The Position on Recruitment and Retention in the Social Service Workforce in Scotland

Literature Review Report

Contents

Executive Summary

The purpose of this literature review was to inform the development of the online survey questionnaire and to complement the online survey findings in providing an overall picture of the issues and challenges of recruitment, retention and workforce planning for social services in Scotland.

This literature review has involved examination of the recruitment and retention knowledge and evidence already available on the Scottish social services sector, with the primary aim of identifying gaps in the existing data. In this way, we can ensure that primary research with stakeholders will not replicate other recent studies and they will not be asked to give information they have already provided in other research.

The data gathered during the literature review, followed by an online survey together with qualitative research, will provide a comprehensive review of recruitment and retention issues to inform national policy development going forward. The findings from this review will be considered by stakeholders from across the sector through the Social Work Services Strategic Forum.

As might be expected, a vast array of existing literature has been identified. We have considered reports dating from 2006 onwards but with a key focus on those published within the last two to three years. The data included in these reports has been gathered from the workforce, service users and employer organisations as well as other stakeholders. This range of perspectives, as well as differences in methodology, inevitably means some variations in statistics presented; nevertheless, the themes are generally consistent and often longstanding. Details of all the literature reviewed are appended to this report and the most recent and relevant reports are individually cited in relation to specific topics in our reporting.

Many of the reports we have considered focus on subsets of the workforce, by services and/or employer i.e. public sector, private sector or voluntary sector. Each of these accounts for a significant proportion of the total workforce although the nature of the services, posts and the profile within each can be very different.

The reports produced by the SSSC are almost unique in encompassing the workforce across all employer organisations and are widely referenced for provision of a broad overview.

In order to provide a concise summary and overview of existing data and gaps, the chart overleaf uses a "traffic light system" to indicate the quality and quantity of recent data available for each key area of information requirement that has been agreed for this review. Information areas highlighted in green are those where we have identified relatively robust and recent data sources, amber denotes that there is information available that might usefully be supplemented and red denotes a gap in the data that we have been able to access.

The chart shows availability of data for each employer type. The forthcoming online survey can be designed to target certain question areas at only one or two employer types or the full stakeholder cohort as appropriate.

Chart 1: Range of recent data

Topic	Public Sector	Private Sector	Voluntary Sector
Workforce Size	🟩	🟩	🟩
Recruitment data:			
- methods used	🟥	🟧	🟧
- challenges	🟧	🟧	🟧
- by service	🟧	🟧	🟧
- by post	🟧	🟧	🟧
- mitigation	🟧	🟧	🟥
Workforce Retention data:			
- challenges	🟩	🟧	🟧
- by service	🟩	🟩	🟩
- by post	🟩	🟧	🟧
- mitigation	🟥	🟥	🟥
Pay and Condition Disparities	🟧	🟧	🟩
Influence of Public Funding	N/A	🟧	🟧
Use of Employment Agencies	🟥	🟥	🟥
Use of Short-Measures	🟥	🟥	🟥
Workforce Planning			
- incidence of use	🟧	🟥	🟥
- specific tools	🟧	🟧	🟧

Our recommendations for question areas for the next stage of research take account of the above summary of available information.

In addition, we are conscious that a number of the reports that we have accessed as part of this review include suggestions and recommendations for actions and

initiatives to assist with recruitment and retention but there is no subsequent data to assess views on the viability and likely effectiveness of these initiatives.

We would suggest that the online survey seeks to gather quantitative views on the potential value of some of these suggestions. In this way, the evaluation can provide hard data on the extent of support for possible initiatives going forward.

Our suggestions for the core online survey content are summarised below:

- Classification by organisation type, total workforce size (from number ranges), use of zero hours contracts (numbers), payment of the UK Government Living Wage (all workers or only where legally required), use of pay freezes in the last two years / planned in the next year, region and urban/rural coverage

- Methods ever used / most frequently used to recruit according to post (from a pre-coded list and an option to specify other methods)

- The incidence (regular, occasional, never) of difficulties in recruiting by service and by post over the last two years; Recruitment plans / expectations for the next two years; and expected changes in the difficulty in recruiting by service and by post in the next two years (much greater difficulty, a little greater difficulty, no change, less difficulty)

- Rating of the extent of impact of specific factors on recruitment difficulties (from a pre-coded list compiled from existing data and with an option to specify other challenges)

- Use of and rating of the likely value of eg shared recruitment platforms across the sector, a method of sharing costs of workforce registration and training across employers in the sector, a sector-wide targeting of the workforce in contracting sectors with positive recruitment messages

- Rating of the impact of specific factors on retention (from a pre-coded list compiled from existing data and with an option to specify other issues)

- Use of employee surveys and/or staff feedback to understand and improve morale, motivation and engagement

- Levels of agreement with a battery of statements addressing workforce diversity, impact of retention on service delivery, impact of the living wage on recruitment and retention in the sector and use of employment agencies

- Types of mitigation measures in place in relation to retention; and the outcomes from these

Our suggestions for the Workforce Planning questions include:

- What workforce planning is currently being done, how and by who?

