

GP practice workforce in Wales, as at 29 February 2020 (experimental statistics)

30 April 2020
SFR 35/2020

The purpose of this release is to provide timely statistics on the number of GPs and other staff working in general practices across Wales.

The main source of data used is the [Wales National Workforce Reporting System](#). This is the first time data has been sourced from this system and therefore this release is classed as [Experimental Statistics](#).

It is planned that data will be extracted from this new source at the end of every quarter (March, June, September, December) with the first stats release scheduled for publication in June 2020, based on the March 2020 extract. However, as a result of the current COVID-19 situation, it was decided that it would be in the public interest to extract data outside of this schedule and publish up-to-date GP workforce data as soon as practicable.

All data for 2020 included in this release refers to 29 February and data for all previous years refers to 30 September unless otherwise stated.

As data for 2020 refers to a different date than previous years, and is sourced from a different data collection system, caution is advised when making comparisons over time.

Main points

In Wales, as at 29 Feb 2020, there were 404 active GP practices with:

- 1,972 GP practitioners (includes partners, providers and salaried GPs but excludes registrars, retainers and locums).
- 296 GP registrars (trainees on GP speciality training programme, currently placed in a GP practice).
- 15 GP retainers (a GP practitioner on the GP retainer scheme, only able to practice a maximum of 4 clinical sessions a week).
- 769 GP locums registered to practice in Wales (no data available on the actual number currently working).
- 1,413 registered nurses.
- 1,123 direct patient care staff.
- 5,126 administrative or other non-clinical practice staff.

About this release

The main source of data is the Wales National Workforce Reporting System (WNWRS) which has replaced the Exeter payment system as the main source for GP workforce statistics.

Data is also sourced from the Medical Performers List (for locums), the NHS Electronic Staff Record (for registrars), Intrepid (for F2 trainees) and NWIS (for active GP practices).

A more thorough analysis of WNWRS data and quality report is intended to be published in summer 2020.

The number of [staff directly employed by the NHS](#) is published on our website too.

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Data quality statement

In previous years the main source of data for GP workforce statistics was the General Medical Services (GMS) census, which was largely generated from the Exeter (GP payments) system. Following several years of data quality issues, [highlighted in previous statistical releases](#), it was decided that a new data collection system was required and the [Wales National Workforce Reporting System](#) (WNWRS) was developed and has now been implemented.

The WNWRS provides a secure web based tool developed to capture information on staff working in general practices. A version of this system has been used by practices in England for some years and is supported by NHS Digital. In Wales, NHS Wales Shared Service Partnership (NWSSP) have implemented the WNWRS, with support from NHS Digital.

In broad terms, the system works by practice managers inputting details of their staff onto the system, confirming the details every quarter. Data is then extracted on the last day of each quarter (March, June, September, December) and NHS Digital validate this data. NWSSP also perform additional validations to improve data quality before anonymised data are shared with Welsh Government statisticians to validate further and produce these official statistics.

The first release of data from this extract was planned for publication in June 2020, with a reference period of 31 March 2020. However, given the current COVID-19 situation, it was decided that data should be extracted, validated and published as soon as practicable. Therefore, new data in this release refers to 29 February 2020.

The data extracted in February 2020 did not go through the full NHS Digital validation process; however NWSSP assumed that role and performed wide-ranging validations before sharing data with Welsh Government statisticians. At the time of this publication it is planned to continue with the June publication (using data extracted as at 31 March 2020), in addition to this April publication. It is intended that the June publication will contain more detailed analysis of WNWRS data, including analysis of sex, ethnicity, Welsh language skills and whole time equivalents, with a full quality report, subject to data quality and resource allocation and the COVID-19 situation.

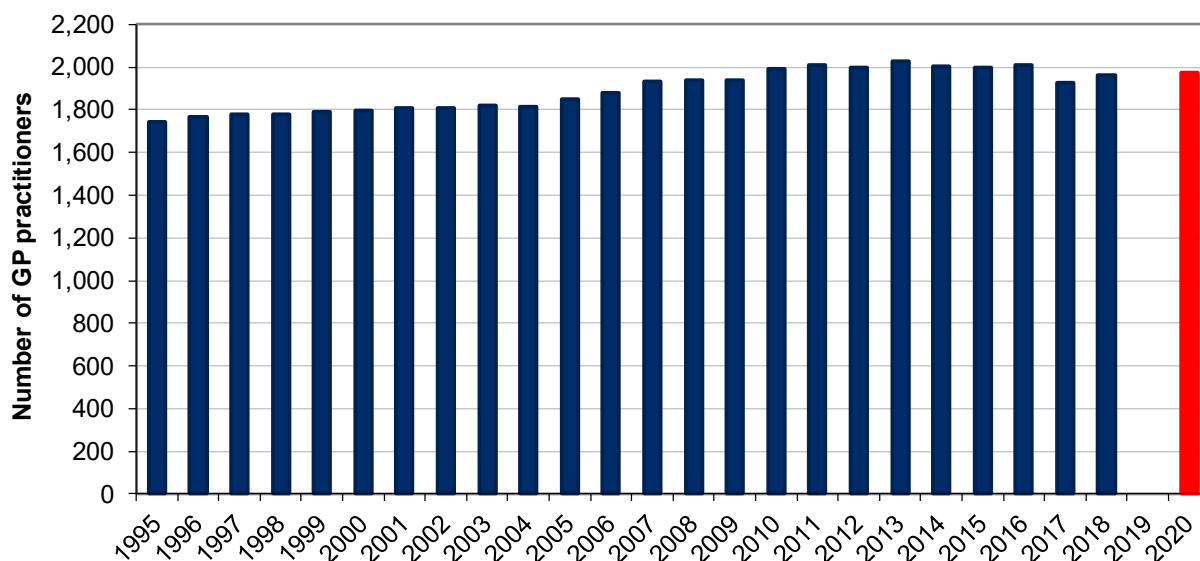
Through the new processes and additional validation processes, data captured by the WNWRS should be more reliable than the previous source, and that will enable us to better understand the primary care workforce demographic in Wales, allowing more effective workforce planning. However, this is dependent on practices supplying robust data through the system. For the February 2020 extract, 13 out of the 404 active practices did not supply data or did not confirm their data was up-to-date, which limits the quality of these statistics and therefore their usefulness. A further 15 practices confirmed their data but returned zero GP practitioners. When checked against the GP payment system, all 15 practices appear to have GPs associated with them. Therefore, in these practices (28 combined), the last available validated data has been used in place of WNWRS data, this comes from the GMS census 2018. This applies to GP practitioners and non-GP staff. Further validation steps are planned which should limit the impact of these data quality issues in future stats releases. A list of practice which did not supply or confirm their data is listed in the Annex.

