# NMDS-SC briefing

The use of NMDS-SC data across the social care sector

Skills for Care provides outstanding workforce intelligence relied upon by government, strategic bodies, employers and individuals to make decisions that will improve outcomes for people who use services. Skills for Care's National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) is recognised as the leading source of workforce intelligence for adult social care. This briefing provides an update on the use of NMDS-SC data across social care.

The NMDS-SC collects information about providers offering a social care service and their workers. All social care providers can register and keep their business information up to date at www.nmds-sc-online.org.uk. The NMDS-SC has received data from over 25,000 care-providing locations (across local statutory local authority, private and voluntary sector employers) and has individual worker data for approximately 735,000 workers spread across the 152 local authority areas in England. Although the data is primarily from social care providers for adults it also has data submitted by children's services. All local authorities have submitted data as NMDS-SC replaced the previous local authority workforce return (SSDS001).

Table 1 and Chart 1: NMDS-SC establishments by sector, September 2014

Sector	Number
Base (all establishments)	25,312
Statutory local authority	8,273
Private sector	11,679
Voluntary or third sector	4,201
Other	1,159
	Percentage
Statutory local authority	33%
Private sector	46%
Voluntary or third sector	17%
Other	5%

Other 5%
Voluntry or third sector 17%
Statutory local authority 33%
Private sector 46%
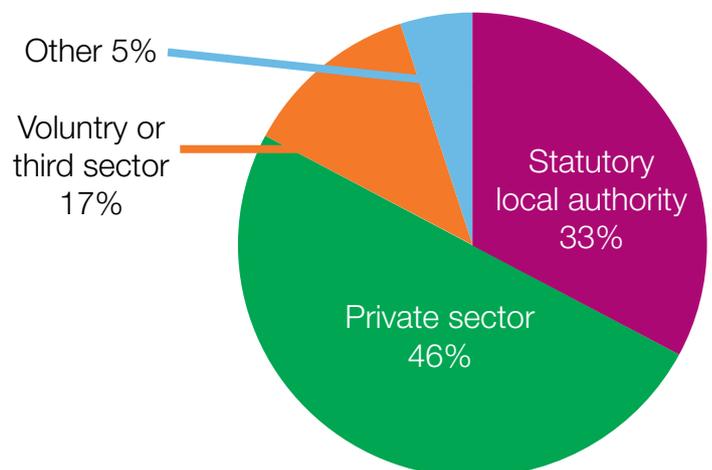
Uses of NMDS-SC data

The high level of accurate workforce data available for adult social care is being used for:

- Trend analysis of important workforce variables such as care worker pay
- Work with Health Education England and the thirteen Local Education and Training Boards
- Work on health and social care integration
- Work by the Chief Social Worker (Adults) to better understand the social worker workforce
- Implementation of the Care Act by local authorities

A range of reports using NMDS-SC data have been co-produced with the Centre for Workforce Intelligence (CfWI) e.g. to inform the workforce elements of the White Paper, *Caring for our future: reforming care and support* now enacted through the Care Act 2014. Local authorities use the data for workforce planning and commissioning as do Higher Education Institutes and bodies such as the Kings Fund who work to improve health and social care in England. There are over 175 academic journal articles published which cite NMDS-SC data.

> Achieving the best outcomes for people using social care services requires the right configuration of services and delivery models alongside a well-trained and skilled workforce. Workforce information from the NMDS-SC is essential to promote rigorous planning and develop good intelligence. These are the essential elements in ensuring social care has the right people, in the right places with the right skills to deliver high quality care and support both today, and in the future.

Glen Mason, Director for People, Communities and Local Government. Department of Health (DH)

Other regular reports are provided to the DH to inform future policy on social care and other initiatives such as the introduction of the Care Certificate. Skills for Care work in partnership with the CfWI and the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) to provide workforce intelligence reports and workforce planning tools for the social care sector. Further reports and data outputs include:

- A series of topical NMDS-SC based briefings for employers and commissioners on sector turnover and pay rates, levels of dementia qualifications, social workers and on the diversity of the social care workforce.
- Quarterly reports for DH on vital workforce data.
- Skills for Care and HSCIC co-produce the local authority workforce report: Personal Social Services: Staff of Social Services Departments, England - as at September 2013 which has been assigned national statistics status.
- Workforce data to inform the production of (workforce) supply and demand models in partnership with CfWI.

Published reports

NMDS-SC data is the primary source of data used to estimate the size and structure of the adult social care workforce. Skills for Care produce an annual report on the size and structure of the adult social care sector and workforce in England.

Table 2: Total number of adult social care jobs and people working in these jobs by job role, 2013.