- Awareness and use of existing tools and guidance (from a pre-coded list with an option to identify other tools)

- Rating of the value of any tools used, as well as an open question regarding relative strengths and weaknesses

- Identification of barriers to use

- Any planned changes to approach(es)
- Likelihood of using a nationally available workforce planning tool/suite of tools
- Required features and outputs to maximise value

Introduction

Background

In 2015, members of the Social Work Services Strategic Forum, key stakeholders working in social services, published 'Social Services in Scotland, a shared vision and strategy 2015 – 2020'.

The Vision is for a:

"socially just Scotland with excellent social services delivered by a skilled and valued workforce which works with others to empower, support and protect people, with a focus on prevention, early intervention and enablement."

Recruitment and retention of staff working in the social services sector has long been seen as key to improving service provision, standards and outcomes.

In the last five years, a number of studies and reports, in Scotland and across the UK, have examined recruitment and retention issues and the Vision and Strategy highlights the benefits associated with improved recruitment and retention. These benefits include time, cost and an improvement in consistency and continuity for people who use services. The Vision and Strategy also refers to evidence of high turnover in some parts of the sector.

Research requirements

In February 2016, the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor on behalf of The Social Work Services Strategic Forum commissioned a review of the recruitment and retention challenges that the Scottish social services sector faces, in order to inform national policy development going forward.

The findings from this review will be considered by stakeholders from across the sector through the Social Work Services Strategic Forum.

In March 2016, the remit of this work was expanded to include gathering information on workforce planning and workforce planning tools. The research has the following elements:

- A literature review to look at the recruitment and retention knowledge and evidence already available and, from this, to identify gaps in the data
- An online questionnaire amongst the full range of stakeholders
- Qualitative in-depth interviews to explore the detail behind the data

This document presents the findings from the first of these: the literature review.

Methodology

The brief called for a literature review aimed at summarising existing recruitment and retention knowledge and identifying gaps in the data.

There were two elements to the literature review: a review of knowledge sources and reports from the organisations and agencies represented on the Social Work Services Strategic Forum and other relevant Scottish organisations, agencies and bodies; and a review of other published, publically available information.

This design allowed us to look for current, relevant information on the range of issues identified in the brief and which are summarised below:

- The rationale and economic case for tackling recruitment and retention issues.
- Recruitment and retention challenges; both overall and for different parts of the sector; and specific shortages.
- Actions being taken to address recruitment and retention challenges.
- Employee retention in the social services sector.
- The impact of pay and condition disparities in the sector.
- Influence of public funding/contracting.
- The role of employment agencies.
- The extent to which services are employing short-measures.
- The extent to which recruitment and retention strategies impact upon other parts of the social services sector.
- Relevant work on recruitment and retention being undertaken in other parts of the UK.
- Workforce planning and workforce planning tools.

Forum members reported that there have been several recent pieces of research around social services and that these have involved their members and stakeholders completing surveys or taking part in interviews. They stressed that it is, therefore, of paramount importance that the literature review focus on identifying gaps in existing information so that the subsequent phases (the quantitative and qualitative research) can be used to fill these gaps.

Members are particularly keen to avoid asking people to provide information they have already provided recently in other research.

This report, therefore, provides a summary of the information in existence and also details the gaps in information; this will allow us to design the materials for the next stage to focus on gathering new and necessary information.

Definitions and scope

The literature review looked at information in relation to most service types within the sector:

- Adoption services
- Adult day care
- Adult placement services
- Care homes for adults
- Central and strategic staff
- Fieldwork service (adults)
- Fieldwork service (children)
- Fieldwork service (generic)
- Fieldwork service (offenders)
- Fostering services
- Housing support/care at home
- Nurse agencies
- Offender accommodation services
- Residential child care
- School care accommodation

However, child care agencies, childminding and day care of children were not included in the remit.

Overview

This chapter presents the picture of the social services landscape that emerged from available literature, outlines the main issues as reported in the documents accessed for this review and summarises the key gaps in information that we suggest can be addressed in the next stages of research.

Workforce

There are over 190,000 people working in social services in Scotland. This workforce includes social care workers, social workers, social work students and early years workers. The social care workforce in Scotland is supplied from a mix of providers: 41% private sector, 32% public sector and 27% voluntary sector. There is also a broad range of services delivered to adults, children and families.

The largest workforce numbers and full time equivalent (FTE) posts by sector are found in housing support / care at home and care homes for adults. In both of these sectors, there are larger numbers of FTE posts in the private sector and the voluntary sector than in the public sector. Almost half of the FTE posts in housing support / care at home are found in the voluntary sector whilst seven in ten FTE posts in care homes for adults fall in the private sector.

Issues identified in literature

Recruitment and retention issues may vary by employer type and also because of the sectors served by different employers and the nature of specific posts within sector. Conclusions from recently published literature suggest a number of themes across and within employer types. These include:

- Low pay
- Conditions of employment
- Workforce skills
- Workforce diversity
- Changing models of health and social care
- Sector growth

Scottish Care's research amongst service providers in the private and voluntary sectors, as well as CPPS Benchmarking Survey HR Forum for Voluntary Sector 2016, highlight issues relate to low pay and conditions, the challenge of geographical recruitment, fragmenting working time, zero-hours contracts and diversity of pay enhancement practices. They also focus on wider challenges resulting from health and social care integration and self-directed support, with providers recognising the need to recruit a suitably skilled workforce that needs to be adequately remunerated on terms that promote retention whilst finances are tight.

