



Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Active Recruitment Statistics - Vacancies at 31 March 2026

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Introduction and Background

This bulletin presents statistics on vacancies actively being recruited in Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland as at 31 March 2026. Statistics by staff group and HSC organisation are presented throughout.

All data used in this bulletin have been gathered from Recruitment Shared Services in the Business Services Organisation (BSO), HSC Trusts and regional HSC organisations. To ensure that the Department's information is accurate, high data quality standards need to be achieved and maintained by all HSC organisations.

The data presented in this bulletin is a measure of active recruitment to both permanent and temporary positions. Users should note that the figures do not indicate a measure of posts that are unfilled by permanent or fixed-term staff. Due to fluctuations in the data, caution should be taken when considering point-in-time comparisons.

The data accompanying this bulletin are available of the [Department of Health](#) website.

Key Points

- At 31 March 2026, there were 6,236 vacancies actively being recruited across Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland, equating to a vacancy rate of 7.2%.
- The total number of vacancies under active recruitment at 31 March 2026 (6,236) is 6.6% higher than at 31 March 2025 (5,851) and 8.3% higher than at 31 March 2021 (5,756).
- The highest number of vacancies actively being recruited across HSC was in the Nursing & Midwifery occupational family, with 1,960. This staff group made up 31.4% of all HSC vacancies in recruitment.
- The Nursing & Midwifery Support staff group had the highest vacancy rate, at 13.4% (742 vacancies).
- Of the five regional HSC Trusts, the Belfast HSC Trust had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited (1,733 vacancies).
- The annual percentage change in vacancies was greatest in the Northern HSC Trust with an increase of 20.9%, followed by Western (13.1%), Belfast (10.5%) and Southern (5.2%). The South Eastern HSC Trust reported a decrease of 5.5%.

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Active Recruitment Vacancy definition: A vacancy is any position that is currently with the recruitment team and being actively recruited to. This will include those going through pre-employment checks, up to the point of a start date being agreed. Once a start date has been agreed with both parties (i.e. manager and applicant) this will no longer be classed as a vacancy. Vacancies that are on hold by managers are not included.

$$\text{Active Recruitment Vacancy Rate} = \frac{\text{Vacancies actively being recruited}}{\text{Active staff in posts*} + \text{vacancies actively being recruited}}$$

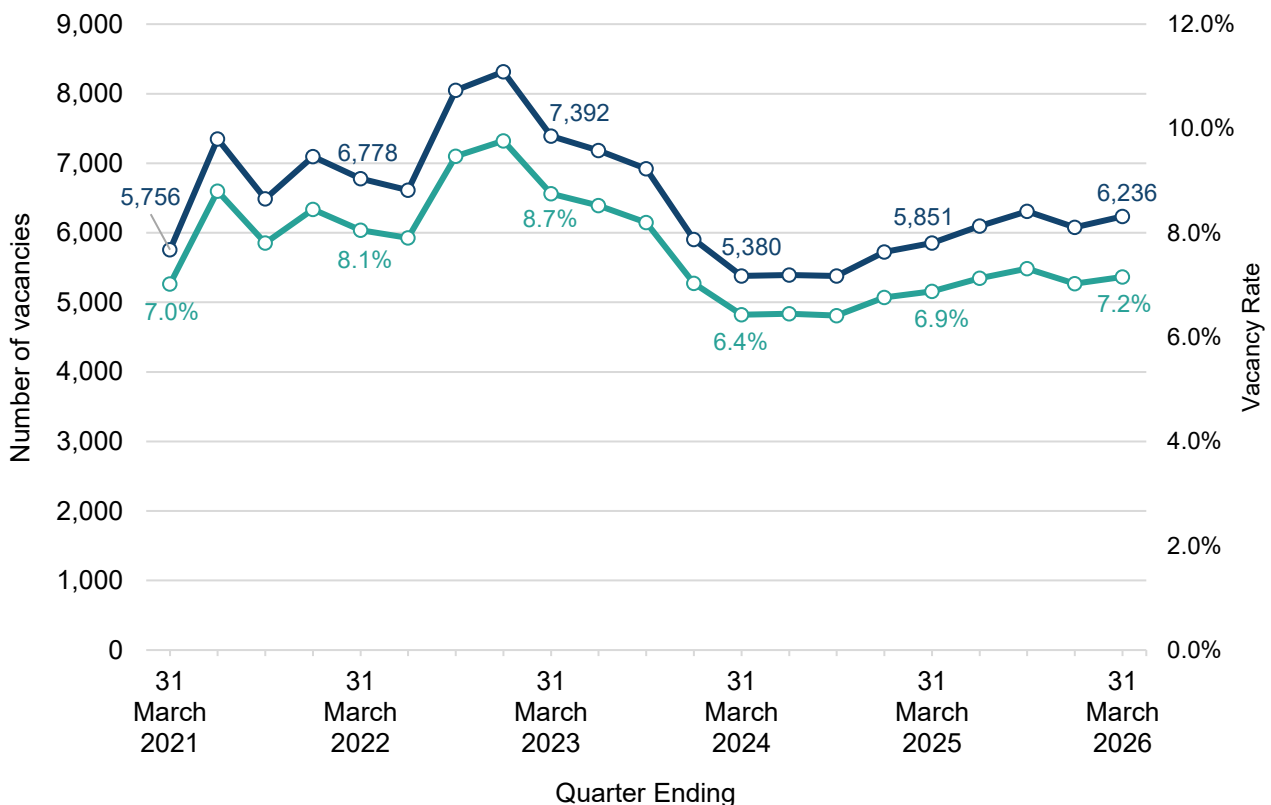
* Includes HSC domiciliary care active staff in posts. This will not match with active staff in post figures published in the HSC Quarterly Workforce Statistics bulletin which excludes domiciliary care active staff in posts.

