

Record numbers of NHS doctors and nurses

- Record numbers of doctors, nurses and staff are working in the NHS, latest data shows
- On top of 4,000 new GP trainees and 21,000 more primary care staff
- Government on track to deliver on commitment for 50,000 more nurses by 2024, with over 32,000 more nurses working in NHS hospitals and in general practice

A record number of doctors and nurses are working in the NHS in England, delivering extra appointments, speeding up diagnoses and helping to tackle the Covid backlog.

There are almost 1.24 million full-time equivalent staff working in NHS trusts and commissioning bodies in England – over 34,000 more people compared to a year ago, up by nearly 3%.

The latest data published by NHS Digital up to September shows there are almost 4,000 more doctors and over 9,300 more nurses working in the NHS compared to September 2021.

Since 2010, there are now over 34,170 more doctors and over 44,820 more nurses working in the NHS.

It follows news that 4,000 new trainee doctors have accepted GP training placements – hitting the government's target for GP specialty trainee recruitment for the fifth year running – according to the latest figures from Health Education England.

There are also now more than 21,000 more primary care staff supporting patients – including nurses and pharmacists – since September 2019 and the government is on track to meet its target of 26,000 additional staff by March 2024.

Health and Social Care Secretary Steve Barclay said:

Supporting the workforce is one of my immediate priorities and we are making significant progress in training and recruiting a record number of nurses, doctors and healthcare professionals. There are almost 4,000 more doctors and over 9,000 more nurses in the NHS than last year.

I want to thank all our brilliant NHS staff who work tirelessly to look after us and our loved ones and continue to inspire future generations to join this rewarding career.

We're building a stronger, healthier NHS for the long-term to give people the security of knowing that it will be there for them when

they need it.

The government remains on track to deliver on its commitment to recruit 50,000 more nurses by 2024, Parliament, with over 32,000 more nurses in September 2022 compared with September 2019.

In the Autumn Statement the government committed to publishing a comprehensive workforce strategy next year to recruit and retain more staff, with independently verified forecasts for the number of doctors, nurses and other professionals that will be needed in 5, 10 and 15 years' time.

This will mean more patients will be able to access the services they need, when they need it.

GP practice data available for first time

- New data published on GP appointments for the first time ever allows patients to make a more informed choice about the practice they choose to visit
- This comes after over 4,000 GPs accepted on training placements, hitting the government target for the fifth year running
- Autumn Statement reiterates government's commitment to primary care and improving patient access to it

Patients will be able to make more informed choices on the GP practice they choose to visit after data showing detailed appointment waiting times was published for the first time ever today (Thursday).

The statistics, which cover all GP practices across England, is being made available to inform patients how many appointments each practice is delivering and on the length of time taken from booking an appointment to the appointment itself.

This will improve transparency about performance and give patients more information to help them make informed choices when choosing their practice.

The statistics, NHS Digital's website, will form part of the GP data published monthly which for the first time will include details at practice level. This was announced in Our Plan for Patients.

Health and Social Care Secretary Steve Barclay said:

We promised to prioritise patients and improve access and that is exactly what we have done – and this is just the start.

I am determined to make it easier for people to get an appointment with their GP practice when they need one and this will allow patients to make a more informed choice about the care they receive.

The Autumn Statement reaffirmed the government's expectation that all those who need an appointment can get one within two weeks, with urgent appointments on the same day.

This will include offering one million additional appointments and providing an additional 31,000 phone lines which will help people avoid the 8am rush for appointments with new digital tools to improve IT systems and ease administrative burdens.

Minister of State for Health Neil O'Brien said:

This is about making sure patients can make genuine choices about where to access their care.

More than 90% of a patient's direct experience of the NHS is through primary care and their GP practices so it is vital appointments are available when needed.

This government reiterated its commitment to the NHS during the Autumn Statement and improving access to data is just the start.

The government is also set to reach its target of 26,000 additional members of primary care staff and has hit its target for new GP trainees – more than 4,000 this year – for the fifth year in a row.

This comes as we provide more support for the sector, with struggling GP practices receiving support with their most acute access challenges to improve performance – such as the delivery of a framework to support all practices to secure cloud-based telephony systems.

Work also continues to incentivise the most experienced GPs to stay in practice by amending pension rules regarding inflation and implementing permanent retirement flexibilities.

**International Day for the Elimination
of Violence against Women 2022: UK**

statement to the OSCE

Thank you, Mr Chair.

Gender-based violence remains one of the most systemic and widespread human rights violations of our time, requiring urgent action.

One in three women will experience physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, according to data from the World Health Organisation. This violence often starts devastatingly early: one in four young women, who have been in a relationship, will experience violence by an intimate partner by their mid-twenties. Violence is often worst among the hardest to reach. Women with disabilities in developing countries are two to four times more likely than other women to experience violence.

There is also clear evidence that gender-based violence increases in scale and severity in conflict situations. An estimated 20 to 30% of women and girls have experienced non-partner sexual violence in conflict-affected settings.