In the public sector, Audit Scotland's very recent report on changing models of health and social care (March 2016) highlights the impact of growing numbers of

people with complex health and social care needs combined with continuing tight finances, and stresses the importance of new models of care to make better use of available resources and improve quality. It also suggests that any shift to new models of care is not happening fast enough to meet growing needs and calls for the Scottish Government to model how much investment is needed in new services and new ways of working, and whether this can be achieved within existing and planned resources.

The report suggests that NHS boards and councils face major challenges in ensuring that staff with the right skills are able to provide new community-based models of care. It also reports that recruiting and retaining staff on permanent contracts remains a significant problem for the social care sector, as well as the NHS. In particular it highlights difficulties that councils have had in recruiting and retaining care home and homecare staff, especially in cities with high living costs. The report concludes that there is a need to develop a valued, stable, skilled and motivated workforce.

Workforce planning

One of the most common themes to emerge from the literature review was reference to the importance of workforce planning, particularly in the light of changes to health and social care. There was, however, little evidence on the incidence of use or on specific tools being used.

Gaps in information

Workforce subsets

Many of the reports accessed for the literature review focussed on subsets of the workforce, by services and/or employer i.e. public sector, private sector or voluntary sector. Indeed, the reports produced by the SSSC are almost unique in encompassing the workforce across all employer organisations.

One of the main gaps, therefore, highlighted in this review is information relating to specific services or posts.

Recruitment and retention

The following gaps in information relate to recruitment and retention:

- Recruitment and retention methods used and the outcomes from / value of these
- Present and anticipated difficulties in recruitment; causes of these difficulties and specific services / posts affected

Literature suggests that a range of factors impact on, or are impacted by, recruitment and retention issues. However there is little evidence on these issues:

- The introduction of the UK Government Living Wage
- Service delivery
- Use of employment agencies and bank staff
- Workforce diversity

- Use of employee surveys and/or staff feedback to understand and improve morale, motivation and engagement

- Mitigation measures: what measures are used and what are the outcomes

Workforce management and planning

As mentioned above, while there is widespread acknowledgement of the importance of workforce planning there is little specific evidence available. Gaps include:

- What data is collected as part of workforce planning; how is this used?

- What workforce planning is currently being done, how and by who?

- Awareness and use of existing tools and guidance; strengths and weaknesses of any in use and barriers to use

- Likelihood of using a nationally available workforce planning tool/suite of tools

- Required features and outputs of such a tool in order to maximise value

Recruitment

The following chart uses a "traffic light system" to indicate the quality and quantity of recent data available for each key area of information relating to recruitment that has been agreed for this review.

Information areas highlighted in green are those where we have identified relatively robust and recent data sources, amber denotes that there is information available that might usefully be supplemented and red denotes a gap in the data that we have been able to access. The chart shows availability of data for each employer type. This format is also used in the remaining chapters of this report.

Chart 2: Recruitment evidence available

Topic	Public Sector	Private Sector	Voluntary Sector
- methods used	🔴	🟠	🟠
- challenges	🟠	🟠	🟠
- by service	🟠	🟠	🟠
- by post	🟠	🟠	🟠
- mitigation	🟠	🟠	🔴

As part of the literature review, we looked for evidence of the following recruitment-related factors:

- Approaches to recruitment

- Evidence of recruitment challenges either across the sector overall, within different parts of the sector or any services or staff groups facing specific shortages; and the nature and extent of any recruitment problems highlighted in the evidence.

- Details of measures employers are using to mitigate these challenges.

From this information we were able to identify where there are gaps in evidence relating to recruitment and, from this, produce recommendations for question areas for the next stage of research. These are included in highlighted boxes throughout this report.

The following paragraphs outline the data or evidence found; our recommendations for the next stage of research are given at the end of this chapter.

Recruitment methods

There is some recent literature relating to approaches to recruitment; this covers mainly voluntary sector recruitment alongside a smaller amount of information on private sector recruitment. The following paragraphs summarise the literature available.

The Social Care Providers Survey Report on Recruitment and Retention 2015, covered methods of recruitment used for different types of post; these were reported as most commonly being online, press and through job centres for all levels of vacancy. The report concluded that organisations need to be far more creative in searching for front line staff.

The survey also gathered information as to where applicants came from or were located, according to management, supervisor, practitioner and support worker roles. All the survey participants reported recruiting from the UK at each level. The highest incidence of recruitment from outside the UK related to support workers with just over 26% recruited from the EU and 13% from elsewhere.

The much earlier Rock Solid research for Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit in Scotland (2007) suggested there may be scope for developing a number of ideas for recruitment within the voluntary social services sector as follows:

- Forming a consortium with direct competitors in order to jointly recruit - linked websites.
- Recruitment materials giving applicant-friendly information - job design, attitude requirements,
- Relevant transferable experience; pre-recruitment support; on-line interactive tools for applicants.
- Screening procedures; accelerated recruitment.
- Partnership approach to interviews with a similar range of jobs.

A GEN report published in 2007 also reported a suggestion from organisations that a single recruitment space should be created specifically for voluntary sector social service organisations.

> We suggest that an up-to-date measure of the recruitment methods used, as well as an assessment of the potential value of additional recruitment initiatives, should be included in the upcoming online survey amongst stakeholders.