Overall Vacancies

At 31 March 2026, there were 6,236 vacancies actively being recruited across Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland. This equated to a vacancy rate of 7.2%.

The total number of vacancies under active recruitment at 31 March 2026 is 6.6% higher than at 31 March 2025 (5,851) and 8.3% higher than at 31 March 2021 (5,756).

Figure 1: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, 31 March 2021 – 31 March 2026



Staff Group

Latest Position (31 March 2026)

Figure 2 below shows the proportion of vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2026 for each staff group. Of the 6,236 vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2026, the Nursing & Midwifery occupational family made up the highest proportion, at 31.4% (1,960 vacancies). This comprised 1,218 Registered Nursing & Midwifery vacancies and 742 Nursing & Midwifery Support vacancies. The second highest proportion of vacancies was in the Social Services staff group, at 25.6% (1,599 vacancies), of which 349 were Social Worker vacancies and 1,250 were Social Care vacancies. This was followed by the Administration & Clerical staff group (13.7%, 856 vacancies) and the Professional & Technical staff group (13.3%, 829 vacancies).

The Medical & Dental staff group made up 5.8% (364 vacancies) of all HSC vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2026. Almost half (47.3%) of these vacancies were at consultant grade (172 vacancies).

Figure 2: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, by Staff Group at 31 March 2026

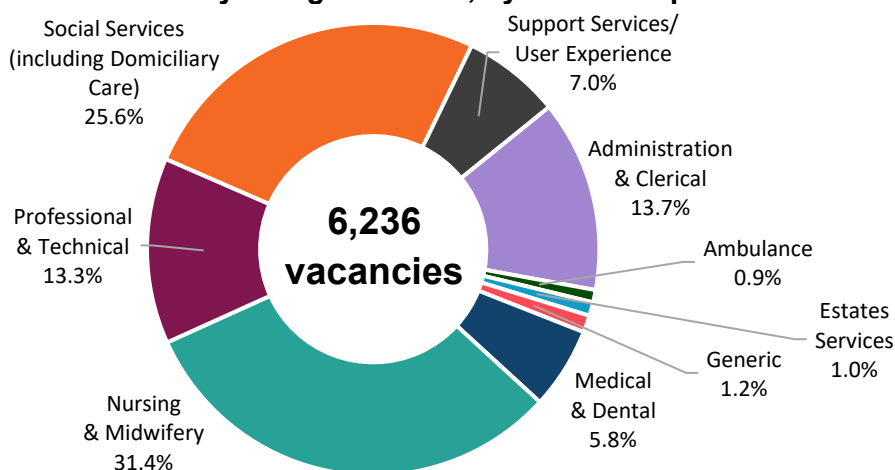


Table 1 below presents the number and proportion of vacancies actively being recruited in some sub staff groups and professions at 31 March 2026.

Table 1: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Sub Staff Group / Profession, 31 March 2026

Sub Staff Group / Profession	Number of vacancies	Percentage of all HSC vacancies
Allied Health Professionals *	369	5.9%
Consultants	172	2.8%
Nursing & Midwifery Support	742	11.9%
Registered Midwives	73	1.2%
Registered Nurses	1,145	18.4%
SAS Doctors (Specialist or Specialty Doctor)	66	1.1%
Social Care (including domiciliary care)	1,250	20.0%
Social Workers	349	5.6%

* Includes physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech & language therapists, podiatrists, dietitians, orthoptists, radiographers (who are all part of the Professional & Technical staff group in Figure 2), and paramedics (who are part of the Ambulance group in Figure 2).

Of the sub staff groups and professions listed in Table 1, Social Care vacancies comprised the largest proportion of all HSCNI vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2026 (20.0%, 1,250 vacancies), followed by Registered Nurses (18.4%, 1,145 vacancies), and Nursing & Midwifery Support (11.9%, 742 vacancies).