This is the first time data has been sourced from the WNWRS and therefore this release is classed as [Experimental Statistics](#). Data from other sources supplement the data from WNWRS, these include:

- Medical Performers List (MPL), which is used to count the number of locum GPs who are registered to work in Wales. Note that locum coverage is not recorded consistently on WNWRS, so there are no current data sources that count the number of locums actually providing GP sessions in Wales at a point in time. In future periods, it is intended that locum data will be sourced from the [All Wales Locum Register](#).
- NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR), which is used to count registrar GPs. From 2015 onwards, all members of the GP speciality training programme are employed by NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) which is hosted by Velindre NHS Trust. Therefore trainees are recorded on ESR, which is also used as the primary source for our [Staff directly employed by the NHS in Wales](#) statistical release. The registrars counted in this GP workforce statistical release are those who are on GP practice placements at the time of data extraction, and not those who are on the programme but are on hospital based placements at the time of data extraction.
- NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (NWSSP) became the lead employer for General Practice (Doctors in Training only) from 2015 onwards. Previously GPs in training who rotated into a GP surgery would be employed by the surgery and therefore leave the NHS Wales payroll. Now NWSSP keeps continuous employment and these figures are shown against Velindre NHS Trust, which hosts NWSSP. In addition to these, GP trainees who are on hospital rotations are recorded under the specialty of their current role against Velindre NHS trust from 2015 onwards
- Intrepid, the system used to monitor Foundation Year 2 doctors (F2) on placement in general practices. These are doctors with a full General Medical Council (GMC) registration, but are not registrars and are not specifically training to be a GP.
- The Welsh Reference Service at NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS) which provides the definitive list of active GP practices in Wales.

GP practitioner trends

Chart 1: Unique headcount - number of GP practitioners in Welsh general practices (a)(b)



Source: WNWRS, GMS census

- (a) Snapshots taken at 29 February for 2020, 1 October for 2009 and prior to 2000, and 30 September for every other year. No data available for 2019.
- (b) Comparisons across years should be treated with caution due to changes in methodology. See [data quality statement](#) and [key quality information](#).

A GP practitioner includes partners, providers and salaried GPs. It does not include GP locums, retainers and registrars. See [key quality information](#) for detailed explanation.

Summary: The number of GP practitioners in Wales gradually increased from under 1,800 in the mid 1990s to around 2,000 in 2010. Since then the number of GP Practitioners has remained largely stable, with small year-to-year changes. Note that while we are counting the same group of people in each year, data from 2020 is taken at a different point in the year to all previous years and collected from a different source. Therefore we can make comparisons over time but users should exercise caution when doing so because any changes may be attributed to the different methods for data collection, and/or seasonality in the data.

Latest data: At 29 February 2020, the number of GP practitioners in Wales was 1,972.

Change since previous time period: There were 8 (or 0.4%) more GP practitioners than at 30 September 2018.

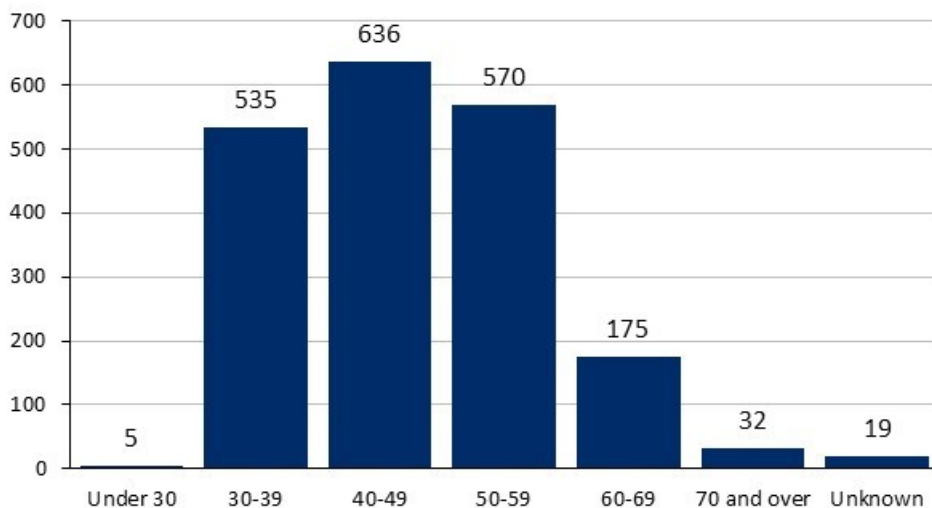
10 year change: There were 37 (or 1.8%) fewer GP practitioners at 29 Feb 2020 than at 30 September 2011

Change since first year of data: There were 231 (or 13.3%) more GP practitioners at 29 Feb 2020 than at 1 October 1995.

Note: February 2020 data is based on data for 376 practices returning data through WNWRS and data from 28 practices based on GMS Census 2018. It is a unique count of GPs, so if a GP works at more than one practice they are only counted once.