Recruitment challenges

There is some recent literature relating to recruitment challenges and this covers all sectors. The key challenges emerging from this evidence relate to:

- Low pay and issues around conditions; and the cost of introducing the UK Government Living Wage
- Sector growth
- Specific issues; including diversity

Issues related to low pay and conditions

The recent Benchmarking Survey HR Forum for Voluntary Sector (2016) indicated that there were recruitment problems in the sector and suggested that as the labour market recovers these problems will become more acute. Issues of low pay and

conditions, possibly linked to problems with the introduction of the living wage, seemed to be the key reasons for recruitment difficulties. In this voluntary sector survey, employee turnover was reported as relatively low compared to general social care, but doubts were expressed about whether this would last as the labour market recovered. The report also highlighted that the key reason for leaving posts in the voluntary sector appeared to be related to pay.

In the Front Line – Social Care Providers Survey Report on Recruitment and Retention 2015, which covered both the private sector and voluntary sector, also highlighted key themes of low pay, better opportunities elsewhere, conditions of service and limited career pathways as challenges to recruitment. It also suggested a lack of quality relating to skills, work experience, qualifications and also attitude and values. Whilst the data was collected almost 18 months ago, the survey findings reported that over 60% of service providers were finding recruitment more difficult than in the previous year.

Following publication of the Social Care Providers Report, a significant number of social care providers apparently expressed their concern that the serious challenges in recruiting and retaining staff that 'In the Front Line' had reported had grown worse in the period up to the end of June 2015. In addition, providers apparently indicated that the pressures in relation to recruitment were starting to have an impact on service delivery.

Looking to the future, The Social Care Providers Survey Report on Recruitment and Retention 2015 estimated the cost of introducing the living wage for all frontline care jobs in Scotland at £231m with gross public costs at £140m (Resolution Foundation, 2015). It should also be borne in mind that further increases to the living wage are planned for the future. The survey report suggests that if achievable, the improvements in pay brought about by the living wage may offer the sector some opportunity to compete more effectively in the labour market.

Overall, many of the documents that we accessed and reviewed included references to issues raised in Social Services in Scotland A Shared Vision and Strategy 2015 – 2020.

In particular, there are references to downward pressure on service costs and the impact on pay and conditions which, in turn, affects recruitment and retention. Many also comment on the consequent impact on quality of care and support.

Sector growth

The SSSC's "A stakeholder report which examines key messages from employers" (2014), reported mixed views around short-term growth for the sector.

Approximately 40% of their survey participants anticipated growth in the number of workers employed by their service over the next three years and greatest optimism was evident in and around the private sector and possibly the voluntary sector. The report also suggested that optimism around growth seems clearest in early years services and is linked to increased flexibility and number of funded-hours of child

care provision. A growth in the number of PAs providing care and support was also reported as being expected at that time.

The report concluded that the extent to which various growth projections will lead to an overall increase in the numbers of social service workers was unclear. It also discussed part-time workers specifically and again concluded that the extent to which services will employ a greater proportion of part-time workers is unclear. The report identified mixed views on the merits of part-time workers in contributing to quality care and support, with some respondents believing it would create challenges around ensuring continuity of care and reinforce stereotypes of the sector as a place for casual work. Others perceived a move towards a greater number of part-time staff as an essential part of a flexible service.

Predictions in the Labour Force Survey (ONS) suggest the Scottish social services sector could employ 216,000 workers by 2020 and approximately 240,000 by 2025. Looking at these numbers in relation to SSSC's headcount workforce of 194,000 in 2014, this represents 11% growth in workforce by 2020 and 23% by 2025 and could add significantly to recruitment challenges.

Capable, Confident, Skilled (Skills for Care, 2011) observed that "As the adult social care workforce needs to grow, other sectors are contracting, and there are real opportunities for the social care sector to diversify its workforce and attract people with a range of skills that can enhance the sector". The report suggested that the sector must target workers who are in transition and present social care services to them as a positive option; this may be an option for consideration within Scotland.

However, In the Front Line – Social Care Providers Survey Report on Recruitment and Retention 2015 commented that as the economic recovery picks up, there is evidence of the sector experiencing renewed recruitment difficulties in many areas of the country (Koehler, 2014). The report suggests that "Care is seen as having to increasingly compete for labour with sectors that have experienced wage stagnation and are now moving to growth (Resolution Foundation, 2015)".

Specific issues

Specific challenges identified in literature relate mainly to diversity of the workforce and to age.

In terms of diversity of the workforce, the Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030 reports that statistics for social care staff suggest relatively low representation; it also suggests that "the local authorities for which many social care staff work generally have very low numbers of minority ethnic staff".

The Scottish Government has expressed an intention to identify potential means of exploring workforce representation with relevant bodies to encourage a greater representation of the minority ethnic population within the social services workforce.

A number of reports that we looked at suggested that the sector struggles to attract young people eg under 45, to the workforce; there were also suggestions of a

gender bias with men more typically represented in senior posts and women dominating the sector's frontline workforce.

