

Working together for kind, safe and effective care

Summary of our work
in 2021-2022

About us

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing. As the independent regulator of more than 758,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.

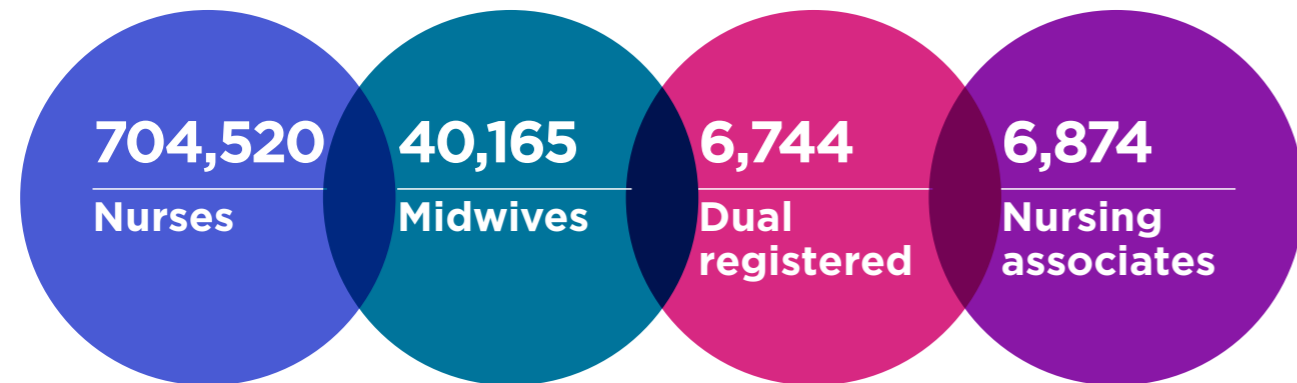
Our core role is to regulate. First, we promote high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England. Second, we maintain the register of professionals eligible to practise. Third, we investigate concerns about nurses, midwives and nursing associates – something that affects a tiny minority of professionals each year. We believe in giving professionals the chance to address concerns, but we'll always take action when needed.

To regulate well, **we support** our professions and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout people's careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address new challenges. We also support people involved in our investigations, and we're increasing our visibility so people feel engaged and empowered to shape our work.

Regulating and supporting our professions allows us **to influence** health and social care. We share intelligence from our regulatory activities and work with our partners to support workforce planning and sector-wide decision making. We use our voice to speak up for a healthy and inclusive working environment for our professions.

Our register in numbers

On 31 March 2022 there were:



Total register **758,303**

(Compared to 731,900 the previous year.)

On 31 March 2022 there were **14,952** people on the **Covid-19 temporary register**.



During 2021-2022, **2,101** professionals either joined or re-joined the permanent register from the temporary register.

We'll continue to support temporary registrants to join the permanent register, should they wish to do so, before the temporary register closes at the end of September 2022.



We value the diversity of our register

24.7% are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to **21.7%** in the previous year.

3.2% have a disability.

The proportions of men and women on our register have changed very little over recent years.

89.1% told us they are women.

10.9% told us they are men.

0.8% said their gender identity doesn't match the sex they were registered with at birth.

Our impact in numbers



We completed **99.6%** of UK initial registration applications within one day. Meeting our target of 97 percent.



We completed **99.7%** of overseas registration applications within our goal of 30 days. Exceeding our target of 90 percent.

For the last six months of the year we processed applications within around ten calendar days. We were able to achieve this with additional funding from the Department of Health and Social Care.

Revalidation

In order to remain on the register, all professionals need to demonstrate that they are maintaining safe and effective practice by revalidating once every three years.

Despite the pressure of the pandemic,

205,044

professionals successfully revalidated.



That's 89.6 percent of those who were due to do so.

370

This includes nursing associates who were revalidating for the first time since this profession was added to the register in January 2019.

Fitness to practise

Fitness to practise is a process we follow to understand as quickly as possible whether a registered professional presents a risk to the public when concerns are raised with us. If they do, we can take steps to promote learning and prevent issues arising again. We'll always take action if needed, including removing people from our register in the most serious cases.

