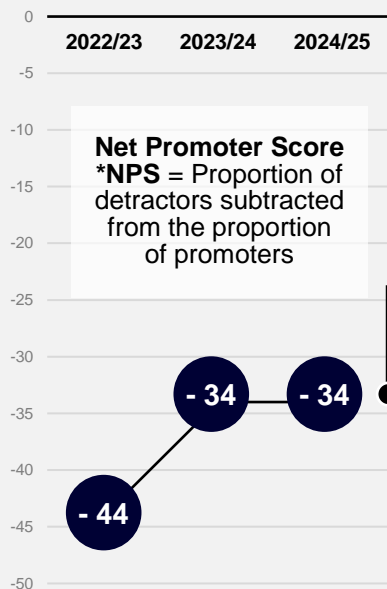
Likelihood to return in future within or outside the UK in % of participant in 2024-25



Those who were educated **internationally**, those who identify as **Asian or Black**, are **recent joiners** and/or in their **early career**, **gen Z and millennials** and those who work **full time positions** or **agency staff roles** are more likely to return to a registered career in future **outside the UK**.

Recommendation for a career in nursing and midwifery is still low amongst leavers

NPS score over time



Most leavers qualify as **detractors** when it comes to recommending a career in nursing and midwifery.

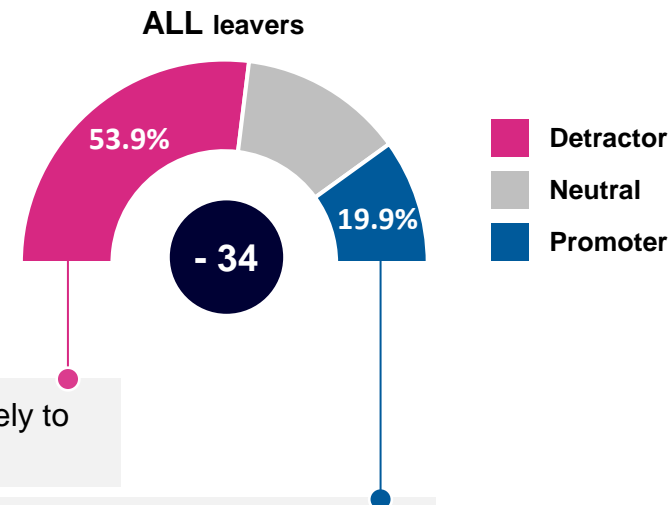
NPS score is negative but **stable** compared to last year.

NPS per nation, setting and profession is consistent with the overall NPS score.

Gen Z, millennials and gen X are more likely to be **detractors** than senior.

Some cohorts: **those educated internationally**, and those who identify as **Asian or Black** are more likely to be **promoters** than other groups.

NPS score in 2024/25



POV from a **Detractor**,

Someone **not at all likely to recommend a career** as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate in the UK to friends or family

As a nurse you've made it **all about paperwork and politics** and you don't ever get to care and mean truly care for the patients anymore. **I'm ashamed to ever be apart of it all.**

White female nurse,
gen X
UK educated



POV from a **Promoter**,

Someone **extremely likely to recommend a career** as a nurse, midwife or nursing associate in the UK to friends or family

I am **grateful** I was given to practise in UK. I learnt a lot while in the UK. It was easy registration.

Black female nurse,
millennial,
Internationally-
educated

Summary

nmc
Insights

Why have professionals left our register this year?

46%
leave to retire

Retirement in the No.1 reason for leaving the register. Most retirees are senior and in their late career.

Many of those who left our register highlighted the negative impact of the profession on their wellness. Many leavers were feeling exhaustion, burnout, worn out and frustration from their job. Millennials and gen X in their mid-careers tend to leave for physical or mental health reasons. Gen Z in their early career tend to leave following burnout and exhaustion. In comparison with overall UK workers, nurses and midwives have similar triggers pushing them to leave their job, including challenges around mental health, stress/burnout.

Professionals' workload also contributed to them leaving our register.

Are professionals leaving when they intended to?

Most leavers **stopped practising when their registration expired** or a few months before.

Most retirees leave when they planned but other professionals leave earlier than planned due largely to negative personal experiences or concerns based on quality of care and standards.

47%
leave earlier than planned



only 20%
of leavers would promote the profession

What does the future hold?

Scope for re-engaging leavers is limited. UK educated leavers tend to be retiring and internationally-educated leavers tend to be relocating outside the UK.

In most cases, those who leave the NMC register do not intend to return.

Recommendation for a career in nursing and midwifery is still low amongst leavers.



