

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

Sustainability of the Health and Social Care Workforce

Summary – Sustainability of the Health and Social Care Workforce Survey

Background

This document provides a summary of responses received to the sustainability of the Health and Social Care workforce survey conducted by the Outreach team.

This survey was open for consultation and responses between 29 July and 19 September 2016.

Methodology

Concerns about the recruitment and retention of the health and social care workforce are well-publicised. To help the Committee understand the issues facing the workforce the Outreach Team conducted an online survey.

The survey targeted those who work in health and social care, in the public, private and voluntary sectors. In this instance, respondents were asked a range of questions relating to their education and training (and how it could be improved), their reasons for choosing to work in Wales (or reasons for leaving) and any ideas they felt should be prioritised by their professions in order to be able to deliver the types of care people might need in future. The responses will form part of an initial, broad piece of evidence-gathering to help inform the Committee of their approach to workforce issues during the Fifth Assembly.

Awareness Raising

In order to promote awareness of the survey and invite respondents the Outreach Team contacted a broad-range of organisations. Those contacted were able to raise awareness using a range of methods including – placing articles on their websites; signposting on social media including Facebook and Twitter and emailing members directly. The Outreach Team utilised the National Assembly for Wales's corporate Twitter and Facebook accounts to share the survey, in addition to the Committee's corporate account.

The survey were also promoted by Assembly staff with relevant individuals during the Assembly's presence at The National Eisteddfod, which was held in Abergavenny this year.



Survey Analysis

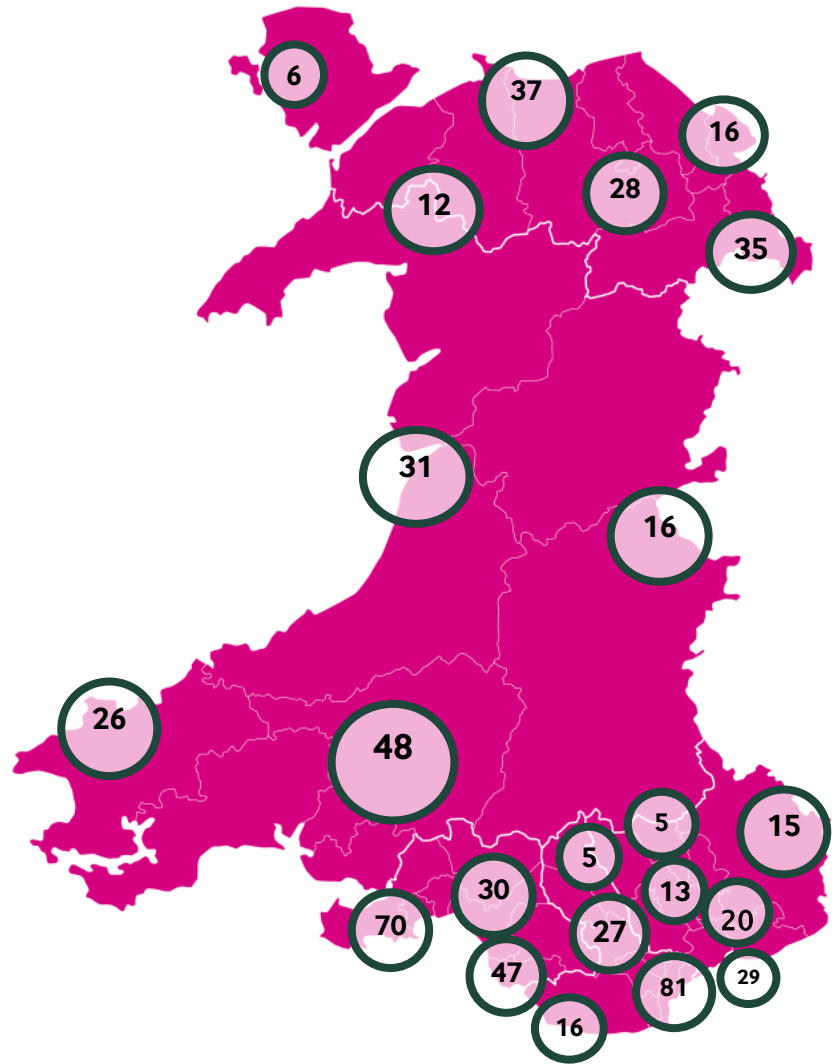
Key Statistics

856 Total number of survey responses received

Geographical Summary of Responses

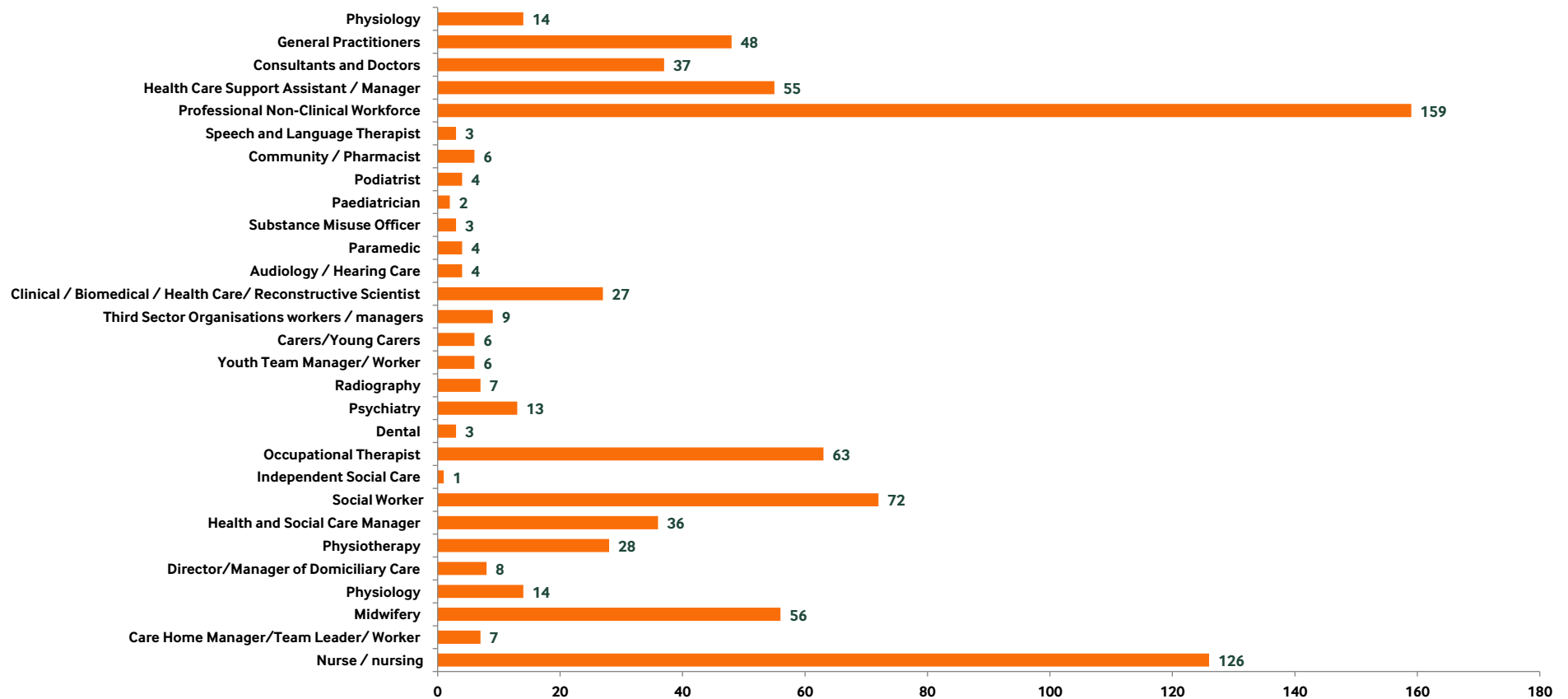
Number of survey responses broken down by local authority area

- Blaenau Gwent: 5
- Bridgend: 47
- Caerphilly: 13
- Cardiff: 81
- Carmarthenshire: 48
- Ceredigion: 31
- Conwy: 37
- Denbighshire: 28
- Flintshire: 16
- Gwynedd: 12
- Isle of Anglesey: 6
- Merthyr Tydfil: 5
- Monmouthshire: 15
- Neath Port Talbot: 30
- Newport: 29
- Pembrokeshire: 26
- Powys: 16
- Rhondda Cynon Taf: 27
- Swansea: 70
- Torfaen: 20
- Vale of Glamorgan: 16
- Wrexham: 35
- Outside of Wales: 16