GP practitioner by age

Chart 2: Unique headcounts - GP practitioners by 10 year age bands, all Wales



Source: WNWRS, GMS census

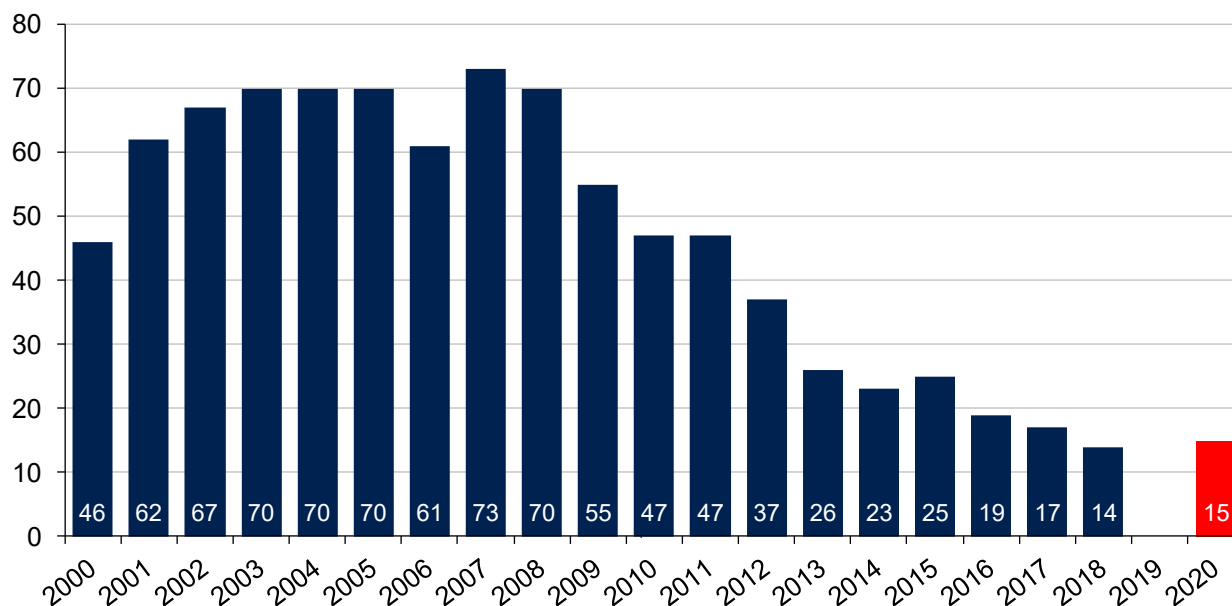
Summary: Chart 2 shows the distribution of GP practitioners by age bands. The large majority of GP Practitioners are aged between 30 and 59 (89.1%), with 32 (or 1.6%) aged 70 or over.

Note: February 2020 data is based on data for 376 practices returning data through WNWRS and data from 28 practices based on GMS Census 2018. It is a unique count of GPs, therefore if a GP works at more than one practice they are only counted once.

GP retainers

A GP retainer is a registered GP Practitioner who has entered the GP Retainer Scheme who may only work up to 4 clinical sessions per week in practice. See [key quality information](#) for detailed explanation.

Chart 3: Unique headcount - number of GP retainers in Welsh General Practices (a)



Source: WNWRS, GMS census

(a) Snapshots taken at 29 February for 2020, 1 October for 2009, and 30 September for every other year. No data available for 2019.

Summary: There has been a downward trend in the number of GP retainers in Wales over the long term.

Latest data: At 29 February 2020, the number of GP retainers in Wales was 15.

Change since previous time period: There was one more GP retainer than at 30 September 2018.

10 year change: There were 32 (or 68.1 %) fewer GP retainers at 29 Feb 2020 than at 30 September 2011

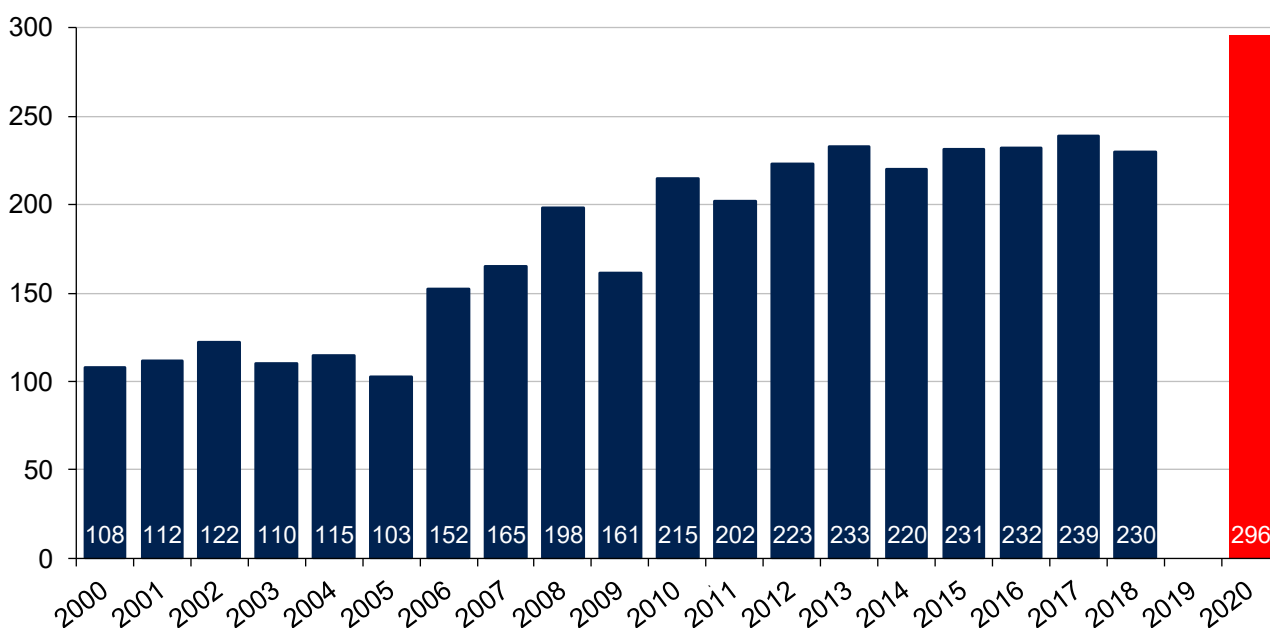
Change since first year of data: There were 31 (or 67.4 %) fewer GP retainers at 29 Feb 2020 than at 30 September 2000.

Note: February 2020 data is based on data for 376 practices returning data through WNWRS and data from 28 practices based on GMS Census 2018; however, there were no retainers recorded in 28 practices in 2018. It is a unique count of GPs, therefore if a GP works at more than one practice they are only counted once.

