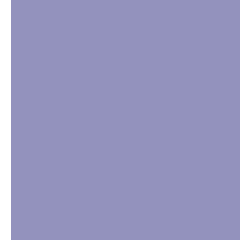


nmuds-sc briefing



issue 11 - using nmuds-sc information across the social care sector

When the NMDS-SC was developed, two distinct audiences were identified. Firstly care-providing organisations and establishments, for whom the NMDS-SC delivers timely, accurate and benchmarked information in key areas such as pay, vacancy rates, turnover rates, worker demographics and qualifications. For this audience a range of establishment level reports have been developed and are available to all logged-in users (see Briefing 7).

The second audience was Skills for Care and our key external partners – including the Department of Health, the Department for Children, Schools & Families (then DfES), the CQC (then CSCI), Local Authorities, the General Social Care Council (GSCC), the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC), the Home Office (Migration Advisory Council and UK Border Agency), the Treasury, Trade Associations, the Learning & Skills Council, the Social Care Workforce Research Unit and other academic institutions, and many more. The NMDS-SC is the first data collection exercise to capture reliable workforce information on the social care sector. This edition of Briefings focuses on how the NMDS-SC is being used by our partners and how (your) information derived from the NMDS-SC is facilitating evidence-based planning and decision-making at the highest levels within central and local government and other organisations.

The Department of Health (DH) is the main funder of Skills for Care and the NMDS-SC and is the major client for NMDS-SC data. The accurate, current and robust data now becoming available for the adult social care sector is beginning to provide DH with the information they have long needed to properly understand, plan and fund the sector.

"In order to deliver the transformation of adult social care, we all need to have a better understanding of the social care workforce. NMDS-SC can help provide this knowledge across both the independent and statutory sectors. I look forward to more employers contributing to the database and making use of it, as we are doing at the Department".

Neil Paterson, Head of Adult Social Care Workforce Development, Workforce Directorate, Department of Health

Examples of the work we have done for DH and others, using your NMDS-SC data, include:

(i) estimating the size and structure of the adult social care workforce

NMDS-SC data is now the main building block in being able to estimate both the size and structure of the adult social care workforce. It has begun to fill the void in knowledge relating to

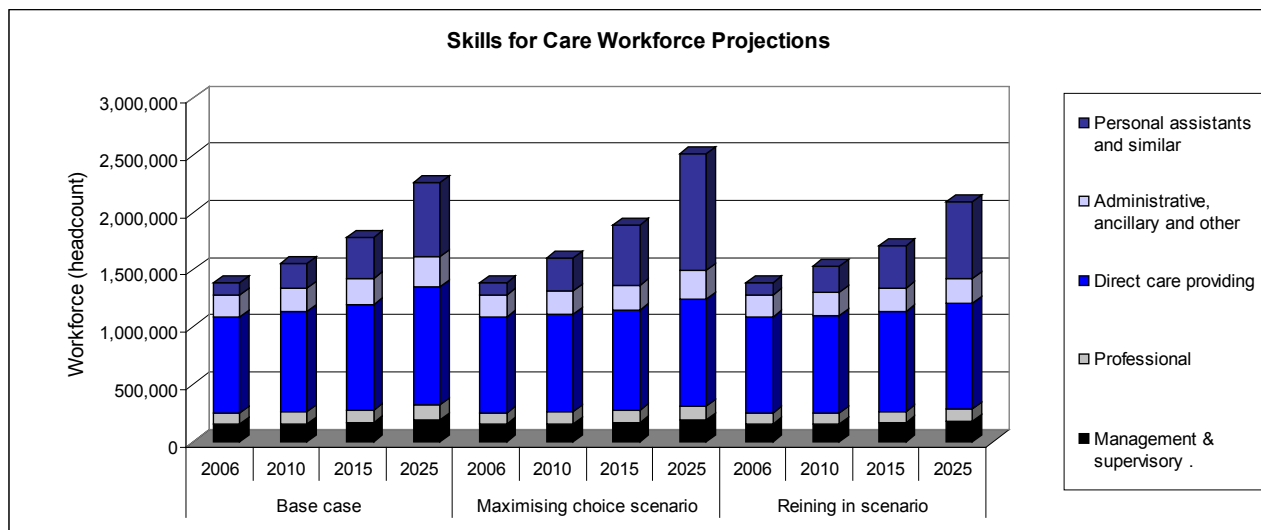
the numbers employed in the private and voluntary sector, through which most social care is delivered. This information is crucial to DH and others, as it allows them to understand which types of workers work where, their current capacity and skills, and their future skills needs.

