

The NMC register UK mid-year update

1 April –
30 September 2025



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

The big picture

On 30 September, there were a record **860,801** nurses, midwives and nursing associates on the Register – an increase of **0.8%** (**7,094** professionals) since 1 April.

While the Register has continued to grow, the rate of growth has more than halved compared to the same period last year – between April and September 2024, it increased by **1.8%** (**14,940** professionals).

The slowdown is due mainly to a sharp fall in the number of internationally educated professionals joining the Register for the first time.

In the last six months, **6,321** international professionals joined. That's a **49.6%** fall compared to the **12,534** international joiners between April and September last year. It is also the lowest six-monthly intake of international professionals for five years.

A record high of

860,801

registered professionals

An increase of

7,094

since April

+0.8%



+0.7%

Nurses

793,694



+1.9%

Midwives

47,481



-0.8%

Dual registrants

6,193

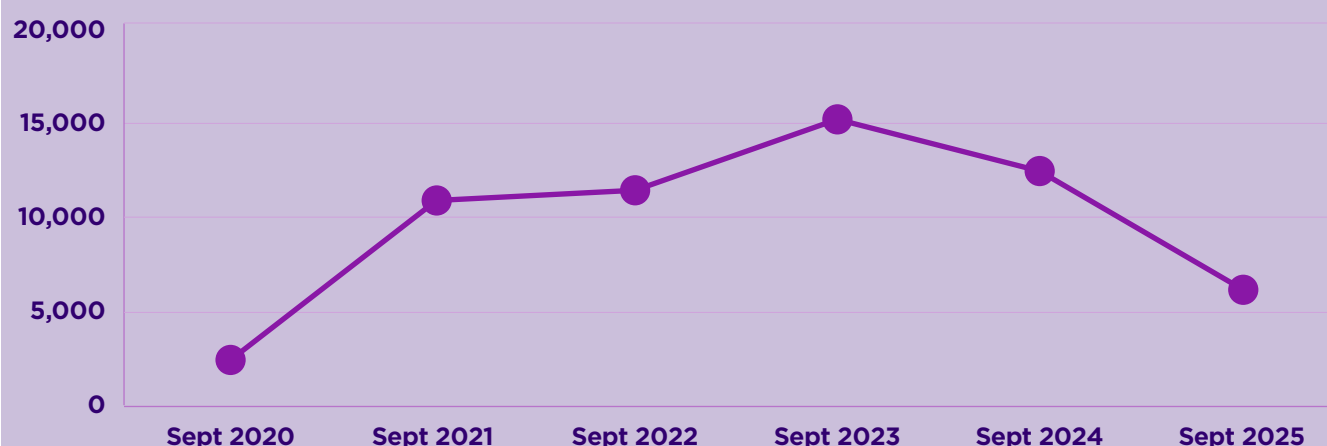


+5.1%

Nursing associates

13,433

Professionals educated internationally joining the Register for the first time



Ethnic diversity

The Register has continued to become more ethnically diverse. There are now **286,058** Black, Asian and minority ethnic nurses, midwives and nursing associates.

That is just under a third of the Register at **33.2%** – an increase of **0.7 percentage points** since 1 April when there were **227,716** Black, Asian and minority ethnic professionals.

This makes it more important than ever that the whole health and care sector takes a zero-tolerance approach to racism and discrimination. For our part at the NMC:

- We have signed the Unison Anti-Racism Charter
- We have pledged to de-bias our regulatory processes and to eliminate disproportionate Fitness to Practise referrals received from employers in relation to ethnicity by 2030 – and will roll out concrete measures in early 2026 to meet this target
- We have increased ethnic diversity among panel members who decide on Fitness to Practise hearings involving nurses, midwives and nursing associates. **26%** of lay panel members and **24%** of registrant panel members are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, respectively.

Closer look at international recruitment

The slowdown in international joiners is spread across countries around the world, including the UK's two largest sources of international recruitment of nursing and midwifery professionals in recent years – India and the Philippines.

The past six months saw **57.8%** fewer professionals join from India than during the same period last year, and **68.1%** fewer from the Philippines.

After India, the second and third largest sources of international recruitment are now Nigeria and Ghana, which are both 'red list' countries.¹ Our data show a **27.8%** and **9.0% decrease** in joiners from these countries respectively, compared to the same period last year.

¹ The relevant codes of practice for international recruitment of health and social care personnel prohibit active recruitment from 'red list' countries designated by the World Health Organisation. The codes do not prevent individual health workers from 'red list' countries seeking employment independently, but employers should not be actively recruiting from those countries.

In the last six months compared to the same period in 2024



33.2%

of the Register are Black, Asian and minority ethnic professionals. In September 2020, **20.1%** of the Register were Black, Asian and minority ethnic.



Register as of September 2025

75.6%

UK educated



24.4%

Internationally educated



New joiners from non-UK countries of education in the last six months, and change from the same period in 2024

1



India

2,467 ↓ -57.8%

2



Nigeria

931 ↓ -27.8%

3



Ghana

779 ↓ -9.0%

Additionally, **2,710** international professionals left the Register over the past six months, **5.3%** more than during the same period last year. That said, it is important to consider leavers' data as a proportion of the growing Register – through this lens we see that **1.4%** of the international cohort left, marginally down from **1.5%** during the same period last year.

UK-educated joiners fluctuate but overall growth continues

Our data show that since April, **13,973** UK-educated professionals joined the Register for the first time. That's a **5.4%** drop compared to the same period last year.

However, it is important to know that the data included in this report are captured on 30 September – in the middle of the peak period for new cohorts of UK graduates joining the Register.