GP registrars

A GP registrar or GP trainee is a qualified doctor who is training to become a GP through a period of working and training in a practice. See [key quality information](#) for detailed explanation.

Chart 4: Unique headcount - number of GP registrars placed in general practice (a)



Source: WNWRS, GMS census

(a) Snapshots taken at 29 February for 2020, 1 October for 2009, and 30 September for every other year. No data available for 2019.

Summary: Over the long term, the number of GP registrars in Wales has increased reaching a peak in the latest time period (February 2020) at just under 300.

Latest data: At 29 February 2020, the number of GP registrars in Wales was 296.

Change since previous time period: There were 66 (or 28.7%) more GP registrars than at 30 September 2018.

10 year change: There were 94 (or 46.5%) more GP registrars at 29 Feb 2020 than at 30 September 2011

Change since first year of data: There were 188 (or 174.1%) more GP registrars at 29 Feb 2020 than at 30 September 2000.

Note: Historically GP trainees spent 18 months in hospitals, and 18 months in GP practices, but the training model in Wales is currently changing to 12 months in hospital, and 24 months in general practices. At the time of data extraction some, but not all training schemes in Wales have moved to the new model; this may explain part of the large increase in registrars in February 2020. Also note that February 2020 data is sourced from the NHS Electronic Staff Record (ESR), with data prior to this sourced from GMS Census, therefore users should exercise caution when making comparisons over time.

F2 doctors

An F2 doctor is a doctor with a full GMC registration in their second year of postgraduate medical training. They would typically undertake clinical work under supervision but they are not training to be a GP.

Summary: This is the first time F2 doctors are included in this statistical release. Data for February 2020 is sourced from Intrepid – the Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) junior doctor training information database.

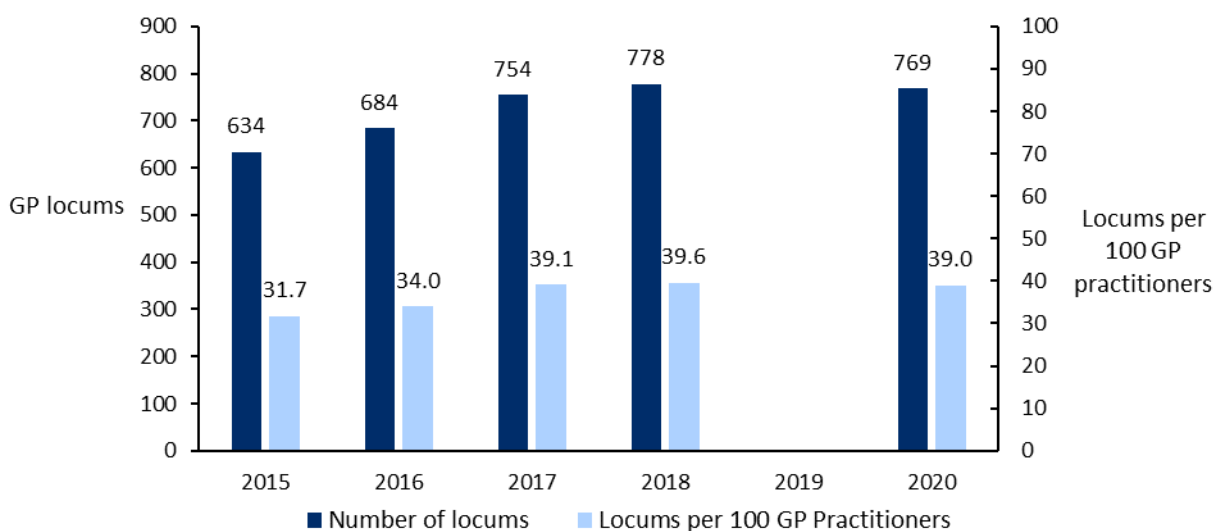
Latest data: At 29 February 2020, there were 29 F2 doctors on placement at GP practices in Wales.

GP locums

A GP locum is a GP who deputises temporarily at a GP practice and is paid through the practice, usually to cover for an absent GP practitioner. Such cover should last for no more than 6 months.

The data is sourced from the Medical Performers List (MPL), which lists all GPs able to practice in Wales and is maintained by the NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership. Just because a GP locum is registered on the Medical Performers List does not mean that they are currently providing GP services in Wales, so the data in Chart 5 refers to the number of GP locums registered to practise in Wales. The data relates to snapshots taken at 29 February for 2020 and 30 September for all previous years.

Chart 5: GP locums unique headcount and per 100 GP practitioners (a)



Source: Medical Performers List

(a) Snapshots taken at 29 February for 2020, 30 September for every other year. No data available for 2019.

Summary: In recent years there has been a clear shift in GPs choosing to register on the Medical Performers List with GP locum as their primary staff role; the number of GP locums has increased most years since the first data were available in 2015.

Latest data: There were 769 GP locums registered to practise in Wales at 29 February 2020, 39.0 per every 100 GP practitioners.

Change since previous time period: There were 9 (or 1.2 %) fewer GP locums registered in Wales than at 30 September 2018. This is equivalent to a decrease of 0.6 locums per 100 GP practitioners over the year.

Change since first year of data: There were 135 (or 21.3 %) more GP locums registered in Wales than at 30 September 2015. This is equivalent to an increase of 7.2 GP locums per 100 GP practitioners over the five years.

Note: The counts are for those GPs who register their primary job type as a locum on the Medical Performers List. That means that if a GP registered themselves as a primary job type but also performed work as a locum, they would not be included on this list.

It is intended that the All Wales Locum Register will provide additional data on GP locums in future periods which will be used to monitor the activity levels of locum GPs in Welsh general practices.

Note the figures exclude any locum who is on the Medical Performers List with a suspended license, or if they joined after the snapshot date (i.e. 29 February in 2020).