(ii) forecasting the future size of the adult social care workforce

As well as allowing Skills for Care to estimate the current size of the workforce, NMDS-SC data is also the basis of a forecasting model developed by Skills for Care. Using this we have estimated that up to 2.5 million social care workers will be needed by 2025, which organisations will be employing them and the skills they will need (see chart 1). This has been important in getting the workforce implications of the country’s future social care demands recognised and in beginning to plan for how we will meet this demand.

We have also provided DH with regional estimates of the social care workforce for swine flu planning, and estimates of the size, structure and qualification levels of the domiciliary care workforce so that the potential implications of care worker registration (currently on hold) could be assessed.

chart 1. workforce forecasts by occupational group, 2006 - 2025



local authorities

The NMDS-SC, through the provision of high quality reporting and through the InLAWS (Integrated Local Area Workforce Strategies) project, is providing local authority commissioners with a new level of understanding regarding social care services in their localities. Having the fullest picture ever available regarding levels of both statutory and independent provision will be vital in producing Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and their workforce strategies.

The Integrated Local Area Workforce Strategy (InLAWS) project is a joint initiative between Skills for Care and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS). The project aims to develop effective ways to support Directors of Adult Social Services (DASS) with workforce commissioning across their local area. The vision is to have the right workforce doing the right things at an achievable cost.

DASS need data and intelligence to fulfil their strategic planning roles effectively. The NMDS-SC provides access to essential workforce information that had previously been challenging, particularly for the independent sector. Now most Directors are using the NMDS-SC to find out about the many people and services delivering social care in their local areas.

“The NMDS-SC is a valuable tool for understanding who is working in adult social care in your area – rather than relying on how services have been delivered in the past we can use this data and adopt a more strategic approach to commissioning services that our citizens will want to purchase.”

Jo Cleary, Executive Director of Adults and Community Services, London Borough of Lambeth and Co-chair of ADASS Workforce Development Network.

“Within our Local Authority in Wigan we have continued to successfully implement NMDS-SC across all sectors. Within the local authority we have an 84% match against our SSDS001 total workforce figure. From this we have begun to develop really meaningful data which is helping us to use the data in our workforce plans, use the data in our commissioning processes in understanding market capacity and what capabilities we have across the workforce with regards to skills and qualifications and identifying the gaps. We are also using the data to develop and implement our InLAWS (Integrated Local Area Workforce Strategy).”

Kirsty Johnson, Workforce Planning, Wigan Council

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The CQC (previously CSCI) were one of the stakeholders who advised on their requirements when the NMDS-SC was being developed. The COUNT principle of ‘collect once and use numerous times’ remains key to the NMDS-SC philosophy.

The NMDS-SC has delivered on that promise in the form of the AQAA Workforce Report (as highlighted in Briefing 7). The single page report allows CQC registered employers to download AQAA workforce information from NMDS-SC Online to provide the workforce element of their AQAA return to CQC when requested. In addition, the NMDS-SC has proved vital to the CQC in helping them understand the wider sector and features in their annual reports. The NMDS-SC also has the potential to help CQC monitor providers’ ongoing compliance with registration regulations and support quality improvements for all regulated activities. Discussions are underway to explore the full extent to which NMDS-SC information can help them with this task.

“NMDS-SC provides essential information about the social care workforce, the issues affecting it and what needs to be addressed to help achieve improvements. It is therefore a very valuable tool for the whole sector and for people who use services. That value will increase even further as NMDS-SC continues to roll out across the sector. For example, delivering the personalisation agenda depends on the workforce, and the more NMDS-SC can tell us, the better focused actions can be to get the right workforce in place to deliver the best personalised outcomes for people who use services.”