Therefore, the number of UK-educated joiners may fluctuate from one six-month period to the next, depending on whether cohorts are added to the Register before or after 30 September. This means that when looking for trends in domestically educated joiners, it is better to look over a longer 12-month period. From this perspective, we see a steady picture of domestic recruitment.

Retention of home-grown professionals also remains steady. A total of **12,361** people who trained in the UK left our Register in the past six months. As a proportion of UK-educated professionals on the Register, that's **1.9%** – a marginal increase compared to the same period last year (**1.8%**)

Uplift in the UK's midwifery workforce

Our data give the definitive picture of the available midwifery workforce in the UK, at a time when the state of maternity services is under scrutiny.

Our latest data show a **1.9%** uplift in the number of midwives on our Register over the past six months – there are now **47,481** midwives registered to work in the UK.

In the last six months compared to the same period last year



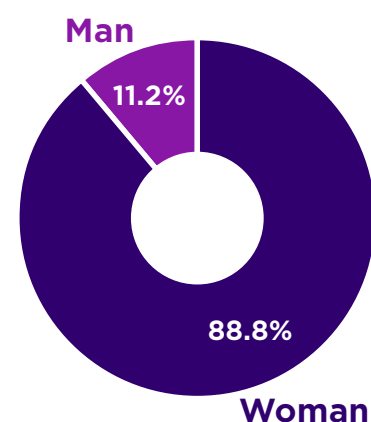
As of September 2025

44 years, 1 month

was the average age of people on the Register



Gender split of the Register



As of September 2025



Between April and September, **1,500** midwives joined our register for the first time, which is **115 (7.1%)** fewer than joined during the same period last year.

744 midwives left the Register over the past six months, compared to **664** during the same period last year. When viewed as a percentage of the Register, that's a marginal increase, with **1.6%** of midwives leaving compared to **1.5%** over the same period in 2024.

The four fields of nursing practice

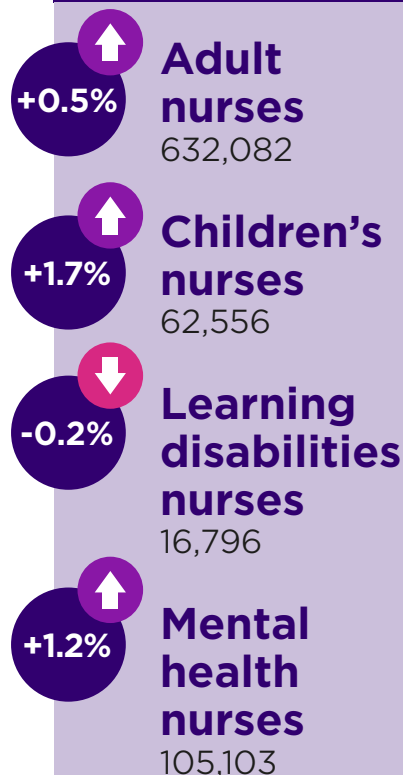
Over the past six months, the number of professionals registered in the adult, children's and mental health fields of nursing practice grew.

However, the number of learning disabilities nurses declined by **0.2%** (**36** professionals) in the six months to September.

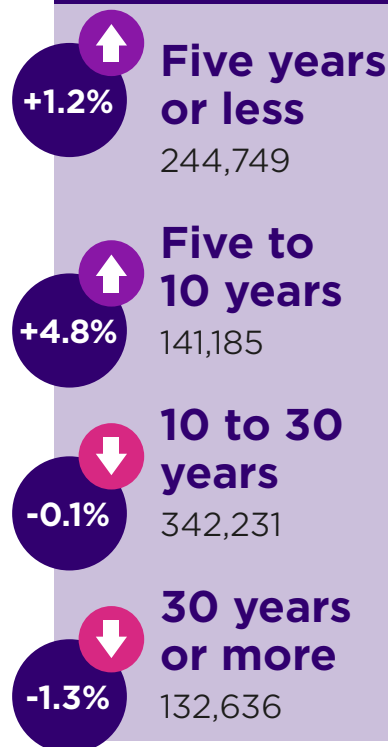
This is a particular concern given research findings that adults with a learning disability in England are nearly twice as likely as the general population to suffer an avoidable death.²



As of September 2025, and change in the last six months



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



Sharing insights to support the sector

We hope this overview, alongside our comprehensive data tables, will support workforce planning and education commissioning across the four countries of the UK – ensuring the most effective delivery of services that people and communities 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 on research@nmc-uk.org.



Paul Rees MBE

Chief Executive and Registrar

A handwritten signature of Paul Rees in black ink.



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



Who we are and what we do

Our vision is to provide safe and effective nursing and midwifery education and practice across the four countries of the UK – regulated by the NMC – a fit for the future organisation, with fairness and equity at the heart of everything we do.

The NMC's role is to **protect the public and maintain confidence** in the nursing and midwifery professions. As the largest independent regulator in Europe of more than 860,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have a crucial role in making this a reality.

We do this by ensuring that every registered nurse, midwife or nursing associate has benefitted from **effective education**. We promote high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England.

We also ensure every nurse, midwife and nursing associate on our Register meets **clear standards of conduct and practice** which protects the public and the reputation of our professions.

We have a duty to **investigate** concerns and to take steps to **protect the public** in the relatively rare instances where we need to limit or restrict a nursing or midwifery professional's right to practise.

We are building a new NMC with integrity, fairness, respect, equity and effectiveness at its core.

We are determined to improve and modernise our culture and ways of working. This will ensure that the public and professionals feel confident in our work.

As part of this we will focus on **strengthening our core regulatory work** and investing in enhanced effectiveness.

This document is also available in Welsh [on our website](#). Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn y Gymraeg ar [ein gwefan](#).

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The Nursing and Midwifery Council

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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