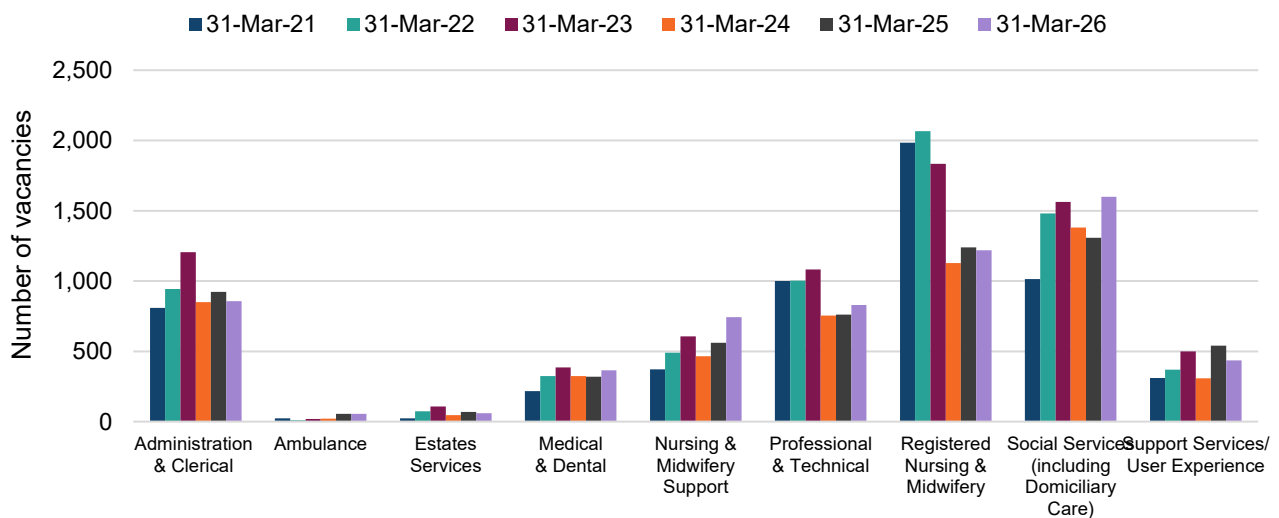
Comparison Over Time

Figure 3 below shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March over the last five years, in each staff group.

With the exception of Administration & Clerical, Ambulance, Estates Services, Registered Nursing & Midwifery and Support Services staff groups, all other main staff groups reported an increase in the number of vacancies in the last year. Since 31 March 2025, the largest increase in the number of vacancies was in the Social Services staff group, which reported 292 (22.3%) more vacancies. The Nursing & Midwifery Support group also reported a large increase in vacancies since 31 March 2025, with 180 more vacancies (32.0%).

In the last five years, all main staff groups with the exception of Registered Nursing & Midwifery and Professional & Technical staff groups, reported an increase in the number of vacancies. Since 31 March 2021, the largest increase in the number of vacancies actively being recruited was in the Social Services staff group, with 584 more vacancies (57.5%), followed by Nursing & Midwifery Support (370 vacancies, 99.5%), Medical & Dental (147 vacancies, 67.7%) and Support Services (125 vacancies, 40.2%). The Registered Nursing & Midwifery staff group reported the largest decrease in vacancies actively being recruited, with 766 fewer vacancies (38.6%).

Figure 3: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited, by Staff Group^{#Ω§}, 31 March 2021 – 31 March 2026



% Change	31-Mar-21	31-Mar-22	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-25	31-Mar-26
2021-26	+5.7%	+139.1%	+154.2%	+67.7%	+99.5%	-17.1%
2025-26	-7.2%	-1.8%	-10.3%	+14.1%	+32.0%	+8.8%

[#] Excludes vacancies coded as generic roles.

^Ω Increase in vacancies for Ambulance staff group may relate to paramedics and new posts created for graduates from the BSc Paramedic programme.

[§] Due to a low level of Nursing & Midwifery Support vacancies in recruitment in March 2021, possibly as a result of nursing & midwifery students being temporarily placed in support roles during the Covid-19 pandemic, this has resulted in a large five-year increase when comparing to 2026.

Table 2 below presents the change in vacancies actively being recruited in some sub staff groups and professions in the last year and the last five years.

Table 2: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Sub Staff Group / Profession, 31 March 2021 – 31 March 2026

Sub Staff Group / Profession	% Change 2021-26		% Change 2025-26	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Allied Health Professionals *	-121	-24.7%	25	7.3%
Consultants	46	36.5%	29	20.3%
Nursing & Midwifery Support	370	99.5%	180	32.0%
Registered Midwives	-58	-44.3%	12	19.7%
Registered Nurses	-708	-38.2%	-33	-2.8%
SAS Doctors (Specialist or Specialty Doctor)	26	65.0%	-16	-19.5%
Social Care (including domiciliary care)	586	88.3%	291	30.3%
Social Workers	-2	-0.6%	1	0.3%

* Includes physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech & language therapists, podiatrists, dietitians, orthoptists, radiographers (who are all part of the Professional & Technical staff group in Figure 3), and paramedics (who are part of the Ambulance group in Figure 3).