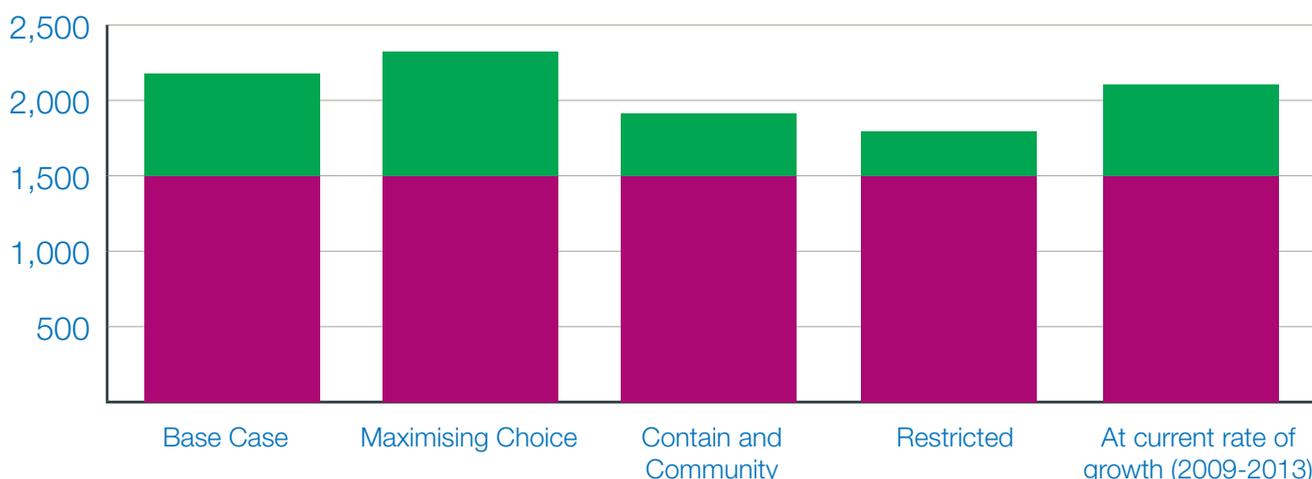| Job role group	Number of jobs	Percentage of jobs	Number of people doing these jobs	Percentage of people
Direct care	1,148,000	75%	1,080,000	74%
Managerial	113,000	7%	110,000	8%
Professional	94,000	6%	90,000	6%
Other	167,000	11%	160,000	11%
Total	**1,520,000**		**1,450,000**	

The report identifies the numbers employed in the statutory, private and voluntary sectors. This information is crucial to DH and others, as it allows them to understand which types of workers work where, their current skills profile and their future skills needs. As can be seen from Table 2 Skills for Care has calculated that there are approximately 1.52 million jobs in adult social care performed by 1.45 million people.

As well as estimating the current size of the workforce, NMDS-SC data is also used as the basis of a forecasting model developed by Skills for Care. Skills for Care's projections of the number of adult social care workers that may be needed to meet the future social care needs of adults and older people in England are shown below. They also appear in The State of the Adult Social Care Workforce Report in England 2014.

A range of scenarios were developed with sector experts. Chart 2 below shows that, depending on the scenario, the number of jobs in adult social care is projected to grow by between 15% and 55% between 2013 and 2025. This means there could be a total of between 1.8 million and 2.4 million social care jobs by 2025.

Chart 2: Adult social care workforce jobs projections (000's), 2013 -2025

Extra needed by 2025 (000's) ■
2013 jobs (000's) ■

| | Base Case | Maximising Choice | Contain and Community | Restricted | At current rate of growth (2009-2013) |

Aspects of all four scenarios have materialised since the projections were made in 2009. The workforce is still growing at a rate not much slower than projected under the 'maximising choice' scenario. Even though adult social care has experienced significant budget reductions over the period (LGA, 2013) the workforce has still grown significantly faster than projected under the 'restricted resources' scenario. This latter scenario takes a very pessimistic view of how social care services will be delivered, most of which have not materialised. It should be noted that under all scenarios (even the most pessimistic in terms of resources) the workforce is projected to grow due to the increasing health and social care needs of an ageing population. Skills for Care is are supporting CfWI to provide updated projections (2014 to 2030) which should be published early in 2015.

Future reports

The State of the Social Care Workforce Report in England 2012 will be updated and published by the end of 2014. Nine regional reports have been published that highlight important findings about the workforce in your region including turnover, vacancy and pay rates. These are updated each year.

Provider quality profiles using NMDS-SC data

As outlined in the government White Paper, Caring for our future: reforming care and support,' NHS Choices publish clear and accessible information on staff training as part of social care and health provider quality profiles, so that people can understand for themselves the skill levels of staff at different care providers. In total there are eight quality measures two of which come from NMDS-SC data:

- Staff qualifications
- Stability of employment

The eight measures aim to give service users, carers and commissioners a rounded picture of the quality of the care provided by their local residential and domiciliary care providers. They provide one element of the proposed comparative information that give providers the opportunity to demonstrate their reputation in the market.

Enabling DH to automatically populate NHS Choices with NMDS-SC data for the two of the proposed measures helps providers by enabling their performance on these quality measures to be published. Although employers can opt out of sharing their data a significant number of large providers and trade organisations are signed up to this voluntary industry-led compact to provide transparency on the quality of care.

Care Quality Commission (CQC)

The CQC were one of the stakeholders who advised on their requirements when the NMDS-SC was first being developed. The definitions of service types in NMDS-SC reflect the regulation framework adopted by CQC. Skills for Care is committed to the COUNT principle of 'collect once and use numerous times'.

In October 2014 CQC implemented a new Provider Information Return (PIR) for all services including residential care services, community care services and shared lives services. CQC has agreed that where data has been submitted to Skills for Care through NMDS-SC on numbers of staff, staff roles, employment type, turnover and vacancies, reasons for staff leaving, qualifications and training of staff that providers will not have to submit it directly to CQC through the PIR.

Improving NMDS-SC reports for employers

Skills for Care has made the information derived from the NMDS-SC more accessible for employers. The NMDS-SC reporting module for employers has been greatly improved in order to engage employers and encourage the use of NMDS-SC for workforce and business planning. New 'dashboard' reports include:

- flexible benchmarking of a social care provider against other providers
- key interpretation of information at a glance
- links to relevant Skills for Care resources

The reports significantly improve the way logged in employers access and interpret NMDS-SC information to make informed business decisions. This further enhances NMDS-SC as the leading source of key workforce intelligence for adult social care.

Further information

Perform your own analysis of 25,000 establishment records and over 735,000 worker records by accessing the NMDS-SC open access dashboards here https://www.nmds-sc-online.org.uk/reportengine/dashboard.aspx

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