



Nursing Staffing Levels and Patient Care in NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde

November 2018

Katharine Shaw Nelson
UNISON

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Background and Objectives.....	3
Survey Method.....	3
Survey Results	4
Appendix – Full survey results	7

Executive Summary

UNISON NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and CVS Branch continue to raise member concerns around staffing levels and patient care. In mid 2018, senior managers within NHS Glasgow and Clyde encouraged the union to identify examples and areas of concern.

The union reached out to members and identified that whilst many were concerned, they felt that they could not engage in a course of action which would identify them as ‘trouble makers’.

In response the union launched a survey of nurse members across the Health Board to see what they had to say about staffing levels and patient safety.

The survey was conducted in October 2018. It highlighted that despite mandatory staffing tools and headline investment in Nursing and Midwifery there continues to be an endemic and exponentially worsening crisis in staffing levels and patient care across the health board.

Background and Objectives

In the past year, UNISON experienced a significant increase in nursing members reporting unsafe staffing levels. In order to establish the statistical significance of these reports, UNISON created this survey to record staff experience, and to establish the extent of the potential staffing crisis. The results of the survey will inform UNISON's strategy and collective response.



Credit: Alistair McMillan

Survey Method

The target population of the survey was nursing and midwifery staff, including un-registered staff across NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, working in either wards/acute or in the community/HSCPs.

4,642 members who have provided emails and agreed to be contacted were surveyed, 13.1% of members responded. The survey was conducted using

SurveyGizmo, an online survey platform. Members were contacted via email with a link to the survey three times over the course of the survey, with reminders sent by SMS three times. The survey was launched on the 2nd October and closed on the 31st October. The survey was also promoted via social media and in workplaces by UNISON stewards.

Survey Results

The results of the survey confirmed the individual reports of UNISON members. Members articulated a widespread crisis of staff confidence in staffing levels and patient care. They also highlighted widespread issues over overwork, pressure, and inability to provide safe and adequate patient care.

Despite significant political commitment to the implementation of mandatory tools which assess and calculate workforce requirements (workload staffing tools) only 3.5% of respondents felt that these tools had made a difference in their work area.

Further analysis of the responses identified that of those members who identified themselves as being on managerial roles within Nursing and Midwifery – only 3% felt that the workforce tools had made a difference in their work area.

UNISON is very concerned that almost 60% of respondents said that on their last shift they DIDN'T have enough time to spend with patients

This response is underpinned by other responses which indicate that almost 60% of respondents reported that there were bank staff working on their last shift and that there were not enough staff on to provide safe, adequate care.

UNISON believes that this evidence suggests a significant crisis in the quality of care being provided to patients in NHS GGC.

The crisis seems to be so serious that 77.5% of members who responded said that they have considered leaving the NHS altogether.

Key Responses

- 48.7% of respondents are extremely concerned (6 on a 1-6 scale) about staffing levels.
- 36% of respondents were not able to take their full break entitlement on their last shift.
- 40.3% were expected to cover a caseload other than their own on their last shift.
- 60.3% had bank staff on their last shift.
- 67% said they weren't able to spend enough time with patients on their last shift.
- 58.6% said staff numbers on their last shift were not enough to provide safe, adequate care.
- Only 3.5% of respondents said they felt the Scottish Government's mandatory workforce planning tools had made any difference (71.5% said no, 25% said don't know)
- 64.6% said staffing levels are getting progressively worse.
- 77.5% of staff have considered leaving.
- Of these, 42.6% cited overwork and pressure as the reason, and 21.6% cited unsafe staffing levels.

Conclusion

Staffing levels in our NHS and in particular across the nursing and midwifery family have been the focal point of discussion and debate for some considerable time with UNISON and other sister unions highlighting concerns that staffing levels are on a cliff edge.

In 2017, in response to the Scottish Government Report on NHS staffing UNISON said:

“UNISON welcomes the publication of the latest NHS Workforce statistics and were not surprised that the government has chosen to focus on the apparent overall increase in NHS workers. The real story, however, lies in the detail of

the report with sickness levels climbing; vacancy rates increasing; and a whopping £142m on bank nurses. It's clear from these figures that despite extra top-line resources, the NHS continues to fail to manage its workforce planning and staffing levels.”

The report indicates that nurse and midwife vacancies have risen by 27% to 2,818.9 and bank costs sitting at a whopping £142m – up 5.5% on last year – while sickness absence is slowly rising at 5.16%.

“UNISON members across our NHS will struggle to believe that staffing levels are at an all-time high. Time and time again they tell us that the daily reality of working in the NHS is one of short staff, reliance on temporary bank staff and increasing stress and anxiety amongst the workforce. Headline increases are of course welcome but are of no real benefit if the service still relies on temporary short-term bank workers.”

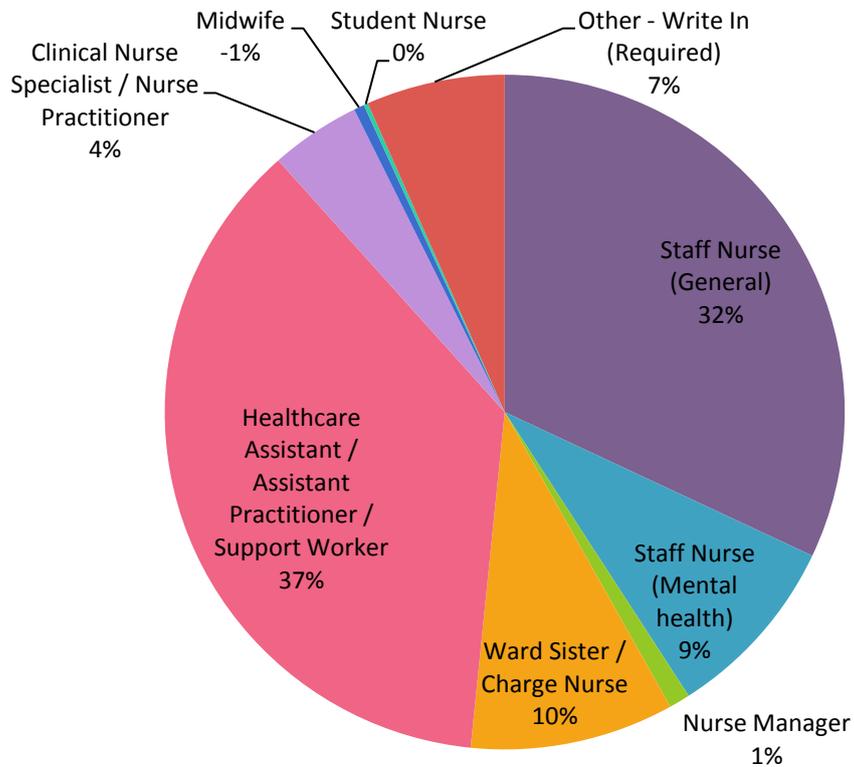
On the basis of this survey, there is no real evidence that staffing levels are significantly Improving within NHS Glasgow and Clyde; nor is there any evidence that measures which have been taken to date have restored workforce confidence or led to significant improvements in workplace environment or patient care.