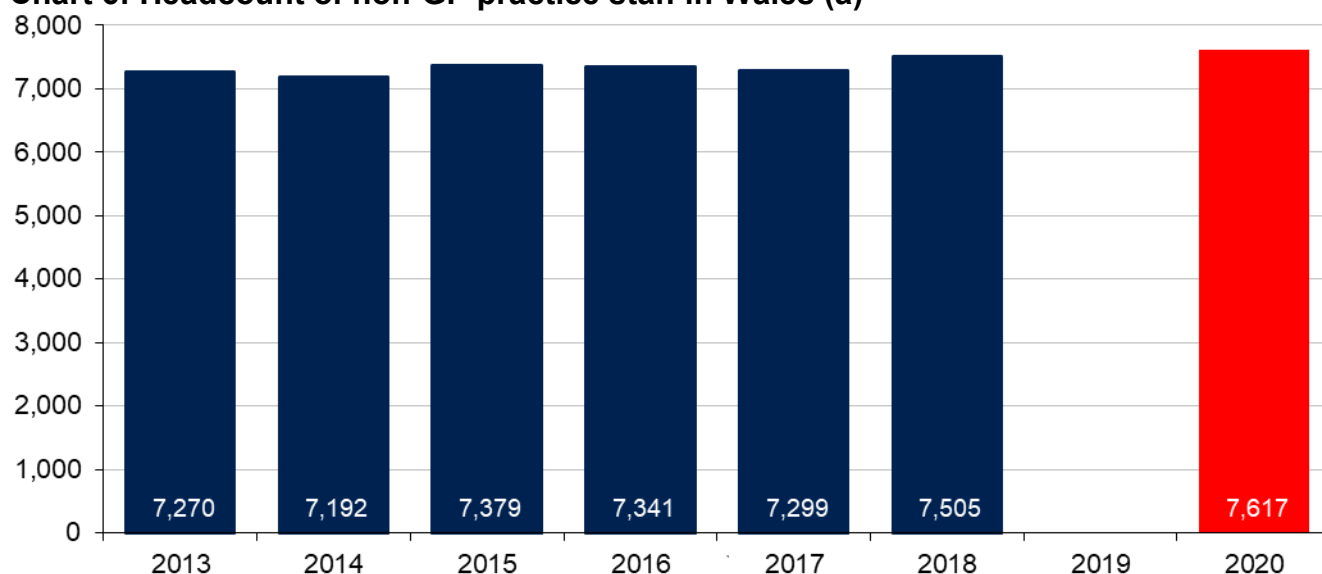
Non-GP practice staff

To deliver primary care, GPs work closely with their practice staff including nurses, pharmacists, managers, administrators and others involved in direct patient care. This section provides data on the number of staff employed in other job types within GP practices.

Data has been provided through WNWRS for 376 out of the 404 active practices. For the remaining 28 practices, data from GMS census 2018 has been used in place of the missing data. Note that GMS census data only provides data at broad staff group level, while WNWRS provides data at individual job type, therefore the individual job type data in Table 1 only refers to staff in the 376 confirmed practices in WNWRS.

A list of practices which did not supply data is provided in the [Annex](#).

Chart 6: Headcount of non-GP practice staff in Wales (a)



Source: WNWRS, GMS census

(a) Data for 2020 refers to 29 Feb, data for all other years refers to 30 September. No data available for 2019.

Summary: Since data was collected in 2013, there has been a general upward trend in the number of non-GP practice staff over time. The number of practice staff at health board level, tends to reflect the size of the populations they serve.

Latest Data: At 29 February 2020, there were 7,617 non-GP staff employed in Welsh general practices.

Change since previous time period: There were 112 (or 1.5%) more non-GP staff in Wales than in 2018.

Change since first year of data: There were 347 (or 4.8%) more non-GP staff in Wales than in 2013.

Note: Data from 2013 to 2018 is sourced from GMS census, while data for February 2020 onwards is sourced from WNWRS. The change in source may have resulted in greater coverage so caution is advised when analysing data over time. Further to this, data from WNWRS provides unique staff

counts; this means if one person is employed in multiple roles, they are only counted once in this total. However data from GMS census is not a unique count, so staff who were employed in multiple roles would have been counted multiple times in the counts. For February 2020 data, as data has been imputed from GMS census 2018 for a small number of practices, there may be a very small number of staff who are counted more than once.

Table 1: Non-GP staff in Wales by staff group and role, 29 February 2020 (a) (b) (c)

Nurses	1,413
Practice Nurse	898
Advanced Nurse Practitioner	246
Extended Role Practice Nurse	156
Nurse Specialist	37
Trainee Nurse	3
Nursing Partner	*
Nurse Dispenser	*
Direct Patient Care	1,123
Health Care Assistant	536
Dispenser	188
Pharmacist	108
Phlebotomist	93
Pharmacy Technician	33
Other	28
Paramedic	22
Physician Associate	16
Physiotherapist	11
Apprentice - Health Care Assistant	8
Therapist- Counsellor	5
Therapist- Occupational Therapist	3
Apprentice - Pharmacist	*
Therapist- Other	*
Admin/Non-clinical/Other	5,126
Receptionist	2,767
Other	1,003
Manager	564
Medical Secretary	411
Estates and Ancillary	65
Management Partner	17
Apprentice	15
Senior Manager	15
Telephonist	14

Source: WNWRS

(a) The individual staff role figures are sourced from WNWRS only: a person who has more than one contract in the same role has been counted once in that role. However, a person who has a contract in more than one role would appear once against each role. Therefore the staff role figures cannot be summed.

(b) The broad staff group figures in bold are sourced from WNWRS for 376 practices and GMS census 2018 for the remaining 28 practices and are shown for context. They are not the sum of the individual staff roles.

(c) Values greater than 0 but less than 3 have been suppressed to avoid disclosure.

Summary: Individual staff role data is sourced from the 376 practices returning data in WNWRS only. The majority of staff employed in nursing roles were practice nurses (898), the largest staff role of direct patient care staff was health care assistant (536), while receptionist was the largest number of any staff role (2,767).

Key quality information

General medical practitioner definitions:

A general practice is an organisation which offers primary care medical services by a qualified general medical practitioner who is able to prescribe medicine where patients can be registered and held on a list. For the purpose of this release the term general practice refers to main surgeries only and excludes prisons, army bases, education establishments, specialist care centres and walk in centres.