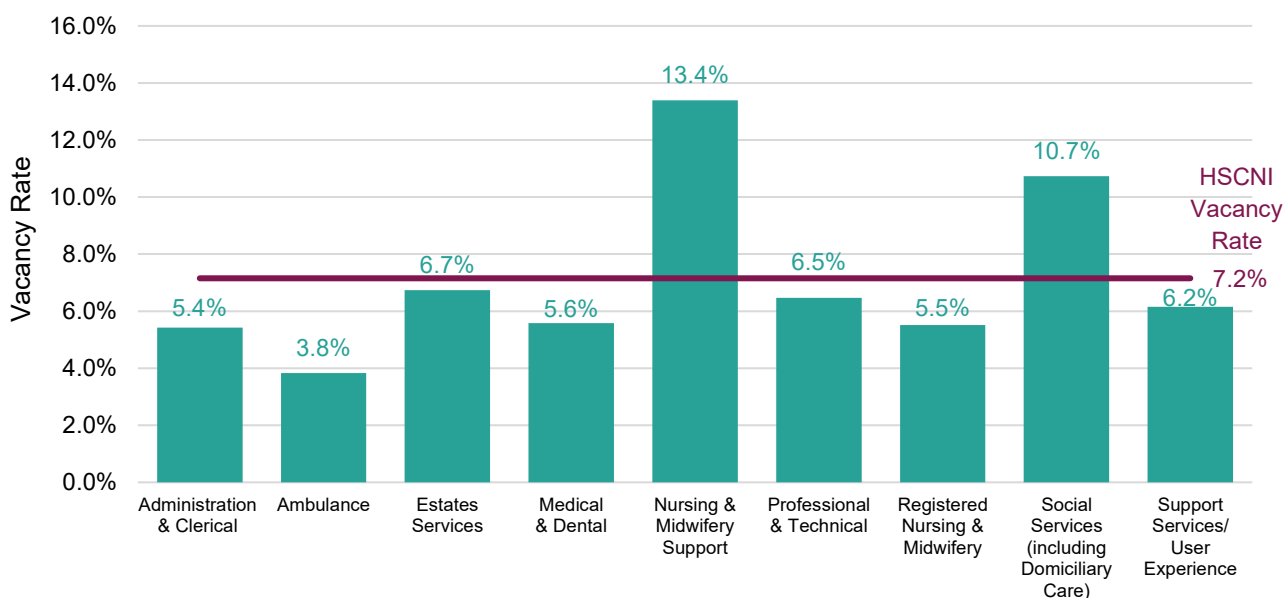
Of the sub staff groups and professions listed in Table 2 above, the Nursing & Midwifery Support staff group reported the largest percentage increase in vacancies actively being recruited since 31 March 2025 (32.0%, 180 vacancies), followed by Social Care (30.3%, 291 vacancies), Consultants (20.3%, 29 vacancies) and Registered Midwives (19.7%, 12 vacancies). SAS Doctors reported the largest percentage decrease (19.5%, 16 vacancies) in vacancies actively being recruited between 31 March 2025 and 31 March 2026, followed by Registered Nurses (2.8%, 33 vacancies).

During the last five years, Nursing & Midwifery Support reported the largest percentage increase in vacancies actively being recruited (99.5%, 370 vacancies), followed by Social Care (88.3%, 586 vacancies). The Registered Midwifery staff group reported the largest percentage decrease (44.3%, 58 vacancies) in vacancies actively being recruited between 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2026 followed by Registered Nurses (38.2%, 708 vacancies) and Allied Health Professionals (24.7%, 121 vacancies).

Vacancy Rate

Figure 4 below shows the vacancy rates at 31 March 2026 in each staff group. The Nursing & Midwifery Support staff group had the highest vacancy rate, at 13.4%, while the Ambulance staff group had the lowest vacancy rate (3.8%).

Figure 4: HSCNI Vacancy Rate, by Staff Group# at 31 March 2026



Excludes vacancies coded as generic roles.

All staff groups, with the exception of Administration & Clerical, Ambulance, Estates Services, Registered Nursing & Midwifery and Support Services, reported an increase in vacancy rates within the last year. The Nursing & Midwifery Support staff group reported the largest increase in vacancy rates in the last year, from 10.4% (31 March 2025) to 13.4% (31 March 2026).

Table 3 below presents the vacancy rates at 31 March 2026 in some sub staff groups and professions.

Table 3: HSCNI Vacancy Rate, by Sub Staff Group / Profession, 31 March 2026

Sub Staff Group / Profession	Vacancy Rate
Allied Health Professionals *	5.5%
Consultants	6.9%
Nursing & Midwifery Support	13.4%
Registered Midwives †	5.2%
Registered Nurses	5.5%
SAS Doctors (Specialist or Specialty Doctor)	7.4%
Social Care (including domiciliary care)	13.2%
Social Workers	6.5%

* Includes physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech & language therapists, podiatrists, dietitians, orthoptists, radiographers (who are all part of the Professional & Technical staff group in Figure 4), and paramedics (who are part of the Ambulance group in Figure 4).

† Vacancy rate calculated based on staff in post figures which contain a small number of HSC staff who were graded as student midwives.

Of the sub staff groups and professions listed in Table 3, Nursing & Midwifery Support had the highest vacancy rate (13.4%), followed by and Social Care (13.2%). Registered Midwives had the lowest vacancy rate (5.2%) of the sub staff groups and professions listed.