UNISON calls on NHS Glasgow and Clyde to take prompt action and enter into meaningful dialogue with unions to develop a sustainable workforce plan which as patient safety and staff wellbeing at its core.

Appendix – Full survey results

Data which identifies members (e.g. answer fields for name, phone number, email address) has been excluded.

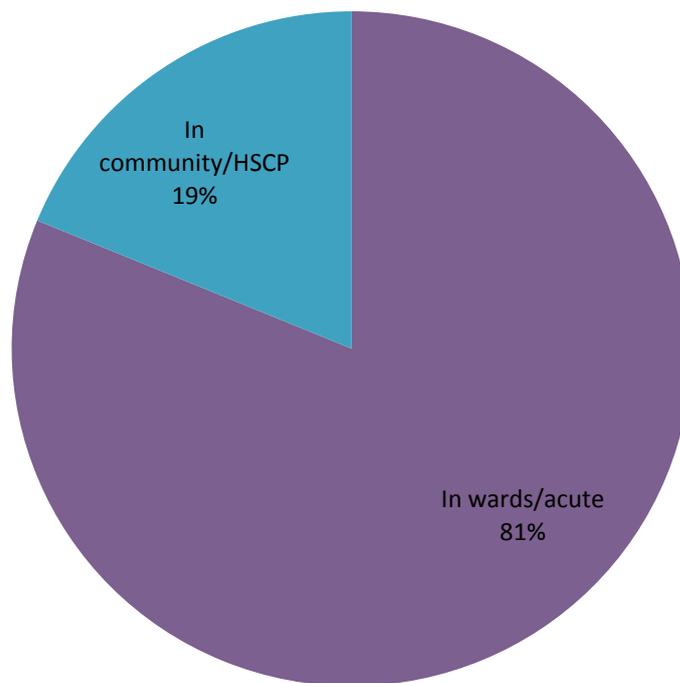
1. What is your role?



Value	Percent
Staff Nurse (General)	32.0%
Staff Nurse (Mental health)	8.9%
Nurse Manager	1.0%
Ward Sister / Charge Nurse	9.7%
Healthcare Assistant / Assistant Practitioner /	36.8%

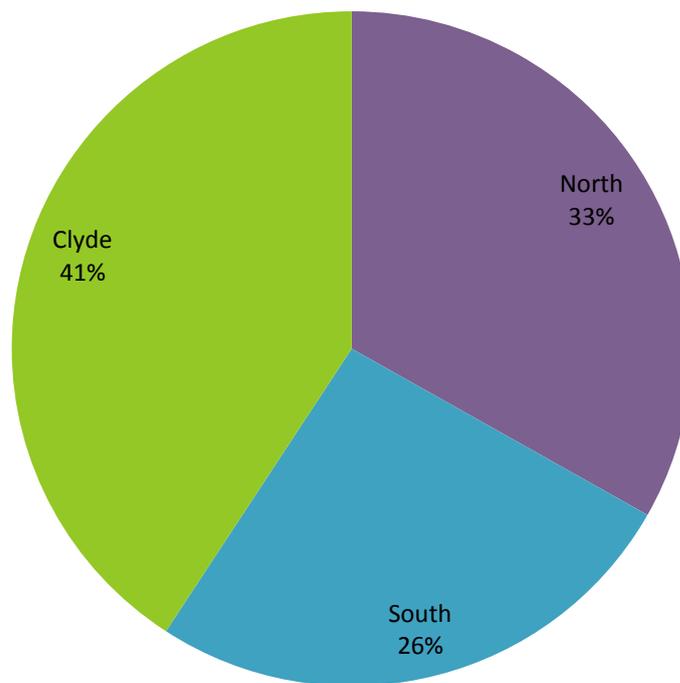
Support Worker	
Clinical Nurse Specialist / Nurse Practitioner	4.3%
Midwife	0.5%
Student Nurse	0.2%
Other - Write In (Required)	6.6%

