

Job satisfaction

A survey of job satisfaction among primary healthcare workers



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About the survey

Campden Health polled 1040 primary healthcare staff between May 30 and June 11 2013. Practice managers, nurses and GPs were quizzed about work enjoyment, employer support, pay and hours of work, among other issues related to job satisfaction. The survey was conducted via email questionnaire.

About campden health

Campden Health is a leading, pan-European healthcare publishing and research company. For over 20 years we have enjoyed a first-rate reputation for delivering top quality, timely content that supports healthcare professionals with their clinical decision-making and career development.

Our portfolio of journals and websites includes *Nursing in Practice*, *Management in Practice*, *The Commissioning Review* and *Hospital Pharmacy Europe*. We deliver 12 national conference exhibitions – including *Commissioning Live* – each year, as well as more than 100 smaller educational ‘road show’ events across the UK. And we produce numerous ‘roundtable’ discussion meetings, focusing on a single therapeutic area, across Europe.

For more information about this survey or, more broadly, about Campden Health, please contact:

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Executive summary

Amid fears that current government reforms and efficiency savings are over-stretching NHS resources, this survey conducted by Campden Health painted a stark picture of working conditions in the NHS with 48% of primary health professionals polled experiencing a lack of support from their employer.

This lack of support was further reflected by figures revealing that only 53% of healthcare professionals felt they were able to do their job to a standard they were pleased with and a large majority (65%) expressing that staffing levels at their organisation were inadequate. Training was another possible contributing factor to concerns about level of performance, with 46% of those polled feeling that not enough training had been provided. The survey also hinted at low morale with a significant majority of 61% of respondents expressing that they had not received sufficient recognition for their work.

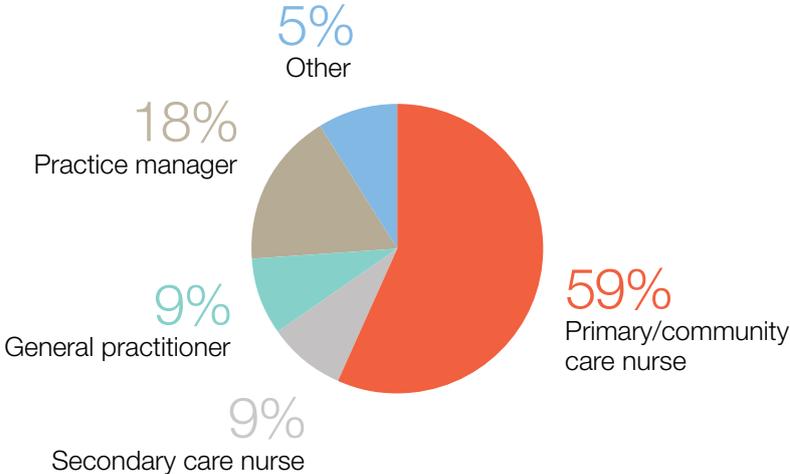
With figures highlighting concerns with understaffing, training and a lack of recognition for contributions, all too familiar themes within the NHS, it is unsurprising that only 53% of those polled said that they would recommend their organisation as a place to work.

However, despite the evident limitations placed by the environment, a significant degree of job satisfaction was detected, with 58% of respondents expressing they looked forward to going to work and 65% saying they enjoyed being at work. A sizeable majority of 62% currently had no plans to change employers.

1 profile

Campden Health polled 1,040 primary healthcare staff by email between May 30 and June 11 2013. Among those polled, 68% were nurses, 18% were practice managers and 9% were GPs.

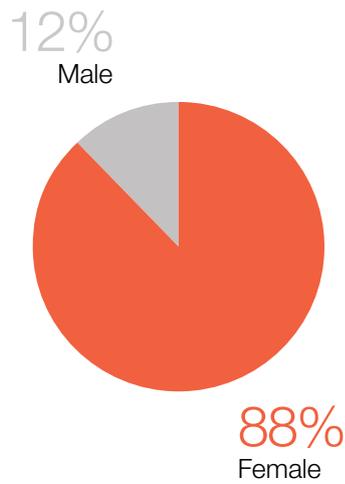
Figure 1
Which of the following best describes your current occupation?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Consistent with the high proportion of nurses polled, 88% of respondents were females and 12% were males.

