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Social Care Workforce Periodical

REPORTED REASONS FOR JOB SHIFTING IN THE ENGLISH CARE SECTOR

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About Social Care Workforce Periodical

The *Social Care Workforce Periodical* (SCWP) is a regular web-based publication, published by the Social Care Workforce Research Unit, King's College London. SCWP aims to provide timely and up-to-date information on the social care workforce in England. In each issue, one aspect of the workforce is investigated through the analysis of emerging quantitative workforce data to provide evidence-based information that relates specifically to the social care workforce in England. The purpose is to share emerging findings with the social care sector to help improve workforce intelligence. Such updates are useful in highlighting specific issues for further analysis and to inform workforce policy. The first few issues of *Social Care Workforce Periodical* provide in-depth analyses of the latest versions of the National Minimum Data Set in Social Care (NMDS-SC). We welcome suggestions for topics to be included in future issues.

About the author

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Executive Summary

Social care continues to receive political attention from the new Coalition government having formed a considerable part of political debate during the recent UK general election (Guardian 2010). While the political focus is on finding a suitable model to fund the increasing demand for long term care (Featherstone and Whitham 2010), care provision itself is going through a dynamic process of change. Changes from the implementation of personalisation, sometimes termed self directed support, are gaining increasing momentum. These aim to offer people eligible for public support more tailored services with freedom to choose their type and amount of care provision. Within this process care workforce roles and skills are becoming broader, flexible and more accommodating to users and carers. Greater emphasis is being placed on building relationships and mutual understanding; expanding the workforce's tasks and roles beyond a traditional care model. While the sector has relatively high turnover rates, it is important to understand the stability and movement within the sector which may be necessary to provide high quality care. On a strategic level, it becomes important to understand the characteristics of those who leave the sector and their reasons to do so in order to enable better retention strategies and to provide care and support for vulnerable people.

Existing literature on motivations among different groups of social care workers highlights the significance of 'the nature of the job' when deciding to join the sector. The caring nature of care work is used by a number of sociologists and health economists to explain continued low wages in the sector. Job satisfaction, of course, is an important factor in determining job mobility. Given the existing evidence in relation to social care workers' motivations, job shifting within the sector, or to related sectors such as health, may be more evident than sector shifting. Given the altruistic motivations of different groups of social care workers to join the sector reported in a number of studies (for example, Stevens et al in press), occupation 'embeddedness' concept may be considered to examine job shifting within the care sector.

In this Issue of *SCWP* we attempt to examine rarely available information on the perception of where people who leave the sector go and what are the stated reasons for leaving social care work. Such information is collected by employers who completed the NMDS-SC returns, up to end of December 2009. Employers identify the number of staff, by different job roles, who left their employment during the 12 months preceding the completion of the NMDS. Employers are then asked to provide information on both the destination of staff who left and reasons for leaving the job. The latest data are collected at aggregate level, meaning that individual destinations and reasons cannot be identified and thus cannot be linked to specific job roles or other individual characteristics. The data can thus be used as an exploratory tool of perceived destinations of 'all' leavers and reasons for leaving. Such information has been then analysed by employers' characteristics in this Issue, such as sector, size and user or client groups. The data also reflect the perception and knowledge of 'employers', which may be

considered as indicative of true reasons rather than accurate, particularly if employees leave due to low level of satisfaction with the employer but may provide their former employer with different reasons to ensure a good reference, for example.

Employers report that a considerable proportion of leavers stay within the care sector (45% out of those with destination known); however, this may be smaller overall due to the large percentage of leavers with destination unknown. According to the destinations provided to employers, occupation embeddedness appear to be present, because a considerable proportion of leavers remain in the same sector, whether within the same organisation or others, or in the related health sector. The retail sector seems to attract a small proportion of care staff (only 4%).

Using Principal Component Analysis (PCA); reasons for leaving are summarised from 15 to 10 factors. Employers indicate that a quarter of leavers do so because of 'personal reasons' while 'unfavourable organisation conditions' are the reasons for leaving in 17 percent of cases. A considerable number, 14 percent (10,365), were reported to cease working with their employer due to the nature of work or through resignation, implying that this group may be likely to cease working in the sector as a whole. Only four percent are reported to leave because of 'pay' levels in the sector.

Reasons for leaving varied by different employers' characteristics. A considerable larger proportions of private sector employers indicated that workers leave for pay (6%) compared to only one percent among local authority employers and 2.5 percent among those from voluntary sector organizations. Similarly, 'unfavourable conditions' featured much higher among private sector employers (19%) compared to 12 and 13 percent among voluntary sector and local authority employers. Dismissals were also relatively higher among the private sector.

Relatively more workers leave 'micro' employers due to 'lack of' career development at 14 percent and the proportion linearly declines as the size of establishment increases to reach 9 percent for medium/large employers. This appears to be related to opportunities, such as for promotion, within different size organisations. On the other hand, pay seems to be of greater concern as the size of the care provider increases, where only 2.4 percent of leavers from small or micro employers are perceived to do so because of pay in comparison to five percent among medium/large establishments. Some variations are also observed in relation to service user groups with 'redundancy' appearing to be higher within organisations providing services to children and carers. On the other hand, unfavourable organization conditions are less frequently mentioned for staff working with children (although numbers here are relatively small).