Regional HSC Trust

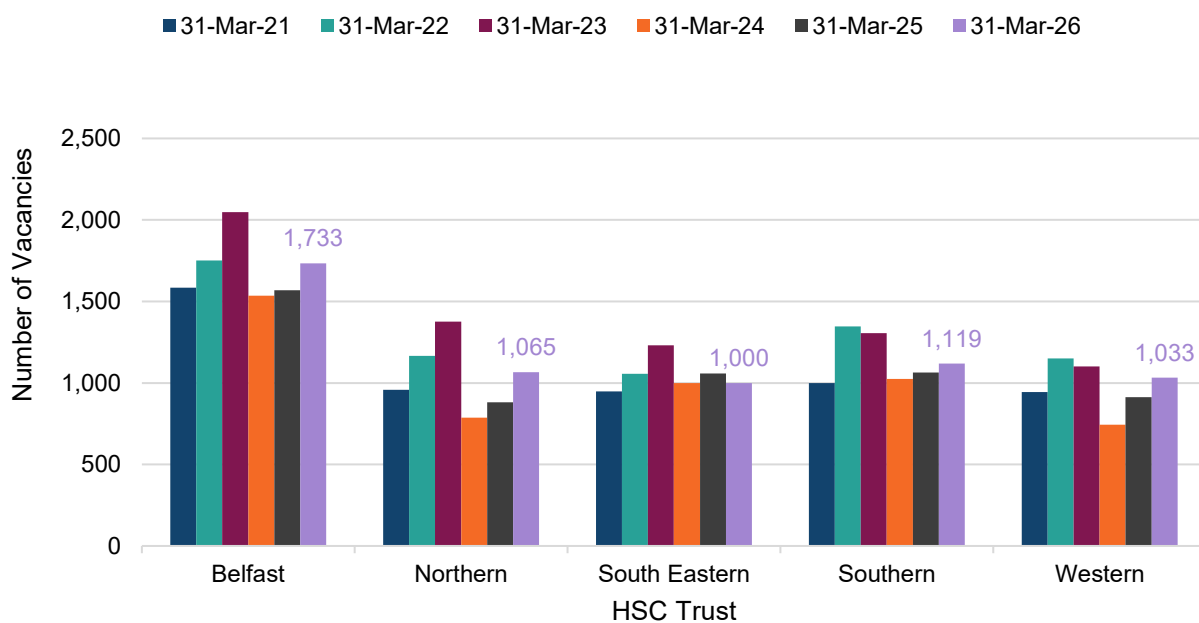
Figure 5 below shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited in each regional HSC Trust at 31 March over the last five years.

The Belfast HSC Trust had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2026 (1,733), an increase of 164 vacancies since 31 March 2025.

All regional HSC Trusts, with the exception of South Eastern HSC Trust, reported an increase in vacancies between 31 March 2025 and 31 March 2026, with the largest annual percentage increase in the Northern HSC Trust (20.9%), followed by Western (13.1%), Belfast (10.5%) and Southern (5.2%). The South Eastern HSC Trust reported a decrease of 5.5% in vacancies actively being recruited in the last year.

Between 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2026, the number of vacancies actively being recruited increased in all regional HSC Trusts. During this period, the largest percentage increase was reported by the Southern HSC Trust (11.9%), followed by Northern (11.2%), Belfast and Western (9.4% each), and South Eastern (5.4%).

Figure 5: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Regional HSC Trust, 31 March 2021 – 31 March 2026



% Change	Belfast	Northern	South Eastern	Southern	Western
2021-26	+9.4%	+11.2%	+5.4%	+11.9%	+9.4%
2025-26	+10.5%	+20.9%	-5.5%	+5.2%	+13.1%

Other HSC Organisations

Figure 6 below shows the number of vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2026 in each of the other HSC organisations. At 31 March 2026, the Business Services Organisation (BSO) had the highest number of vacancies actively being recruited (120), 71 (37.2%) less when compared with the position last year and 29 (19.5%) less than the position five years ago.

Figure 6: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Other HSC Organisation, 31 March 2026 and Change Over Time[∞]

		% Change	
		2021-26	2025-26
Business Services Organisation	120	-19.5%	-37.2%
NI Ambulance Service ~	70	+118.8%	-20.5%
Strategic Planning & Performance Group	31	-22.5%	-6.1%
Public Health Agency	30	-62.0%	+57.9%
NI Blood Transfusion Service	8	-42.9%	-50.0%
NI Medical & Dental Training Agency	7	-	0.0%
Children's Court Guardian Agency for NI ^	6	-	0.0%
Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority	6	+100.0%	+20.0%
NI Social Care Council	5	+150.0%	+400.0%
Patient Client Council	3	+50.0%	-
NI Practice & Education Council	0	-	-

[∞] While some of the percentage changes detailed in Figure 6 are large, the number of vacancies involved are mostly small.

~ New posts have been created in NIAS for graduates from the BSc Paramedic programme.

^ Formerly known as the Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA).

Pay Band

Figure 7 below shows the breakdown of HSCNI vacancies actively being recruited at 31 March 2026 by Agenda for Change (AfC) pay band group.

At 31 March 2026, almost half (48.6%) of all vacancies actively being recruited in HSCNI were at AfC pay bands 2-4, 19.5% at AfC pay band 5, 14.5% at AfC pay band 6, 7.8% at AfC pay band 7, 3.7% at AfC pay bands 8 & above, and 5.8% at non-AfC grades.