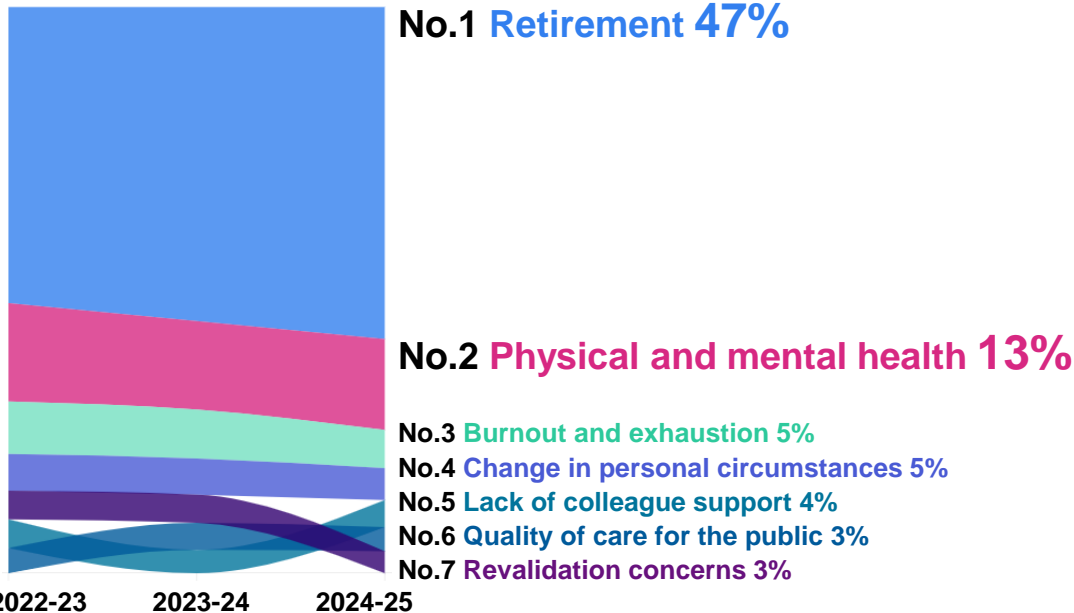
ANNEX

In England - as for the UK overall - retirement is still the number one reason for people to leave the register, and well-being remains prominent

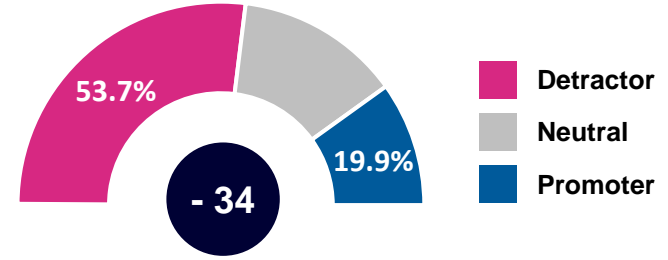
Main reasons for leaving the register in England - Top ranking over the last 3 years

% of participant are displayed for 2024-2025

England



Only 20% would promote the profession in England (NPS score in 2024/25)



In 2024-25, in **England**, lack of support from colleagues or senior members of staff is ranked higher (5th) than in other nations.

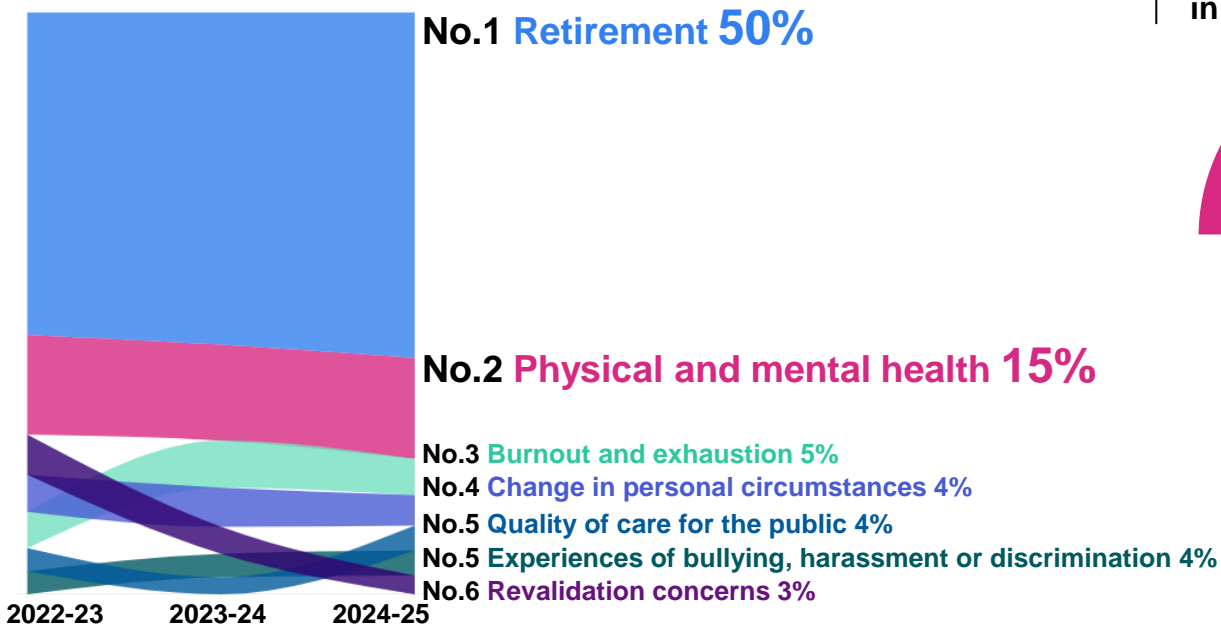
In 2024-25, 'leaving the UK' ranks 7th and 'workload' 9th.