Summary of responses

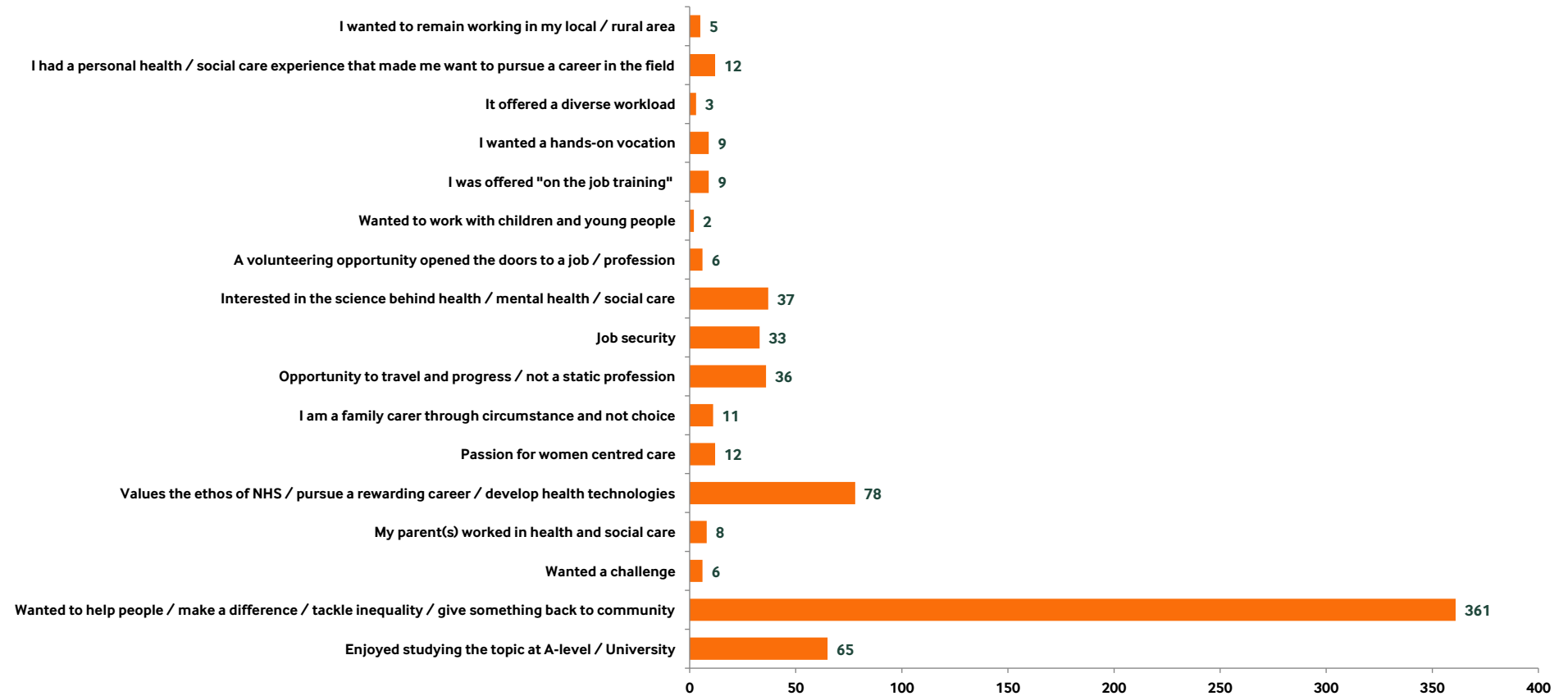
01. What is your job or profession? If you are still in education and training, please tell us in what subject.



Number of responses

N.B. – These categories are based on jobs / professions identified by the respondents.

02. What were your reasons for choosing to work or train within the health and social care sector?

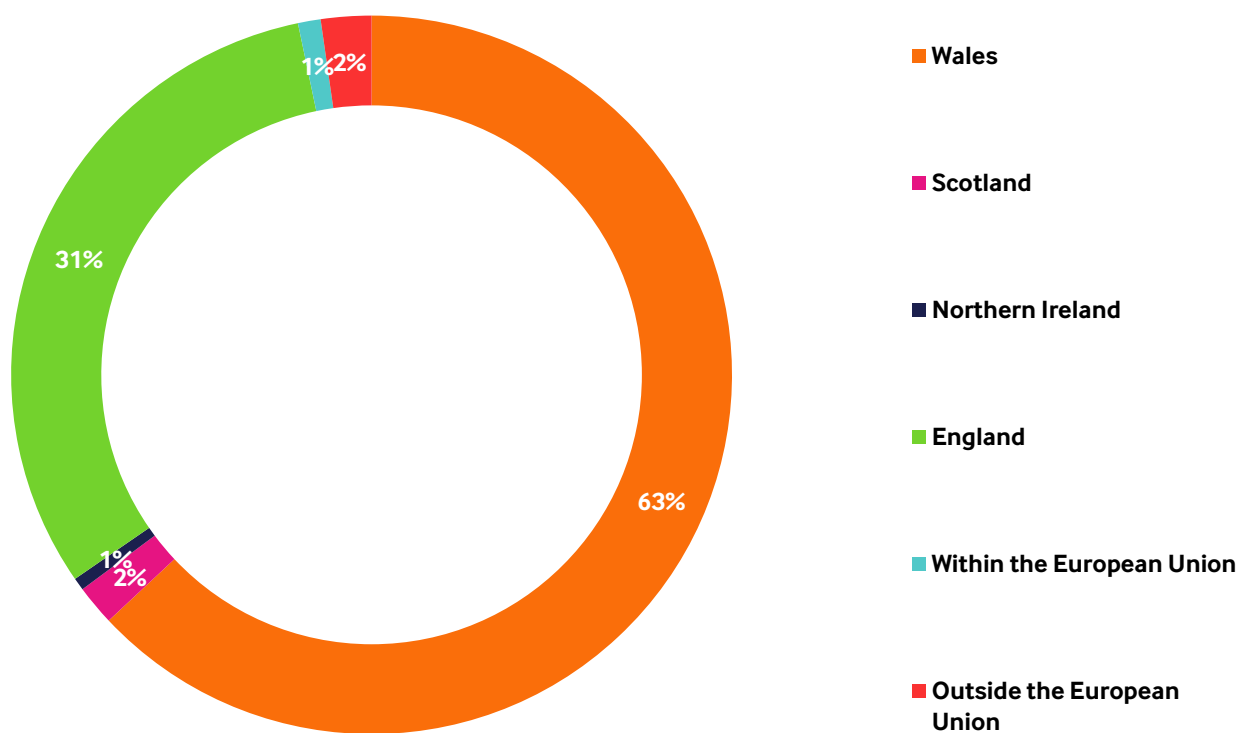


Number of responses

03. Where did you / do you study?

Total number of responses: 884

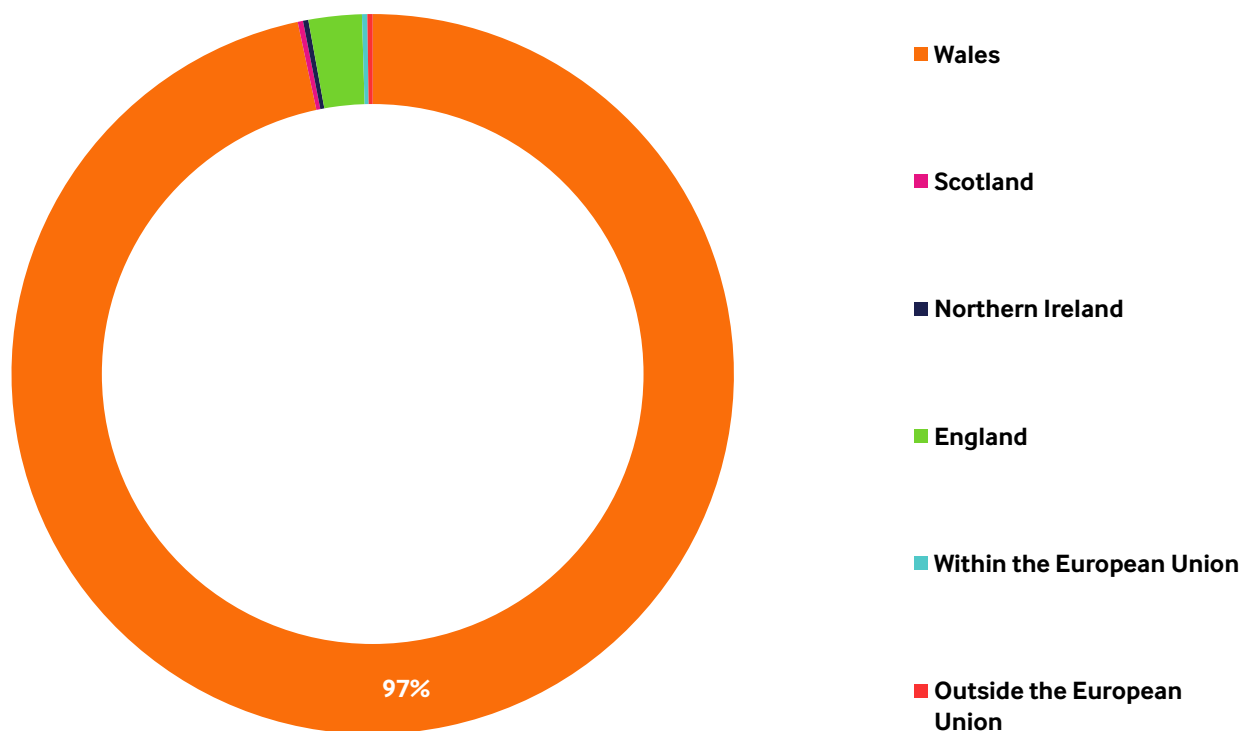
- Wales: **63% (557)**
- Scotland: **1.96% (16)**
- Northern Ireland: **0.61% (5)**
- England: **31% (277)**
- Within the European Union: **1.1% (9)**
- Outside the European Union: **2.45% (20)**