Background

Demand for care workers in England is unlikely to decline in the near future and indications of the rise in predicted numbers have recently been explored by Skills for Care (Eborall et al 2010). However, roles, tasks and exact job descriptions are prone to change. Particularly with the personalisation providing greater choices of care, new roles may involve supporting users to participate in wider society through employment and through greater engagement with local communities. Over the past few years, in the UK the social care workforce has been going through a dynamic process of change and increasingly skills, education and creativity of the workforce may be crucial to enhancing the lives of service users and their carers through more personalised support. However, the sector has one of the highest staff turnover rates in employment, particularly within the private sector, which provides a considerable proportion of long term care at home and in care facilities. At a strategic level, retaining staff from diverse backgrounds and with wide range of knowledge and skills may become more important than meeting increasing demand in its simplest forms.

Understanding the stability and movement of the care workforce, where they go and why they leave, therefore, becomes even more necessary when devising adequate strategies to retain staff with diverse skills and knowledge. Employers may need to offer innovative and new job roles, as they emerge, to those who may be thinking of leaving to seek different experiences outside the sector. Research is scarce in the area of understanding occupation and specific job shifting within the care sector. In the closely related sector of nursing, some recent work has been conducted in an attempt to understand factors associated with intention and actual job quitting, but is far from inclusive. Both care work and nursing intersect in terms of main motivations to work with altruistic motivations dominating (Miers et al 2007, Matosevic et al 2008, Ball et al 2009). Both workforces also tend to be more female, older and more diverse than other workforces. However, pay levels can vary and within the care sector two tier pay layers exist (Issue 7, Hussein 2010a). In a recent study focusing on nurses' intentions to leave in The Netherlands, Heijden and colleagues (2009) found that both occupational commitment and job satisfaction were related to nurses' intentions to leave.

Existing literature on motivations among different groups of social care workers highlights the significance of 'the nature of the job' on deciding to join the sector. The caring nature of care work is used by a number of sociologists and health economists to explain continued low wages in the sector. The assumption is that workers derive personal and emotional satisfaction from caring for others; models of compensating wage differentials (Lanfranchi et al 2002) may explain lower wages for care work when compared to other jobs requiring similar skills. From a sociological point of view, there is a concern that paying for a job or a 'commodity' that is inherently personal devalues it and lowers its quality. From a theoretical economic model, Hayes (2007) raises a similar thesis. He suggests that attempting to 'attract' nurses with higher than average wages may lower the

overall quality of the care provided by these new recruits. He argues that such process may exclude those with 'good' or altruistic motivations who seek personal rewards as part of their job satisfaction. For many care workers the intrinsic rewards from working with service users may outweigh or offset the disadvantages associated with the job, such as high demands and low wages.

Movement of people between jobs has long attracted the attention of many sociologists and economists, highlighting the interaction of time and opportunity structures in career development. Vacancy-driven models provide the background for many conceptions of the opportunity structure and economic segmentation that contribute to the characterisation of particular structures, such as those found in the social care sector. Economists have been interested in how different labour market structures affect job mobility (Piore 1975, Rosenfeld 1992, Su and Bozeman 2009). Recognising the segmentation within labour markets, several theories seek to explain why workers from different occupations may experience higher or lower patterns of mobility and career advancement.

Internal labour market (ILM) theory has been widely used. ILMs are groups of jobs with three basic structural features; they contain a job ladder, with entry only at the bottom, and movement up this ladder is associated with progressive development of knowledge and skill (Althauser and Kalleberg 1981). Related to ILM models is what is referred to as vacancy-chain theory (White 1970). This theory assumes that mobility is a function of available positions and that the emptying and filling of positions are closely related to one another (Rosenfeld 1992). At the same time, social ecology (Miner 1991) plays an important in determining switching patterns. This may be particularly applicable to the care sector where larger than average proportions of the workforce are older, female and/or from Black and ethnic minorities (BME) populations (Issue 2: Hussein 2009a). This specific profile not only expands the candidate pool for hiring sectors, but also may generate varied switching patterns related to different human and social capital, family/environment preferences and competing demands.

Job satisfaction, of course, is an important factor in determining job mobility. Given the existing evidence in relation to social care workers' motivations, job shifting within the sector, or to related sectors such as health, may be more evident than sector shifting. Moreover, some studies in Canada indicate that job changing depends to a considerable extent on features of occupations (Pendakur et al. 2000). It is likely that careers are bounded by prior career history, family work history and occupational identity as well as *"constraints imposed by employers, and other 'gatekeepers', to job opportunities"* (King et al 2005, 981).

Researchers have identified that the higher job embeddedness, which examines how perceptions of person-job fit links with colleagues and work activities, the less likely it will be that workers leave their employers voluntarily (Crossley et al 2007). Closely linked is the association between job embeddedness and employees' performance (Lee et al 2004). More recently Ng and Feldman (2009) argue for a focus on 'occupational' embeddedness, which assumes that '*just as*

employees can become embedded in their jobs, they can become enmeshed in their occupations' (Ng and Feldman 2009, p.864). Such occupation embeddedness may apply to employees who perceive a strong person and skills-fit with their occupations and develop extensive links with professional colleagues and activities. This concept can be easily assumed to sectors such as social care where particular strong emotional incentives are associated with the work (Stevens et al in press, Hussein et al 2010, Baginsky et al 2010). However, this may not be true for all groups of workers or in relation to all job roles.