Our suggestions for the core online survey content are summarised below:

- The incidence (regular, occasional, never) of difficulties in recruiting by service and by post over the last two years; Recruitment plans / expectations for the next two years;

- Expected changes in the difficulty in recruiting by service and by post in the next two years (much greater difficulty, a little greater difficulty, no change, less difficulty)

- Rating of the extent of impact of specific factors on recruitment difficulties (from a pre-coded list compiled from existing data and with an option to specify other challenges)

- Levels of agreement with a battery of statements addressing workforce diversity, impact of recruitment issues on service delivery, impact of the living wage on recruitment in the sector and use of employment agencies

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Mitigating measures

There was little information on mitigation measures being used to prevent or reduce the challenges identified.

The Chief Social Work Officer Annual reports identified work that Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire were doing to mitigate against the impact of retail sector as a competitor for care staff, offering better pay and conditions. Aberdeen offering a council house for a year as part of an incentive package

In the Front Line - Supplementary Report on the Use of Agency Staffing was a survey to get an up to date picture of the challenges facing the independent sector in the summer of 2015. Respondents were asked whether over the last three months their organisation had increased its use of agency staff in relation to: General care staff (e.g. support workers and practitioners), managers and supervisors, and nursing staff. The results indicated for each of the categories that there had been an increase in the use of agency staff, most especially for general care staff and for nursing staff with only a small increase in the use of agency staff for supervisors and managers.

We suggest that the next stage of research asks specifically about the use of mitigating measures.

We also suggest that questions be considered that relate to the current use of and rating of the likely value of eg shared recruitment platforms across the sector, a method of sharing costs of workforce registration and training across employers in the sector, a sector-wide targeting of the workforce in contracting sectors with positive recruitment messages

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Retention

We looked to see whether there is evidence to support common perceptions such as the view that there are significant challenges for retaining employees throughout the sector and that all parts of the sector are struggling to retain staff. Many of the issues we reported in the chapter on recruitment were also cited as being linked to problems or potential problems with workforce retention.

Again, we have used a "traffic light system" to indicate the quality and quantity of recent data available for each key area of information relating to staff retention that has been agreed for this review.

Chart 3: Workforce retention evidence available

Topic	Public Sector	Private Sector	Voluntary Sector
- challenges	🟩	🟧	🟧
- by service	🟩	🟩	🟩
- by post	🟩	🟧	🟧
- mitigation	🟥	🟥	🟥

In this section we looked for:

- Evidence of retention challenges either across the sector overall, within different parts of the sector or any services or staff groups facing specific issues; and the nature and extent of any retention problems highlighted in the evidence.
- Details of measures employers are using to mitigate these challenges.

From this information we were able to identify where there are gaps in evidence relating to staff retention and, from this, produce recommendations for question areas for the next stage of research.

Retention challenges

The following areas were present within the literature reviewed:

- Lower retention rates in some staff posts
- Causes of low retention
- Issues caused by retention problems
- Mitigating actions

Lower retention rates

There is a good deal of information available on retention rates within social services as a whole and on challenges faced in the public sector. However, data relating to the private and voluntary sectors is less evident.

The literature available suggests that areas facing specific issues include:

- Social work posts in fieldwork with children
- Social work posts in fieldwork with offenders
- Support worker level roles

The very recently published Experimental Statistics: "Staff Retention in the Scottish Social Service Sector" (Scottish Social Services Council, March 2016) uses the 'stability index' (Taylor, 2002) to measure staff retention in organisations across the different types of services and employers operating in the sector. It also discusses retention of staff in particular types of posts in local authorities. The experimental nature of the statistics and the potential strengths and weaknesses of the data are detailed in the report and feedback is currently being sought on the value and suitability of the data.

The data presented in these experimental statistics suggests that staff retention in the social services sector was on average 85% between 2013 and 2014, i.e. 85% of staff were with the same employer in December 2014 as they had been in December 2013. The data suggest some variation by employer type with almost 91% of staff retained by public sector employers, 86% by voluntary sector providers and 79% in the private sector.

In terms of social workers in local authorities, the data indicate that posts in fieldwork with children and fieldwork with offenders have the lowest retention rates for social workers and senior social workers, while generic fieldwork has the highest.

In the Front Line's Social Care Providers Survey of 2015, suggested that "broadly speaking the highest turnover is in support worker level roles". There may be some correlation between this and the lower levels of staff retention reported in the private sector and the voluntary sector by the SSSC's experimental statistics. The report also noted that support worker roles are the hardest to recruit to and suggested a knock-on effect whereby staff that are currently working within these roles are the hardest hit by vacancies. The authors went on to comment that "this is clearly emerging as a self-perpetuating problem as staff go sick, or become dissatisfied and leave due to feeling unable to fulfil their role well enough" and also highlighted the adverse impact of turnover of front line staff on quality of care.

> We suggest that an up-to-date measure of the retention techniques used, as well as an assessment of the potential value of additional retention initiatives, should be included in the upcoming online survey amongst stakeholders.

Causes of low retention

The GEN report published nearly a decade ago in 2007 cited the main reason for turnover as low wages & salaries, suggested by 38% of organisations. This is consistent with The Scottish Care Skill Needs survey which found that the reason why most staff leave was for improved pay. Other reasons for staff turnover included antisocial hours (33%), lack of career progression (25%) and lack of full time opportunities (17%). Issues around lack of training, management practice and dissatisfaction with the employer were not widely cited at that time as driving turnover.