A GP practitioner includes GP providers and salaried GPs only (i.e. excludes GP locums, GP registrars, and GP retainers).

A GP provider is a practitioner who has entered into a contract with a local health board to provide services to patients.

Salaried GPs work within partnerships and are generally remunerated by salary. This also includes GP returners. Returner is an old name for those GPs on what is now the induction and refresher training.

A GP registrar or GP trainee is a qualified doctor who is training to become a GP through a period of working and training in a practice. Historically, in Wales the training programme consisted of 18 months in approved hospital posts and 18 months in general practice as a GP Trainee; this is in the process of changing to 12 months in hospital posts and 24 months in general practice. At the time of publication, some health boards have made the change but not all. All the Specialty Training Schemes in Wales offer the opportunity to undertake the complete training programme as a 3-year scheme.

A GP retainer is a registered GP Practitioner who has entered the GP Retainer Scheme. This is designed to help keep doctors working in general practice, and usually applies to GPs who are either approaching retirement or who require greater flexibility in their work in general practice. A retainer may only work up to 4 clinical sessions per week in practice.

A GP locum is a GP who deputises temporarily at a practice, usually to cover for an absent GP practitioner. Such cover should last for no more than 6 months.

An F2 doctor is a doctor with a full GMC registration in their second year of postgraduate medical training. They have completed their first foundation year and will be rotating through three specialties. They would typically undertake clinical work under supervision but they are not training to be a GP.

A partnership is a financial arrangement between two or more bodies of which one must be a practitioner.

General Medical Services (GMS) is the contract by which most GPs are employed.

General practice staff definitions

Nurses: all staff who are registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), specifically all staff recorded under these staff roles: practice nurse, advanced nurse practitioner, nurse specialist, extended role practice nurse, nursing partner, trainee nurse and nurse dispenser.

Direct patient care: typically includes anyone who is directly involved in delivering patient care but who is not a nurse or GP. This includes staff recorded with the specific staff roles of: health care assistant, dispenser, pharmacy technician, paramedic, occupational therapist, pharmacist, phlebotomist, counsellor, physiotherapist, physician associate, apprentice health care assistant, other therapist, apprentice pharmacist, and other direct patient care.

Administrative: anyone who is involved in the administration or organisation of the practice. This includes staff with the specific roles of management partner, receptionist, apprentice, manager, medical secretary, telephonist, estates and ancillary, senior manager and other admin.

Data sources

Various data sources have been used to produce the statistics in this release. The data source is stated in each section of the statistical release.

Welsh National Workforce Reporting System (WNWRS)

This is the first time data has been sourced from WNWRS and is now the primary source for most GP practice workforce (from February 2020 onwards).

The WNWRS provides a secure web based tool developed to capture information on staff working in general practices. A version of this system has been used by practices in England for some years and is supported by NHS Digital. In Wales, NHS Wales Shared Service Partnership (NWSSP) have implemented the WNWRS, with support from NHS Digital.

In broad terms, the system works by practice managers inputting details of their staff onto the system, confirming the details every quarter. Data is then extracted on the last day of each quarter (March, June, September, December) and NHS Digital validate this data. NWSSP also perform additional validations to improve data quality before anonymised data are shared with Welsh Government statisticians to validate further and produce these official statistics.

This is the main source for data on GP practitioners, retainers and all practice staff.

Further details are provided in the [data quality statement](#).

GMS census

The main source of historic GP workforce data is the GMS which was produced by NHS Digital using the Exeter/NHAIS database. This database is a computerised payment system of General medical practitioners who are in contract with local health boards. WNWRS has replaced the GMS Census as the main source of GP workforce data and the last GMS census data refers to September 2018. Some of this data has been used to estimate workforce data for practices which have not supplied or validated data through WNWRS in February 2020.

GMS census will remain the data source for historic data and as WNWRS becomes more established, data coverage should improve and GMS census data will not be needed for estimations.

Raw data from the Exeter payment system has also been used to validate February 2020 WNWRS data and will be routinely used to for validation purposes in future periods.

Medical Performers List

All GPs need to be registered to the Medical Performers List (MPL) before they are allowed to practice in Wales. When a GP registers, they are asked to input their primary job role and this is used to count the number of GP locums who are registered to practice in Wales. Historically it has been used to calculate the number of GPs who are able to speak Welsh, before more robust data on Welsh language skills was collected in WNWRS.

NHS Wales Shared Service Partnership maintains the Medical Performers List, and it is also used to validate workforce data supplied through WNWRS.

Electronic Staff Record (ESR)

ESR is the workforce tool used by the NHS to supports the delivery of national workforce policy and strategy. It provides NHS organisations with a range of tools that facilitate effective workforce management and planning. All staff employed by the NHS should have an ESR record and is the source for registrar data from February 2020 onwards.

All members of the GP speciality training programme are employed by Velindre NHS Trust and are therefore present on ESR. The registrars counted in this statistical release are those who are on GP practice placements at the time of data extraction, and not those who are on the programme but are on hospital based placements at the time of data extraction.

Intrepid

NHS Shared Service Partnership access the system which is used to monitor Foundation Year 2 doctors (F2) on placement in general practices. These are doctors with a full General Medical Council (GMC) registration, but are not registrars and are not specifically training to be a GP.

NHS Wales Informatics Service (NWIS)

All practices which open, close or merge in Wales need to be recorded by the Welsh Reference Service at NWIS. This is the definitive source of active practices in Wales. Data for February 2020 refers to only the practices which were active at that date on the list of practices provided by the Welsh Reference Service.

Coverage

Wales National Workforce Reporting System (WNWRS)

All active practices in Wales are registered on the WNWRS so data should be captured from all general practices in Wales. However, this is dependent on practices supplying their information through the system. In February 2020, 13 practices did not supply any data, or supplied data at an earlier point in time and did not confirm their data was valid and correct at the time data was extracted. The most recent validated data (GMS census 2018) has been used instead of the data returned in WNWRS for these practices and a list of these practices is published in Table 6 (annex). It is hoped as WNWRS becomes more established 100% of practices will supply valid and confirmed data through the system.