In **2021-2022** we received

5,291

new concerns about nurses, midwives and nursing associates.

(4.6 percent less than last year.)

We decided not to investigate

3,843

cases after initial assessment.

Interim orders: Our panels can apply temporary restrictions to someone's practice or suspend them while our investigations are ongoing if we believe this is necessary to protect the public. **This happened in 504 cases this year.**

We completed

1,582

investigations.

In 102 cases we gave advice, issued a warning, or agreed on measures that would address the problem.

741 cases were referred to independent fitness to practise panels for a hearing or a meeting.

In 739 cases, no further action was needed.

109

who went through our fitness to practise process were removed from the register.

An additional 46 were granted voluntary removal.

124 people were suspended from the register, 37 were given a caution and 61 people had conditions placed on their practice.

Our fitness to practise performance

77%

We imposed 77% of interim orders within 28 days of receiving concerns.
(Target 80 percent.)

62%

We closed 62% of cases within 15 months of receiving concerns.
(Target 80 percent.)

Disappointingly, we didn't make the progress we wanted to in reducing our caseload this year, though we did manage to stabilise it. We're very sorry for the further distress this causes for all involved. We're determined to deliver changes in the coming year to reduce the time people wait for a decision.

Equality, diversity and inclusion in fitness to practise

Compared to the proportions on our register, we receive higher referrals for those who are male, disabled, trans, bisexual, gay or lesbian, Black, or those aged 41 and over.

23.2%

of new referrals were about men.
(10.9 percent of people on the permanent register told us they are men)

16.1%

of all new referrals were about people from Black ethnicities.
(10 percent of people on the register are Black).



[Read more](#) about our research into these disparities on page 11 below.

People at the NMC



Employee turnover increased to
(Target: 10 percent)

11.8%

Turnover of new starters who left within six months increased to
(Target: 10 percent)