Mr Chair, in this context it is important to underline the particularly horrific impact Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine is having on women, girls and marginalised groups. There has been an alarming increase in reports of gender-based violence since Russia's invasion – including conflict-related sexual violence in temporarily Russian controlled areas; sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment; and economic abuse.

Both Moscow Mechanism reports document acts of sexual violence carried out by members of the Russian Armed Forces. [As I said at yesterday's joint FSC/PC meeting](#), this evidence exists because of the brave testimonies of survivors, who, by telling their stories, break down stigma and enable justice. The use of sexual violence as a weapon is a war crime. It is vital that we hold those individuals responsible to account.

Women are disproportionately affected by conflict, and are at far greater risk of gender-based violence, including conflict related sexual violence. Despite this, in times of war, women are often the first responders to a crisis, stepping up to serve their communities. This is true in Ukraine, where women have been instrumental to the humanitarian, political, and security efforts in the defence of their country.

It is vital that we, the international community, end impunity for sexual violence, which threatens the lives and wellbeing of women and girls, and prevents them from accessing opportunities that are fundamental to freedom and development – namely, education, healthcare, and jobs.

The UK is committed to providing global leadership towards ending such violence. Through the [What Works to Prevent Violence programme](#), the UK has pioneered prevention approaches around the world that have shown reductions in violence of around 50%. In 2021, the UK launched a successor programme

responding to the urgent need to scale up gender-based violence prevention efforts, using evidence to drive more effective international action. The UK has also led work internationally focused on ending child marriage, and tackling sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in the aid sector.

Mr Chair, conflict-related sexual violence continues to shatter lives and scar communities around the world. That is why on 28-29 November, the UK will host the [International Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative \(PSVI\) Conference](#). The Conference marks an important step towards galvanising global support for further action to tackle sexual violence in conflict – promoting prevention, justice and support for survivors. During the Conference, participating states will make a number of national commitments. These include support for key initiatives, such as the [Murad Code](#), and the [Call to Action to Ensure the Rights and Wellbeing of Children Born of Sexual Violence in Conflict](#).

Mr Chair, gender-based violence is a global challenge, and requires a global response. Despite the scale of the problem, gender-based violence is preventable. It is essential that we reaffirm our commitment to end this violence, and support all women and girls in fully realising their potential.

The UK is committed to making this happen.

Thank you, Mr Chair.

[Animal medicine seizure notice: TMP Breeding at the Racing Pigeon Show, Doncaster](#)

News story

Details of seizure notice served to TMP Breeding of Preston by a VMD Inspector attending the Racing Pigeon Show, Doncaster.



The following veterinary medicines were seized on 12 November 2022 by a VMD inspector during the attendance at the Racing Pigeon Show, Doncaster.

- 38 bottles of “Platteeuw Yellow Drops” (15ml)
- 11 bottles of “Gold Bird Vital Drops” (30ml)

They are not authorised veterinary medicines in GB or NI.

The medicines were seized under Regulation 26(2) (possession of an unauthorised veterinary medicine with the intent to supply) of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013.

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[Equalities analysis: further insights from 2022](#)

The Department for Education (DfE) has published statistics on [attainment of students at Key Stage 4](#) and also for [16- to 18-year-olds in summer 2022](#) compared with previous years. These statistics include breakdowns of results by student characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.

Ofqual has also been working on [equalities analyses](#), to consider trends in a wider context. We have analysed how the results for different groups of students have changed over time, when controlling for other variables. This analysis focuses on GCSEs, A level, and vocational and technical qualifications taken alongside them in schools and colleges.

This work follows on from analysis of [GCSE and A level](#) and [vocational and technical qualifications](#) in 2020 and [GCSE and A level](#) and [vocational and technical qualifications](#) in 2021, and uses the same methodology to consider the impact of the different methods of assessment in those years on existing attainment gaps.

With the return of exams in summer 2022, the team repeated the analysis with 2022 results, to see whether, and if so how, these attainment gaps might have changed.

The analysis includes students taking GCSEs, A levels and some vocational and technical qualifications. It includes the following student characteristics:

- prior attainment

- ethnicity
- gender
- special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) status
- free school meal eligibility
- socio-economic status (using the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI))
- region, and the type of school or college (GCSE and A level only)

Crucially, our analysis uses multivariate regression modelling, so we can measure the impact of each of the above characteristics once all others have been held constant. For example, we can compare the results of 2 different ethnic groups, without differences in their overall prior attainment or socio-economic make-up affecting the findings. This analysis differs from the DfE statistics, and so gives more insight into the changes in attainment gaps over time.

Main findings

Of the many different comparisons between groups of students, the majority showed no notable change in attainment gaps in 2022, compared with both pandemic and pre-pandemic years. The full report explains what we mean by 'notable changes' but essentially they are changes that we believe go beyond normal year-on-year variation.

Attainment gaps are still there, but in most cases they have not changed since the last time summer exams took place. And in some cases, they have narrowed.