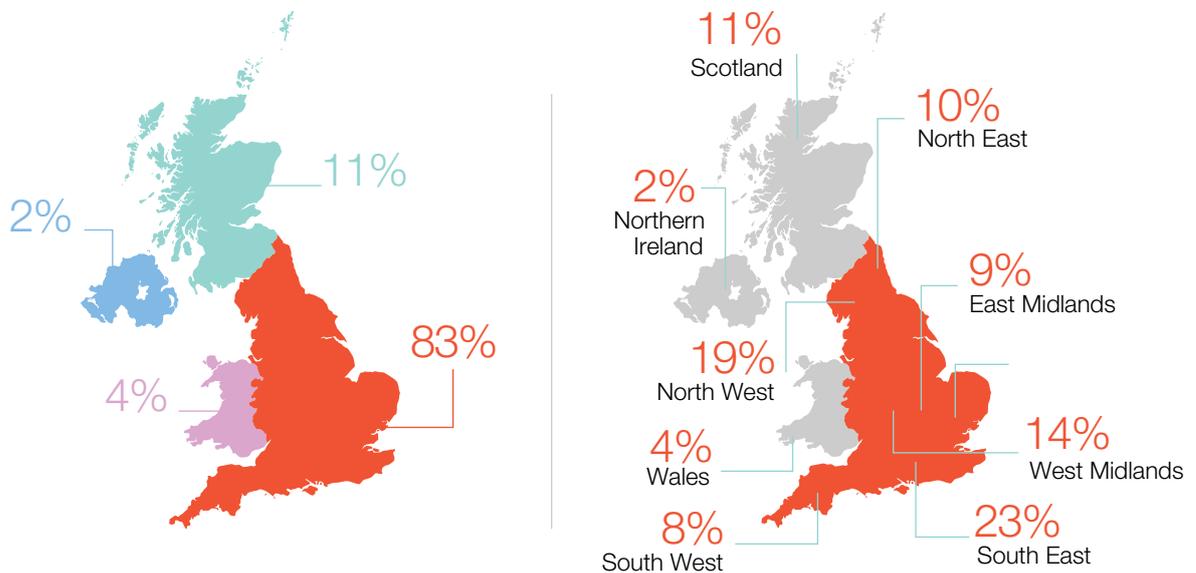
Figure 2
Are you...?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

As for location, a majority of 83% of respondents worked in England, while 4% worked in Wales, 11% worked in Scotland and 2% in Northern Ireland.

Figure 3
In which of the following regions do you work?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

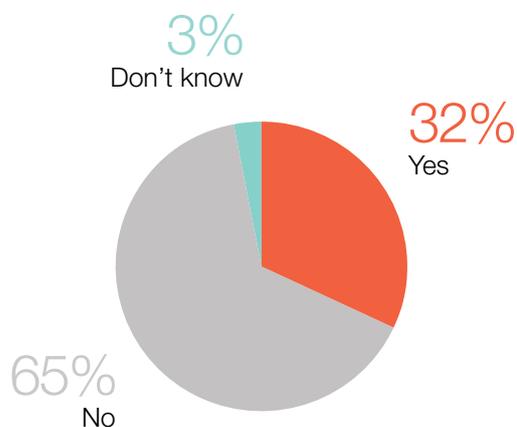
2

staff & support

With plans to achieve a target of £20 billion in 'efficiency savings' by 2015, nursing posts have been cut and social care programmes have been significantly reduced, along with massive restructuring to cut management and commissioning costs.

