



Source: Skills for Care adult social care workforce estimates 2022/23

Recent trends – Workforce supply and demand

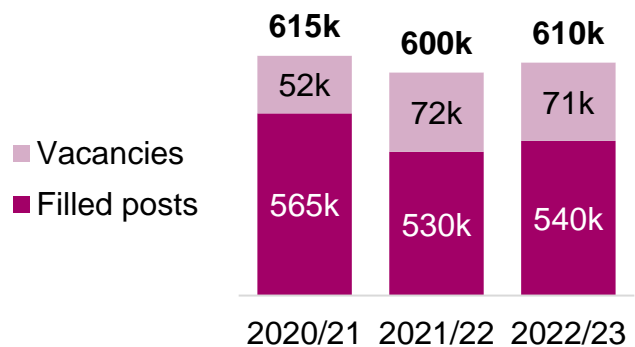
Across the whole adult social care sector, we estimate there were 1.68 million filled posts in 2020/21. The number of filled posts decreased to 1.615 million in 2021/22, a decrease of 4% (60,000 filled posts), but has increased to 1.635 million in 2022/23, an increase of 1% (20,000 filled posts). During this period, the number of vacant posts increased from 109,000 to 164,000 between 2020/21 and 2021/22, reaching a peak vacancy rate of 10.6%, however the vacancy rate fell in 2022/23 to 9.9% (152,000 vacant posts).

Domiciliary care services in the independent sector had a decrease of 35,000 filled posts between 2020/21 and 2021/22, a decrease of 6%, and the number of vacant posts increased by 20,000 (38%). Between 2021/22 and 2022/23, the number of filled posts increased by 10,000 (2%) and the number of vacant posts decreased by 1,000 (-2%). Therefore, the total number of posts in independent sector domiciliary care services has remained stable in recent periods, but the amount of these posts which are vacant has increased substantially.

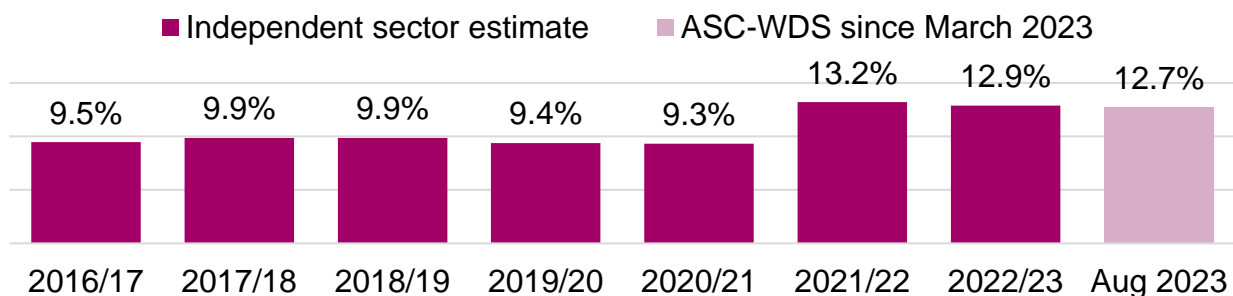
In 2022/23, the vacancy rate of independent sector domiciliary care services was 12.9%, equivalent to 71,000 vacant posts. Monthly tracking of data¹ from the ASC-WDS has shown that the vacancy rate decreased slightly to 12.7% by August 2023, however this rate is relatively high compared to 9.3% in 2020/21, prior to the pandemic.

In contrast, monthly tracking showed the number of vacant posts in care homes with and without nursing returned to their pre-pandemic levels in August 2023.

Estimated filled and vacant posts in the independent sector



Independent sector vacancy rate trend from 2016/17 to August 2023



¹ Note that monthly tracking is based on unweighted data and may change throughout the year as more data is submitted to ASC-WDS

An increase in international recruitment is playing a part in these recent trends. Care workers were added to the Shortage Occupation List in February 2022 and this opened a route for people to immigrate into the UK into this role, given that they meet the points-based criteria.

Recruitment and retention