Ronald Morton, Strategy Development and Innovation Manager, Care Quality Commission

working with the NHS

The fact that the NMDS-SC collects uniform data in terms of data items across the sector means that comparisons can be made with other datasets collecting the same or similar data items on their workforce. Work is in progress to look at the extent to which anonymised or aggregate data could be shared between the NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR) and the NMDS-SC.

It has always been known that social care staff work within the health sector, and to a lesser extent that health staff work within social care. However, the extent of this phenomenon has to date been unable to be gauged with any great accuracy. The current work will both highlight to what extent the two systems collect comparable data, and what options are available to Skills for Care and the NHS in terms of data sharing. It has the potential to assist in understanding the full range of settings in which social care staff are found, the extent to which workers work in both sectors and it will serve to increase the understanding of our complex and dispersed workforce. The project also has the potential to be able to identify the full workforce available

nationally, regionally and locally to address the needs of different service-user groups in both health and social care. It should be noted that this project is only identifying and evaluating options, actual data transfers or data sharing is some way off.

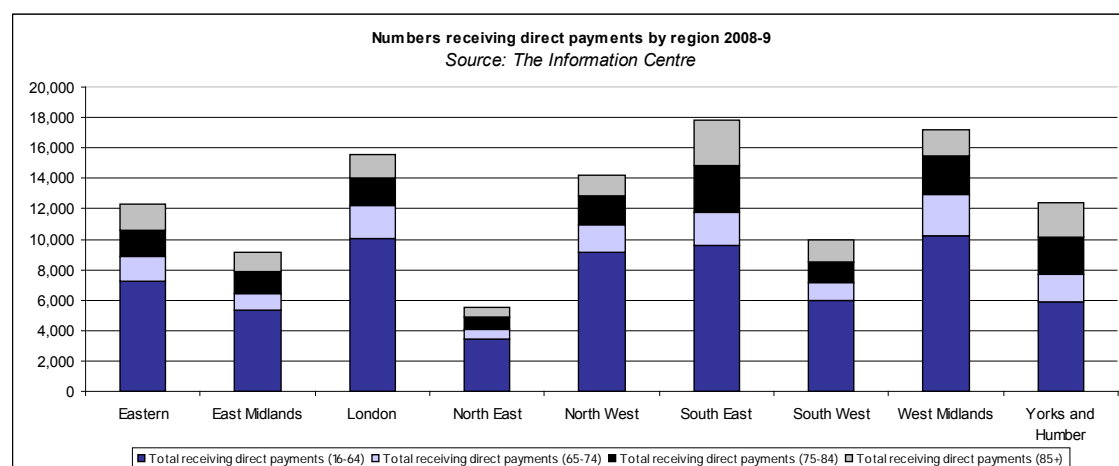
forthcoming nmds-sc developments:

1. workers from overseas

The first of the changes to the NMDS-SC announced at the end of September this year will become available for completion in mid January 2010 (although they do not officially form part of the dataset until September 2010). These changes relate to a worker's nationality, country of birth and year of entry to the UK (where applicable). The information gained from these additional questions will allow Skills for Care to build up the most accurate picture to date of the levels of migrant workers in the care workforce.

2. personalisation / transformation

There are over 100,000 recipients of direct payments or individual budgets in England, this excludes people funding their own care and support whose numbers will be far greater. Over recent months a shorter, simpler and more relevant (to this audience) version of the NMDS-SC has been developed and piloted specifically for this growing volume of care sector employers. It is hoped that this new NMDS-SC module will be available to these individuals employing their own care and support staff by June 2010. This development will allow Skills for Care to capture information on volumes of workers working in this area, their employment patterns, demographics, pay and qualification levels. It is a potentially very exciting addition to the NMDS-SC, and will hopefully begin to fill gaps in knowledge regarding this segment of the sector.



3. Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC)

Over recent months CWDC has begun to actively re-engage with the NMDS-SC and will be actively marketing the NMDS-SC to their sector in the new year. Their initial focus will be on children's residential services, fostering services and adoption services. They hope to be producing some initial analysis of NMDS-SC data early in 2010.

4. staying relevant – the qualifications and credit framework (QCF)

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) comes into being around September 2010. The QCF replaces the outgoing National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Work is already underway to ensure that when the changeover takes place, the NMDS-SC is ready to reflect these new qualifications available to social care workers.