2. Where do you work?



Value	Percent
In wards/acute	81.2%
In community/HSCP	18.8%

3. Which Directorate do you work in?

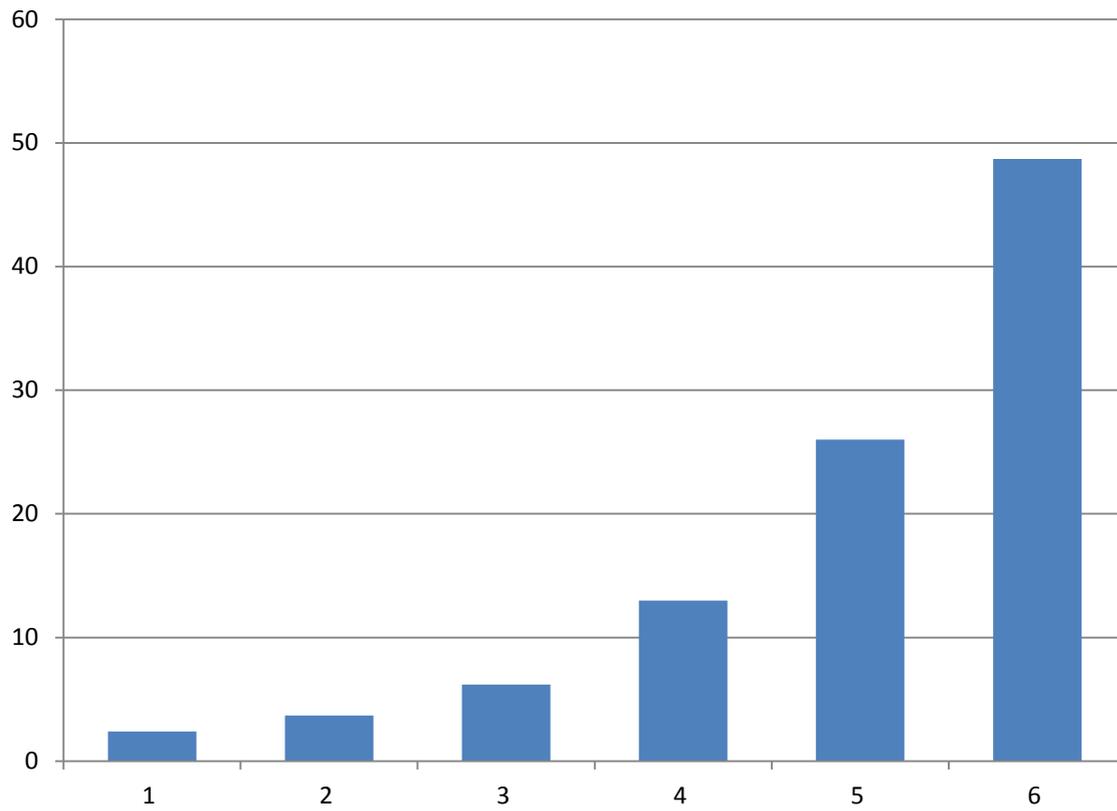


Value	Percent
North	33.2%
South	26.0%
Clyde	40.8%

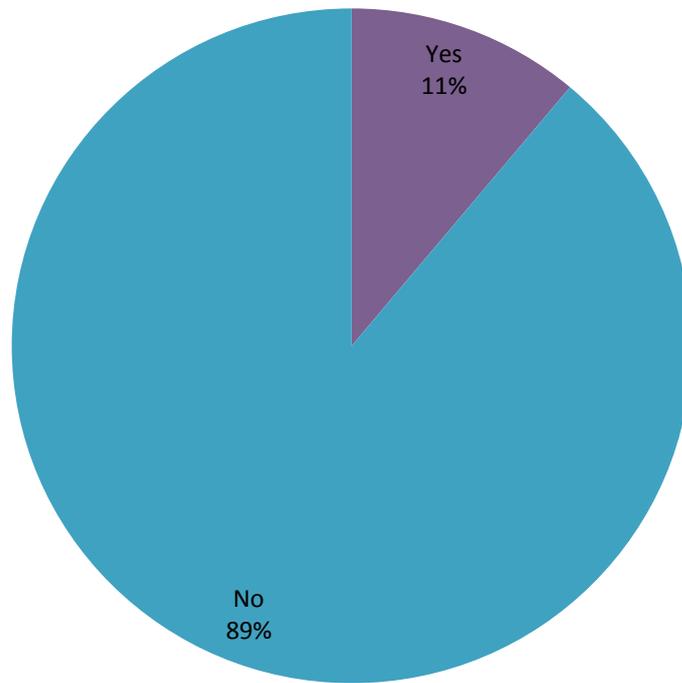
4. Where do you work? (e.g. QEUH, Inverclyde Royal, etc...)

Accord Hospice	Inverclyde Royal Hospital
Addiction Services	Kirkintilloch Health and Care Centre
All sites in NHS GGC	Larkfield Unit Greenock
Ashgill Care Home	LD team
Auchinlea CMHT	Leverndale Hospital
Baillieston Health Centre	Lightburn Hospital
Beatson	Mackinnon House
Birdston	Marie Curie Community Nursing
Bishopton Health Centre	Maryhill HC
Blythwood house	Mearnskirk
Care Home	NE ADRS
Community	NE Glasgow
Community Centre for Health	Neadrs
Community Wellpark	Neurology opd QEUH
Community, Treatment rooms north east.	New Victoria ACH
Cover all of gg&c	New Victoria Hospital
District nursing GG&C north west	North East
Drumchapel Health Centre	North West
Dumbarton Joint Hospital	Nursing Home Helensburgh
Dykebar Hospital	Orange wing Clydebank Health Centre
East Renfrewshire HSCP	Orchard view
Eastwood Health & Care Centre	Pollok Health Centre
Esteem north west	Pollokshaws clinic
Esteem, Leverndale Hospital	Port Glasgow Community
Florence St resource centre	Primary care
Gartnavel General Hospital	Princess Royal Maternity
Gartnavel Royal Hospital	QEUH
General practice	Renfrewshire HSCP District Nursing Dykebar Hospital
Glasgow	Riverside CMHT
Glasgow Dental Hospital	Riverview Resource Centre
Glasgow Royal Infirmary	Rowanbank Clinic
Glenkirk Centre	Rowanpark pavilion
Golden Jubilee National Hospital	Royal Alexandra Hospital
Gorbals community addictions	Royal Hospital for Children
Govan elderpark	Rutherglen HC
Govan Health Centre	Sandyford Initiative
Govanhill HC	Shawmill
Greenock Health Centre	South addiction service
HSCP	Springburn health centre
HMP Barlinnie	Stobhill
HMP PRISON	Vale of Leven Hospital
Homeless Mental Health Team	West Dunbartonshire
Hunter St Homeless Services	West Glasgow ACH
Initial Healthcare	Woodside Health Centre

5. On a scale of 1-6, how concerned are you about staffing levels in NHSGGC? 0 - Not at all concerned 6 - Extremely concerned