The concept of job versus occupation embeddedness mirrors the understanding of organizational versus occupational turnover (Heijden et al 2009). While the former implies that workers may change employers but remain in the same occupation, the latter implies the complete withdrawal from an occupation and thus merits more attention. Individuals' job-relevant resources, constraints and contacts interact with structural characteristics to create careers. Careers take place over time, but different aspects of time have different implications for mobility. These differences in job and sector switching are important within the context of changing skills requirements, structure and job roles within the care sector. For example, the shift in UK policies toward self-directed support and personalisation may prompt an expansion of 'traditional' care roles. Care workers', personal assistants' and support workers' roles may now include a wide range of activities beyond traditional care models (Manthorpe et al 2010). Care workers may be required to assist users to achieve greater engagement in different activities and may be required to act as advocates, job coaches, assisting in providing information, and so on.

It is clear that care work possesses, and is going through, a number of complex dimensions and interactions. Moreover, the care workforce has a distinctive profile, which is highly gendered, contains proportionally more older and ethnically diverse workers than other workforces. These are coupled with the general low-status/low-pay nature of the job as well as the rewarding intrinsic nature of jobs resulting on a batched picture of high job satisfaction with high levels of emotional involvement and stress levels. Personal characteristics are also crucial, particularly among those who may be in a minority such as men and younger workers. For example, a recent evaluation of the Care First Career pilots, based on a small number of interviews with employers (30), showed that retention of young workers was a particular concern among employers (Dobson and Byrne 2010). The same group of employers indicated less preference for younger workers arising from concern about retaining them in the sector. Furthermore, a recent study for Skills for Care shows that care work appears to be almost absent as an option for men and many only 'stumble' upon social care work (Skills for Care 2010). The latter research indicates that many men reject care work due to its nature while another group possesses highly negative views of the sector in relation to its wages and 'flat' management structure. Their negative perceptions may be compounded by media coverage in which men are rarely presented in the sector (Skills for Care 2010).

In this Issue of *SCWP* we attempt to examine rarely available information on the perception of where people who leave the sector go and what are the stated

reasons for leaving social care work. Such information is collected by employers who completed the NMDS-SC returns, up to end of December 2009. There are some limitations to such information and these are discussed in more detail in the Methods section. The main caveat is that the information analysed relates to employers' perceptions of the reasons workers leave the sector. New data emerging from the Social Care Workforce Research Unit's ongoing study on recruitment and retention in the care sector: the Longitudinal Care Workers Study (http://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/sspp/interdisciplinary/scwru/res/capacity/locs .html) are expected to provide more detail on employees' own views.

Methods

We start this *Issue* by providing a summary of vacancy levels and turnover levels as well as the workforce profile as revealed by latest analyses of the NMDS-SC returns. We then provide analysis of destinations of leavers as well as reasons why they leave the sector as perceived by employers completing the NMDS-SC by the end of December 2009. The National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) request employers to identify the number of staff, by different job roles, who left their employment during the 12 months preceding the completion of the NMDS. Employers are then asked to provide information on both the destination of staff who left and reasons for leaving the job. The latest data are collected at aggregate level, meaning that individual destinations and reasons cannot be identified and thus cannot be linked to specific job roles or other individual characteristics. The data can thus be used as an exploratory tool of perceived destinations of 'all' leavers and reasons for leaving. Such information is then analysed by employers' characteristics, such as sector, size, and user or client groups. The data also reflect the perception and knowledge of 'employers', which may be considered as indicative of true reasons rather than accurate, particularly if employees leave due to low level of satisfaction with the employer but may provide their former employer with different reasons to ensure a good reference, for example.

In the following analyses we use the NMDS-SC data, December 2009 returns. We included only those records, which have been updated during 2009 to ensure that data are up-to-date. Over 27,000 employers completed the NMDS and they reported employing 729,653 permanent or temporary staff members. Out of these, 17,992 employers completed their returns during 2009; these records are the focus of the current analysis. These employers reported 'losing' 73,746 staff members during the 12 months prior to completing their NMDS-SC returns. Employers then provided, from their knowledge, details of the number of employees going to different (pre-coded) destinations as well as number of employees leaving for different reasons (pre-coded).

Employers were requested to select all reasons for leaving from a list of 15 possible reasons. In an effort to examine whether some of these reasons were affected by common latent (or unmeasured) factors we used Principal Component Analysis (PCA). PCA involves a mathematical procedure that transforms a number of possibly correlated variables into a smaller number of uncorrelated variables called principal components. It is a multivariate technique in which a number of related variables are transformed to a smaller set of uncorrelated variables (Jackson 1991).