The recent Benchmarking Survey HR Forum for Voluntary Sector (2016) indicated that employee turnover was relatively low in the voluntary sector, but doubts were expressed about whether this would last as the labour market recovered. Indeed it was noticeable that the key reason for leaving still appeared to be related to pay.

We suggest that the next stage of research includes questions on:

- Rating of the impact of specific factors on retention (from a pre-coded list compiled from existing data and with an option to specify other issues)
- Specifically, the impact of the living wage on retention in the sector

Issues caused by retention problems

Literature suggests that the following issues stem from retention problems:

- Lower levels of staff contentment
- Increased recruitment and training costs
- Difficulties in meeting service user needs

The 2015 IRISS report 'The View from Here' focused on the views of the workforce. The findings suggested 86% of managers surveyed were happy, compared with 78% of care workers and 71% of social workers. The survey also showed that 91% of social workers reported that they'd seen a reduction in the availability of social services support for people, perhaps affecting happiness and potentially affecting retention in the long term.

'The View from Here' reported that 48% of respondents (workforce members) identified funding cuts as the biggest challenge affecting the sector.

"Taking the High Road - Work, Wages and Wellbeing in the Scottish Labour Market" (2016) reported on the recruitment and training costs associated with high staff turnover and absence rates in the care sector. This was highlighted in the report as an issue that had been raised by the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCSPS) and Close the Gap49. The report stated that CCSPS estimated that recruitment costs in the care sector amount to £3,500 for each new worker.

A much older GEN report, for the Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit, supported the view that while the main implication of staff turnover on voluntary sector social service employers was difficulties meeting service

user needs, the management time involved in recruitment was also perceived as being a major issue (62%). Overall, the reported costs of recruitment serve to reinforce the benefits of high retention levels.

Our suggestions for online survey content include:

- Use of employee surveys and/or staff feedback to understand and improve morale, motivation and engagement
- Levels of agreement with a battery of statements addressing, for example, workforce management and impact of retention on service delivery

Mitigating actions

There appears to be little by way of evidence on measures in use to mitigate against low retention or against issues caused by low retention.

Rock Solid's research for Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit in Scotland (also 2007) suggested there may be scope for developing a number of ideas for retention within the voluntary social services sector:

- Effective induction replaces need for probationary period.
- Fast track promotion of employees who show the right attributes.
- 'Retention bonuses' offered on the basis of service and rising value of employees, combined with
- Option to negotiate flexible contracts.
- Coaching management in coaching skills.
- Personal development opportunities extended to volunteers as well as to contract staff.
- Welcoming back ex-employees and offering 'time out' or sabbatical opportunities

We suggest that the next stage of research asks specifically about the use of mitigating measures and includes both types of mitigation in use as well as outcomes from the use of these measures.

Other issues

The research brief mentioned a number of other specific areas of interest in relation to recruitment and retention.

As indicated in the following chart, which again uses a "traffic light system" to indicate the quality and quantity of recent data available for each key area, these are areas where we found little in the way of published data relating to the Scottish workforce.

Chart 4: Evidence available relating to other issues

Topic	Public Sector	Private Sector	Voluntary Sector
Pay and Condition Disparities	🟧	🟧	🟩
Influence of Public Funding	N/A	🟧	🟧
Use of Employment Agencies	🟥	🟥	🟥
Use of Short-Measures	🟥	🟥	🟥

The impact of pay and condition disparities

Pay features high on the list of issues affecting recruitment and retention within the sector. However, while there is some information available from England (mainly relating to the gender pay gap), we found relatively little up-to-date hard data on pay and conditions and/or the impact of disparities.

Imagining The Future: Workforce Report produced by Kerry Musselbrook for IRISS in 2013, suggested that The Low Pay Commission identified social care as a low paying sector. The report added that the number of social care jobs paid at the minimum wage had fallen in recent years (SSSC, 2011).

In 2012, UNISON conducted a survey of homecare workers specifically entitled "Time to Care". The survey was open to homecare workers who were either UNISON members or non-members. The findings detailed in the subsequent report suggested that 2.4% of homecare workers were paid below the then national minimum wage. The authors suggested that this might be a consequence of employers not paying for homecare workers travel time between appointments.

UNISON subsequently referenced these survey results with some comment on Scotland specifically, in the context of travel between appointments. UNISON commented that nearly 80% of English homecare workers surveyed said that their work schedule was arranged in a way that they either had to rush their work or leave a client early to get to the next visit; this figure was reported as 44% in Scotland.

An earlier 2011 study by Dr Shereen Hussein, Senior Research Fellow at the Social Care Workforce Research Unit, found that between 150,000 and 200,000 people in

the care workforce in England were earning less than the national minimum wage (Hussein, 2011).

Pay, conditions and care quality in residential, nursing and domiciliary services (2014) summarises the findings of a Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) study that looked at staff pay, status and quality of care in social care (Owen et al., unpublished). It supplements this with messages from two JRF reports on rewarding work for low-paid employees and career progression for workers in retail, catering and care sectors (Philpott, forthcoming; Devins, 2014)

In terms of disparities, Imagining The Future: Workforce Report suggested that generally across all UK jobs/professions, pay is higher for public sector workers than private sector ones (ONS, 2012a; b). However comparability of roles and job titles was recognised.