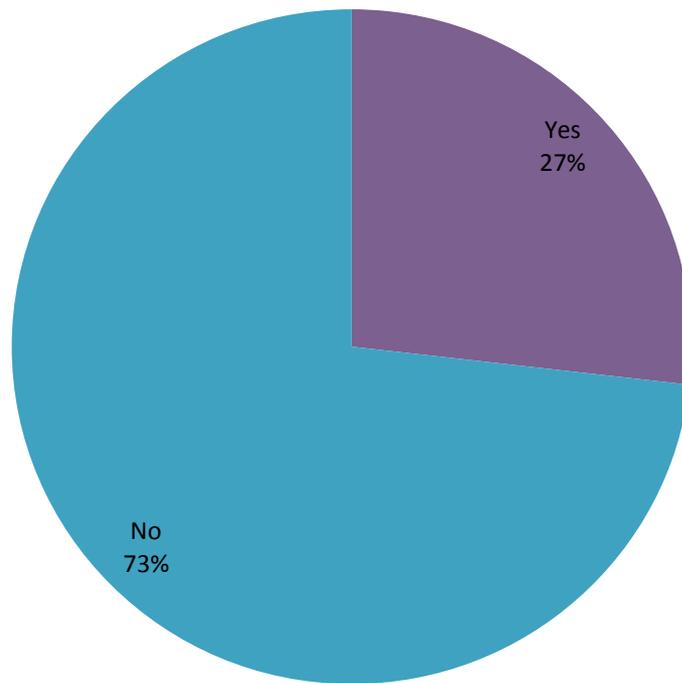


6. If you have concerns about staffing levels or patient care, have you submitted a Datix Report?



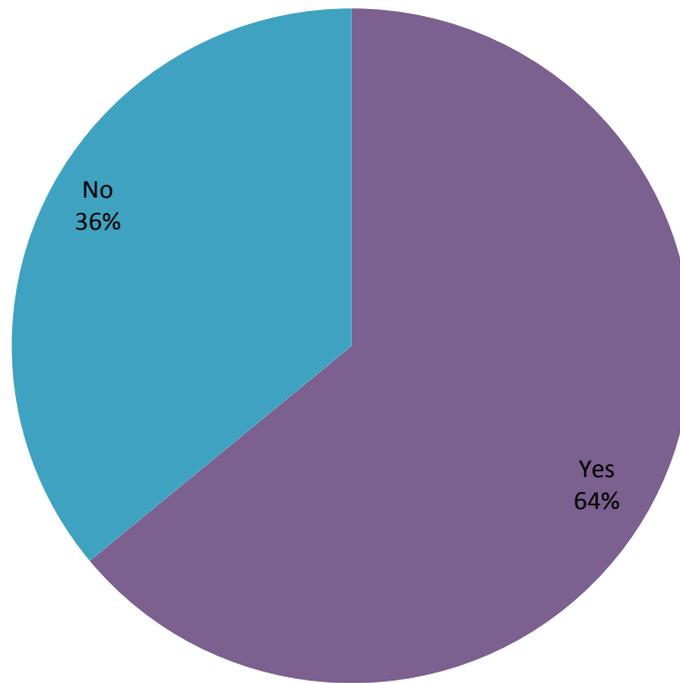
Value	Percent
Yes	11.1%
No	88.9%

7. Have you had a response to the datix yet?



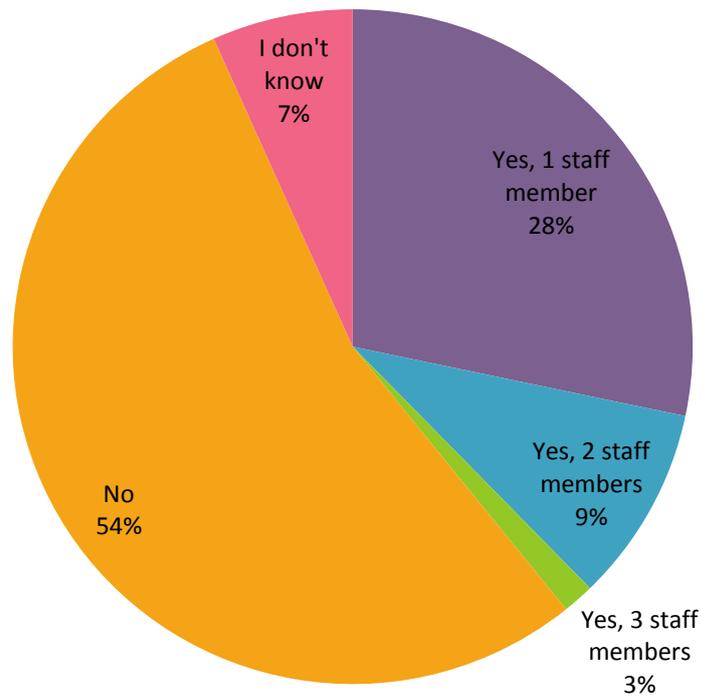
Value	Percent
Yes	26.8%
No	73.2%

8. On your last contracted shift, were you able to take your full entitlement to rest breaks?



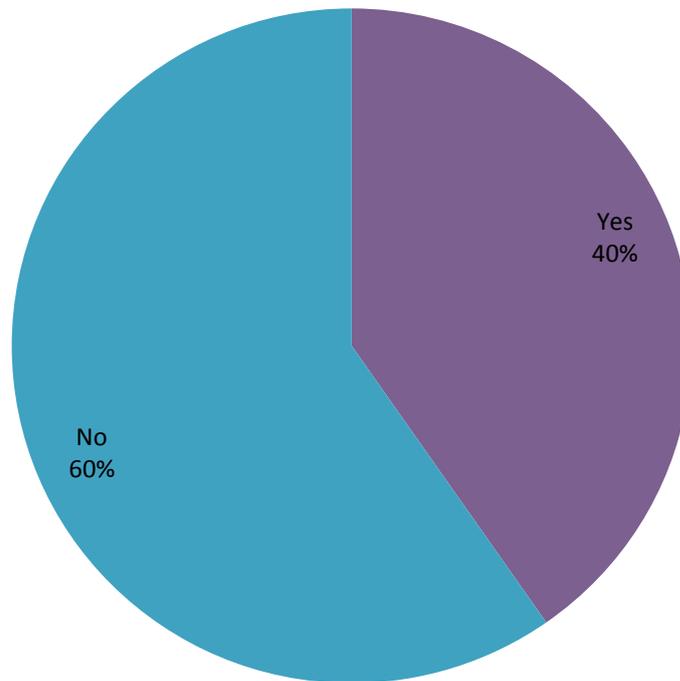
Value	Percent
Yes	64.0%
No	36.0%

9. On your last shift, were any staff moved from another ward to work on your ward?



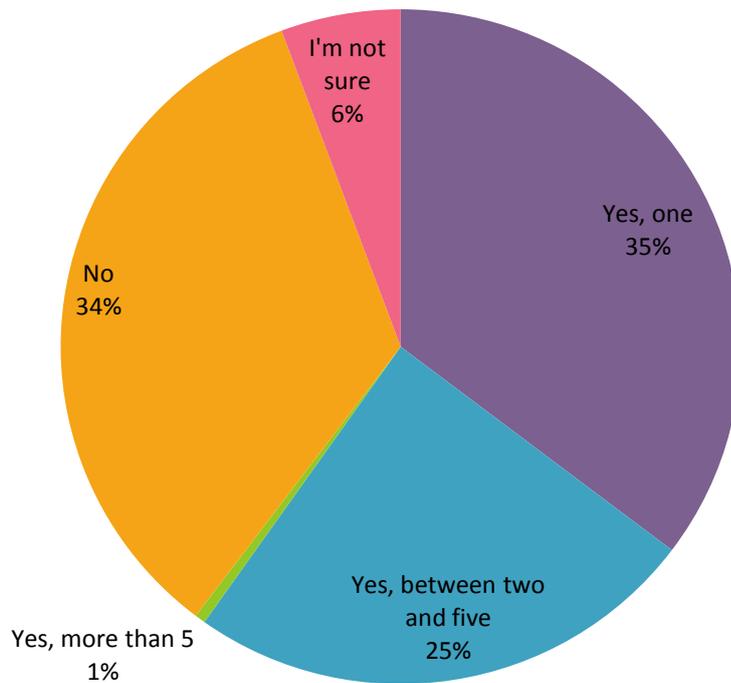
Value	Percent
Yes, 1 staff member	28.3%
Yes, 2 staff members	9.4%
Yes, 3 staff members	1.5%
No	54.1%
I don't know	6.7%