The rotated PCA showed that 10 components are required to represent 97 percent of the variance (with a minimum of 3 components to account for 64 percent of the variance). The detailed analysis shows that some of the reasons are not affected by common latent factors while some are. Exact reasons are

detailed below in the presentations of findings. Figure 1 shows the results of a 'scree' test, with a clear 'elbow' forming at component 3 (Cattell 1966).

Figure 1 Typical 'Scree' plot, Principle Component Analysis of reasons for leaving
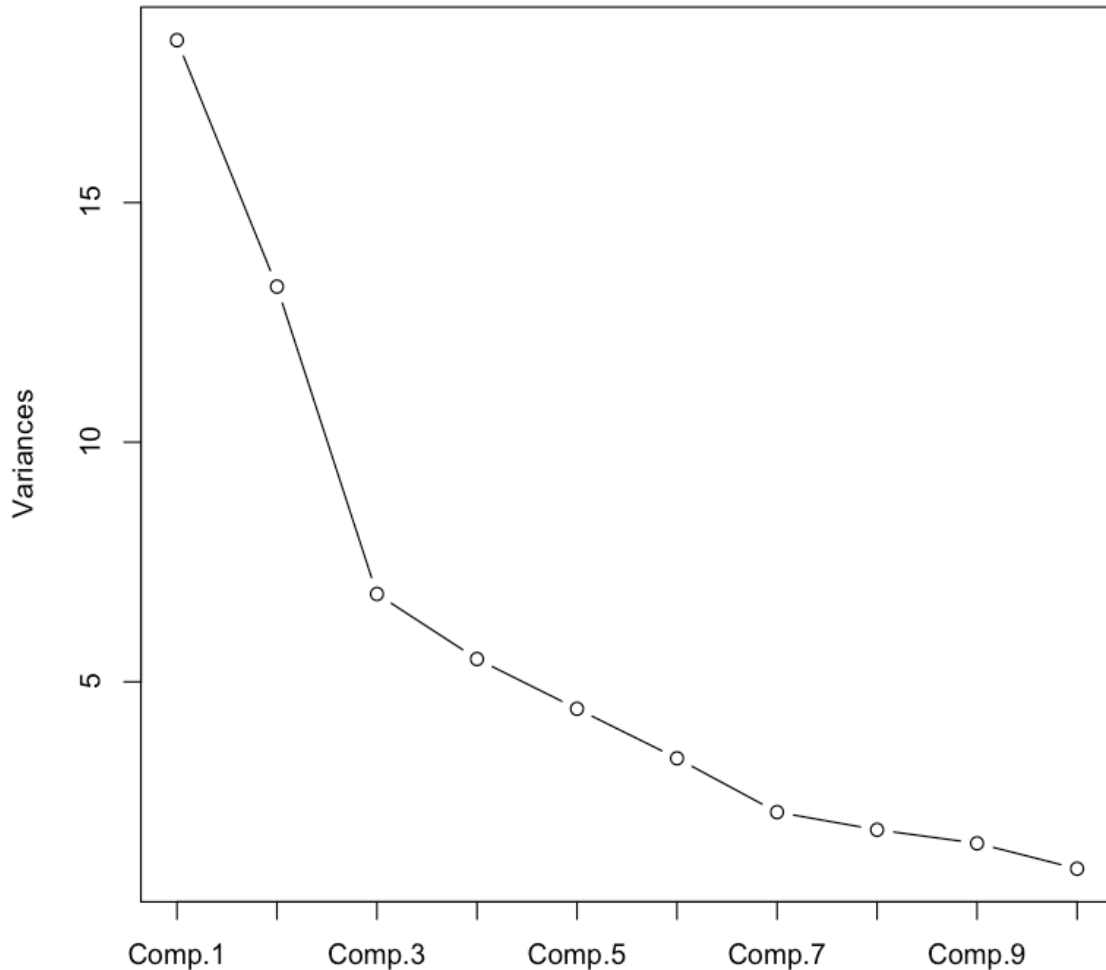
The findings presented in this *Issue* examine variations in reasons to leave as summarised through the results of PCA according to different employers' characteristics. The current analysis provides an opportunity to examine the mobility of the social care workforce in terms of destinations and perceived reasons to leave the job. It also highlights differences in reasons to leave by a number of employers' characteristics such as sector, size and type of service provision. As noted, there are a number of limitations due to the nature of the data, mainly relating to the fact that employers are the ones who are providing the information on reasons to leave, which may differ from 'true' reasons as perceived by leavers themselves. Additionally, the aggregate nature of the data collection does not enable examination of the reasons for leaving by different job roles or by different individuals' characteristics. On the other hand, the size and coverage of the data provide great value in terms of reliability of findings related to employers' perception. The current analysis thus can be considered as being exploratory and relates to the employers' perspectives.

Social care workforce profile and stability

The term 'social care' encompasses a wide range of activities, provided by a diverse workforce. The Department of Health (2006) defines social care as:

> Cover[ing] a wide range of services, which are provided by local authorities and the independent sector. Social care comes in many forms, such as care at home, in day centres or by way of residential or nursing homes. The term also covers services such as providing meals on wheels to the elderly, home help for people with disabilities and fostering services.

