

# NHS Staff Survey 2025 – A Guide to Understanding and Using Results

NHS STAFF SURVEY COORDINATION CENTRE

Version 1

## Contact details

NHS Staff Survey Coordination Centre  
Picker  
Suite 6, Fountain House  
1200 Parkway Court  
John Smith Drive  
Oxford  
OX4 2JY

Tel: 01865 208 141 (9.30am – 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)

E-mail: [nhsstaffsurvey@surveycoordination.com](mailto:nhsstaffsurvey@surveycoordination.com)

Website: [www.nhsstaffsurveys.com](http://www.nhsstaffsurveys.com)

## Contents:

1. [Introduction](#)
2. [Overview of changes to reporting for 2025](#)
3. [Who is included?](#)
4. [What type of results are presented?](#)
5. [Benchmarking groups](#)
6. [Summary of key outputs for the NHS Staff Survey](#)
7. [Summary of key outputs for the NHS Staff Survey for bank only workers](#)

## 1 Introduction

The NHS Staff Survey (NSS) and the NHS Staff Survey for bank only workers (NSSB) provide an opportunity for organisations to survey their staff in a consistent and systematic manner. This makes it possible to build up a picture of staff experience, compare and monitor change over time, and identify variations between different staff groups. Obtaining feedback from staff, and taking account of their views and priorities, is vital for driving improvements in the NHS.

In spring 2026, the Survey Coordination Centre (SCC) publish the results for NSS and NSSB 2025. The results are primarily intended to be used by organisations to help review and improve workforce experience. The Care Quality Commission will use the results from the survey to monitor ongoing compliance with essential standards of quality and safety. The survey will also support accountability of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to Parliament for delivery of the NHS Constitution.

This guide outlines some fundamental information about the survey results published by the SCC: whose responses are included in the data, what types of results are presented and how, an explanation of benchmarking groups and weighting, and an overview of the different outputs. This guide also includes a brief overview of reporting changes for 2025. This guide is useful for NHS staff, researchers, and other users of NSS and NSSB data who may be unfamiliar with the survey or need some context in interpreting the reports.

If you require further information, you can review the Technical Guides from the [Survey Documents](#) section of the staff survey [website](#). There are two Technical Guides: the NHS Staff Survey Technical Guide provides technical information about the results of NSS as they apply to staff on substantive contracts, and the NHS Staff Survey Technical Guide for bank only workers provides technical information about NSSB. These documents contain more detailed technical information about the survey results such as how scores are calculated, how weighting is applied and a summary of the historical comparability of questions.

## 1.1 Note on sex, gender and gender identity in the NHS Staff Survey

Sex, gender and gender identity are complex and important topics. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published information<sup>1</sup> regarding its reporting of some of this data, and there are ongoing processes seeking clarification to existing legislation. Existing questions are retained until question design, cognitive testing, user engagement and observance of advice and guidance from formal sources has taken place to avoid using untested questions in large national surveys. The Government Statistical Service (a community for all UK civil servants working in the collection, production and communication of official statistics) are undertaking priority work<sup>2</sup> to develop best practice harmonised standards for gender identity, sex and other protected characteristics. This work will feed into future Staff Survey developments. The survey questions are continually reviewed against any changes to legislation or guidance.

## 2 Overview of changes to reporting for 2025

NSS and NSSB 2025 have undergone some changes since 2024 consisting of minor changes to the content of the questionnaires, including the inclusion of questions about socio-economic background in the online versions of the survey. For more information on these changes please see the summary of questionnaire changes document available to download from the [Survey Documents section](#) of the staff survey [website](#).

In 2024, a dashboard reporting the results of the NSSB was introduced. The dashboard contains results at a national, regional, Integrated Care System (ICS) and organisation level, including benchmarking data for individual organisations. Background information variables can be applied as breakdowns to the results. Information about using the dashboard is available on the [How to use the dashboard](#) page of the interactive dashboard site.

To enable fair historical comparisons, data from previous years have been re-calculated where necessary. More information can be found in the [weighting section](#) of this guide.

## 3 Who is included?

NSS and NSSB 2025 were conducted between September and November 2025, with eight weeks of mandatory fieldwork between 6 October and 28 November. Organisations were recommended to start fieldwork earlier than the mandatory period.

NSS is mandatory for all NHS trusts and voluntary for other NHS organisations such as Integrated Care Boards and Social Enterprises. Since 2023, the NSSB is mandatory for any organisation participating in the NSS that has a minimum of 200 eligible bank workers.