In Scotland - as for the UK overall - retirement is still the number one reason for people to leave the register, and well-being remains prominent

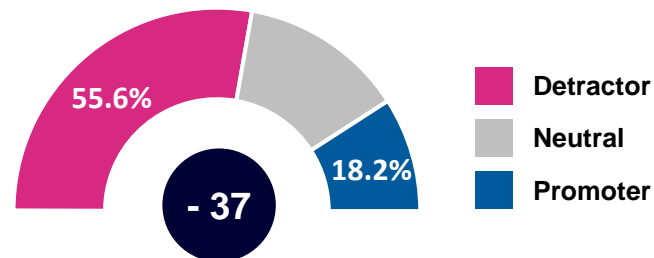
Main reasons for leaving the register in Scotland - Top ranking over the last 3 years

% of participant are displayed for 2024-2025

Scotland



● Only 18% would promote the profession in Scotland (NPS score in 2024/25)



● In 2024-25, **Scotland** is the only nation to see experiences of bullying, harassment and discrimination in its **top 5 reasons** for leaving the register.

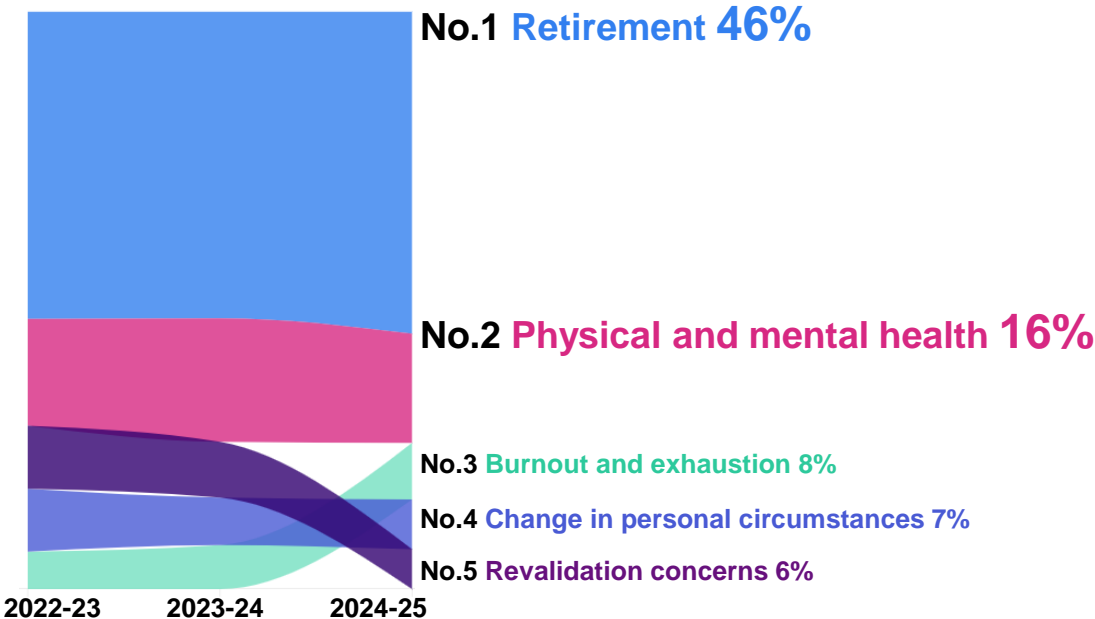
● In 2024-25, 'workload' ranks 8th and 'leaving the UK' ranks 10th.