10. During your last shift, were you expected to cover a caseload other than your own, or moved to another area/ward?



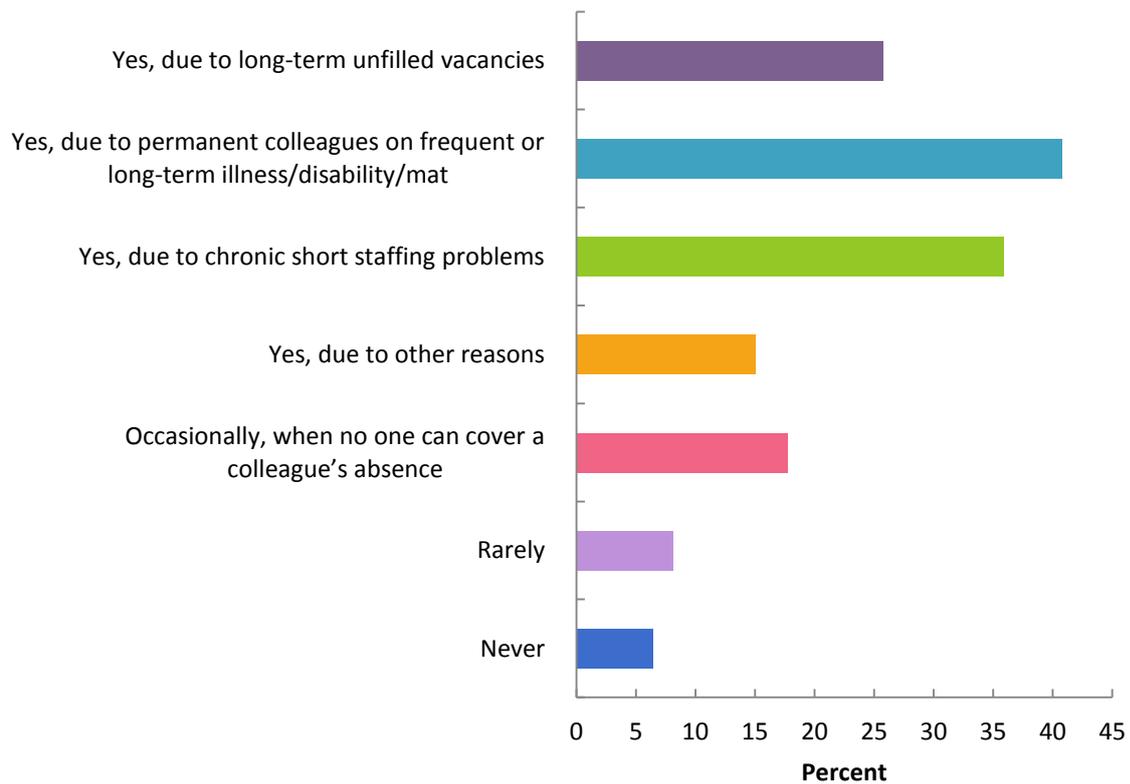
Value	Percent
Yes	40.3%
No	59.7%

11. Were there any bank or agency staff working on your shift?



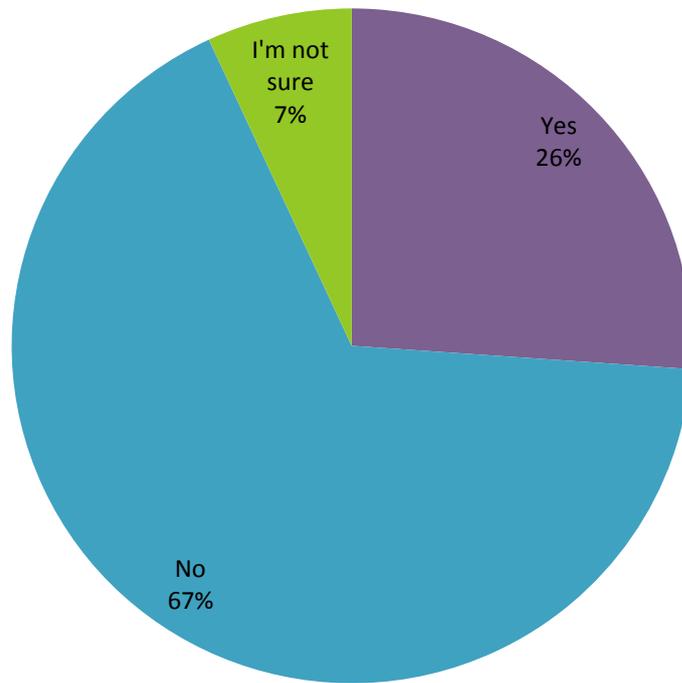
Value	Percent
Yes, one	35.3%
Yes, between two and five	24.5%
Yes, more than 5	0.5%
No	34.0%
I'm not sure	5.7%

12. Do your shifts frequently make use of bank or agency staff? Please tick all that apply.