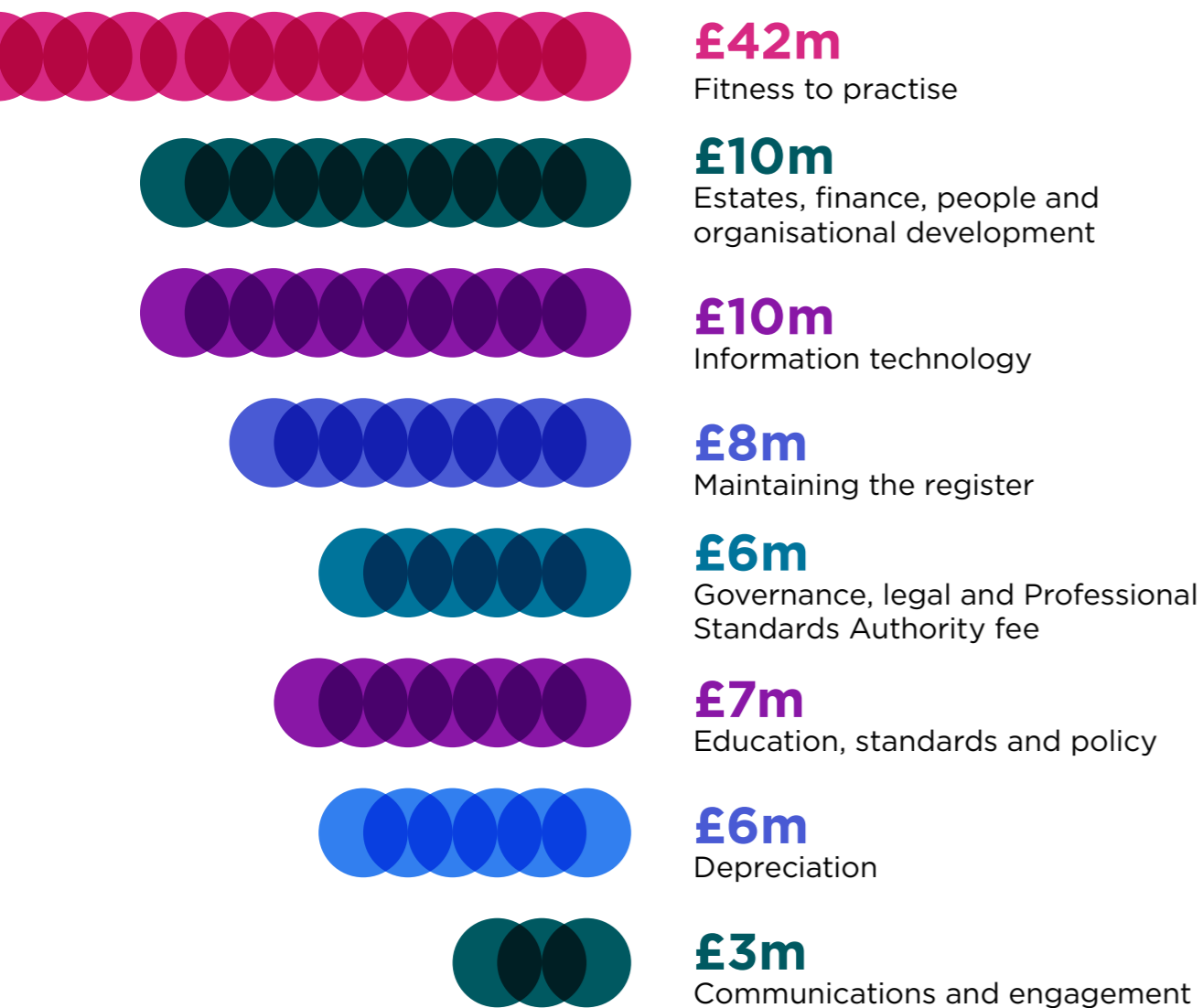
14.3%

Like other organisations, we expected an increase in turnover, partially due to exceptionally low levels of turnover during the pandemic and the increasingly candidate driven market as restrictions have eased.

What we spent



This is how we spent this money:



We're mindful that the majority of our funding comes from those on our register and we need to spend that money as effectively as possible.

*The totals here don't add up to £93m due to rounding.



“Thank you for recognising ALL our efforts. It was lovely to receive a positive message when I got home from another 12-hour shift working in a Covid-positive dementia unit.”

Professional on our register

What we did this year

We supported professionals through another challenging year.

We worked closely with the professionals on our register across the UK to support them during the pandemic.

We provided regular updates on our work to expand and support the workforce, including signposting to wellbeing support. We stayed connected and continued to work with professionals collaboratively. Most of our engagement events were online, which increased our visibility and meant they were very well attended.

The easing of restrictions has allowed us to resume in-person engagement, refocus on priorities and look at how we'll make progress with our strategic ambitions.

We prioritised our fitness to practise caseload while maintaining our person-centered approach.

Our caseload is the number of fitness to practise concerns people have raised with us and which we still need to look into. This caseload is higher than we'd like and that was exacerbated by the pandemic. We are sorry for the further distress this causes for all involved.

Reducing the fitness to practise caseload was, and remains, our number one priority. We have stabilised case numbers and are determined to deliver further changes to reduce the time people wait for a decision in the year ahead.

We continued to make our processes fair for everyone

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is a top priority for us and there is still a lot to do.

This year we refreshed our EDI framework, developed detailed action plans and held race equality workshops for our Council and Executive Directors.

We worked on the second phase of our Ambitious for Change research into our processes and people's protected characteristics. This phase is about understanding why some people receive different outcomes from our processes, what this means for the professionals involved and what we, in collaboration with others, can do to tackle any unfairness.

We also recognise the importance of making sure we and the people we work with fully understand the impact of discriminatory behaviour. We'll continue to act on this and to carry out the plans we agreed.

We responded to the Ockenden Maternity Review

The Ockenden Maternity Review was published in March 2022 and set out appalling and long-standing failures in maternity care and leadership at Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Hospital Trust. Each of the cases is a family tragedy.

We wrote to every midwife on our register following the report. We acknowledged the incredible pressure they are under and shared resources, such as our future midwife standards, that will support them in delivering safe, kind and effective care.