Social care thus encompasses several occupations including professional staff, such as social workers, care workers, (allied) health professional staff who are employed in social care, managers, administrative staff and ancillary staff not providing care, among others. Retention and job/occupation switching are influenced by several factors, which operate at different levels of hierarchy. Personal characteristics, skills and non-work related commitments operate on the individual (or micro) level, while management styles and jobs satisfaction may operate on the employer (or meso) level and finally the overall conditions of the work, status, vacancies and (some) pay levels operate on the occupational (or macro) level.

As discussed in Issue 1 of this *Periodical*, the social care sector has high vacancy and turnover rates. Turnover rates for all social care jobs are high at 14.8 percent, and are highest for the private sector and lowest for local authorities. However, overall vacancy rates from the NMDS-SC data investigated in this *Issue* were 33 per 1000 (3.3%), with the highest figures reported by local authority employers and the lowest by employers in the private sector (Issue 1: Hussein 2009b). These findings may highlight that the private sector may keep vacancy rates relatively low but at the cost of high turnover rates, i.e. low retention of staff but rapid refilling of posts. The opposite may be concluded in relation to local authorities.

However, the sector has a slightly negative net flow rate of -3.4 per 1000; meaning that during the year prior to the analysis the sector lost more people than it gained, again indicating possible problems with staff retention. Such losses were highest among direct care workers in the voluntary sector where the net flow rate stood at -27.6 per 1000. However, positive net flow rate was evident among social workers (6.9 per 1000) particularly within local authority adult services. As this analysis shows in-flow rates varied considerably by employers' sector and job role. Employers in the private and 'other' sectors reported the largest 'losses' of staff while employers in the voluntary and local authorities (adult services) made most gains at the employer level. Employers reported positive net-flow rates among both managers/supervisors and professional staff groups; this may relate to employing new staff, or the possibility that employees have gained promotion or further qualifications. On

the other hand, employers reported a decrease in the number of direct care employees during the previous 12 months, with a net-flow rate of -5.9 per 1000 (0.6%) (Issue 1: Hussein 2009b).

In Issue 2 of this *Periodical* we showed that the social care workforce is a relatively older workforce, highly gendered and contains proportionally more workers from Black minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds compared to other industries (Issue 2: Hussein 2009a). Although women constitute the majority of the workforce at 84 percent, men are significantly better represented among manager/supervisor (20 percent) and other (22 percent) job role groups. Men are also relatively over-represented in the voluntary sector (19 percent) and local authority owned establishments. The median age of all employees is 42 years, according to NMDS-SC returns. However, there are significant variations in the median age according to both the sector in which employees were employed and the main job that they perform. Social care employees in the statutory sector are significantly older than those employed in the voluntary or private sector, with the gap ranging from 4 to 7 years. Employees in the private sector are significantly younger than other employees, with median age of 40 years (mean=39.2 years).

BME employees comprise 17.4 percent of all employees for whom employers provided information on ethnicity, with the majority identified as Black or Black British (8.2 percent), followed by Asian or Asian British (5.1 percent) and two to three percent Mixed and Other ethnicity respectively. White employees are proportionally over represented among managers/supervisors and other job role groups, while Asian employees are considerably over represented among professional workers, particularly nurses. Employees identified by their employers as Black or Black British are over represented among direct care and professional job role groups (Hussein 2009a).

In Issues 6 and 7 of this *Periodical* we examined pay in the English care sector and identified two tier pay levels, with direct care workers and ancillary staff earning considerably less than professional staff and those with managerial/supervisory roles. Managers and supervisors had the widest pay variations, even after excluding those with considerably higher salaries (Hussein 2010a and 2010b). Findings based on mixed-effects models show that sector of employment has the highest and numerically largest association with pay rates for all job roles. Estimated pay rates are significantly lower among the private sector than amongst local authorities. Pay rates in the voluntary sector are also significantly lower than in local authorities, particularly for direct care workers.

Employers' reports of the destinations of staff who leave

According to the NMDS-SC December 2009, employers report that 73,746 employees left their jobs during the 12 months prior to data collection, the majority of those being direct care workers (which is proportional to the size of this workforce; Table 1).

Table 1 Number of staff ceasing work during the last 12 months prior to completing NMDS-SC returns, NMDS December 2009

Job role	Ceased during last 12 months
Direct care	57,479
Manager/supervisor	3,828
Professional staff	3,688
Other workers	8,751
Total number of workers ceasing work in the last 12 months	73,746

Employers were asked to provide aggregated numbers of their workers who went to different 'destinations' from a list of 12 destinations. However, they provided such destinations in respect of less than half of the workers who left during the previous 12 months (31,548). Here we have considered all those who left to work in social care as moving to other employment in the social care sector as one group while maintained the other categories. Table 2 presents the distribution of destinations of leavers and percentages out of all leavers and among those with destination known.