The analysis highlights changes in these attainment gaps. In some cases, the patterns of attainment are different from previous years. In others, the pattern when exams took place is notably different from pandemic years.

The patterns are different for A level, GCSE, and vocational and technical qualifications.

Note that these are changes after controlling for all other variables.

A level

At A level, the analysis highlights some key changes in relation to gender, ethnicity and school and/or college type.

Gender

In 2022, at grade A and above, male students had higher outcomes than female students, similar to pre-pandemic years. The difference in 2022, however, is smaller than in 2018 and 2019, so the gap between male and female students has shrunk. This reverses what we saw during the pandemic, and especially in 2021, when female students overall achieved better results than male students.

Ethnicity

The gap between Black African and White students narrowed in 2022 particularly at grade A and above. Since 2018, Black African students have had consistently lower results. The largest difference was in 2021, and the smallest difference was seen in 2022.

School and college type

The analysis compared each school and/or college type with academies, the largest type of school and/or college.

The most notable change is for students in further education colleges. These students have had lower outcomes relative to those in academies for the past 5 years. In 2022, the gap, in terms of average grade, widened to about half a grade.

Students in sixth forms and tertiary colleges also achieved lower results, in terms of average grade, than those in academies. This is in line with pandemic years, but a change from pre-pandemic exam years, when those students had slightly better overall outcomes than students in academies.

The analysis also shows a difference for students in state selective schools. Before the pandemic, these students had higher overall results than students in academies, once prior attainment and other characteristics are accounted for. In 2020 and 2021, this trend reversed, and their overall results were lower than for students in academies. In 2022, the trend reversed again and students in state selective schools outperformed students in academies by about a fifth of a grade on average. This was in line with results when exams last took place, although the differences this year on all measures were larger than in 2019.

GCSE

At GCSE, the analysis highlights the following changes compared to previous years.

Ethnicity

White Gypsy and Roma students have had lower outcomes relative to White British students since 2018. In 2022 the gap, in terms of average grade, has narrowed to 1 grade.

School and college type

Students in independent schools have had higher outcomes compared to students in academies since 2018. In 2022, however, the difference in average grade was the smallest of the past 5 years, though still nearly a grade and a half.

Students in selective schools have had higher outcomes than those in academies over the past 5 years. The gap narrowed in 2020 and 2021 but in 2022 the gap returned to pre-pandemic levels.

GCSE students in further education colleges and other centres (which include training providers and hospital schools) have had lower outcomes relative to students in academies since 2018. In 2022 the gap widened and is now a little over 1 grade on average.

Socio-economic background

Here the picture is mixed.

Over the past 5 years, students eligible for free school meals have had lower outcomes compared to those not eligible. In 2022 the gap was similar to 2021 at almost half a grade on average, a little wider than in pre-pandemic exam years.

However, analysis using the IDACI index shows students from the most socio-economically deprived areas slightly closed the gap with those from better-off backgrounds.

The differences could be because the 2 measures of socio-economic background are different. In addition, eligibility criteria for free school meals have changed over time, making it difficult to make like-for-like comparisons over time.

Vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs)

VTQs have different structures and different grade scales, so the analysis focused on the probability of achieving the 'top grade', that is, the highest grade that can be achieved in each qualification.

Findings vary across the different groups of qualifications considered, but overall, we found fewer notable changes than for GCSEs and A levels.

For level 2 Technical Certificates, usually taken post-16, the notable changes were in relation to ethnicity and prior attainment. In 2022 White and Black Caribbean students were less likely overall to achieve top grades than White British students. But the gap in 2022 narrowed compared to previous years. Students with very high prior attainment were more likely than their average ability peers to achieve top grades in 2022. But again, the difference reduced compared to 2019.

For Level 3 Applied Generals, the only notable change observed related to prior attainment. Students with very high prior attainment were even more likely to achieve top grades in 2022 than in pre-pandemic years, compared to students with medium prior attainment.

For level 3 Tech Levels, the notable changes were in relation to ethnicity only. White and Asian students and those from 'any other ethnic group' were more likely to achieve top grades compared to White British students in 2022. This reversed the differences seen in 2019 when those students were less likely to achieve top grades.

For level 2 Technical Awards, there were no notable changes.

Conclusion – mixed findings

It is difficult to draw firm conclusions from these mixed findings. Some gaps have narrowed, some have reversed, and some have widened. But most have not changed in a material way.

Attainment gaps existed before the pandemic, and they are not fixed. Even in a normal year, we see small changes from one year to the next. This analysis highlights the more notable changes, which warrant reflection.

We cannot disentangle the many factors that may have led to these changes. And assessment arrangements were different in 2020 and 2021, making comparisons more difficult. It is possible that many of these changes highlighted in this analysis reflect the uneven impact of the pandemic on different groups of students.

Exams and other formal assessments are not the cause of attainment gaps, nor can they be the solution. Indeed, an important feature of exams and formal assessments is that the rules are the same for all students.