This has been aptly reflected in Campden Health polls which show that a large majority of 65% respondents felt staffing levels at their organisation were inadequate.

Figure 4
Are there enough staff at your organisation for you to do your job properly?

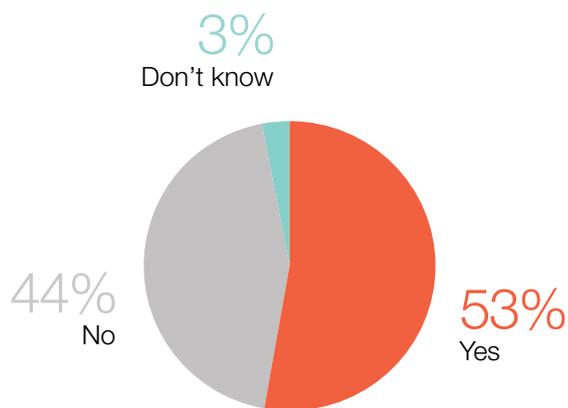


Responding to concerns about understaffing in nurses, Howard Catton, Head of Policy at the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), said that the ratio level in many hospitals was unacceptable.

“We should have clear national guidance on what safe staffing levels are...We have ratios for our kids in nurseries...why can't we have them for our patients in hospitals?” he said. “...Cutting nurses will have a negative impact on the quality of care that's provided and in the worse case scenario yes it can lead to untimely deaths,” he added.

Figure 5

Are you able to do your job to a standard that you are pleased with?



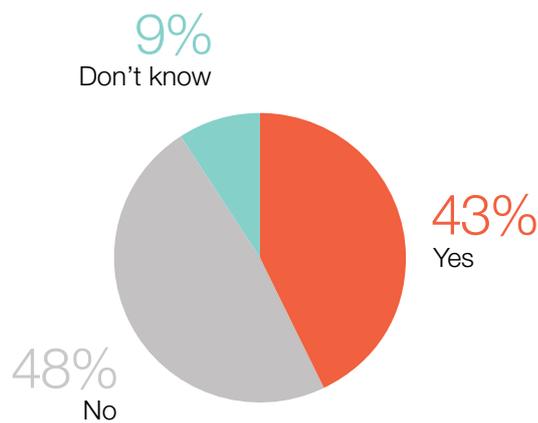
Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Concurrent with concerns of understaffing, our polls showed that only 53% of healthcare staff felt they were able to do their jobs to a standard they were pleased with, echoing the results of research carried out in 2012 by Unison which showed that less than 10% of nurses polled said they could deliver safe, dignified, compassionate care all of the time.

Similarly, the level of support offered to workers by their employers was felt to be quite low with a majority of 48% saying they were unsatisfied with the level of support received.

Figure 6

Are you satisfied with the level of support you receive from your employer?