Table 2 Destination of leavers according to employers, NMDS-SC December 2009

Destination	Number of workers	% Out of total leavers	% Out of those with destination known
Within the same Organisation	1,662	2.3%	5.3%
Another employer in social care	12,500	17.0%	39.6%
Health Sector	3,941	5.3%	12.5%
Retail sector	1,201	1.6%	3.8%
Other destinations	4,940	6.7%	15.7%
Abroad	2,325	3.2%	7.4%
Not to another job immediately	4,979	6.8%	15.8%
Destination not known	42,198	57.2%	
Total number ceasing work	73,746	100.0%	
Total number with destination known			31,548

Employers report that a considerable proportion of leavers stay within the care sector (45% out of those with destination known); however, this may be smaller overall due to the large percentage of leavers with destination unknown. Following this, 16 percent are reported as not going to another job immediately, possibly due to family responsibilities given the female profile of the care workforce. Employers believe that nearly 4,000 workers are going to work in the health sector. Only 4 percent are said to be leaving to go to work in the retail sector, while seven percent are said to be going abroad. The latter may be related to migrant workers who are going back to their countries due to changes in immigration rules or other reasons, or may reflect students going on gap years or similar.

According to the destinations provided by employers, occupation embeddedness appear to be present, where a considerable proportion of leavers remain in the same sector, whether within the same organisation or others, or in the related health sector. The retail sector seems to attract a small proportion of care staff (only 4%). While it may be perceived that the retail sector offers higher wages for less responsibility, it may not be motivating enough for care staff. Similar indications from childcare staff are observed by Carroll and colleagues (2008), where staff tended to use the retail sector terms and conditions to illustrate the unfairness of their own pay and responsibilities, however, they did not often appear to be tempted to work in the retail sector.

Reasons for leaving the sector

Employers were asked to indicate the number of staff leaving for each of 15 reasons. Table 3 shows that the most common perceived reason to leave the job was being transferred to another employer in the sector (12.3%, 9,290); after reasons being unknown or personal reasons. At nearly 10 percent, career development featured highly as a reason for leaving, but it was not clear whether such career development is taking place within or outside the care sector. It may be the case that direct care workers leave temporary to gain further social care relevant qualifications and will thus remain in the sector. For example, 'grow your own' or seconded social worker schemes are regarded by employers to be a successful strategy in improving staff retention and increasing their skills (Harris et al 2008). However, it is equally possible that some staff may be working towards qualifications that may enable them to move from the sector. Career development may also mean promotion, which is indicative of remaining in the sector but undertaking different job roles.

Table 3 Reasons for leaving jobs according to employers. NMDS-SC December 2009

Reasons for leaving job	Number	Percent
Pay	3,312	4.4%
Conditions of employment	1,250	1.7%
Nature of the work	4,038	5.3%
Competition from other employers	2,268	3.0%
Transferred to another employer in the sector	9,290	12.3%
Career development	7,441	9.9%
Personal reasons	13,700	18.1%
Resignation for undisclosed reasons	6,327	8.4%
Retirement	3,085	4.1%
Death	291	0.4%
Dismissal	4,116	5.5%
Redundancy	889	1.2%
End of contract term	873	1.2%
Other	5,238	6.9%
Reason not known	13,437	17.8%

Using Principal Component Method (PCA) to examine if more than one of these reasons is influenced by some latent common factors we found that the above 15 reasons could be reduced to 10 reasons:

- First, both 'retirement' and 'death' are influenced by a common factor that we will call 'end of working life'.
- Second, both 'personal reasons' and 'other' reasons appear to be affected by a common latent factor, we will call 'personal'.

- Thirdly, the three reasons 'conditions of work', 'competition from other employers' and 'transfer to other employer' appear to be influenced by another latent factor we will call 'unfavourable organisation conditions'.
- Lastly 'nature of work' and 'resignation' both load highly to a fourth latent variable, which we will call 'unsuitable nature of work'.

No other reasons appear to be influenced by similar latent variables. The results may be then summarised into 10 reasons instead of the above 15, as indicated in Table 4 and Figure 2. Variations in these 10 reasons are examined in the following sections according to different employers' characteristics, including service user or client groups.

**Table 4 'Reduced' reasons to leave based on the results of PCA, NMDS-SC December 2009**

Reasons to leave	Number	%
Pay	3,312	4.4%
'End of working life'	3,376	4.5%
'Personal'	18,938	25.1%
'Unfavourable organisation conditions'	12,808	17.0%
'Unsuitable nature of work'	10,365	13.7%
Career development	7,441	9.8%
Dismissal	4,116	5.4%
Redundancy	889	1.2%
End of contract	873	1.2%
Reason unknown	13,437	17.8%

It should be considered that 'unknown reason' as provided by employers may conceal negative reasons related to the employer or that employers genuinely do not know the reasons. Similarly, 'personal reasons' may be used by employees as excuses to shield employees' own negative experience with that particular employer while retaining a good enough relationship for future references.

Employers indicate that a quarter of leavers do so because of 'personal reasons'; these may relate to family care responsibilities given that over 80 percent of the workforce are women, who are in general expected by society to provide care for children and other family members. However, employers indicated that 'unfavourable organisation conditions' are the reasons for leaving in 17 percent of cases (or 12,808 staff members). The latest factor includes three elements: conditions of work, transfer to other employers and competition with other employers, which are found to be affected by the same latent factor as indicated by the PCA above. A considerable number, 14 percent, were reported to cease working with their employer due to the nature of work or through resignation, implying that this group may be likely to cease working in the sector as a whole.