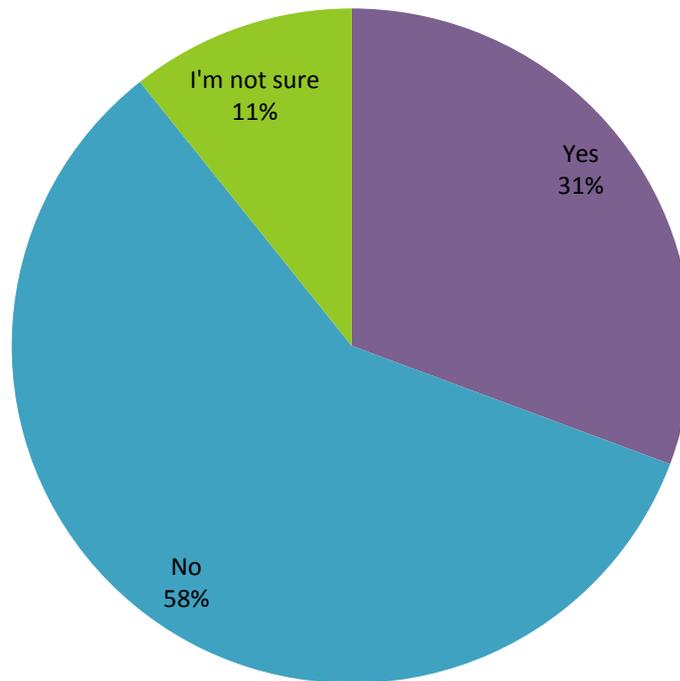
n.b. Percentages add up to greater than 100% due to 'tick all that apply' instruction.

13. On your last shift, did you feel that you had an adequate amount of time to spend with each patient?



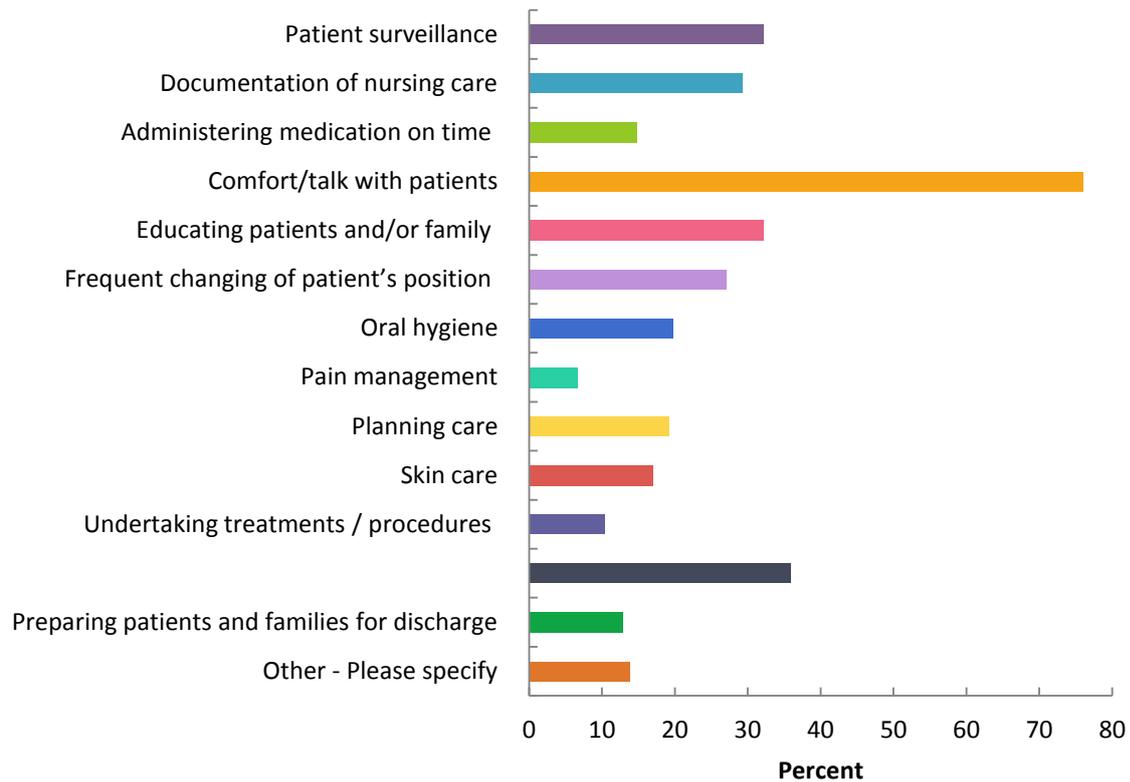
Value	Percent
Yes	26.1%
No	67.0%
I'm not sure	6.9%

14. On your last shift, did you feel that there were adequate staff numbers to deliver safe, dignified, compassionate care?