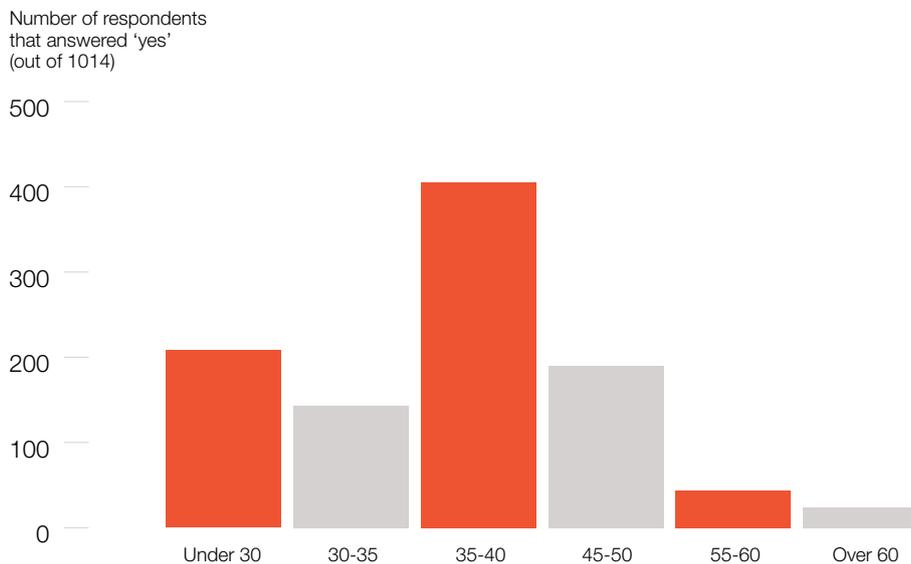


Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Commenting on the results of our survey, a representative from the British Medical Association (BMA) said, "With a rise in age ing population, medical needs and a shrinking of resources, if is often very difficult for employers to provide the level of support that employees need. Your survey results are quite representative of the general feedback that we have been receiving." He added that this state of affairs, along with new NHS reforms which require GPs to have a lot more involvement with administrative duties, was likely to affect the work morale of employees.

Amid concerns with understaffing, one might expect working hours to be well above the 35-40 hour national average. However, 756 (75%) of those polled worked below 40 hours, with 68 (7%) working over 55 hours a week. It is difficult to tell however whether these figures belie extended hours beyond allocated shifts.

Figure 7
Approximately how many hours do you work per week on average?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Senior Employment Relations Adviser from the RCN, Karen Didovich, said that with increasing demand from patients, a widening of services and increase of responsibilities among nursing staff, it was unlikely that the figures were a result of a moderation in working hours. “There is a trend towards an increase in uptake of contract and part-time staff which could reflect the results. Certainly we have found that with a widening of services and changing access for patients, workforce responsibilities have definitely increased,” she said.

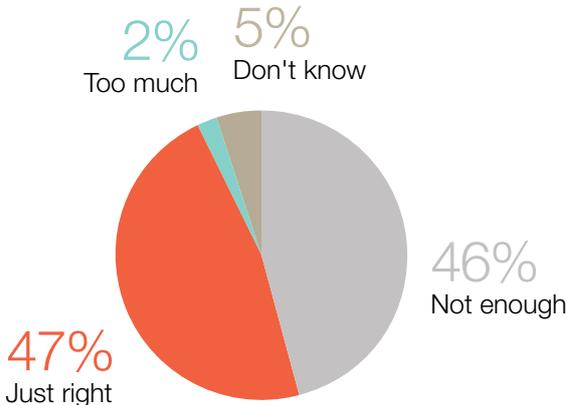
3

training & development

In addition to a lack of support and understaffing, the limits placed on performing to a satisfactory level could be further compounded by issues to do with training as our polls showed that a sizeable minority of respondents (46%) felt that not enough training had been provided.

Figure 8

Do you feel the amount of training/learning/development paid for or provided by your employer is....