04. Where do you work?

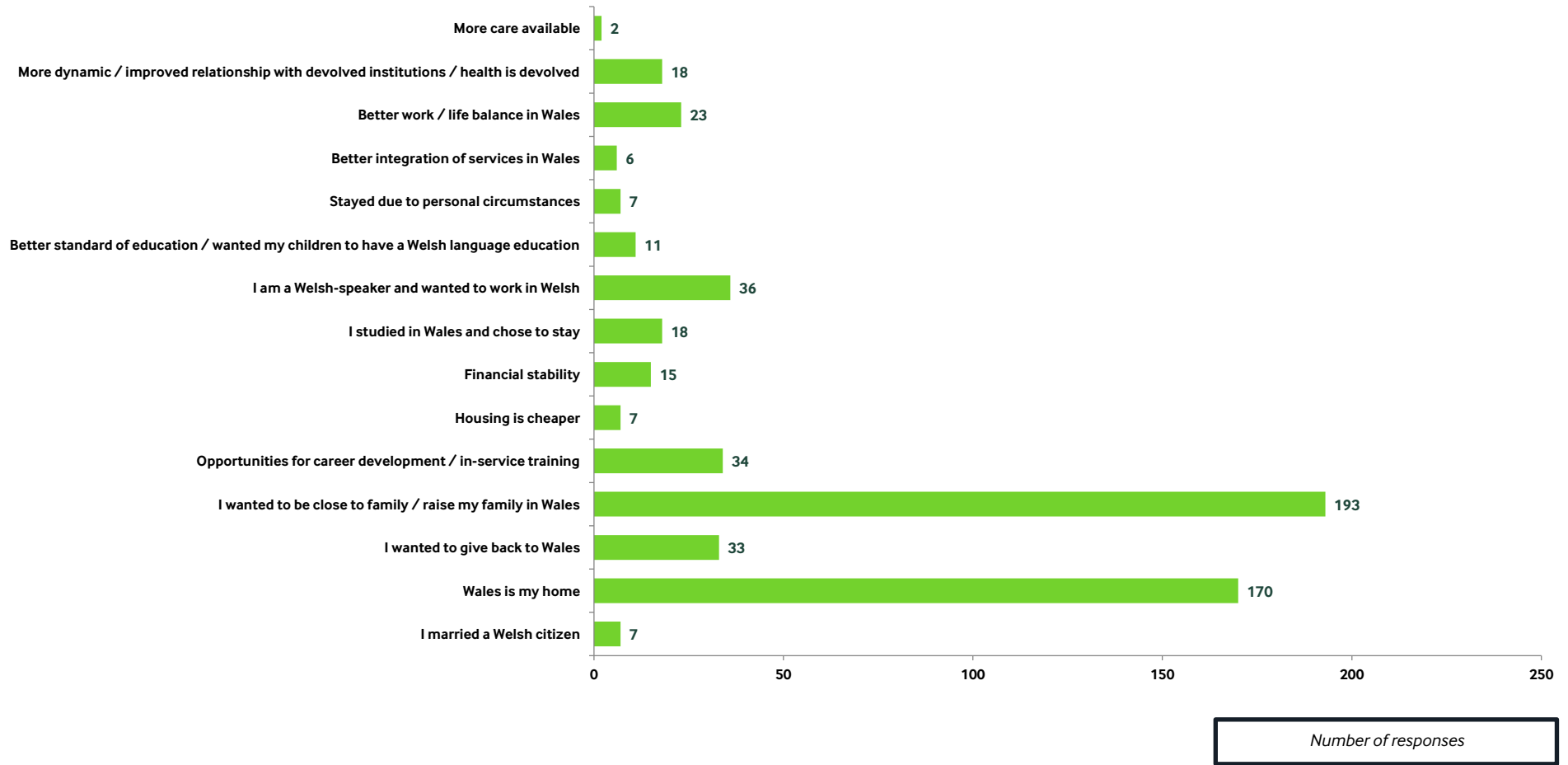
Total number of responses: 842

- Wales: **97% (812)**
- Scotland: **0.2% (2)**
- Northern Ireland: **0.2% (2)**
- England: **2.2% (20)**
- Within the European Union: **0.2% (2)**
- Outside the European Union: **0.2% (2)**



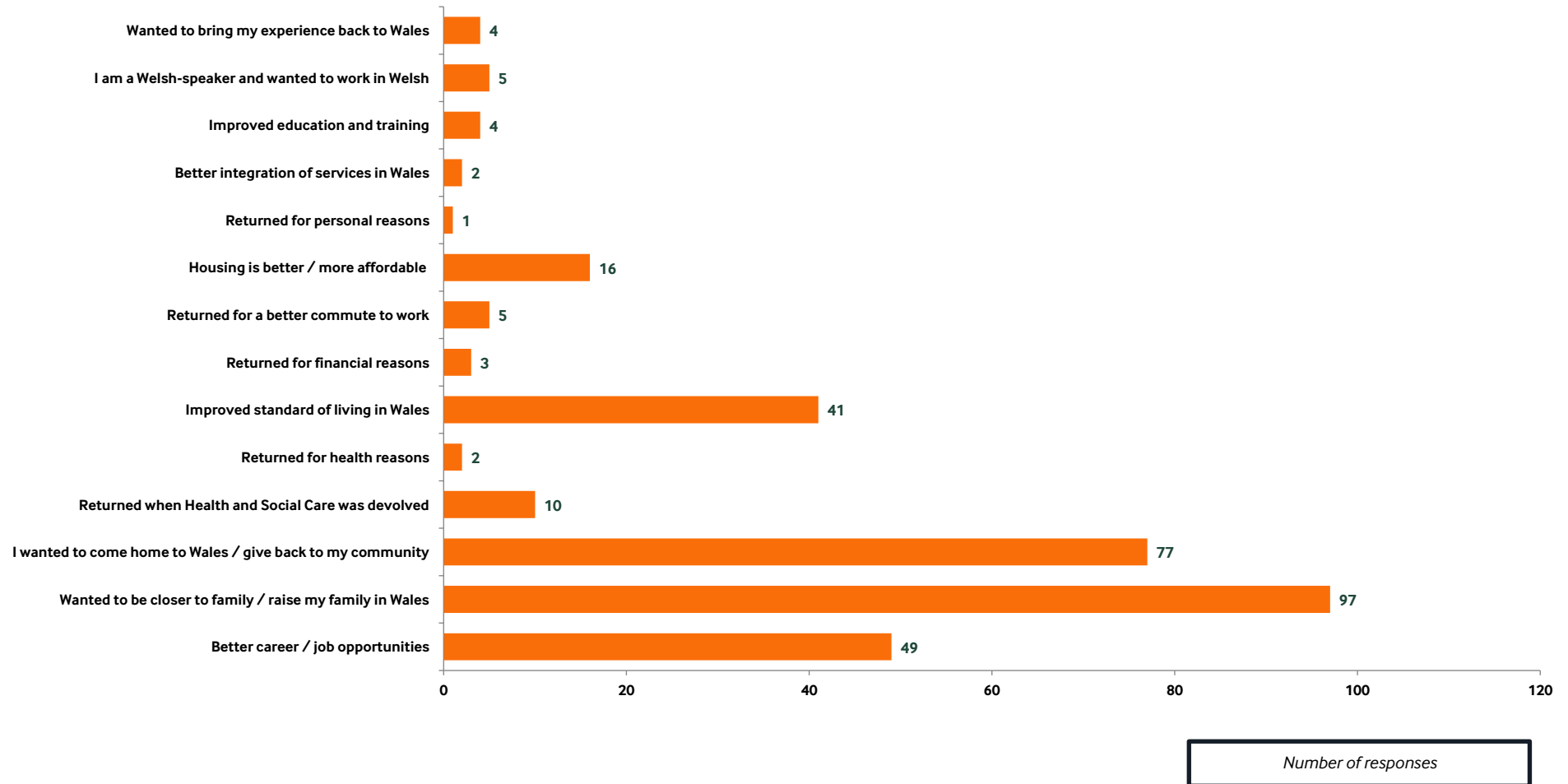
For those who studied or trained in Wales, and work in Wales:

05. What were your main reasons for staying to work in Wales?



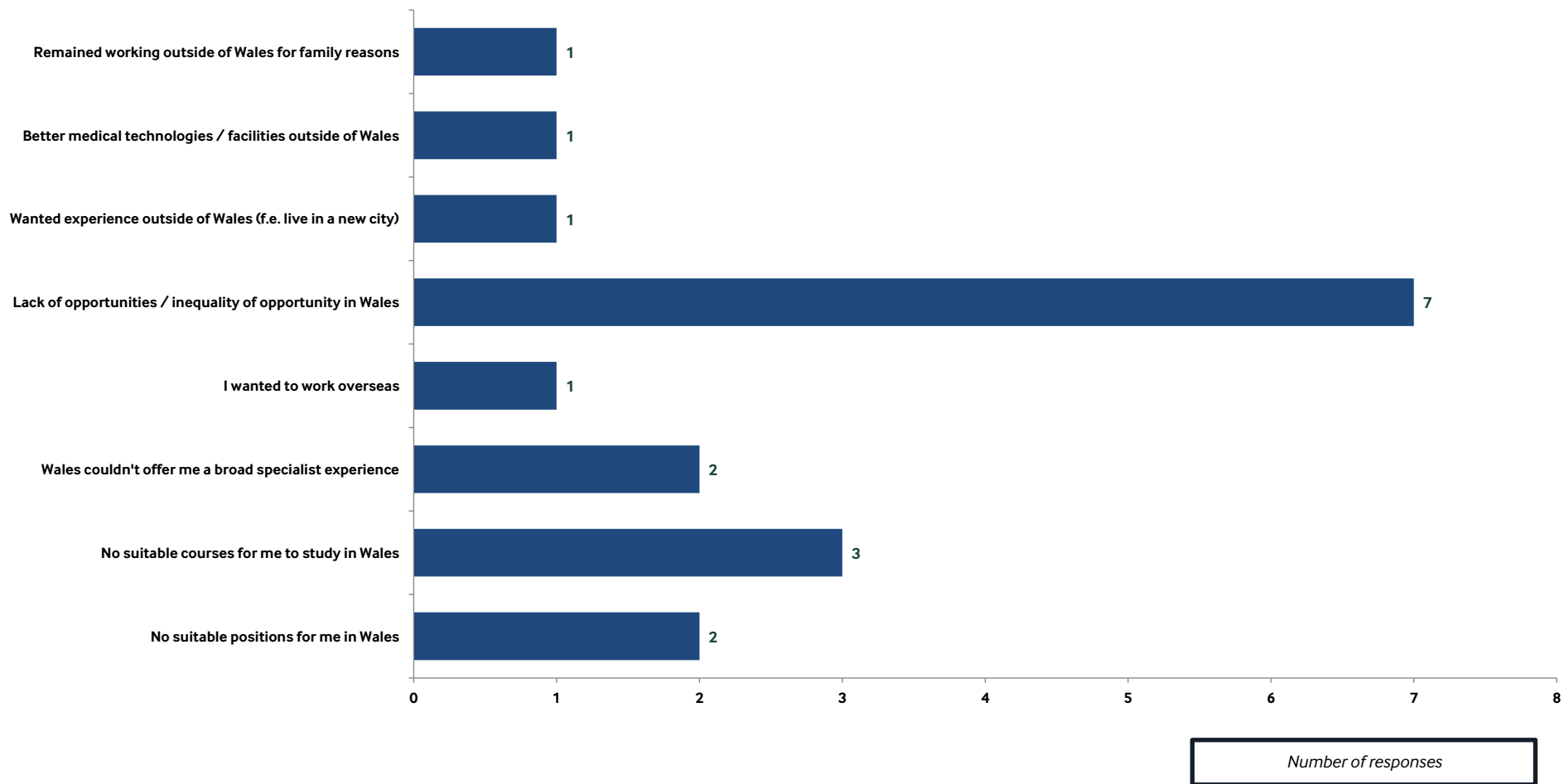
For those who studied or trained outside of Wales, and work in Wales:

06. What were your main reasons for choosing to work in Wales?



For Welsh nationals who studied or trained outside of Wales, and work outside of Wales:

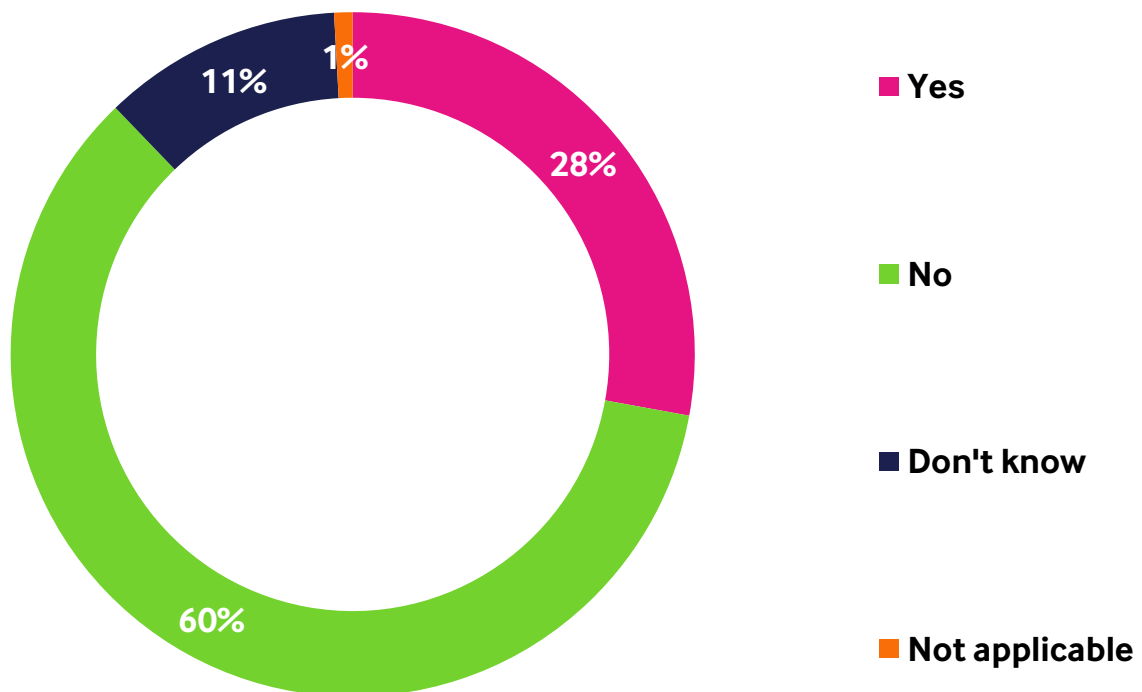
07. What were your main reasons for choosing to remain working outside of Wales?



08. Do you think young people have adequate opportunities to find out about the range of NHS and social care careers? Tell us about your experience.

Total number of responses: 689

- Yes: **27.8% (192)**
- No: **59.9% (413)**
- Don't know: **11.3% (78)**
- Not applicable: **0.87% (6)**



Comments

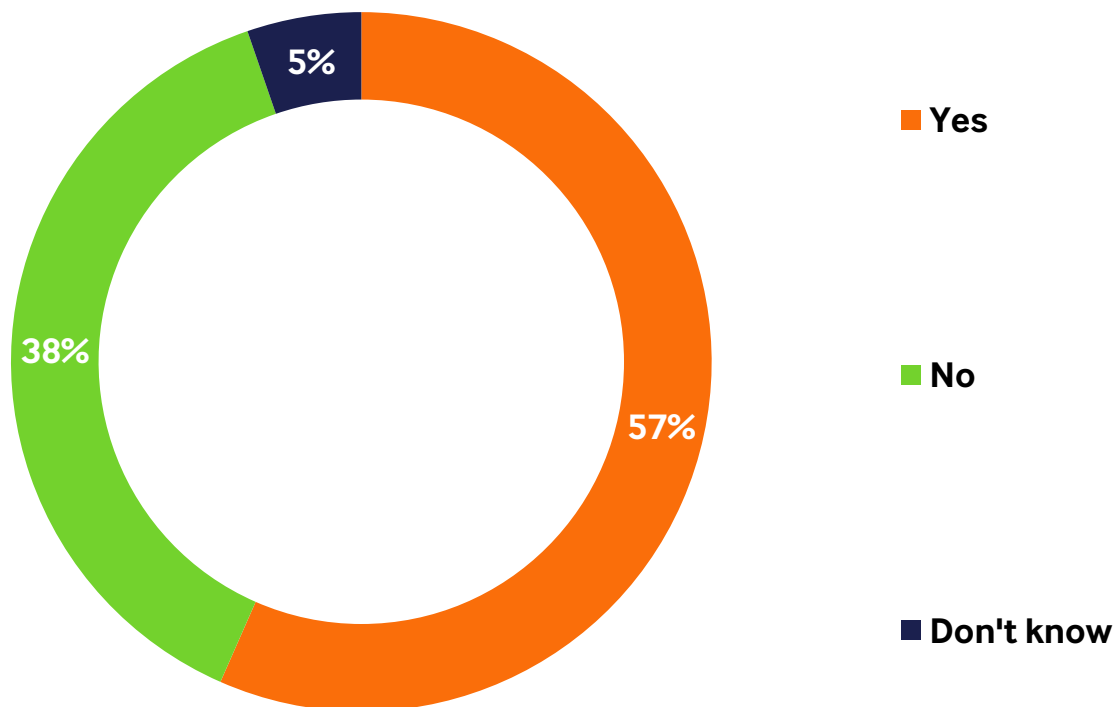
- **282** respondents felt that there was **insufficient information** about the **variety of opportunities** within the health and social care workforce;
- **29** individuals argued that there was **insufficient investment in volunteering** and work experience opportunities within the sector;
- **131** people stated that there was sufficient information available about the range of career opportunities within the workforce and **lots of ways in which you could receive information** (f.e. social media);
- **93** respondents felt that **more could be done to promote the range of NHS and social care careers** at an earlier stage in schools;
- **Nine** individuals argued that **most opportunities** are **only advertised internally** on the NHS intranet;
- **Ten** people stated that more could be done to promote training opportunities within the sector with **less focus on academic achievement**;
- **Six** respondents argued that whilst there are **increased in-service training** opportunities, **some professions** within the workforce have a **shortage of staff to undertake the training**;
- **Three** individuals put forward the idea **of bringing back the taster scheme** which allowed people to try out and have a taster of different part of the NHS and social care workforce;
- **Five** respondents felt that the **lack of funding support** in accessing certain health and social care professions / jobs **discourages young people from making applications**.