Figure 7: HSCNI Vacancies by AfC Pay Band Group, 31 March 2026

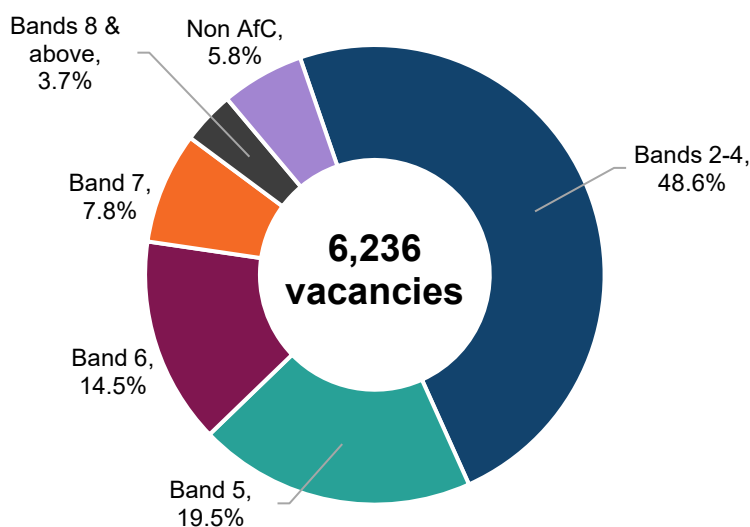


Table 4 below presents the percentage breakdown of vacancies actively being recruited in each staff group by pay band groups.

Table 4: HSCNI Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Staff Group and Pay Band Group, 31 March 2026

Staff Group	Pay bands 2-4	Pay band 5	Pay band 6	Pay band 7	Pay bands 8 & above	Non-AfC Grades	Vacancies
Administration & Clerical	66.1%	9.0%	8.5%	7.5%	8.9%	0.0%	856
Ambulance	52.7%	10.9%	25.5%	5.5%	5.5%	0.0%	55
Estates Services	47.5%	27.9%	14.8%	6.6%	3.3%	0.0%	61
Generic	1.3%	26.3%	31.6%	34.2%	6.6%	0.0%	76
Medical & Dental	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	364
Nursing & Midwifery Support	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	742
Professional & Technical	23.0%	20.4%	26.7%	18.1%	11.8%	0.0%	829
Registered Nursing & Midwifery	0.0%	63.5%	23.8%	10.2%	2.5%	0.0%	1,218
Social Services (incl. Dom. Care)	64.7%	9.6%	17.3%	7.4%	1.1%	0.0%	1,599
Support Services/User Experience	99.8%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	436
Total	48.6%	19.5%	14.5%	7.8%	3.7%	5.8%	6,236

Annex 1: Key Data Tables

Additional data tables can be found in the NI HSC Active Recruitment Tables Excel file at the following link: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/articles/staff-vacancies>

Table A1: HSC Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Staff Group & Pay Band Group, at 31 March 2026

Staff Group	Bands 2-4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Bands 8 & above	Non-AFC Grades	Total
Administration & Clerical	566	77	73	64	76	[z]	856
Ambulance	29	6	14	3	3	[z]	55
Estates Services	29	17	9	4	2	[z]	61
Generic	1	20	24	26	5	[z]	76
Medical & Dental	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	364	364
Nursing & Midwifery Support	742	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	742
Professional & Technical	191	169	221	150	98	[z]	829
Registered Nursing & Midwifery	[z]	773	290	124	31	[z]	1,218
Social Services (incl. Domiciliary Care)	1,035	153	276	118	17	[z]	1,599
Support Services/User Experience	435	1	0	0	0	[z]	436
Total	3,028	1,216	907	489	232	364	6,236

[z] Not applicable

Table A2: HSC Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by Profession & Pay Band Group, at 31 March 2026