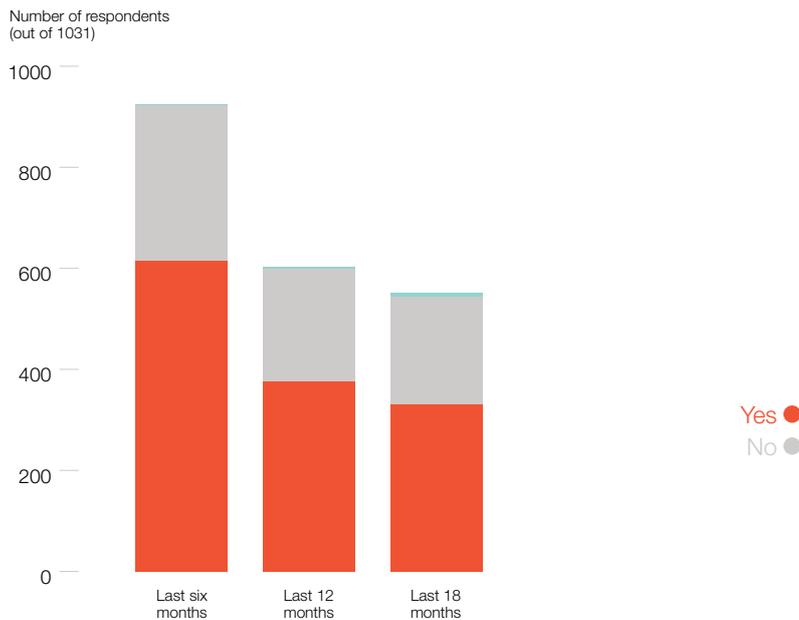


Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Our findings correlate with Robert Francis QC’s attributions in his report on the shocking state of care at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust, published February this year, that some of the failings were due to nursing staff not being skilled enough to provide the care required.

In his report, Francis recommended that there should be, “an increased focus in nurse training, education and professional development on the practical requirements of delivering compassionate care in addition to the theory.”

Figure 9
Have you had any training/learning/development paid for or provided by your employer in the...



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Talking about training provisions for nurses, Unison Head of Nurses, Gail Adams, said that while the level of training and understanding that some nurses need is comparable with medical training, nurses get a disproportionately low amount of the budget.

The RCN said that requirement for more training was indeed a general feeling among nursing staff and that very often when there were financial pressures, training resources were often the first to be raided. However, with an increase in responsibilities, receiving time off for training was also often a problem.

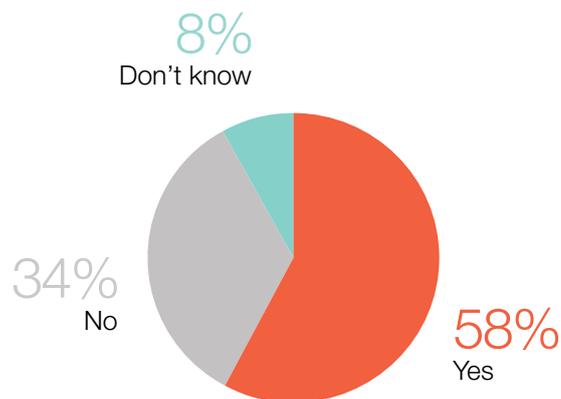
4

work engagement

Despite concerns about understaffing and training, our surveys detected a fairly high level of engagement from those polled, with 58% saying that they looked forward to going to work and 8% feeling ambivalent.

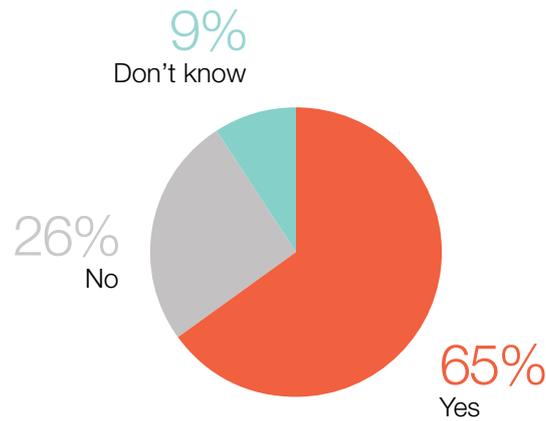
Figure 10

Do you look forward to going to work?



The actual job itself seemed to prove more appealing than the thought of work for some, with figures showing that a higher proportion (65%) of people enjoyed being at work while 26% did not enjoy being at work.

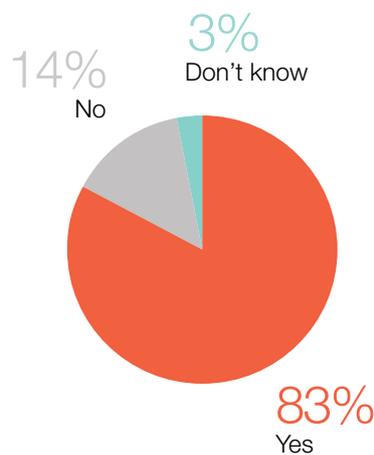
Figure 11
Do you enjoy being at work?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

At 83%, an even higher percentage of respondents said that time passed quickly while at work. However, whether this is a case of "time passes quickly when you're having fun" remains ambiguous as it could equally mean that understaffing issues have kept staff very busy.

