

Dear Colleague

NATIONAL PRIMARY CARE WORKFORCE SURVEY 2013 – PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Summary

1. This letter provides an update in respect of the National Primary Care Workforce Survey 2013.

Background

2. [CEL 02\(13\)](#), issued on 22 January, advised of the launch of the Survey and the deadline for completion and return of Survey forms. The Survey was concluded in March and over the spring and summer, ISD Scotland collated, checked and analysed the data collected assisted by a stakeholder group – the National Primary Care Workforce Survey Advisory Group. The Advisory Group helped assure the quality and integrity of the approach taken in respect of handling the results and helped ensure that the conclusions detailed in the final report were valid and robust (in respect of interpretation of data and appropriateness of assumptions made).

Results

3. As indicated in CEL 02(13), the 2013 survey collected workforce data, for the first time, about GP Out of Hours services. It had originally been hoped that all of the results of both forms would be suitable for publication by ISD Scotland as an Official Statistics report. However, as collation of the Out of Hours data progressed, it became apparent that only some of the data in this pilot strand would be robust enough to be included in the 2013 Official Statistics Report.

4. The Official Statistics Report was published on the ISD

CEL 23 (2013)

12 November 2013

Addressees

For action

Chief Executives, NHS territorial
Boards
Directors of Human Resources,
NHS territorial Boards

For information

Chief Executives, Special NHS
Boards
Directors of Human Resources,
Special NHS Boards
Primary Care Leads, NHS Boards
NHS Education for Scotland
Scottish General Practitioners
Committee
Chair, National Out of Hours
Operations Group
Scottish Practice Nursing
Association
Royal College of General
Practitioners
Royal College of Nursing
Workforce Survey Advisory Group
members

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Scotland website on 24 September and is available at www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/General-Practice/GPs-and-Other-Practice-Workforce/primary-care-workforce-

[survey-2013.asp](#). It includes data at the national level. However, ISD Scotland have also published supplementary statistics which break down the data to Regional Workforce Group, Health Board and CHP level. This data will be of interest to workforce planners at all levels, helping to ensure that the right people with the right skills and competences are deployed in the right place at the right time.

Experimental report

5. Although not robust enough to be featured in the Official Statistics Report, it was recognised that the other elements of the Out of Hours data contained some very useful information and messages for those responsible for workforce planning in primary care. Therefore these experimental results are being published on the ISD Scotland website at <http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/General-Practice/> on 19 November.

Workforce planning tool

6. I would like to thank Board Primary Care Leads for their assistance earlier in the year distributing the Survey forms and encouraging their completion and return. The data in the Official Statistics Report and in the Experimental Report will assist those with responsibilities for ensuring the provision of safe, high quality and sustainable patient care. At Regional Workforce Group and Health Board levels, the reports facilitate identification and understanding of the primary care workforce serving the area: headcount and demographic profile. They also provide data on the average weekly hours or sessions committed by doctors and nurses employed by GP practices and an indication of vacancies, which will help build a clearer picture of the demand for primary care services, 24/7, and the challenges facing primary care providers in meeting those demands.

7. Within CHPs and GP practices, the data could provide the basis for discussions with neighbours in order to learn from each other; share examples of good practice; and explore potential alternative models of care aimed at optimising the resources available in the delivery of a safe, high quality and sustainable service to the local communities.

Action

8. You are invited to promote awareness of the 2013 National Primary Care Workforce Survey results amongst those within your Board involved in workforce planning discussions at Regional Workforce Group level; those with responsibilities for Out of Hours service provision; and those liaising with CHPs and GP practices. It has become apparent from feedback received from this year's Survey that some GP practices have reservations about the value to them of completing and returning the Survey. Raising awareness of the findings of this year's Survey with GP practices, will, hopefully, contribute to the success of future similar exercises.

9. This Chief Executive Letter can be obtained online at www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shirley Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Shirley Rogers
Deputy Director of Health Workforce