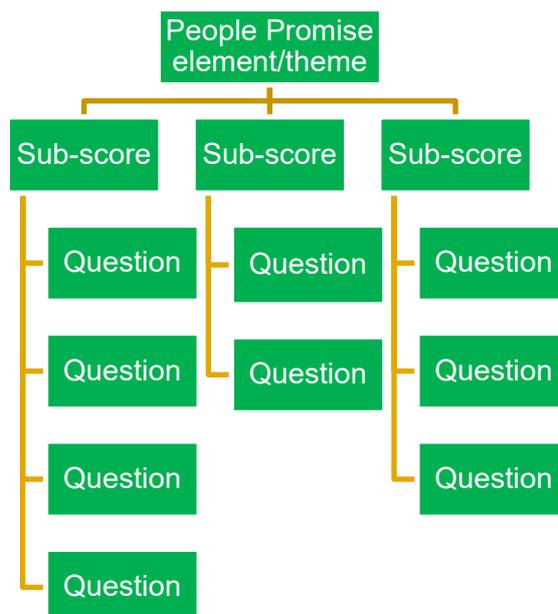
---

<sup>1</sup> For more information, please see <https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/review-of-statistics-on-gender-identity-based-on-data-collected-as-part-of-the-2021-england-and-wales-census-final-report/>

<sup>2</sup> For more information, please see [Government Statistical Service \(GSS\) Harmonisation Team workplan 2024 – Government Analysis Function](#)

Each participating organisation drew a list of eligible staff based on their records on 1 September 2025.

The full eligibility criteria for NSS, including staff who are not eligible, is outlined in Appendix A of the [NHS Staff Survey Technical Guide](#), however the key criterion is that staff must be substantively employed and paid by the organisation on 1 September 2025 (on a full- or part-time contract) to be eligible.



The key criterion for eligibility for the NSSB is that bank workers should work solely on the bank, with no substantive contract at the organisation. External bank workers (e.g., NHS Professionals) are not eligible to take part. The full eligibility criteria for NSSB are outlined in Appendix A of the [NHS Staff Survey Technical Guide for bank only workers](#).

## 4 What types of results are presented?

The 2025 Staff Survey outputs report two types of measures: summary indicators (People Promise element/theme scores and sub-scores) and question level data.

### 4.1 Summary indicators: People Promise elements/theme scores and sub-scores

At the uppermost level of the scoring hierarchy are the seven People Promise elements and two themes, which are overall scores derived from the sub-scores that feed into them, with each sub-score pertaining to responses from several questions. The People Promise elements and two themes, therefore, function as singular summary measures for groups of questions that give more information about each area of interest. They are formed by assigning values to responses (on a scale from 0 to 10) and calculating their average. All values reported relate to an average (mean) score, where a higher score indicates a more favourable outcome to the given indicator. A higher

score indicates a more favourable outcome, even in cases where questions are included for which a higher proportion is a worse outcome.

At the second level of the hierarchy, the sub-scores provide a more granular level to the results, within a particular area of interest. Again, these are taken as an average score of the questions that feed into them. Finally, at the lowest level of the hierarchy are the responses to each individual question. More details about these calculations can be found in the [Technical Guides](#).

The diagram below illustrates the hierarchy and the relationship between scores, sub-scores and questions.

This year, 2025 results for the People Promise elements, themes, and sub-scores will be reported with up to four years of trend data where available.

The mapping of questions to sub-scores, and sub-scores to scores, is not entirely consistent between NSS and NSSB.

## **4.2. Question-level results**

Beside the summary indicators, question level results are also included in most reporting outputs. Question results are always presented as percentages. In each instance where question level results are presented, the exact meaning of a given percentage is indicated. For example, a graph's axis may specify that the values presented relate to the '% of staff selecting 'Satisfied'/'Very Satisfied''. It is worth noting that for certain questions a higher percentage is a worse result than a lower percentage. For example, when looking at the '% of staff experiencing violence', the lower the percentage, the better the result.

## **4.3 Suppression of results**

To protect staff confidentiality and to ensure the robustness of results, the SCC does not report results for groups of less than 10. When less than 10 responses feed into a result, that value will be suppressed, regardless of what type of measure it is. However, the base size will still be shown where appropriate.

# **5 Benchmarking groups**

NHS organisations vary in the services they provide and the challenges they face. Organisations are assigned to a benchmarking group based on the services they offer. This means that comparisons are only made between organisations of a similar type and ensures comparisons are fair. In the benchmark reports, organisations' results are presented in the context of their benchmarking group's best, average and worst results.

Trusts participating in the survey are assigned to one of the below benchmarking groups depending on the services they provide:

- Acute and Acute & Community Trusts
- Acute Specialist Trusts

- Mental Health & Learning Disability and Mental Health, Learning Disability & Community Trusts
- Community Trusts
- Ambulance Trusts

Benchmarking groups for organisations that participate voluntarily are detailed in the [Technical Guides](#).

## **5.1 Data weighting**

Despite grouping organisations together based on service provision and occupational group profile, NHS organisations of the same type are still likely to have some differences in the numbers of respondents in each occupational group.