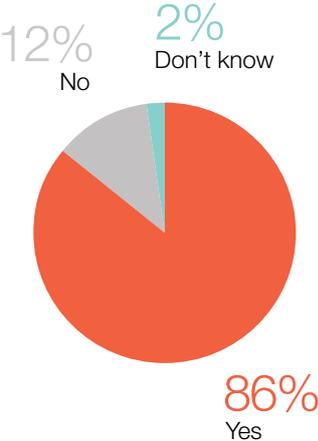
Figure 12
Does time pass quickly when you're working ?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Figure 13

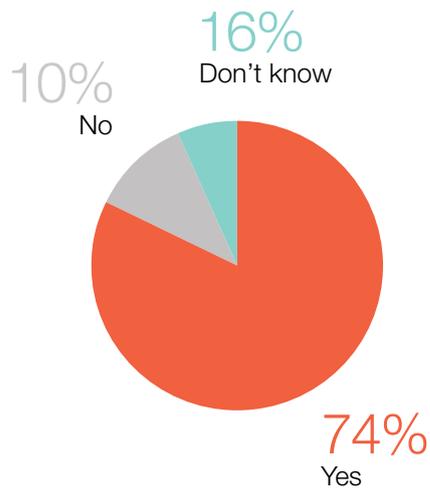
Are you given enough responsibility ?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

In general, the amount of responsibility assigned was aimed at the right level with 86% of respondents saying that they were given enough responsibility. These polls may perhaps also reflect a category of respondents who are given 'too much' responsibility, which would be consistent with issues of understaffing and an increase in the range of duties performed in the wake of the new NHS reforms.

Figure 14
Are you trusted by your employer ?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

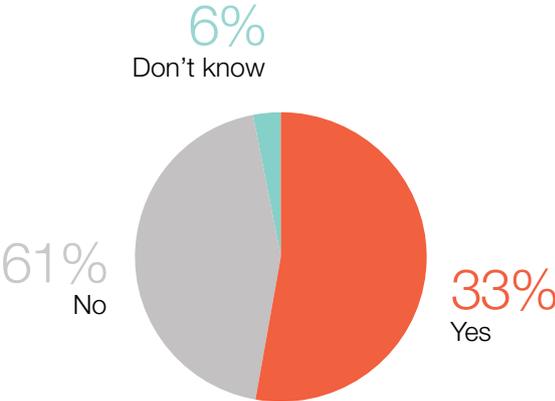
Similarly, trust did not seem to be a major issue of concern with 74% of respondents satisfied that they were trusted by their employer. These results are quite heartening in the face of the negative attention drawn to standard of care following the Francis inquiry and the Winterbourne View abuse scandal.

5

recognition & pay

In contrast to the relatively high levels of work engagement, a lack of recognition for efforts put a damper on job satisfaction, with just 33% of those polled feeling that they received sufficient recognition for their work.

Figure 15
Do you get sufficient recognition for your work?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Figures related to pay satisfaction told a similar story with only 36% satisfied with their level of pay and 4% remaining ambivalent. This was well below the national average results for pay satisfaction obtained in a cross sector job satisfaction survey carried out by Randstad, which showed 43% of employees were satisfied with pay.

The RCN said that although many NHS healthcare staff were now graded on the new Agenda for Change (AfC) system, for which there is a greater regulation of pay resulting in incremental adjustments

Figure 16
Are you happy with your level of pay?