Value	Percent
Yes	30.7%
No	58.6%
I'm not sure	10.7%

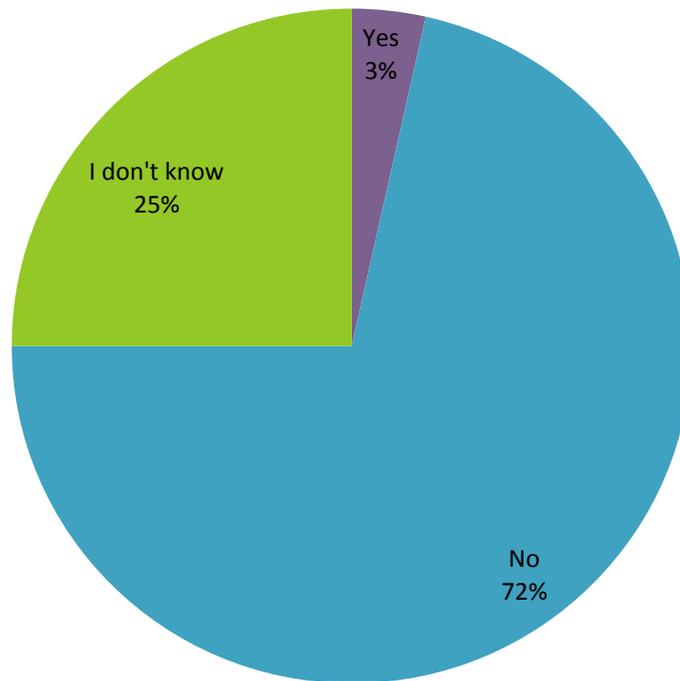
15. On date of this survey, which of the following activities were necessary but left undone because you lacked the time to complete them? Please tick all that apply.



Value	Percent
Patient surveillance	32.1%
Documentation of nursing care	29.3%
Administering medication on time	14.8%
Comfort/talk with patients	76.0%
Educating patients and/or family	32.1%
Frequent changing of patient's position	27.1%

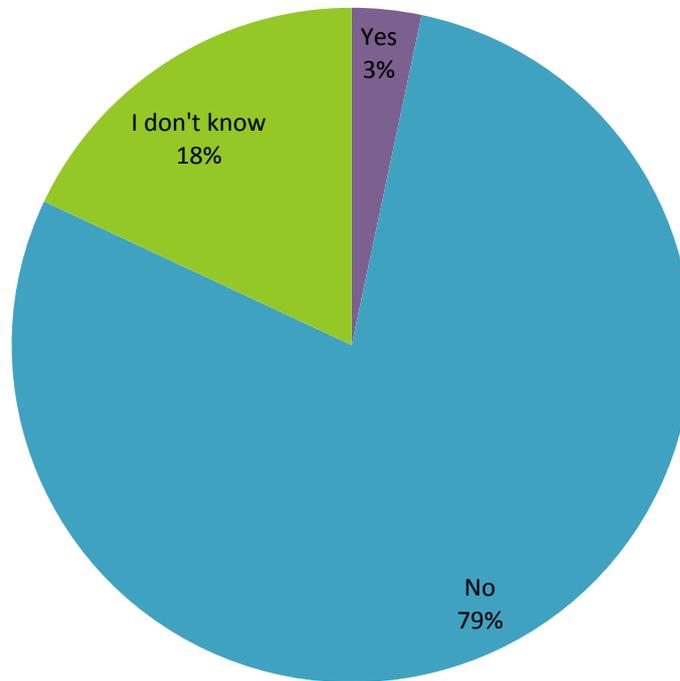
Oral hygiene	19.8%
Pain management	6.6%
Planning care	19.2%
Skin care	17.0%
Undertaking treatments / procedures	10.4%
Develop or update nursing care plans/care pathways	35.9%
Preparing patients and families for discharge	12.8%
Other - Please specify	13.8%

16. In Scotland, the Government has introduced mandatory workforce planning tools to set staffing levels were introduced. In your opinion, has this made a noticeable difference and led to improved staffing levels in your organisation?



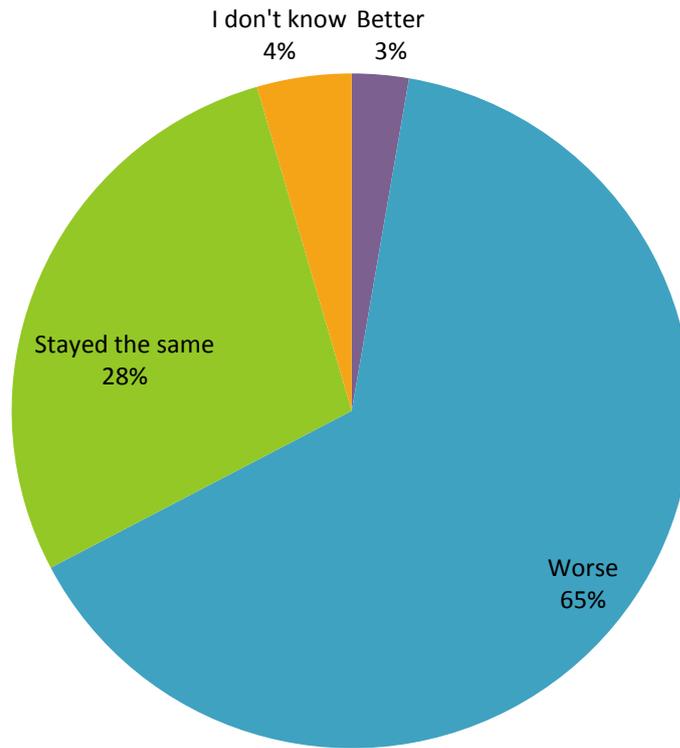
Value	Percent
Yes	3.6%
No	71.8%
I don't know	24.6%

16. Charge nurse/ward sister responses ONLY - In Scotland, the Government has introduced mandatory workforce planning tools to set staffing levels were introduced. In your opinion, has this made a noticeable difference and led to improved staffing levels in your organisation?