In Northern Ireland - as for the UK overall - retirement is still the number one reason for people to leave the register, and well-being remains prominent

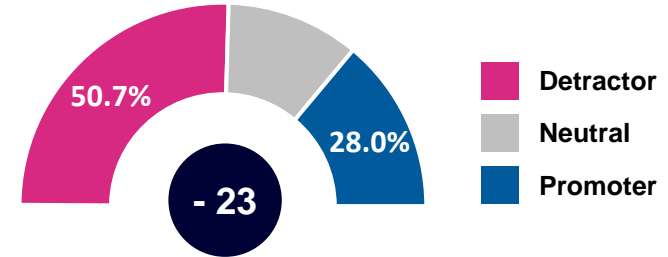
Main reasons for leaving the register in Northern Ireland - Top ranking over the last 3 years

% of participant are displayed for 2024-2025

Northern Ireland



● Only 28% would promote the profession in Northern Ireland (NPS score in 2024/25)



● Historically and still in 2024-25, in Northern Ireland, concerns around meeting revalidation requirements ranked higher (No.3, then No.5) as a reason to leave the register than in England and Scotland.

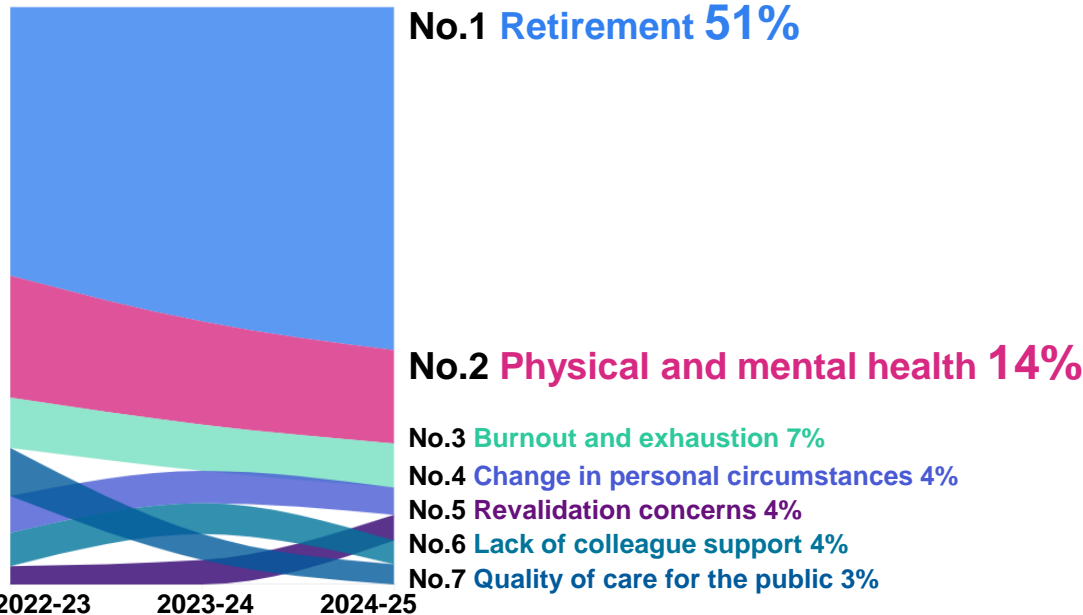
● In 2024-25, 'leaving the UK' ranks 8th and 'workload' ranks 10th.

In Wales – as for the UK overall - retirement is still the number one reason for people to leave the register, and well-being remains prominent

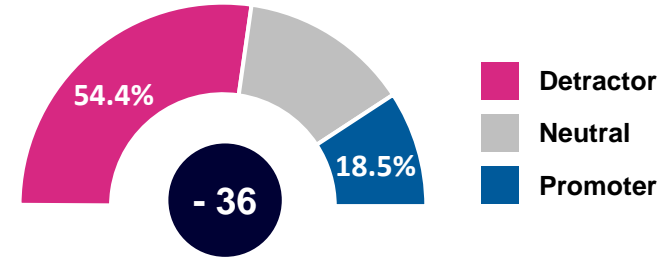
Main reasons for leaving the register in Wales - Top ranking over the last 3 years

% of participant are displayed for 2024-2025

Wales



● Only 19% would promote the profession in Wales (NPS score in 2024/25)



● In 2024-25, in **Wales**, concerns around meeting revalidation requirements ranked **higher (No.5)** as a main reason to leave the register than in England and Scotland.

● In 2024-25, 'workload' ranks 10th and 'leaving the UK' ranks 12th.

The logo for nmc Insights is located in the top left corner. It features a large purple circle containing the text "nmc" in a small, white, lowercase sans-serif font, and "Insights" in a larger, white, uppercase sans-serif font below it. To the right and slightly below the purple circle are three smaller overlapping circles: a dark blue one, a dark red one, and a bright pink one.

nmc
Insights

Thank you