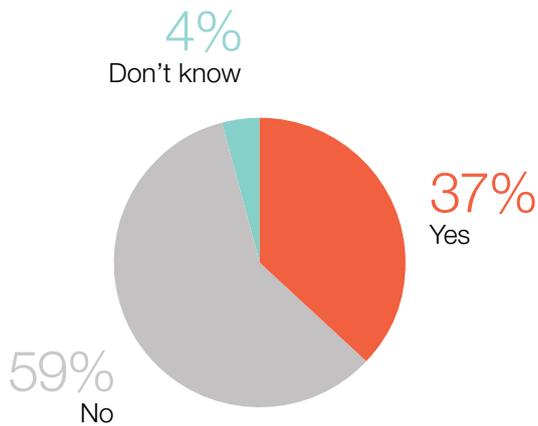
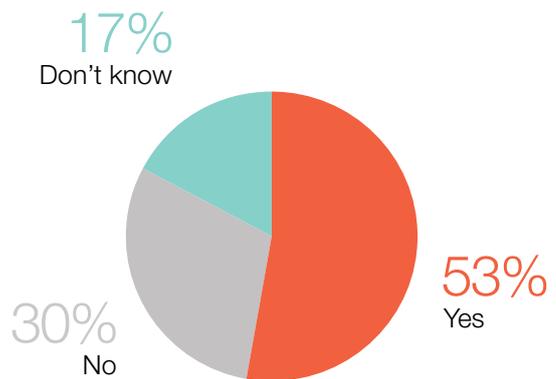


Figure 17
I would recommend my organisation as a place to work...



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

in salary at specified intervals, there were reports of nursing staff not receiving the mandatory pay increase.

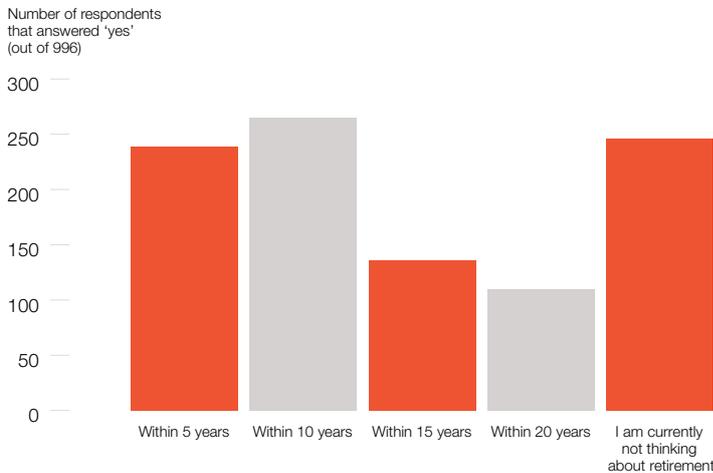
“Although the AfC may be used as a reference point in employment contracts, an increase in salary does not always follow which can lead to dissatisfaction,” Employment Relations Advisor of the RCN, Didovich said. “Furthermore, the salaries of some healthcare staff are still based on the old system, which is based on broader job outlines,” she added, noting that recognition and pay were perhaps part and parcel of the same thing as level of pay was reflective of a recognition of efforts.

With polls suggesting dissatisfaction with the level of support offered by employers, pay levels and issues related to understaffing, it does not come as a surprise that only 53% of those polled would recommend their organisation as a place to work.

6 the future

Turning their thoughts towards the future, more than 50% (504) of those polled were thinking of retiring within the next 5-10 years while about 25% (246) were currently not thinking about retirement. With such a high proportion of respondents looking to retire within the foreseeable future, the mandate given to Health Education England by the Department of Health to improve training and recruitment could not have come at a better time.