09. Thinking about your own experience, do you think health and social care education and training in Wales, for your job or profession, is effective?

Total number of responses: 645

- Yes: **56.58% (365)**
- No: **38.1% (246)**
- Don't know: **5.27% (34)**



Key Quotes

Many respondents explained that they were concerned about the quality of the training provided to students:

“I am worried that we have **increased our student nurse numbers but they need good placements** and nurses are under huge pressure due to shortages and so the student experience may be poor and our attrition rate increases...” – **District Nurse Team Manager**

“There is **recognised difficulty in sustaining adequate numbers of clinical placements**. Clinicians raise concerns about having adequate time to give optimal learning experiences to students on placement”. – **Physiotherapist**

This included further training and professional development offered by local authorities:

“I have been **qualified for 20 years, and sadly I do not feel the training offered by the LA effectively meets my needs**. Year on year the same training is offered and if you have specialised in a particular area such as fostering, adoption or support services there is very little specific training offered”. – **Social Worker**

A great deal of other respondents discussed the need to consider moving away from academic training from a variety of perspectives:

“Training [is] now academically focused which has some importance, but there is less importance [placed] on practical experience and **decreasing opportunities for those who struggle more with academia** but would be excellent carers / professionals in healthcare”. – **Midwife**

“I think it is effective but I do feel that we are **missing out on good future nurses/carers as the knowledge base required to get on the ladder is too high** for the majority of people who may excel in the practical aspects of the work e.g. the old State Enrolled Nurse level was taken away and no opportunities for those who are unable to attain the high grades”. – **Registered Manager of a Residential Care Home**

As a result, many felt that it discourages young people from pursuing careers within the health and social care workforce:

“**Very high A-level grades needed** means many young people I know wanted to do nursing but didn’t achieve 3 B’s so then did access courses for another year then reapplied, some successfully, some not. Seems difficult to access nursing at the moment”. – **Senior Sister**



Others discussed the issue of training posts and opportunities to study, which included the roles that are available:

“There is **only one place to study my profession in Wales**, and despite getting the required grade, I did not even make it to interview. I think this is a shame, as it pushes people out of Wales, and increases the likelihood they may not return to work here”. – **Physiotherapist**

“I think there is a **disparity between the training that is offered and the roles that are available**. I am currently undertaking an MSc and there is not only the little chance that a job with my qualification will become available (Paediatric Nurse Practitioner). But there is actually the expectation that I will have to leave the Health Board I work for despite the fact that we only have one in the entire Health Board (ABMU). Probably to move out of Wales”. – **Charge Nurse**

There was also some comments in relation to the adult education and access to the professions:

“I have studied as a mature student and found it very disorganised. **Cuts to adult education** have certainly had an impact”. – **Student Social Worker**

For many, it was the vocational aspects of their courses and training which gave them the understanding that they needed but it needed to reflect current working practices. There was also a call to further utilise volunteering opportunities:

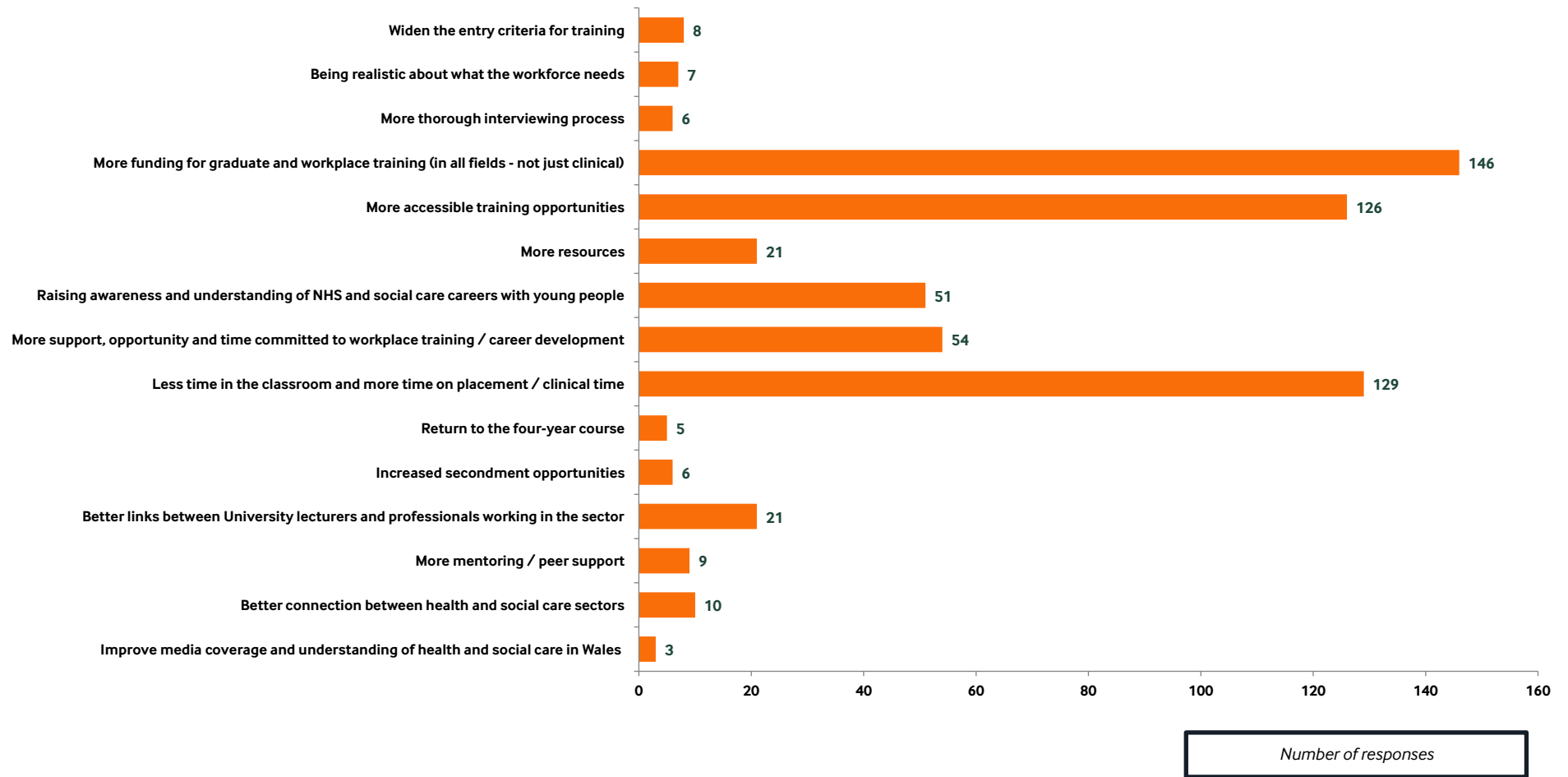
“**Many excellent Social Workers have benefitted from the pathway of volunteering**, unqualified support work etc. and then going on to Social Work training. More opportunities should be made available through employers to support this in work development route whereby they know the challenges of the job first hand by working alongside qualified professionals before embarking on professional training themselves.” – **Regional Care Development Adviser**

Overall, respondents thought that health and social care education and training Wales was effective but for a significant number of them, there is a need to better prepare new entrants and better retain staff:

“Overall, **I really enjoyed my degree. However I feel that there could be a section which focuses on self-awareness / stress management / managing case load skills** etc. Sadly, I am aware of a large number of newly qualified social workers, through working in England and Wales who struggle with the pressures and expectations of the role in their first 1-2 years. This impacts on their confidence as a worker and the department they are working for. As well as the work undertaken with the families”. – **Social Worker**