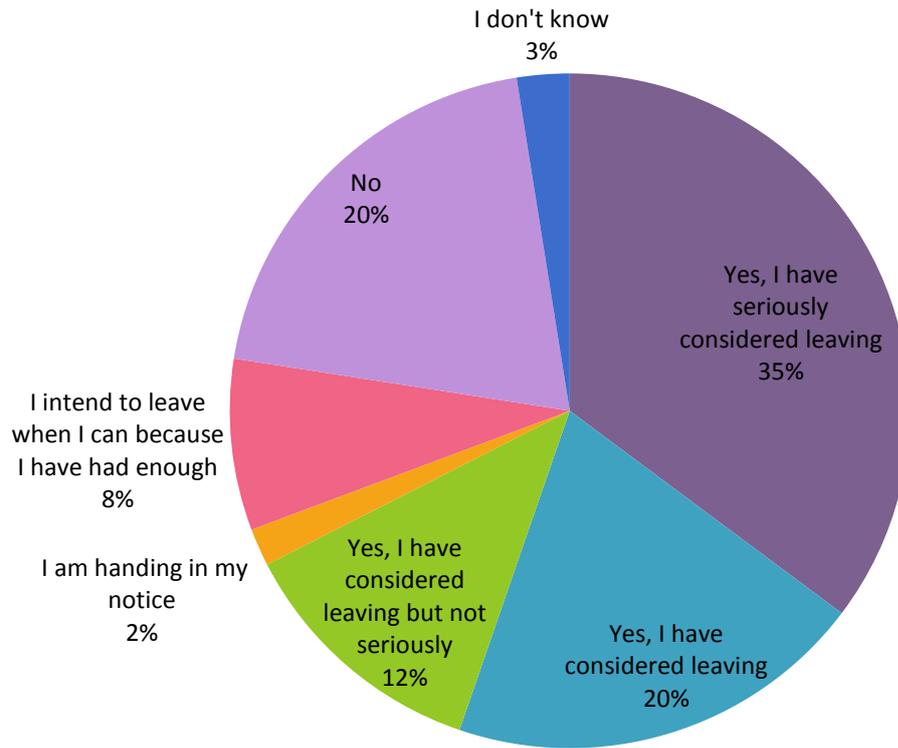
Value	Percent
Yes	3.3%
No	78.7%
I don't know	18.0%

17. In your opinion, do you think that staffing levels on your shifts have got worse, better or stayed the same since this time last year?



Value	Percent
Better	2.7%
Worse	64.6%
Stayed the same	28.2%
I don't know	4.5%

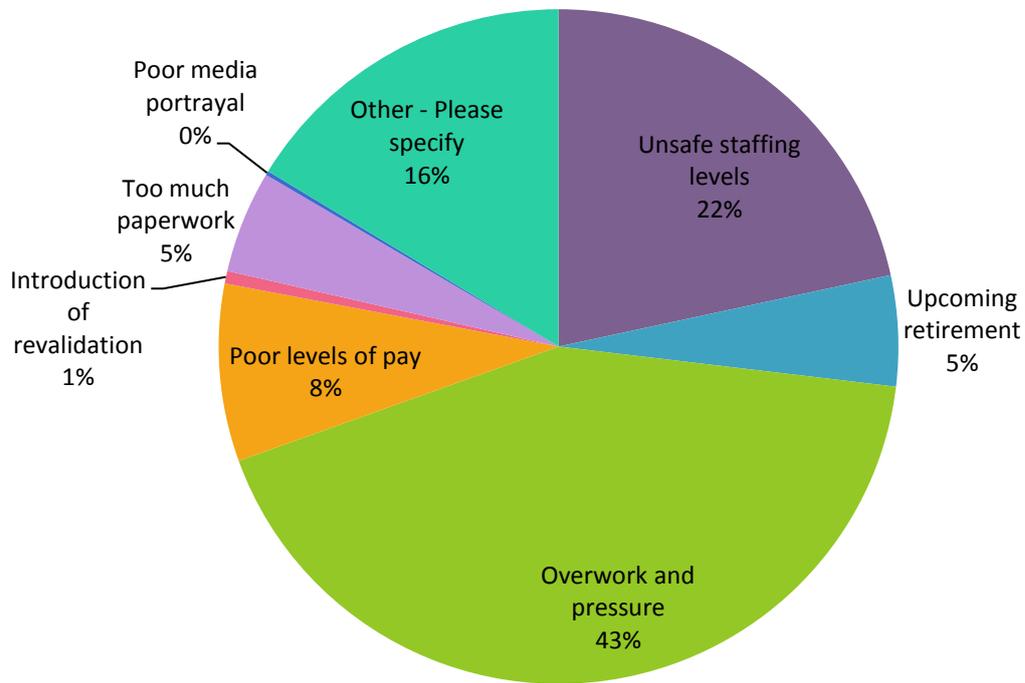
18. Have you seriously considered leaving the organisation you work for over the last 12 months?



Value	Percent
Yes, I have seriously considered leaving	35.2%
Yes, I have considered leaving	20.0%
Yes, I have considered leaving but not seriously	12.2%
I am handing in my notice	1.8%
I intend to leave when I can because I have had enough	8.2%
No	20.0%

I don't know	2.5%
--------------	------

19. What is your main reason for seriously considering leaving nursing?



Value	Percent
Unsafe staffing levels	21.6%
Upcoming retirement	5.3%
Overwork and pressure	42.6%
Poor levels of pay	8.5%
Introduction of revalidation	0.6%
Too much paperwork	4.9%
Poor media portrayal	0.2%
Other - Please specify	16.3%