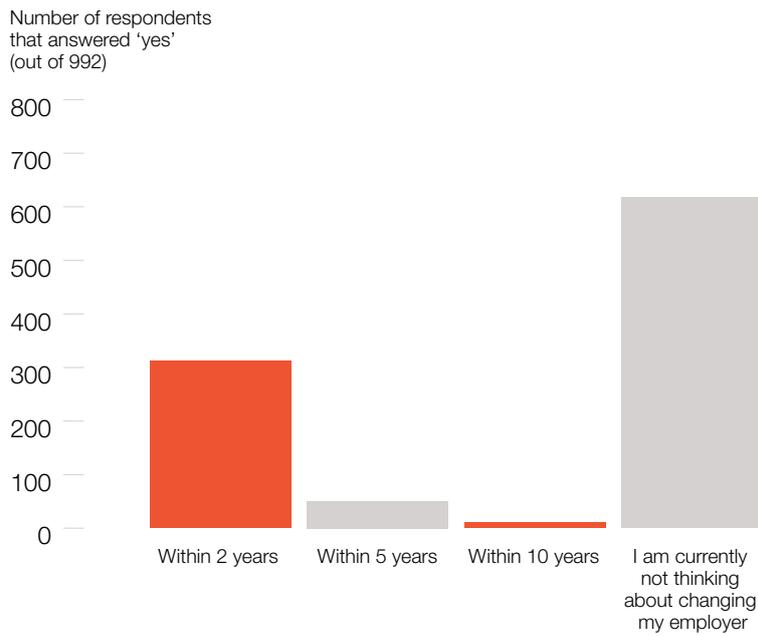
Figure 18
Are you planning to retire?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

With regards to changing employers, it is interesting to see that despite issues related to understaffing and pay dissatisfaction, a significant degree of employer loyalty was shown with 62% of respondents currently not looking to change employers. Of those considering a change of career (32%), most wanted to do so within the next two years as opposed to the next 5-10 years.

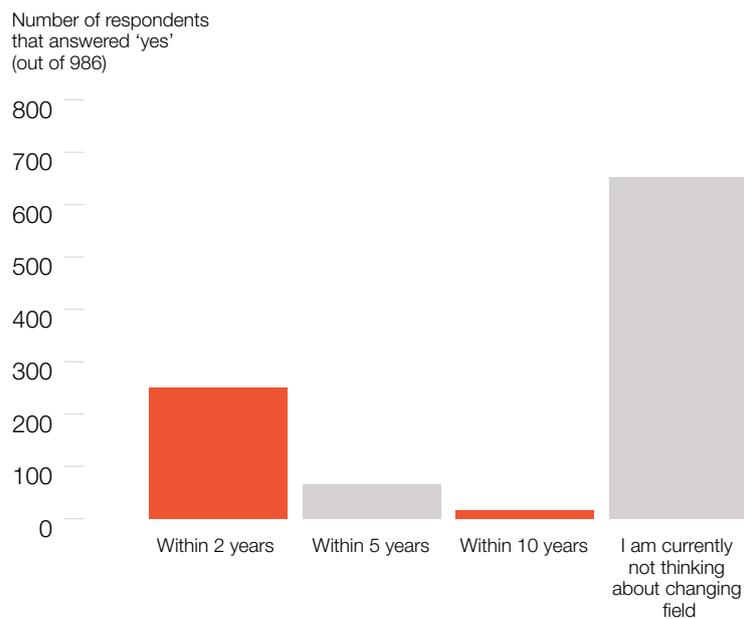
Figure 19
Are you considering changing employer?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Similar trends were observed with regards to changing fields with 66% of respondents currently not thinking about changing fields. Again for those thinking of changing fields (32%), most were looking to do so within the next two years.

Figure 20
Are you considering moving into a different field?



Source: Campden Health, Primary Concerns: Job Satisfaction

Commenting on the trends observed, Employment Relations Advisor of the RCN, Didovich said, "General practices have generally had a stable workforce with nurses enjoying the work they do and remaining loyal to their employers. While morale may be low, motivation is another...The issues that employers are facing are one of recruitment rather than of retention." She added that issues related to training, pay dissatisfaction and staff levels needed to be urgently addressed by employers to drive recruitment and that if they remain unresolved, this could lead to further movement in the workforce.

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