These differences can occur for several reasons. One example is that some organisations may sub-contract services such as catering and cleaning, while other organisations supply them in-house. These differences between trusts can have a notable effect on organisation results, as different occupational groups tend to answer some questions in different ways. For instance, managers are known to respond more positively than other groups to some questions and an organisation that has a particularly large number of responses from managers may have more positive results simply because of this imbalance. For this reason, NSS data are weighted to account for occupational group differences at organisations within benchmarking groups. The weighting procedure limits the impact of occupational group differences on results and works to create a 'level playing field'.

To make one NHS trust's scores comparable with other trusts of the same type, individuals' scores within each trust are weighted so that the occupational group profile of the organisation reflects that of a typical trust of its type. For organisations taking part voluntarily (i.e., non-trust organisations) results are not typically weighted. Note that occupation group weighting is not applied to NSSB results.

To account for trusts' sizes in national results, another weight called the 'trust size weight' is also calculated, and is applied to the national, regional and ICS level outputs. Trust size weighting is applied to the results of the NSS and the NSSB.

Where appropriate, the occupation group weight and trust size weight are combined when presenting national results which also contain the results for benchmarking groups.

Note that the data for questions where a higher or lower value does not relate to a better or worse result are never weighted.

In 2023 only, alternative organisational, group, trust size, and combined weights were applied to the data for q13 and q14 in NSS and q18 and q19 in NSSB to address a data issue. These adjustments affected the 2023 data for the relevant measures.

The data weighting process is detailed in the [Technical Guides](#).

## 6 Summary of key outputs for the NHS Staff Survey

This section provides a summary of key NSS outputs. Please see the next section for a summary of key NSSB outputs.

The outputs of NSS reported by the SCC fall into three categories: national, local (i.e., organisational level), and regional/ICS level results. Documents are published on the [staff survey website](#).

A summary of each output type is included below, while full details can be found in the [NHS Staff Survey Technical Guide](#).

### 6.1 National results

National outputs are based mainly on data from participating **trusts**. They exclude organisations that participate voluntarily.

**National dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide the national results for all participating trusts on all People Promise elements, themes, sub-scores, and questions, including trend data for 2021-2025 where available. Results are presented for all trusts combined (national average) as well as for each individual trust benchmarking group. Question results are typically presented both as single percentages (e.g., ‘% of staff agreeing/strongly agreeing’) as well as the proportions choosing each response option. Results are also presented broken down by various background variables (such as age and length of service). Up to two of these breakdowns can be applied at a time.

**National briefing:** Published in PDF format, this output provides a summary of the key national results (based on results from NHS trusts only) from the survey with narrative.

**National Workforce Equality Standards Tables:** Published in Excel format, these tables provide the national results (based on results from NHS trusts only) of the NSS indicators used in the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES).

**Detailed spreadsheets:** Published in Excel format, these are a series of spreadsheets that contain question results broken down by individual response options (split by questionnaire section), People Promise elements, themes and sub-scores. Results included in these spreadsheets are weighted to match those reported in the outputs detailed above. Information on the weighting used for a given result is available in each output. Detailed spreadsheets are published about a month after the main results.

### 6.2 Local results

**Benchmark reports:** A PDF report produced for every organisation, containing organisation results for People Promise elements/themes, sub-scores, and questions over the last 5 years (where possible). All results included are weighted and benchmarked where appropriate. An additional breakdown report, with up to two unique, organisation specific sets of breakdowns for theme scores, is optional for every organisation. The benchmark reports also contain data

required for the NSS indicators used in the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES). Data from the benchmark reports is also available in Excel format.

**Organisational dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide the results for each participating organisation and benchmark data on all People Promise elements, themes, sub-scores, and questions, including trend data for 2021-2025 where available. Question results are presented both as single percentages (e.g., ‘% of staff agreeing or strongly agreeing’) and as the proportions choosing each response option. Results are also presented broken down by various background variables (such as age and length of service). Only one of these breakdowns can be applied at a time.

**Detailed spreadsheets:** Published in Excel format, these are a series of spreadsheets that contain question results broken down by individual response options (split by questionnaire section), People Promise elements, themes and sub-scores. The sheets contain the results for each organisation, the results for each trust benchmarking group (the mean of all the constituent organisation results), and the results for all trusts (the mean of all trust responses). Additionally, they contain breakdowns by all of the demographic variables across organisations and within the five trust benchmarking groups. Results included in these spreadsheets are weighted to match those reported in the outputs detailed above. Information on the weighting used for a given result is available in each output. Detailed spreadsheets are published about a month after the main results.

**WRES and WDES dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide data for each organisation based on indicators used in the Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) and the Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES).