It's essential that families are heard, staff are able to speak up and concerns are acted upon. We will do all we can to work with other regulators, employers and professionals to make improvements happen.

"It's down to the sheer determination and bravery of grieving families that these systemic failures have now been recognised. Women and families should have been listened to and taken seriously far sooner."

Andrea Sutcliffe,
Chief Executive and Registrar, NMC

We updated our overseas registration processes

We updated the Test of Competence that internationally-trained nurses and midwives have to take before they join our register. The test is also used as a route to returning to the register for those who have been out of practice for a long time and wish to obtain their registration again.

The test now reflects our new, world-class standards and means that people can be confident in the quality of the care they receive - no matter where someone trained.

The objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) is one part of the Test of Competence and is a practical exam taken at a test centre in the UK. We significantly increased our OSCE test centre provision and commissioned two new centres. This additional capacity will mean professionals have more choice in where to take their test, enabling them to join our register quickly and safely.

We reviewed our post-registration standards

We're updating the standards we set for post-registration qualifications to make them fit for the future. It's the first time they've been updated for over 15 years.

Following extensive public consultation, we have now agreed new standards.

Our consultation process was thorough and we had more than 2,300 responses. We're very grateful to all the organisations who've worked with us, and to everyone who took part.

"We are pleased that the Test of Competence has been updated to reflect the NMC's new standards for nursing and midwifery professionals. The new test will ensure that all nursing and midwifery professionals will meet the same high standards, regardless of where they trained or how long they've been out of practice"

Four Chief Nursing Officers, August 2021

We're helping address legal barriers so we can be more effective

We have a once in a generation chance to modernise the laws that govern how we regulate nurses, midwives and nursing associates.

If the Government improves this legislation and makes it more flexible, we'll be able to act more quickly and effectively. This means we can do more to enable better, safer regulation for the public and the professionals on our register.

We responded to the Department of Health and Social Care's consultation in June 2021, and since then have worked with the Department and other stakeholders to consider what we think our legislation should look like, for example, ensuring we have the right protected titles and enforcement powers.

We have begun to work on how to make the most of the proposed changes, and what the subsequent impact on our organisation and our regulatory work might be.

We listened to you

We commissioned independent audience research to better understand what professionals, students and the public think of us and what they care about. We heard from a diverse range of voices across the four nations of the UK.

The research showed that workforce pressures are front of mind for everyone, and the public is sympathetic to this. Stakeholders want to see us supporting and influencing more. They particularly want to see us share intelligence and work with others to positively influence the sector.

The full research findings are shaping our plans for the future as well as our conversations with partners, and inform how and what we communicate with people.

We worked towards a better NMC

We're making sure our organisation is fit for the future. This year we made progress towards upgrading our digital systems and creating workplaces that support wellbeing and collaboration.

We're also working hard to become a more inclusive employer that attracts the best talent, develops colleagues and ensures everyone is appropriately

rewarded. We developed a People Plan to help us do this.

As this work continues, we're mindful that the majority of our funding comes from those on our register and we need to spend that money as effectively as possible by making sure that we have the right capabilities, processes and resource to fulfil our ambitions.



"I can tell that the NMC are wanting to progress and become better by engaging the public, and I think this is a step in the right direction."

Member of NMC
Public Voice Forum

Looking ahead

Following on from the unforeseen impact the pandemic has had on our work and the health and care sector, we reviewed our progress and our priorities for the coming years. We've reassessed how we'll approach our commitments, and which pieces of work will now be done after 2025.

This is set out in our Corporate Plan 2022-2025. We're confident that by working collaboratively, being fair and kind we will realise our ambitions for the benefit of the public we serve and professionals on our register.

You can find out more by reading our [Corporate Plan](#), and [EDI Action Plan](#).

“I have enjoyed every minute at the Vaccination Centre, and I wanted to take this time to thank the NMC for giving me the opportunity to contribute and do my part to help save people’s lives.”

Professional on the temporary register

“Dear Andrea and all at the NMC ... thank you for your hard work and dedication to the profession throughout the pandemic – especially your part in protecting nursing students.”

Student nurse

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[nmc.org.uk](https://www.nmc.org.uk)

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