In the Front Line – Social Care Providers Survey Report on Recruitment and Retention 2015 commented on pay and conditions, suggesting that surveys of employees in the care sector find that the level of pay falls below expectations, given the required responsibilities, skill and emotional demands of care work. It reports that the issue of comparability with retail is more pronounced among the private sector care providers, where pay is lower on average than in the local authority and voluntary sectors (Rubery et al, 2011).

Influence of public funding/contracting

We were unable to identify additional relevant and up-to-date sources of information as to whether public funding/contracting influences pay disparities or the extent to which local labour markets impact on recruitment challenges.

Use of employment agencies

There was little in the way of evidence relating to the use of employment agencies.

A 2011 article on www.communitycare.co.uk touched on use of agency staff by a council in London, comparing this to Edinburgh where use of agency social workers was minimal.

However, much has changed over the last five years and we were unable to identify more relevant and up-to-date sources of information.

Use of short-measures

We looked for any evidence to show the extent to which services are employing short-measures rather than longer-term (structural) approaches to tackle challenges and were unable to identify any up-to-date sources of information.

We will discuss with the project manager whether to address these issues in the online survey.

Workforce planning

We looked for information on approaches currently used for workforce planning in the sector and also the tools that are being used.

While one of the most common themes in our review of literature was reference to the importance of workforce planning, as can be seen in the following "traffic light" chart, there was little hard evidence on the incidence of use or on specific tools being used.

Chart 5: Workforce Planning

Topic	Public Sector	Private Sector	Voluntary Sector
- Incidence of use			
- specific tools			

Incidence of use

In June 2015 Audit Scotland published its impact report on Scotland's public sector workforce. This focused on changes in staff numbers and costs, implementing workforce changes and planning for future workforce changes. The report recommended that councils, the NHS, the Scottish Government and central government bodies should forecast expected staff numbers, skill needs and costs on a rolling three year basis, using scenario planning where necessary.

There is as yet a lack of any evidence on progress towards these recommendations and the next stage of research could address this by asking whether organisations are following these recommendations and, if so, how the data is being used in resource planning and service commissioning.

The following reports also provided information for employers in relation to workforce planning. Again, there is little evidence available on how, or if, employers are using this information; again, this is an area that can be explored further in the next stages of research.

The Scottish Social Services Council's Workforce Planning Guide was last revised in December 2014 and is designed to provide a framework for development and subsequent implementation of a workforce plan for all types and sizes of social service employers.

The SSSC's Service Trends and Workforce Implications in Scotland (2014) explored evidence around demand for services and highlighted a number of potential workforce implications, as well as contributing to the information that employers need to undertake effective workforce and business planning.

The Centre for Workforce Intelligence's 2015 report for England 'Forecasting the adult social care workforce: a summary report of workforce intelligence' described

the shape of the adult social care workforce and forecasts future requirements, based on predicted population growth.

As noted above, we suggest that the next stage of research looks at:

- Data collected as part of workforce planning
- How this data is used and by whom

Specific tools

A number of tools and guidelines have been developed and promoted over the last decade. While there is information available on these tools there is little evidence as to whether these are being used or, if they are being used, by whom.

In 2008, Learning Network North produced a report regarding four Workforce Planning tools tailored for different areas in the Social Services Sector. These were:

- Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) – Workforce PlanningTool.
- Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOC) – EVOC CareTraining Needs Analyser (ECTNA).
- Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care (SIRCC) – Towards a Competent and Confident Residential Child Care Workforce. A Guide for Residential Managers to the Registration and Continual Professional Development of Residential Child Care Staff.
- Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit (VSSSWU):Workforce Planning – A Toolkit for Voluntary Sector Social Services in Scotland.

A further purpose of the report was to evaluate the active use of these tools in the North of Scotland within the Social Services Sector, in order to determine the effectiveness of the tools and the accessibility for individual and organisations. However, at that time, the report concluded: "In the North of Scotland awareness of the tools and their purposes is not so apparent.

An explanation for this could be that people may not recognise or perceive these tools to be specific Workforce Planning tools. Therefore more awareness raising is required to effectively inform on the Workforce Planning tools that are available to assist the sector."

The Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit produced a Toolkit for Voluntary Sector Social Services in Scotland, last updated in 2009. It provides guidance and tools to help voluntary sector organisations develop a workforce plan.

Aberdeenshire Council developed a workforce planning toolkit, launched in March 2011, with financial support from the Improvement Service.

Our suggestions for the Workforce Planning questions include:

- What workforce planning is currently being done, how and by who?
- Awareness and use of existing tools and guidance (from a pre-coded list with an option to identify other tools)
- Rating of the value of any tools used, as well as an open question regarding relative strengths and weaknesses
- Identification of barriers to use and any planned changes to approach(es)
- Likelihood of using a nationally available workforce planning tool/suite of tools
- Required features and outputs to maximise value