On a similar bar, pay, 'end of working life' and dismissal are reported by employers as reasons for leaving the job in four to five percent of cases. Redundancy and end of contract featured in only one percent of the cases.

Figure 2 Distributions of leavers during the previous 12 months by reason to leave according to their employers, NMDS-SC December 2009
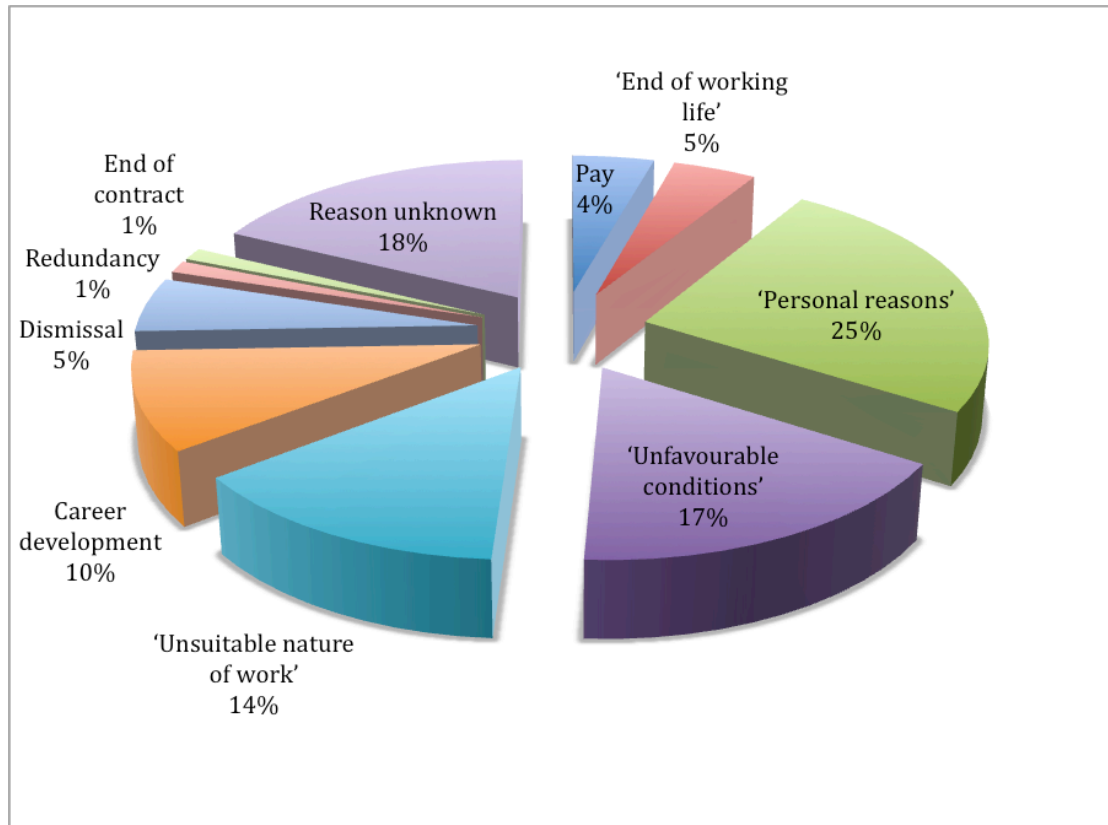
Region

Some variations in reasons to leave were observed between geographical regions. For example, redundancy appeared to be higher in the North West and West Midlands at 2.4 and 2.3 percent; while lowest in the South East and South West of England. Pay was cited as reason more often in Yorkshire and the Humber at 7 percent followed by the North East at 5.8; while least cited among employers in the South West of England at 2.8 percent. As we discussed in Issue 6 and 7 of this *Periodical*, pay was on average higher in the South region, particularly among managers/supervisor group (Hussein 2010a and 2010b).

Table 5 Regional variations in reasons to cease working in care jobs as perceived by employers, NMDS-SC December 2009

Reason for leaving	Region of employment								
	Eastern	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midland	Yorks & Humber
Redundancy	0.8	0.8	1.5	1.0	2.4	0.5	0.6	2.3	0.8
End of contract	1.2	0.9	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.6	0.6
'End of working life'	3.8	5.5	3.1	4.5	4.5	4.2	5.1	4.4	4.8
Pay	4.2	4.8	5.1	5.8	4.6	3.3	2.8	4.1	7.0
Dismissal	4.9	5.0	4.5	6.2	6.0	4.7	5.4	5.9	7.1
Career development	8.4	9.3	13.8	8.7	9.0	9.9	10.3	10.2	9.5
'Unsuitable nature of work'	13.4	11.0	15.0	16.3	12.8	13.2	12.1	14.8	17.6
Reason unknown	17.1	17.5	17.7	9.3	18.7	22.0	16.8	19.0	15.0
'Unfavourable conditions'	20.9	15.0	14.8	23.7	18.3	15.7	16.9	14.9	16.3
'Personal'	25.5	30.3	23.0	23.0	22.6	25.6	29.0	22.9	21.2
Number of leavers	7,530	8,275	5,975	4,208	9,410	13,000	10,325	9,389	7,443

Employers in the North East and Eastern regions indicated that relatively higher proportions of staff left their jobs due to 'unfavourable organisation conditions' at 24 and 21 percent respectively, compared to a range of 15 to 18 percent among other regions. Some

variations are also observed in relation to career development, where more workers in London appear to benefit from this at 14 percent.