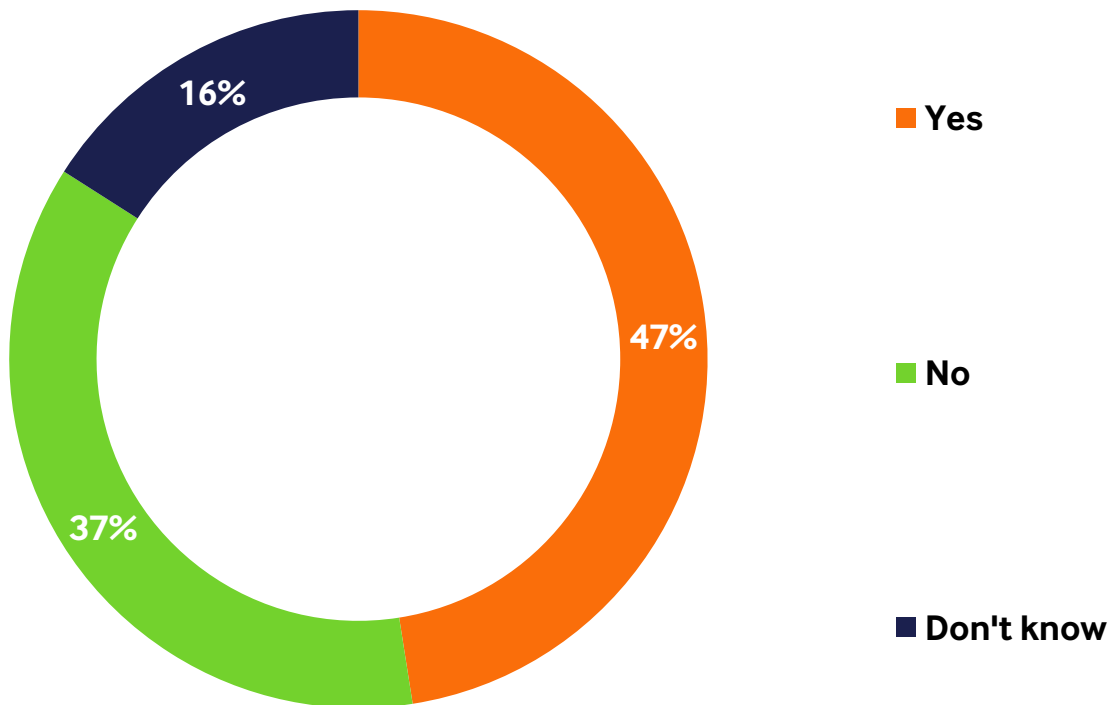
10. How could the education and training for your job or profession be improved?



11. Is your job or profession prepared to meet the future health and care needs of people in Wales, including, for example, providing different types of care/in different care settings? Please tell us about your experience.

Total number of responses: 764

- Yes: **47% (363)**
- No: **37% (279)**
- Don't know: **16% (122)**



Key Quotes

The majority of respondents felt that their job or profession was prepared to meet the future health and care needs of people in Wales. However, there were a number of concerns in relation to being able to manage the basic workload:

“We are expected to be multi skilled in all aspects of care & support work and able to respond almost immediately to crisis calls when **we are barely able to cover the set packages**”. – **Community Support Manager**

There were some concerns about responding to new health and social care needs in the context of professional training and development:

“**A flexible and adaptable workforce is needed** to respond to new and emerging threats, for example antimicrobial resistance, emerging infectious disease. Not sure how training and professional development addresses this. Danger that good people leave to work outside of Wales”. – **Clinical Scientist**

“There is **no scope for successional planning** as workforce numbers have been cut whilst work pressure seem to have increased tenfold. This **leaves little or no scope to develop junior staff to the required level**”. – **Locum GP**

Many respondents stated that they were fully aware of the needs of the aging population but there was a need to manage patient expectations and demand. For most, workload pressures and staff shortages were the biggest barriers to adequately prepare for the future care needs of Wales, as well as the lack of appropriate settings to provide care:

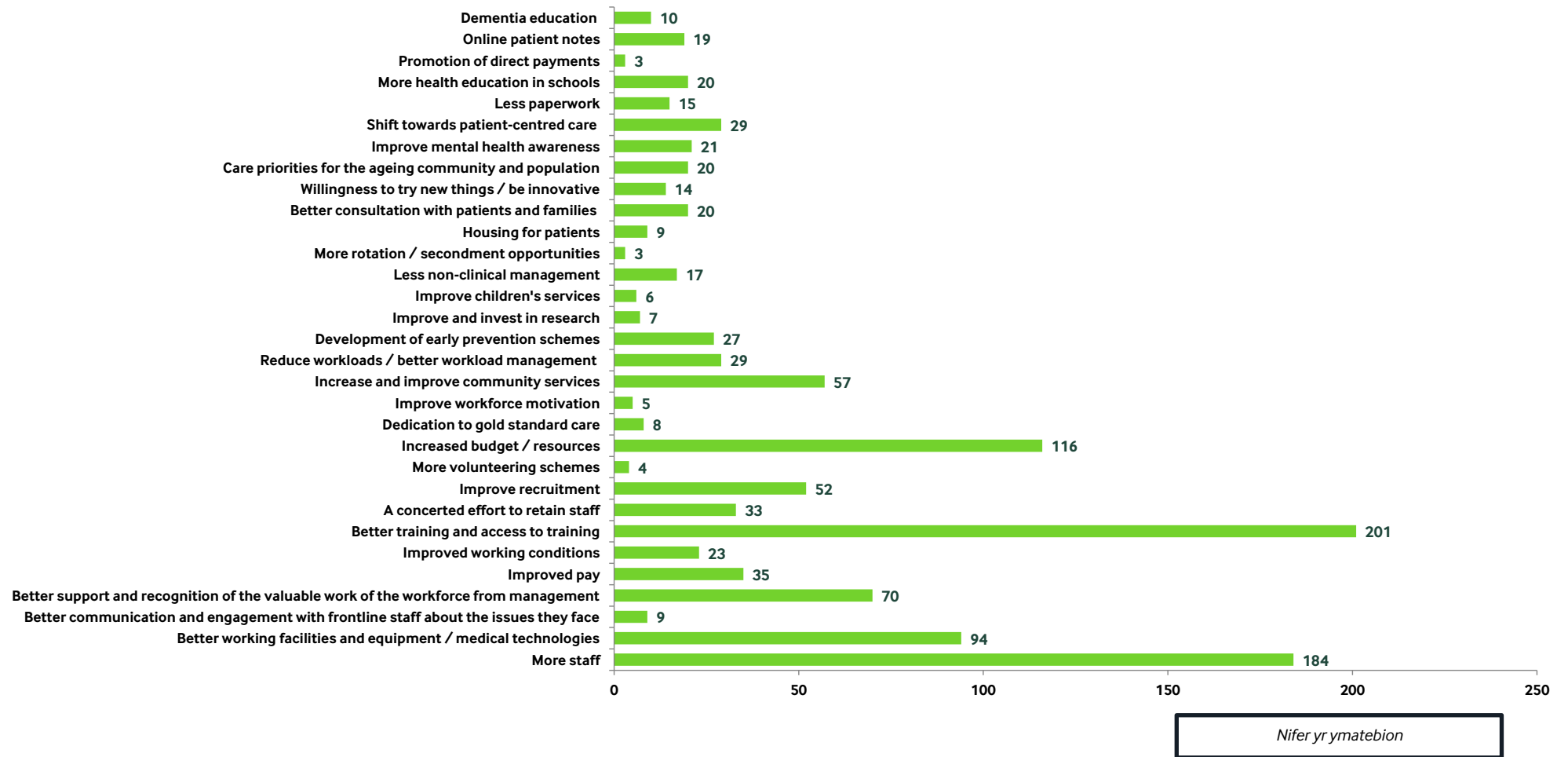
“We are a health service which is controlled by the **social impact of patients living longer**, no one to care for them within their homes and therefore remain in the hospital for extended periods of time. This does not benefit the individual...**there needs to be a greater 'working together' between primary and secondary care** settings.” – **Nurse**

“Current **health care system is not prepared for the aging population and the health problems that come with it**. Long term care at home or Nursing Home is not adequate for the increased volumes of Dementia /Alzhiemers /Parkinson Disease patients that come into the hospitals. This results in longer hospital stays, waiting for long term care putting them at great risk of infection and emotion stress for the families”. – **Staff Nurse**

“[There is] a very slow acceptance of the growing difficulty in providing care settings appropriate for people...Lack of knowledge and skill in dementia care for example. Lack of funding / care homes / respite beds / specialist services that are realistically staffed. **Very poor level of understanding generally about what constitutes excellent care**. Basic care is washed/clothed/fed - good or excellent care goes beyond this level”. – **Dementia Care Training Team Lead**