Document title	Date	Author / Publisher
2014 Benchmarking Report for Voluntary Sector HR Network and CCPS	April 2015	Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland
2016 A trusted, skilled and valued social service workforce	March 2016	SSSC
A Guide to Data to Support Health & Social Care Partnerships in Joint Strategic Commissioning and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	October 2014	ISD Scotland
A stakeholder report which examines key messages from employers	2014	SSSC
A successful partnership: working with Personal Assistants in Scotland	March 2014	SSSC
A Toolkit for Voluntary Sector Social Services in Scotland	2009	SG
Aberdeenshire Council's workforce planning toolkit and NHS six steps methodology	November 2013	Audit Scotland
An independent review of the Scottish Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Workforce and Out of School Care (OSC) Workforce	April 2015	SG Early Years
Annual Reports of the Chief Social Work Officers 2014 – 2015	2015	Local Authority CSWOs
Benchmarking Survey HR Forum for Voluntary Sector 2016	2016	CCPS
Briefing 072 Bargaining: Buurtzorg Care Model	2016	UNISON
Business Resilience Survey 2015	2015	CCPS
Capable, confident, skilled: a workforce development strategy for people working, supporting and caring in adult social care	May 2011	Skills for Care
Changing Lives	2006	Scottish Executive
Changing models of health and social care	March 2016	Audit Scotland
Employment Conditions in the Scottish Social Care Voluntary Sector: Impact of Public Funding Constraints in the Context of Economic Recession	March 2011	CCPS

Examining the recruitment and retention challenges in the third sector	June 2014	Cornerstone
Experimental Statistics: Staff Retention in the Scottish Social Service Sector	2016	SSSC
Experimental Statistics: Whole Time Equivalent Data for the Scottish Social Service Workforce	2016	SSSC
Exploring Recruitment & Retention of Social Care Support Workers	2016	Scottish Care
Forecasting the adult social care workforce: a summary report of workforce intelligence	October 2015	Centre for Workforce Intelligence
Gender pay gap revealed in adult social care	April 2014	Communitycare
Health and Care Experience Survey 2013/14	2014	SG
Higher Aspirations, Brighter Futures: NRCCI Workforce report	2009	National Residential Child Care Initiative
Horizon 2035 future demand for skills initial results	August 2015	CfWI
Imagining The Future: Workforce	December 2013	IRISS
In the Front Line – Social Care Providers Survey Report on Recruitment and Retention 2015	2015	Scottish Care
In the front line - Supplementary Report on the Use of Agency Staffing	July 2015	Scottish Care
Inspecting and improving care and social work in Scotland	2015	Care Inspectorate
Key policy drivers and skills challenges for the sector	2014	SSSC
Key to Care	December 2014	LGiU
Learning Network North Workforce Planning Tools	October 2008	Learning Network North
Meeting Scotland's Childcare Challenge	June 2015	Childcare Alliance
Mental Health Officers (Scotland) Report 2014	August 2015	SSSC
National Benchmarking Overview Report 2014	2015	Scottish Local Government Benchmarking Framework

NHSScotland Staff Survey 2014	December 2014	SG
NHSScotland Workforce Information	December 2015	NHS National Services Scotland
Pay, conditions and care quality in residential, nursing and domiciliary services	April 2014	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Personalisation and its implications for work and employment in the voluntary sector	2010	CCPS
Qualification and training provision in the social service sector in Scotland	2014	SSSC
Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016 2030	2016	SG
Recruitment and Retention Lessons from Beyond the Social Services Sector	2007	VSSSWU in Scotland
Scotland's public sector workforce	November 2013	Audit Scotland
Scotland's public sector workforce Impact Report	June 2015	Audit Scotland
Scottish Social Service Sector Report on 2014 Workforce Data	August 2015	SSSC
Scotland steals a march on England (Workforce Planning)	2011	Communitycare
Service trends and workforce implications in Scotland	2014	SSSC
Social Services in Scotland A Shared Vision and Strategy 2015 2020	March 2015	Social Work Services Strategic Forum
Social Services in Scotland A Shared Vision and Strategy 2015 2020: A One Year on Progress Update	March 2016	Social Work Services Strategic Forum
Social Work and Social Care Statistics for Scotland: A Summary	January 2016	Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser
Social work in Scotland (Flyer for upcoming report)	tbp summer 2016	Audit Scotland
SSSC Workforce Planning Guide	December 2014	SSSC
Study Of The Workforce And Employment Issues Surrounding SDS	2010	SG
Summary Study Of The Workforce And Employment Issues Surrounding SDS	2010	SG

Taking the High Road - Work, Wages and Wellbeing in the Scottish Labour Market	January 2016	Scottish Parliament
The Cavendish Review	July 2015	Independent Review
The Kingsmill Review : Taking Care	April 2014	Independent Review
The Future of Residential Care for Older People in Scotland	February 2014	SG and COSLA
The impact of welfare reform on third sector care and support services in Scotland	June 2014	IRISS/CCPS
The Mental Health Officer role in Scotland: a report on current capacity and landscape	April 2015	SG Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser
The public health knowledge and intelligence workforce	March 2015	Public Health England
The View From Here	2015	IRISS
Time to care	2014	UNISON
Voices from the front line Exploring Recruitment & Retention of Social Care Support Workers	January 2016	Scottish Care
Voluntary Sector Social Service Organisations Staff Turnover	October 2007	Voluntary Sector Social Services Workforce Unit in Scotland
Why are some employers more successful than others in retaining their workforce?	2011	Skills for Care

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this <statistical bulletin / social research publication>:

☐ are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

☐ are available via an alternative route <specify or delete this text>

☐ may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact <email address> for further information.

☐ cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.