Profession	Bands 2-4	Band 5	Band 6	Band 7	Bands 8 & above	Non-AFC Grades	Total
Generic	1	20	24	26	5	[z]	76
Administration & Clerical	566	77	73	64	76	[z]	856
Estates Services Staff	29	17	9	4	2	[z]	61
Support Services/User Experience	435	1	0	0	0	[z]	436
Health Visitors	[z]	32	14	1	1	[z]	48
District Nurses	[z]	0	2	7	0	[z]	9
Paediatric Nurses	[z]	47	3	3	4	[z]	57
Mental Health Nurses	[z]	104	43	7	4	[z]	158
Learning Disability Nurses	[z]	27	9	1	1	[z]	38
All Other Registered Nurses	[z]	557	164	95	19	[z]	835
Registered Midwives	[z]	6	55	10	2	[z]	73
Nurse Support	730	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	730
Midwifery Support	12	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	12
Social Workers	[z]	3	230	106	10	[z]	349
Social Care Workers	682	120	33	0	0	[z]	835
Domiciliary Care Workers	261	2	0	0	0	[z]	263
Other Social Services staff	92	28	13	12	7	[z]	152
Physiotherapists	[z]	14	54	15	14	[z]	97
Occupational Therapists	[z]	25	46	22	6	[z]	99
Speech & Language Therapists	[z]	8	22	17	12	[z]	59
Podiatrists	[z]	18	9	4	1	[z]	32
Dietitians	[z]	2	8	3	0	[z]	13
Orthoptists	[z]	1	2	1	0	[z]	4
Radiographers	[z]	12	26	11	1	[z]	50
Pharmacists	[z]	60	29	35	18	[z]	142
Clinical Psychology	2	7	0	12	25	[z]	46
Pharmacy Technician / Pharmacy Support	72	2	1	1	0	[z]	76
Scientist/Sci. Support/Med. Tech. Officer/Ass. Tech. Officer	20	7	18	15	13	[z]	73
Allied Health Profession Support	13	0	0	0	0	[z]	13
Other Professional & Technical staff	84	13	6	14	8	[z]	125
Consultant	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	142	142
Locum Consultant	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	30	30
SAS Doctor (Specialist or Specialty Doctor)	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	66	66
Resident Doctor [note 1]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	1	1
Other Doctor	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	122	122
Dental Officer	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	[z]	3	3
HCP/Registered Paramedic	[z]	2	13	0	0	[z]	15
Emergency Medical Technician	0	2	0	0	0	[z]	2
Ambulance Officer	0	0	1	1	3	[z]	5
Patient Care Services	19	0	0	0	0	[z]	19
Control Officer	8	2	0	2	0	[z]	12
Control Assistant	2	0	0	0	0	[z]	2
Total	3,028	1,216	907	489	232	364	6,236

[z] Not applicable

Note 1: Relates to Trust local recruitment only and not training programme enrolment.

Table A3: HSC Vacancy Rates by Staff Group, 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2026

Staff Group	31 March 2021	31 March 2025	31 March 2026
Administration & Clerical	5.4%	5.8%	5.4%
Ambulance	1.7%	4.2%	3.8%
Estates Services	2.9%	7.5%	6.7%
Medical & Dental	4.0%	5.2%	5.6%
Nursing & Midwifery Support	6.4%	10.4%	13.4%
Professional & Technical	8.5%	6.1%	6.5%
Registered Nursing & Midwifery	9.7%	5.8%	5.5%
Social Services (including domiciliary care)	7.3%	9.0%	10.7%
Support Services/User Experience	4.3%	7.6%	6.2%
Total	7.0%	6.9%	7.2%

Table A4: HSC Vacancies Actively Being Recruited by HSC Organisation, 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2026

HSC Organisation	31 Mar 2021	31 Mar 2025	31 Mar 2026
Belfast HSC Trust	1,584	1,569	1,733
Northern HSC Trust	958	881	1,065
South Eastern HSC Trust	949	1,058	1,000
Southern HSC Trust	1,000	1,064	1,119
Western HSC Trust	944	913	1,033
NI Ambulance Service HSC Trust	32	88	70
Business Services Organisation (BSO)	149	191	120
Strategic Planning & Performance Group (SPPG) [note 2]	40	33	31
Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland (CCGANI) [note 3]	0	6	6
NI Social Care Council (NISCC)	2	1	5
NI Practice & Education Council (NIPEC)	0	0	0
Public Health Agency (PHA)	79	19	30
Regulation & Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)	3	5	6
NI Blood Transfusion Service (NIBTS)	14	16	8
NI Medical & Dental Training Agency (NIMDTA)	0	7	7
Patient Client Council (PCC)	2	0	3
Total	5,756	5,851	6,236

Note 2: Former HSC Board staff have undertaken their functions from 1 April 2022 as part of the Department of Health's newly formed Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG). For consistency purposes, vacancies actively being recruited in SPPG are included in these data tables, and noted as SPPG.

Note 3: The Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland (CCGANI) was formerly known as the Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA).

Notes

The data included in this bulletin represents the number of vacancies actively being recruited and does not indicate the whole time equivalent (WTE) for these positions. The data includes both permanent and temporary positions. These figures do not indicate a measure of posts that are unfilled by permanent or fixed-term staff, and do not include posts not actively being recruited to at the specific point in time, including those outside the bounds of the definition e.g. those that have not reached recruitment stage yet.

Due to fluctuations in the data, caution should be taken when considering point-in-time comparisons.

These figures have not been assessed for seasonal adjustment and have not been seasonally adjusted.

The information presented in this bulletin is based on data obtained from Recruitment Shared Services within the Business Support Organisation (BSO), and from the HSC Organisations listed below:

Belfast HSC Trust
Northern HSC Trust
South Eastern HSC Trust
Southern HSC Trust
Western HSC Trust
Northern Ireland Ambulance Service
Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service

Former HSC Board staff have undertaken their functions from 1 April 2022 as part of the Department of Health's newly formed Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG). For consistency purposes, vacancies actively being recruited in SPPG are included in this bulletin, and noted as SPPG.

The Northern Ireland Guardian Ad Litem Agency (NIGALA) has been renamed to the Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland. This change is effective from 6th March 2023.

Definitions

Active Recruitment Vacancy: A vacancy is any position that is currently with the recruitment team and being actively recruited to. This will include those going through pre-employment checks, up to the point of a start date being agreed. Once a start date has been agreed with both parties (i.e. manager and applicant) this will no longer be classed as a vacancy. Vacancies that are on hold by managers are not included.