A further 15 practices confirmed their data but returned 0 GP practitioners. While this may be accurate, the validations against the Exeter payment system suggested that there should be GP practitioners associated with all of these practices. Therefore, the most recent validated data (GMS census 2018) has also been used instead of the data returned in WNWRS for these practices. This applies to all data submitted through WNWRS (including non-GP data).

By the next publication date, an additional validation stage will be added where all practices returning 0 GPs will be contacted to double check the accuracy of their data.

GMS census

The GMS census was a full census of GP Practitioners carried out as at 30 September 2018. Only Practitioners whose 'responsible local health board' is within Wales have been included.

Medical Performers List (MPL)

The MPL covers all GPs licensed to practice in Wales, and is used to count GP locums in this release. The list relies on the primary job role being provided by the GP, so if a GP works multiple roles, they would only be recorded under one of them. Therefore, the number of GPs available for locum work in Wales may be undercounted in the MPL. However, as the MPL typically relies on a GP informing NHS Shared Service Partnership of any changes in their circumstances, the list is not always a timely reflection of the number of GPs available to work in Wales. For example, a GP may be listed as a locum on the list but is now working as a salaried GP in Wales or another country, which may overstate the number of locums counted on the list.

Better quality data on locums and their activity should be sourced from the [All Wales Locum Register](#) in future periods.

Other sources

All other sources used in this release, including the Electronic Staff Record, Intrepid and the Welsh Reference Service in NWIS have 100% coverage of the relevant data items used in this release.

Accuracy

Extensive quality assurance has been performed on data extracted from WNWRS.

Some of the quality assurance steps include:

- Checking GMC numbers in WNWRS against the GMC master list to ensure the number provided is valid. If numbers are invalid NHS Shared Service Partnership have contacted the practice to obtain the correct number, or verified it using the Medical Performers List. Any GP recorded in WNWRS but did not have a valid GMC number after these steps has been removed.
- Counts provided are for unique staff unless otherwise stated. That is, if a GP works at multiple practices, they would only be counted once in Wales-level totals. If a GP works in two different health boards, they would be counted in both health boards, but only once in the Wales-level totals.
- Checks are performed against various data sources including GMS 2018 and an extract from the Exeter payments system taken at the same reference date as WNWRS data was extracted. Any data items which appear inconsistent between data sources have been checked with the practice.
- Staff who appear to have duplicated records are removed. Typically these are staff with the same National Insurance or registration number, employed in the same practice, in the same staff role.
- Any data for practices which were not active at 29 February 2020 has been removed.
- Any data supplied where the GP has been recorded as a locum is not counted, as locum coverage in the WNWRS is not recorded on a consistent basis.
- Various checks and follow ups are applied for specific data items, including:
 - Checking date of births are within a set range
 - Staff role is completed and not blank
 - Staff joining after 29 February 2020 or being terminated before 29 February 2020 are excluded.
- NHS Shared Service Partnership also extensively contacted GP practices to ensure data supplied was accurate and in correct formats.

A full quality report will be published as soon as is practicable.

Timeliness and punctuality

Data is published as soon as practicable after being received by Welsh Government.

This report was published 2 months after data had been extracted from the WNWRS; previous data from the GMS Census was typically published around 6 months after the reference date.

This report has limited additional analysis of data and has been published in response to the current covid-19 pandemic, to provide a more up-to-date picture of the general practice workforce in Wales just before the crises began.

Going forward, it is planned that data will be published from the WNWRS quarterly, around 3-4 months after the reference period.

Comparability and coherence

The latest data published on GPs practitioners, retainers and non-GP practice staff is sourced from a new system which is totally different to the GMS census which provided data for previous years. It is also taken at a different point in time to all other previous data, therefore users are advised to be cautious when analysing the data over time. Any differences may be explained by the different data collection processes or reference periods.

The WNWRS is based on the same system used by NHS Digital to monitor the GP workforce in England, so GP workforce data is collected on a consistent basis. However, NHS Digital use some estimation methods in England which are not necessary to be applied in Wales, so there are some subtle differences in the way statistics are produced from similar source data.

Data on GP Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) is collected through the WNWRS and it is intended that this will be published in future publications. It has not been published in this report as there has not been time to adequately validate this data. WTE data from the previous 5 GMS census was not published as it was not of sufficient quality and consistency.

Revisions

The majority of the data used in the release is a snapshot taken at a single point in time from administrative systems. All statistics in this report can be regarded as final and not subject to further revision or update.

Accessing and clarity

The data informing the analysis in this report is published in the annex and as an Excel spreadsheet. The data will be added to [StatsWales](#) (a free-to-use open data platform that allows visitors to view, create and download tables) as soon as is practicable.

This statistical release has been pre-announced and then published on the [Statistics and Research website](#).

Relevance

What are the potential uses of these statistics?

These statistics will be used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are:

- advice to Ministers
- to inform workforce planning decisions
- to inform debate in the National Assembly for Wales and beyond
- to make publically available data on GP services in Wales

Who are the key potential users of this data?

These statistics will be useful both within and outside the Welsh Government. Some of the key potential users are:

- ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales
- local health boards
- local authorities
- primary care clusters
- GP practices
- The department for Health and Social Services in the Welsh Government
- other areas of the Welsh Government
- National Health Service (e.g. Workforce, Education & Development Services (WEDS))
- Public Health Wales
- the research community
- students, academics and universities
- individual citizens and private companies.

The statistics may also be useful for other UK governments:

- Northern Ireland Executive's Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
- Scottish Government
- Department of Health in England

UK comparisons

The other UK countries also publish counts of GPs. Users should be aware of differences in definitions, methodologies and data collections.

England, NHS Digital

[General Practice Data Hub](#)

[GP Primary Care & Workforce Data Report](#)

Scotland

ISD Scotland

[GPs and Other Practice Workforce](#)

[General Practice Data Tables](#)

Northern Ireland

[General Medical Statistics](#)

[GPs, Practices and Registered Patients \(administrative geographies\)](#)

[GP Registrations](#)

Related links

Official statistics for the number of serving UK Armed Forces personnel and civilian personnel with a Defence Medical Services (DMS) registration can be accessed on the [Ministry of Defence Website](#).