### **6.3 Regional results**

**Regional dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide results aggregated for each NHS Region for all participating trusts. Trend data for 2021-2025 are presented where available. Results are also presented broken down by various background variables (such as gender and ethnicity). Up to two of these breakdowns can be applied at a time. These dashboards also provide benchmarked results for each trust grouped within region on all People Promise elements, themes and sub-scores for 2025.

### **6.4 ICS results**

**ICS dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide results aggregated for each ICS for all participating trusts (except ambulance trusts which cover more than one ICS). Trend data for 2021-2025 are presented where appropriate. Results are also presented broken down by various background variables (such as age and length of service). Up to two of these breakdowns can be applied at a time. These dashboards also provide benchmarked results for each trust grouped within an ICS on all People Promise elements, themes and sub-scores for 2025.

## 7 Summary of key outputs for the NHS Staff Survey for bank only workers

The outputs of NSSB reported by the SCC fall into three categories: national, local (i.e., organisational level), and regional/ICS level results. Documents are published on the [staff survey website](#).

A brief summary of each output type is included below, while full details can be found in the [NHS Staff Survey Technical Guide for bank only workers](#).

### 7.1 National results

**National dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide the national results for all participating trusts on all People Promise elements, themes, sub-scores, and questions, including trend data for 2023-2025 where available. Results are presented for all trusts combined (national average) as well as for each individual trust benchmarking group. Question results are typically presented both as single percentages (e.g., ‘% of staff agreeing/strongly agreeing’) as well as the proportions choosing each response option. Results are also presented broken down by various background variables (such as age and length of service). Up to two of these breakdowns can be applied at a time.

**National aggregate report:** Published in PDF format, this output provides a summary of the key national results (based on results from NHS trusts only) from the survey with narrative.

**National Workforce Equality Standards Tables:** Published in Excel format, these tables provide the national results (based on results from NHS trusts only) of the NSSB indicators used in the Bank Workforce Race Equality Standard (BWRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES).

**Detailed spreadsheets:** Published in Excel format, these are a series of spreadsheets that contain question results broken down by individual response options (split by questionnaire section), People Promise elements, themes and sub-scores. Results included in these spreadsheets are weighted to match those reported in the outputs detailed above. Information on the weighting used for a given result is available in each output. Detailed spreadsheets are published about a month after the main results.

### 7.2 Local results

**Benchmark reports:** A PDF report produced for every organisation, containing organisation results for People Promise elements/themes, sub-scores, and questions from 2022-2025, where comparable data is available. All results included are benchmarked where appropriate. The benchmark reports also contain data required for the NSSB indicators used in the Bank Workforce Race Equality Standard (BWRES) and Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES). Data from the benchmark reports is also available in Excel format.

**Organisational dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide the results for each participating organisation and benchmark data on all People Promise elements, themes, sub-scores, and questions, including trend data for 2023-2025 where available. Question results

are presented both as single percentages (e.g., ‘% of staff agreeing or strongly agreeing’) and as the proportions choosing each response option. Results are also presented broken down by various background variables (such as age and length of service). Only one of these breakdowns can be applied at a time. The organisational dashboards also show comparisons between an organisation’s occupation group profile and the average profile for their benchmark group.

**Detailed spreadsheets:** Published in Excel format, these are a series of spreadsheets that contain question results broken down by individual response options (split by questionnaire section), People Promise elements, themes and sub-scores. The sheets contain the results for each organisation, the results for each trust benchmarking group (the mean of all the constituent organisation results), and the results for all trusts (the mean of all trust responses). Additionally, they contain breakdowns by all of the demographic variables across organisations and within the five trust benchmarking groups. Results included in these spreadsheets are weighted to match those reported in the outputs detailed above. Information on the weighting used for a given result is available in each output. Detailed spreadsheets are published about a month after the main results.

**BWRES and WDES dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide data for each organisation based on indicators used in the Bank Workforce Race Equality Standard (BWRES) and the Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES).

### **7.3 Regional results**

**Regional dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide results aggregated for each NHS Region for all participating trusts. Trend data for 2023-2025 are presented where appropriate. Results are also presented broken down by various background variables (such as age and length of service). Up to two of these breakdowns can be applied at a time. These dashboards also provide benchmarked results for each trust grouped within region on all People Promise elements, themes and sub-scores for 2025, as well as an occupational group profile view, which shows comparisons between an organisation’s occupation group profile and the average profile for their benchmark group.

### **7.4 ICS results**

**ICS dashboards:** Published online, these dashboards provide results aggregated for each ICS for all participating trusts (except ambulance trusts which cover more than one ICS). Trend data for 2023-2025 are presented where appropriate. Results are also presented broken down by various background variables (such as age and length of service). Up to two of these breakdowns can be applied at a time. These dashboards also provide benchmarked results for each trust grouped within an ICS on all People Promise elements, themes and sub-scores for 2025, as well as an occupational group profile view, which shows comparisons between an organisation’s occupation group profile and the average profile for their benchmark group.