

Noel Gordon
Chairman
NHS Digital
Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

0300 303 5678

chair@nhs.net

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Ed Humpherson
Director General for Regulation
Office for Statistics Regulation
1 Drummond Gate
Pimlico
London
SW1V 2QQ

BY EMAIL

ed.humpherson@statistics.gov.uk

Dear Ed

Thank you for your letter of 14 December 2017 regarding mental health workforce data. NHS Digital always aims to develop its statistics in line with user need, so we plan to release outputs to help answer the questions in your letter, both in the short term and on an ongoing basis.

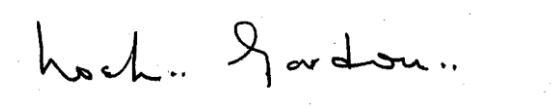
As you note, NHS Digital publishes a wide range of information about the NHS workforce. This is possible due to the breadth information available from the administrative payroll system used across the NHS, the Electronic Staff Record (ESR). The flexibility of the published data enables users to produce totals on similar topics in a variety of different ways.

We also provide a service where customers can request bespoke tables to meet their needs, as the richness of the data means that we cannot include every possible table in our regular publication. These bespoke tables, which include the full definitions for the information provided, are then published in the Supplementary Information area of our website so that all users have access to this information. Furthermore, the NHS Occupation Code Manual includes a table which shows the definition of the staff groups used in our monthly published output and would allow others to recreate the same staff groups.

Following your request, we will release an initial output in January 2018 attached to our monthly workforce publication that will address the questions you raised. We will then include further information on the mental health workforce on a regular basis as part of our larger quarterly workforce publication starting from March 2018. We will provide clear explanatory notes about the mental health workforce to support users' interpretation and use of the data. This will include outlining the different definitions that can be used dependent on the question asked and for what purposes the data is required for. The expansion to our quarterly report will also allow similar understanding of other parts of the NHS workforce.

We look forward to working with you in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Noel Gordon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'N' and 'G'.

Noel Gordon

Cc: Sarah Wilkinson, NHS Digital
Cc: Tom Denwood, NHS Digital
Cc: Chris Roebuck, NHS Digital
Cc: Daniel Ray, NHS Digital