

New statistics on Postgraduate Medical Education and Training

In December 2025 NES will publish new statistics on postgraduate medical training in NHSScotland. These will be released as Official Statistics in Development (OSID). In line with the Office for Statistics Regulation's (OSR) requirements for OSID, we present this development plan which outlines the content of the statistics and the rationale for producing them, the timing of releases, and the expected users of the statistics. We also provide details of how to get in touch with us to provide feedback on this plan and on the statistics once they are available.

What statistics will be published?

These will be new statistics about the postgraduate medical training population and its transition to the Consultant/General Practitioner (GP) workforce:

- Time series of the number of doctors commencing specialty training programmes
- Time series of the number of doctors completing specialty training programmes
- Employment time series for Consultants/GPs decomposed into inflows and outflows, highlighting the inflows from specialty training
- Transition rates between commencement of specialty training and achieving the certificate of completion of training (CCT)
- Transition rates between CCT and participation in the consultant or GP workforce

These statistics will be available to analyse by appropriate characteristics, such as the Sex and Country of Primary Medical Qualification of doctors entering postgraduate training, or the Age and Sex of doctors leaving the Consultant/GP workforce.

Why are we publishing these statistics?

NES regularly produces management information on medical specialty training, including characteristics of the training population, parameter estimates for the transition between stages of training, and estimates for the transition between training and participation in the trained workforce. Users of this information include:

- The Medical Undergraduate Group, which informs the intake targets for Medicine in Scottish universities, and whose members include the Scottish Government, the Scotland Deanery (NES), and the Scottish Funding Council.
- The Scottish Shape of Training Transitions Group, which supports the management of postgraduate medical education and training. Its members include the Scottish Government, NHS boards, the British Medical Association and Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties.

- The GP Workforce Employment Trends group, whose members include Scottish Government, the British Medical Association and the Royal College of GPs.
- The public, who submit Freedom of Information (FOI) requests on, e.g., transition rates.

Some of the same methods are well established in the analytical support we provide to education and workforce planning in disciplines such as Dentistry, and Nursing and Midwifery.

Some of our stakeholders have requested that we make statistics on medical training available in the public domain alongside our publications on the medical workforce.

The number of doctors entering specialty training, and the rate and timing of transition between stages of training, are lead indicators of inflow into the Consultant/GP workforce; they are therefore valuable pieces of information for workforce planning and the planning of medical education.

Postgraduate medical training is also a substantial piece of public expenditure, with basic salary costs alone amounting to almost £375m in the year ending 31 March 2025. Showing the number of doctors entering postgraduate training, and the outputs of this training in terms of trained Consultants and GPs, will improve public understanding of the return on this investment.

In summary, placing the statistics in the public domain will enhance public discussion and understanding of factors affecting the healthcare workforce and may reduce users' reliance on FOI requests and parliamentary questions when seeking information on the medical training pipeline.

Who will be developing these statistics?

The statistics will be developed by the Data Group in NHS Education for Scotland (NES). The Data Group has been publishing official statistics since 2019 and produces the management information described above. This will be our third release of OSID, following releases on [National Treatment Centre staffing](#) and the [General Practice Workforce](#).

During the development period, we will work with known users of the statistics such as Scottish Government and the Scotland Medical Deanery. We will also identify and work with likely interested parties such as the British Medical Association, the General Medical Council and the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties in Scotland. We will seek the views of all users through our website. We will also work closely with the producers of the source data to develop and communicate the appropriate levels of assurance within the OSR's [Quality Assurance of Administrative Data \(QAAD\)](#) framework.

When will the new statistics be available?

This will be an annual publication, produced each December and based on a 30 September census date.

In December 2025 we will release statistics on **GP specialty training only**.

Restricting the first release to GP training will allow us to focus on our presentation of two new methodologies (stock-flow decomposition and survival analysis), working with users before and after the release to ensure that these are well understood before widening the scope to all training specialties and NHS Board-level breakdowns.

In June 2026 we will update the first release with all training specialties and Board-level breakdowns, as well as any updates to style and presentation based on user feedback.

In December 2026, after further engagement with users based on the June updates, we will publish the second release of these statistics. At this point we will remove the “in development” label and publish as Official Statistics.

How to get in touch

If you would like to be involved in the development of these statistics, you can contact the NES Data Group at Datagroup@nes.scot.nhs.uk