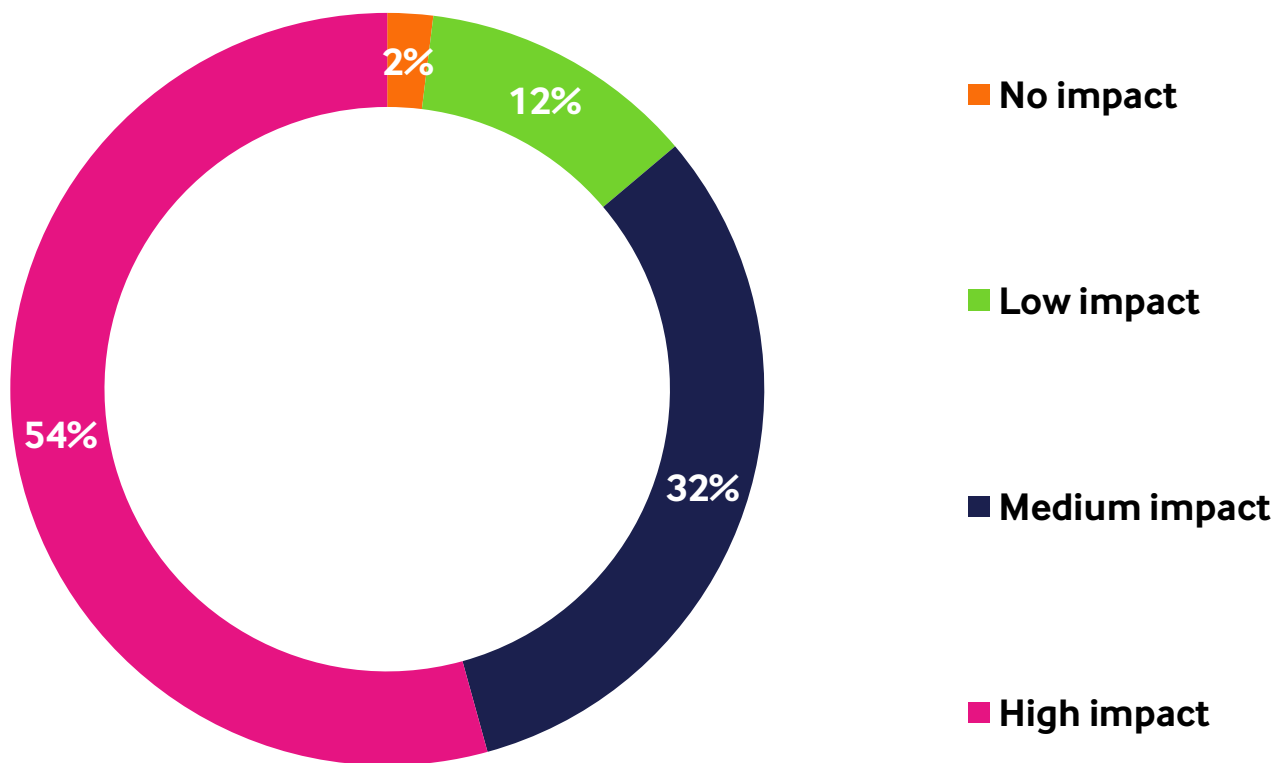
12. In order to deliver the types of care people might need in future, what would be your top three priorities within your job / profession?



13. To what extent do you think pay and terms of employment impact on recruitment and retention within your job / profession? Please explain your answer.

Total number of responses: 665

- No impact: **1.95% (13)**
- Low impact: **11.88% (79)**
- Medium impact: **31.88% (212)**
- High impact: **54.29% (361)**



Key Quotes

The majority of respondents felt that pay and terms of employment impacted highly on recruitment and retention within their jobs / profession:

“Changes in employment regulations to national minimum wage and sleep-in rates have severely affected us this year, adding hugely to our costs, with no increase in fees to help providers compensate for this. Pay scales are very low in this sector, and we are unable to give rises to deserving staff. - **Registered Manager, Private Residential Care Homes for Adults with Learning Disabilities**

“Having worked in England, New Zealand and Wales it is easy to see that good terms of employment (NZ) [meant] motivated staff that were easier to retain and thus less gaps in service which then improve job satisfaction. Costs of indemnity [have] sky rocketed along with professional subscriptions, thus take home pay has dropped year on year - **many friends have moved abroad or planning to do so in the very near future - many others have left the profession all together**” – **GP Registrar**

For some, it was the added costs that had an impact on recruitment and retention. For others, it was the demands of their roles:

“Carers work hard to meet the demands of their role and are certainly not rewarded sufficiently, they continue to do this as they don't want to let the people down as they become family over time”. – **Registered Manager of Residential Care Home for the Elderly**

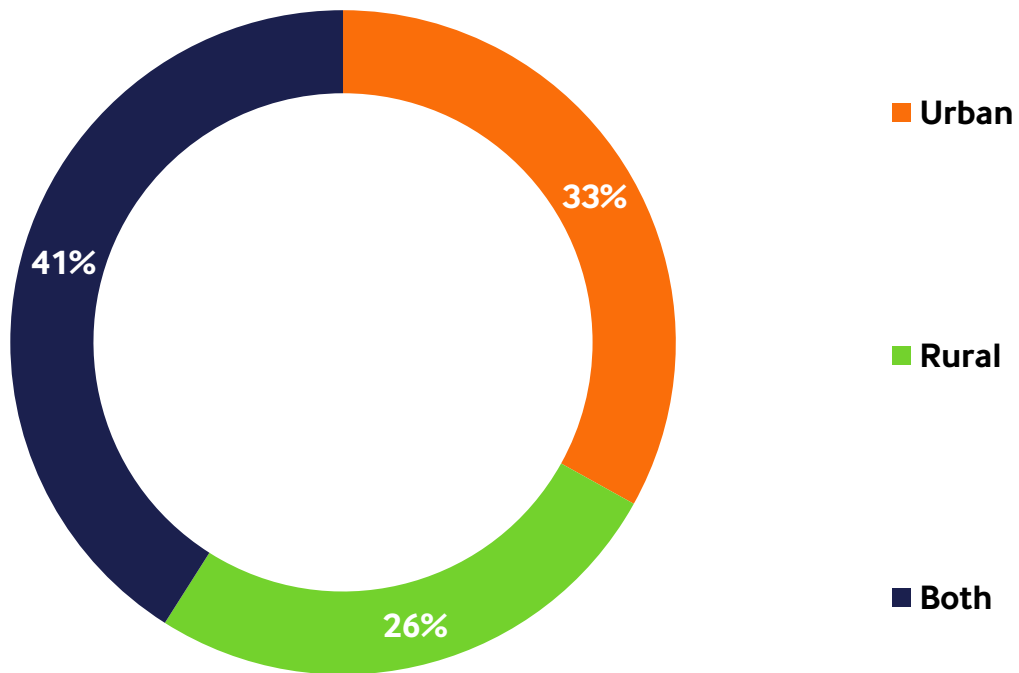
“I am fortunate to be employed by a local authority and receive good pay and conditions. However, prior to this I have worked in the private sector with poor conditions and pay. **Looking after any vulnerable person is very important and we should be looking to employ and retain the best people possible**, train, retain and reward them”. – **Support Worker - Adults with Learning Difficulties**



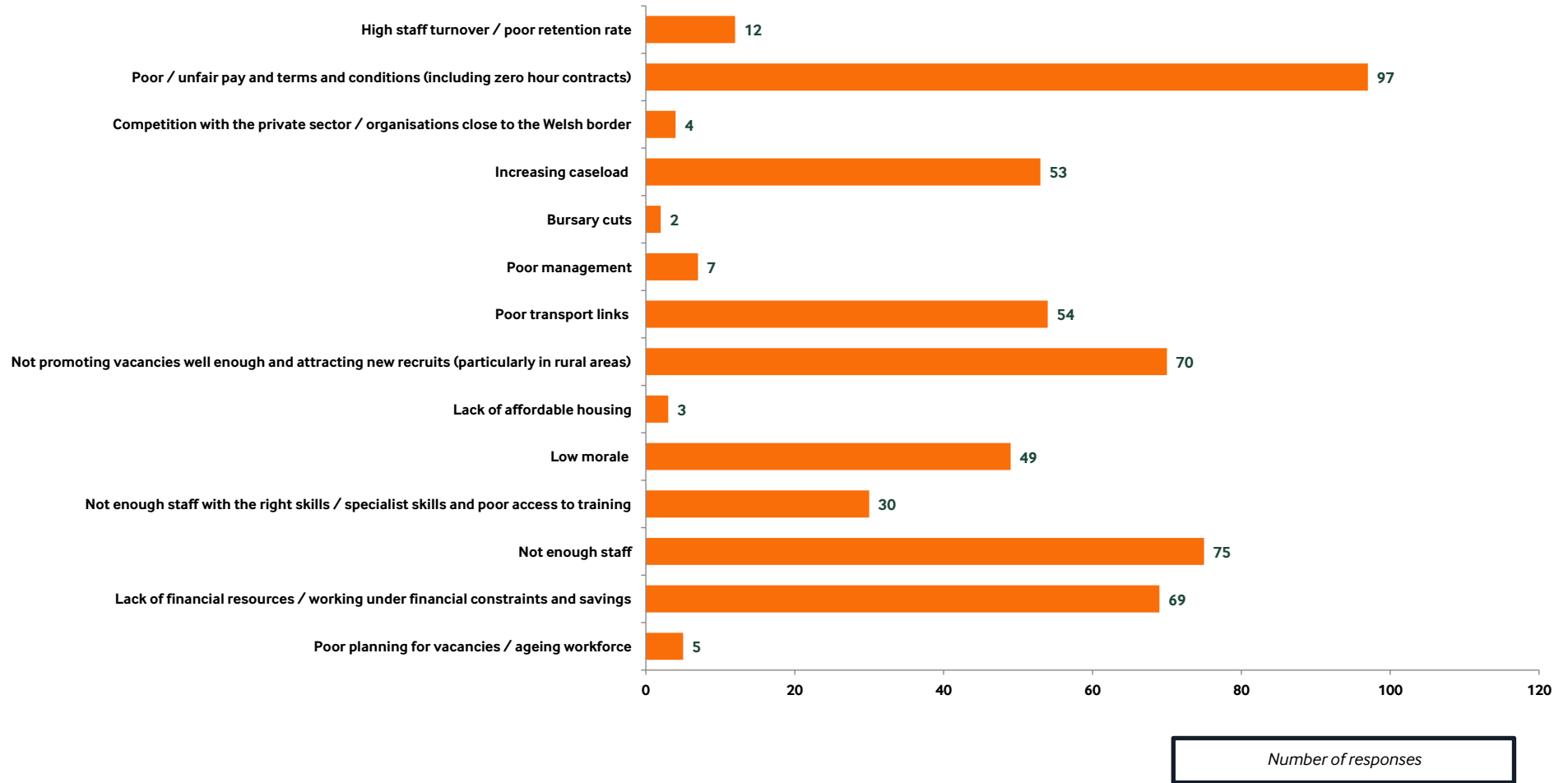
14. Do you work in an urban or rural area?

