

Supporting Services for Children: Workforce Census 2003

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Executive Summary

- In September 2003 the UK paediatric career grade workforce consisted of 4239 individuals (3783 whole time equivalents). Of these, 2519 were consultants, 1435 were staff and associate specialist grade doctors and 285 were other grades, mainly trust grade doctors.
- The career grade workforce (Consultants and SASGs) has increased by 7.2% from 3687 in 2001 to 3954 in 2003.
- Between 2001 and 2003 there was an increase of 15.2 % in consultant numbers in the UK, an annual growth rate of 7.3 %. The number of consultants increased by over 30% between 1999 and 2003.
- In September 2003 there were 1435 SASGs in the UK compared to 1501 in 2001, a decrease of 4.4% equating to a 2.2 % per annum decline. The fall can be attributed to a decrease in numbers of SCMOs and CMOs of 36-38% between the 2 census years.
- Trust grade doctors increased from 94 in 2001 to 241 in 2003, a rise of 156%.
- The data show that the number of academic paediatricians reported fell for the 2nd consecutive census.
- 7.4% of consultant posts in community trusts were vacant, compared to only 1.6% in acute and 1.3% in tertiary trusts.
- Overall in England, consultants and academics comprise 62% of the career grade workforce compared to only 47% in Scotland - a discrepancy which has narrowed slightly since 2001. The highest proportion of SASGs in the workforce is found in Scotland (52.5%)
- 32% of trust grade SpR equivalent doctors are employed in the South East Thames region.
- In 2003 the total number of career grade paediatricians working 100% of the time in general paediatrics (1465) exceeded those who were working 100% in the community (1400).
- There appears to be a virtual standstill in the number of community paediatricians; in 2001, 1544 were reported as spending at least 75% of their time in community paediatrics. This figure had only risen by 5 to 1549 in 2003.

- The census identified 858 consultants working as specialists in the 38 UK tertiary trusts.
- The largest subspecialty groups were neonatal medicine (128) and neurology (76).
- In 2003 women outnumbered men in the total career grade workforce (52.4% to 47.6%) - a slight fall since 2001 when the proportion for women was 53.3%.
- Although paediatrics still has the highest (40.9%) proportion of women consultants of any hospital specialty followed by psychiatry (36%) and pathology (34%) the gap is closing.
- The gender split of the paediatric workforce is strongly associated with age. In the 55-59 and 60-64 age groups, there were > 2 male consultants to every female, whereas the split is almost even amongst 35-39 year olds. There were more women than men in the under 35s.
- Just over 50% of community consultants (defined as working 75% or more in the community) are aged 50 or over compared to only 36% of consultants working 75% or more in acute paediatrics.
- 17.3% of consultants were part time in 2003 compared to 15.4% in 2001 and 10.9% in 1999.
- Comparing results with 2001 and excluding null answers, the percentage of consultants working more than 48 hours per week has fallen from 76.3% in 2001 to 71.8% in 2003.
- The paediatric SHO workforce in September 2003 consisted of 2351 doctors. By weighting the information it is estimated that there were 2323 whole time equivalents. Women comprise 57.2% of the SHO workforce.