Active Recruitment Vacancy Rate: The number of active vacancies as a proportion of all posts (see formula below).

$$\text{Active Recruitment Vacancy Rate} = \frac{\text{Vacancies actively being recruited}}{\text{Active staff in posts}^* + \text{vacancies actively being recruited}}$$

** Includes HSC domiciliary care active staff in posts. This will not match with active staff in post figures published in the HSC Quarterly Workforce Statistics bulletin which excludes domiciliary care active staff in posts.*

HSC: Umbrella term for all Health and Social Care NI Organisations

Quality Assessment

Relevance

This publication provides a summary of HSC vacancies actively being recruited by broad staff groups and HSC organisation. The publication also includes HSC active recruitment trends. The publication meets the needs of users in terms of trends in active recruitment increases or decreases and the volume of active recruitment in staff groupings.

Accuracy and Reliability

The data is sourced from the recording of each HSC organisation's requisition requests on the HSC e-recruit system. Each HSC organisation is responsible for the data in their requisition requests. Regular reporting and sharing of trends helps the data quality discussion. Figures are an accurate summary of recruitment data at a point in time, as per the definition detailed in the publication. Due to the processing time of a vacancy through the HSC e-recruit system, this may have an impact on figures, causing delays in data peaks and troughs.

Once the figures are prepared for publication in excel format, internal quality assurance is carried out by Information and Analysis Directorate (IAD). The report is drafted and the figures in tabular and chart form are inserted into the report; at this point, further internal quality assurance is carried out by IAD to ensure the report matches the excel file.

Validation

IAD do not have the ability to verify aggregate data returns. However some general quality checks for missing data, changes and trends are monitored, any anomalies are checked and can be followed up as appropriate with HSC organisations or the regional recruitment group.

Error

HSC organisations are responsible for their own data and occasionally variance in recording practices can result in inconsistent data patterns across the region. The system is primarily designed for the recruiting of staff, and whilst recruitment (advert) specifications will be accurate, reporting capabilities are sometimes limited and rely on the accurate coding and categorisation of data for analytical purposes.

Revisions

IAD is committed to clarity around data revisions. As soon as possible after IAD ascertain that a correction to published data is necessary, all electronic documents containing the affected statistics on the DoH website will be updated and clearly marked with caveats and footnotes to detail any amendments. If the correction to the published data is minor, the necessary changes will be made by IAD without an announcement.

Timeliness and Punctuality

IAD request this data from HSC organisations on a quarterly basis using a defined data template. A data definition of HSC active vacancies in recruitment was agreed with the regional HSC recruitment leads.

Data is requested from Recruitment Shared Services within BSO and other HSC Trusts/organisations within 1 week of quarter end. Data is usually returned to IAD within approximately 4 weeks, with publication of the data in this bulletin approximately 3 weeks later i.e. 8 weeks after quarter end.

Normal procedure is that twelve months advance notice of publications is given in the [IAD Statistical Releases Calendar](#) on the DoH website. In the majority of cases, the target publication deadlines are met. However, in the event of a change to a pre-announced release date, the delay is announced, explained and updated regularly.

Accessibility and Clarity

The PDF report is accessible on the DoH Internet site via the Statistics section provided by Information and Analysis Directorate, and can be found under [staff vacancies](#).

The PDF report is published alongside MS Excel and CSV versions of data tables. The 24 hour pre-release list is published also. The report is not yet fully accessible for those using assistive technology.

Coherence and Comparability

IAD are not aware of other published data sources of active recruitment data based on the regionally agreed definition detailed in the publication. HSC organisations are of course able to produce their own analysis of their own organisation only.

The data categories as presented in the report are comparable each quarter. Where data categorisation changes, this is noted.

Trade-offs between Output Quality Components

None

Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions

The publications are primarily used by those linked to health services and we take on board any feedback given. We sometimes get requests for lower level data than is published however prior experience of collating too much data (that was frequently unused) has influenced the current template of published information. Where the case for a particular breakdown is presented, it is considered and actioned where found appropriate. Some criticism is received from those that think we should be working to a different definition of vacancies, however for consistency and given the steer from recruitment leads on the definition, we have kept the collection as posts actively being recruited to. If any other outputs were to be developed, they would have to be presented as a different publication.

The publication will be used for a range of purposes by researchers and other users such as the NI Assembly and the DoH. IAD will ensure that the publication remains relevant to users' needs by taking on comments and feedback regularly.

User feedback is invited in this publication. Readers are provided with contact details for the relevant statistician. We gain awareness of users of our data from ad hoc requests for information.

Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden

The publication represents a secondary use of the data and therefore adds no additional burden on health service organisations. The data are obtained from administrative systems within Northern Ireland.

Confidentiality, Transparency and Security

Aggregate data is supplied on HSC active recruitment by staff group and AfC pay level group where applicable.

Data obtained from Recruitment Shared Services and HSC Trusts/organisations does contain some personal information but only aggregate information is published.

The Code of Practice for Statistics is adhered to from data collection to publishing.

DoH's 'Statistical Policy Statement on Confidentiality' can be found in the [Statistics Charter](#).