Total number of responses: 656

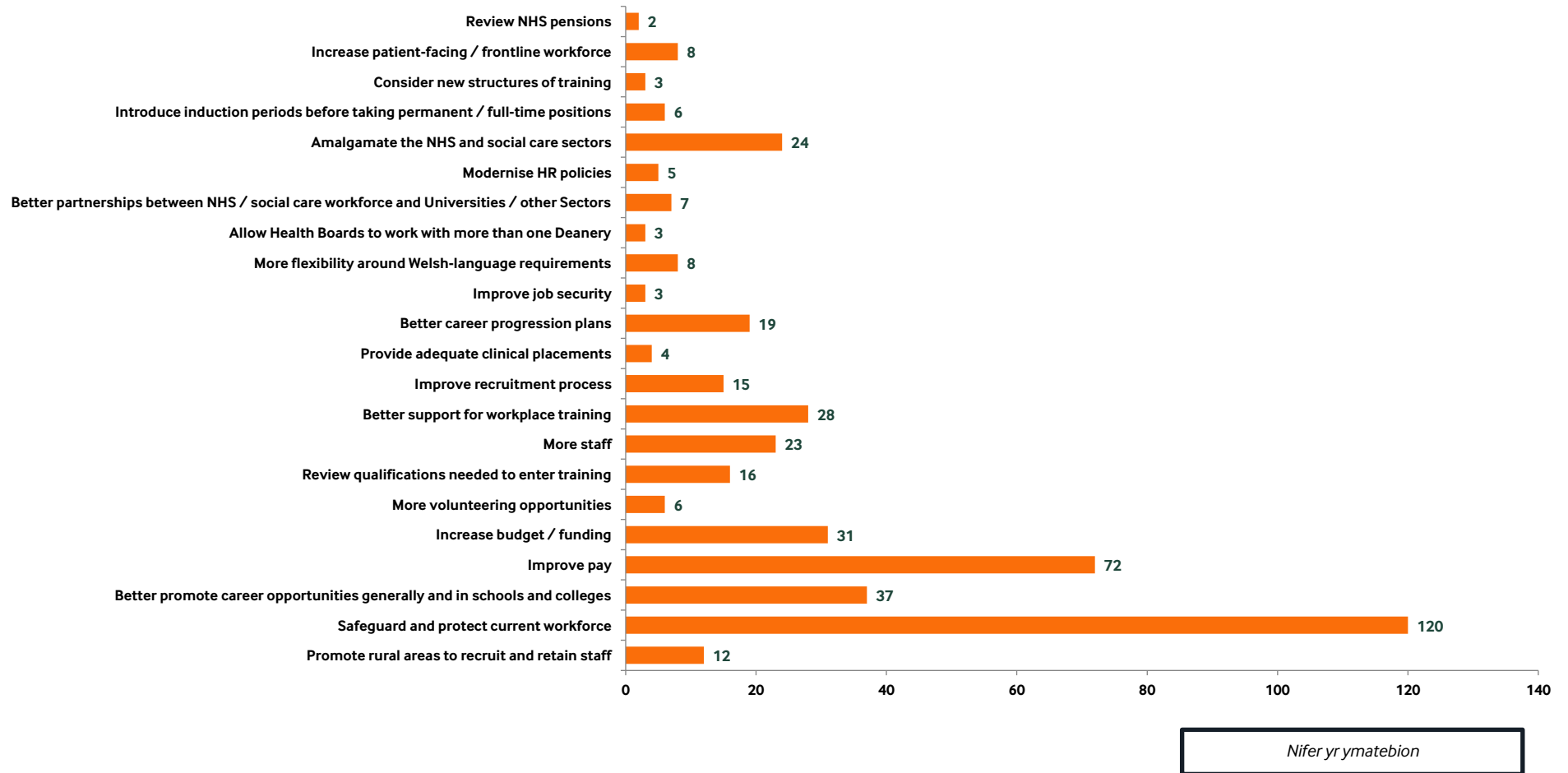
- Urban: **33.08% (217)**
- Rural: **25.91% (170)**
- Both: **41.01% (269)**



15. What do you think are the key recruitment and retention issues facing your job / profession in your local area?



16. We welcome all ideas in relation to the factors that influence recruitment and retention of the health and social care workforce across Wales. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please use the space below to share them with us.

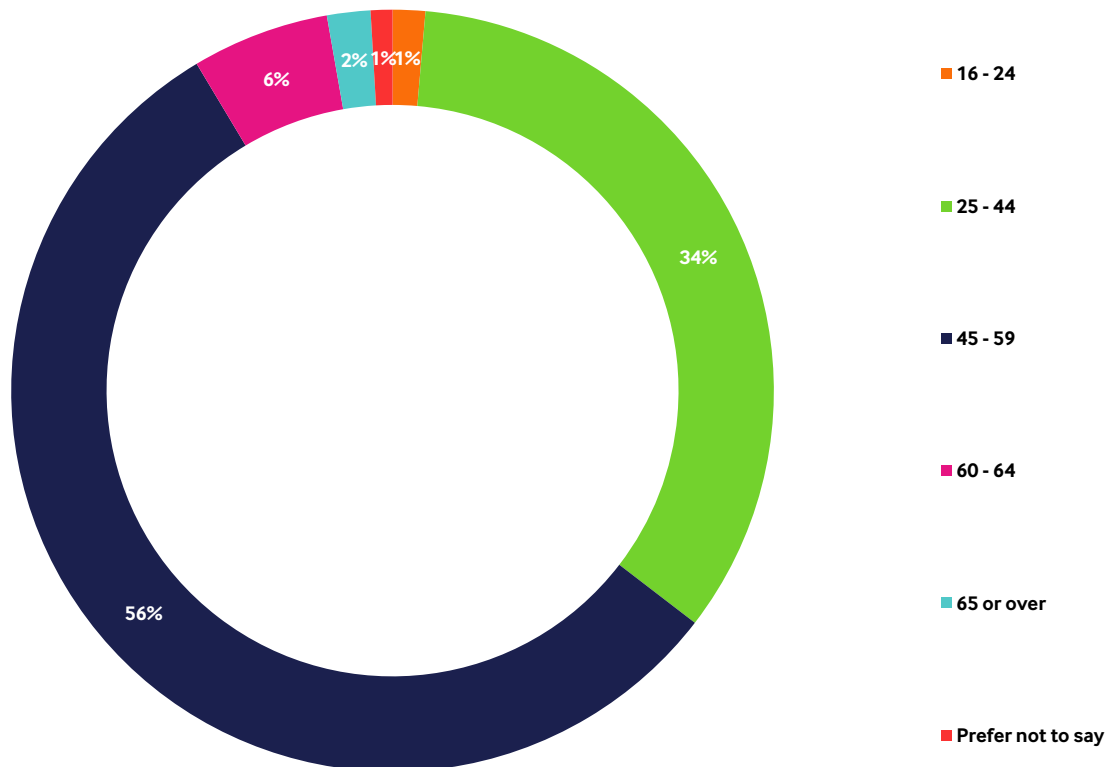


Demographics

17. What is your age?

Total number of responses: 652

- 16 – 24: **1.38% (9)**
- 25 – 44: **34.05 (222)**
- 45 – 59: **55.98% (365)**
- 60 – 64: **5.83% (38)**
- 65 or over: **1.84% (12)**
- Prefer not to say: **0.92% (6)**



18. What is your gender?

Total number of responses: 653

- Male: **23.28% (152)**
- Female: **74.27% (485)**
- Prefer not to say: **2.5% (16)**