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

The document is available at: <https://gov.wales/general-practice-workforce>

Next update

June 2020 (provisional – subject to resource allocation changes in response to COVID-19)

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.healthinfo@gov.wales.

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Annex

Table 2: Number of GPs by type and local health boards at 29 February 2020 (a) (b) (c)

Local health board	Number of GP practitioners (excluding locums, GP Registrars and GP Retainers)			GP Registrars	GP Retainers	GP Locums
	Partner/ Provider/ Senior Partner	Salaried	Total			
Betsi Cadwaladr University	283	81	413	56	4	196
Powys Teaching	78	23	101	7	0	53
Hywel Dda University	164	54	224	39	*	84
Swansea Bay University	266	69	349	74	*	105
Cwm Taf Morgannwg University	135	71	207	34	0	79
Aneurin Bevan University	273	85	360	39	*	142
Cardiff and Vale University	228	91	330	47	7	110
Wales	1,423	469	1,972	296	15	769

(a) The GP practitioner breakdowns at local health board (LHB) level are sourced from WNWRS only: a person who has more than one contract in the same LHB has been counted once in that LHB. However, a person who has a contract in more than one LHB would appear once against each LHB. Therefore the figures cannot be summed by LHB. Similarly, a person who has more than one contract in the same GP practitioner role has been counted once in that role, but a person who has a contract in more than one role would appear once against each role. Data from GMS census 2018 has not been used in columns B and C because the GP types aren't recorded on a consistent basis with WNWRS.

(b) The GP practitioner total figures (column D) are sourced from WNWRS for 376 practices and GMS census 2018 for the remaining 28 practices. They are not the sum of the individual GP practitioner roles.

(c) Values greater than 0 but less than 3 have been suppressed to avoid disclosure.

Table 3: Number of GPs by type, 2006 onwards

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
GP practitioners	1,882	1,936	1,940	1,940	1,991	2,009	1,997	2,026	2,006	1,997	2,009	1,926	1,964	-	1,972
GP registrars	152	165	198	161	215	202	223	233	220	231	232	239	230	-	296
GP retainers	61	73	70	55	47	47	37	26	23	25	19	17	14	-	15
GP locums	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	634	684	754	778	-	769

Table 4: Non-GP staff by staff group and health board, 29 February 2020

Local health board	Nurses	Direct patient care	Admin/non-clinical/other
Betsi Cadwaladr University	381	329	1,179
Powys Teaching	87	122	267
Hywel Dda University	217	149	663
Swansea Bay University	185	123	787
Cwm Taf Morgannwg Univer	114	104	467
Aneurin Bevan University	258	226	1,006
Cardiff and Vale University	186	81	782
Wales	1,413	1,123	5,126

Note: The figures are sourced from WNWRS for 376 practices and GMS census 2018 for the remaining 28 practices. Data from WNWRS provides unique staff counts; this means if one person is employed multiple times in one local health board (LHB) (or staff group), they are only counted once (but if the person is also employed in another LHB or staff group, then they would be counted once in each LHB or staff group). However data from GMS census is not a unique count, so staff who were employed across more than one LHB (or staff group) would have been counted multiple times in the counts. Therefore figures cannot be summed by LHB. For February 2020 data, as data has been imputed from GMS census 2018 for a small number of practices, there may be a very small number of staff who are counted more than once.

Table 5: Non-GP staff by staff group, 2013 onwards (a)

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Non-GP staff	7,270	7,192	7,379	7,341	7,299	7,505	-	7,617
Nurses	1,296	1,288	1,287	1,327	1,312	1,338	-	1,413
Direct patient care	885	900	909	955	990	1,038	-	1,123
Admin/non-clinical/other	5,089	5,004	5,183	5,059	4,997	5,129	-	5,126

(a) Data from 2013 to 2018 is sourced from GMS census, while data for February 2020 onwards is sourced from WNWRS. The change in source may have resulted in greater coverage so caution is advised when analysing data over time. Data from WNWRS provides unique staff counts; so if one person is employed multiple times in one staff group, they are only counted once in that staff group (but if the person is also employed in another staff group, then they would be counted once in each staff group). However data from GMS census is not a unique count, so staff who were employed multiple times would have been counted multiple times in the counts. Therefore figures cannot be summed by staff group. For February 2020 data, as data has been imputed from GMS census 2018 for a small number of practices, there may be a very small number of staff who are counted more than once.

Table 6: Practices with no or unconfirmed data in WNWRS

	W code	Practice Name	Practice Address			Postcode	Health board
No data supplied	W91019	Gardden Road Surgery	Gardden Road	Rhosllanerchrugog	Wrexham	LL14 2EN	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W97069	Willowbrook Surgery	Strathy Road	St Mellons	Cardiff	CF3 0SH	Cardiff & Vale
Some initial test data submitted before WNWRS was operational but practice did not confirm their data	W91006	Pen Y Maes Health Centre	Beech Street	Summerhill	Wrexham	LL11 4UF	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W91029	Bodowen Surgery	Halkyn Road	Holywell	Flintshire	CH8 7GA	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W91038	Gwrych Medical Centre	Cae Eithin	Abergele	Conwy	LL22 8LJ	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W91054	Borras Park Surgery	Borras Park Road		Wrexham	LL12 7TH	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W94033	Llys Meddyg Penygroes	Victoria Road	Penygroes	Gwynedd	LL54 6HD	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W94035	Meddygfa Bala Surgery	Canolfan Iechyd	Bala	Gwynedd	LL23 7BA	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W94039	Liverpool House	Waunfawr		Gwynedd	LL55 4YY	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W94633	Star Surgery	Star	Gaerwen	Isle of Anglesey	LL60 6AH	Betsi Cadwaladr
	W92046	Coalbrook Surgery	Coalbrook Road	Pontyberem	Carmarthenshire	SA15 5HU	Hywel Dda
	W98043	Manselton Surgery	Elgin Street		Swansea	SA5 8QE	Swansea Bay
W98608	Abertawe Medical Partnership	151 St Helens Road		Swansea	SA1 4DF	Swansea Bay	