Type of service

Table 6 Employers' perception of reasons to leave by type of setting, NMDS-SC December 2009

Reason to leave	Detailed type of setting							
	Care home with nursing	Care home without nursing or care only	Any other adult residential care service	Any day care and day services	Domiciliary care or home care	Any other adult domiciliary care service	Any adult community care service	Any other services
Pay	4.4	3.6	2.8	4.2	5.9	4.1	3.0	2.5
'End of working life'	4.6	5.5	3.6	8.4	3.4	3.8	5.7	3.0
'Personal'	22.9	28.9	25.6	17.1	22.5	20.2	26.3	30.8
'Unfavourable conditions'	19.3	15.6	13.8	7.5	18.4	18.0	18.3	11.5
'Unsuitable nature of work'	12.7	11.2	14.1	16.2	17.3	14.5	12.7	10.7
Career development	11.0	11.2	12.9	10.2	7.3	10.4	10.7	9.5
Dismissal	6.0	6.4	7.3	3.5	4.6	8.9	4.0	2.7
Redundancy	0.6	0.7	1.2	10.8	0.7	1.4	1.3	4.8
End of contract	0.9	1.0	1.2	3.3	0.6	1.2	3.5	3.4
Reason unknown	17.6	16.0	17.5	18.9	19.3	17.6	14.6	21.1
Number of leavers	16779	22062	3065	1447	23523	1458	2636	4585

Reasons to leave and employers' characteristics

The NMDS data contain different pieces of information in relation to employers' characteristics, including sector of employment, setting, main type of service, establishment size and service user groups. In this section, reported reasons for leaving are examined in relation to these characteristics.

Sector

It is evident that pay, workforce profile and other factors are highly correlated with sector of employment whether public (local authorities), private, voluntary or other (such as not-for-profit organisations). Reasons for ceasing care jobs also appear to be associated with sector of employment as indicated in Table 7. Some of the main differences relate to 'pay', 'end of working life', 'dismissal' and 'unfavourable organization conditions'. A considerable larger proportions of private employers indicated that workers leave for pay (6%) compared to only one percent among local authority employers and 2.5 percent among those from voluntary organizations. Similarly, 'unfavourable conditions' featured much higher among private sector employers (19%) compared to 12 and 13 percent among voluntary and local authority employers (Table 7).

Table 7 Reason for leaving care jobs by sector of employment, NMDS-SC December 2009

Reason for leaving	Sector of employment			
	Local Authorities	Private	Voluntary	Other
Pay	*1.4*	*5.2*	*2.5*	*3.8*
Dismissal	3.3	5.9	4.8	5.0
End of contract	*3.5*	*0.9*	*1.2*	*1.1*
Redundancy	*3.9*	*0.6*	*2.8*	*0.4*
Career development	*7.8*	*9.8*	*10.8*	*12.0*
'End of working life'	*12.3*	*3.4*	*5.1*	*6.0*
'Unsuitable nature of work'	12.7	13.8	11.2	25.4
'Unfavorable conditions'	*13.4*	*18.8*	*11.9*	*11.6*
Reason unknown	17.1	16.1	26.5	15.7
'Personal'	24.6	25.9	23.2	19.1
Number of leavers	6,069	54,435	12,047	3,004

The pay analysis presented in *Issues* 6 and 7 clearly showed that pay rates in the private sector are significantly lower than those in local authorities among all job role groups. Thus the relatively higher indication of pay as a factor in retention is not surprising but consistent with previous findings. Very much linked to pay are working conditions, for example, number of shifts worked, pay for extra hours and the speed by which work needs to be completed. Private employers cite

unfavourable conditions (including competition) as reasons why people leave their jobs. Dismissals were also relatively higher among the private sector.

Leaving for career development is slightly lower in local authorities than the private and voluntary sectors but may relate to the composition of job roles among these sectors. For example, most professional staff (such as social workers and occupational therapists) are employed by local authorities.

It is interesting to note the wide gap in the proportion leaving due to 'end of working life' (mainly relate to retirement) between local authorities and the voluntary sector. Around 12 percent are perceived to leave local authorities due to 'end of working life' compared to only five percent in the voluntary sector, highlighting the attraction of the voluntary sector to older workers as discussed in Issue 5 of this *Periodical* (Hussein 2010c).

Type of service

Table 8 shows that, besides personal reasons or reasons for leaving being unknown, the highest cited reason for leaving among people working in adult services was 'unfavourable organization conditions' at 17 percent followed by 'unsuitable nature of work' at 14 percent. For children services (a minority of which are reported in the NMDS-SC data), unsuitable nature of work, career development and redundancy accounted for almost a tenth each of reasons to leave. For the reported 706 workers who ceased working in health services during the previous 12 months, employers felt that 'unfavourable organisation conditions' are the reason in 23 percent of cases while career development was the reason to leave in 16 percent of cases.
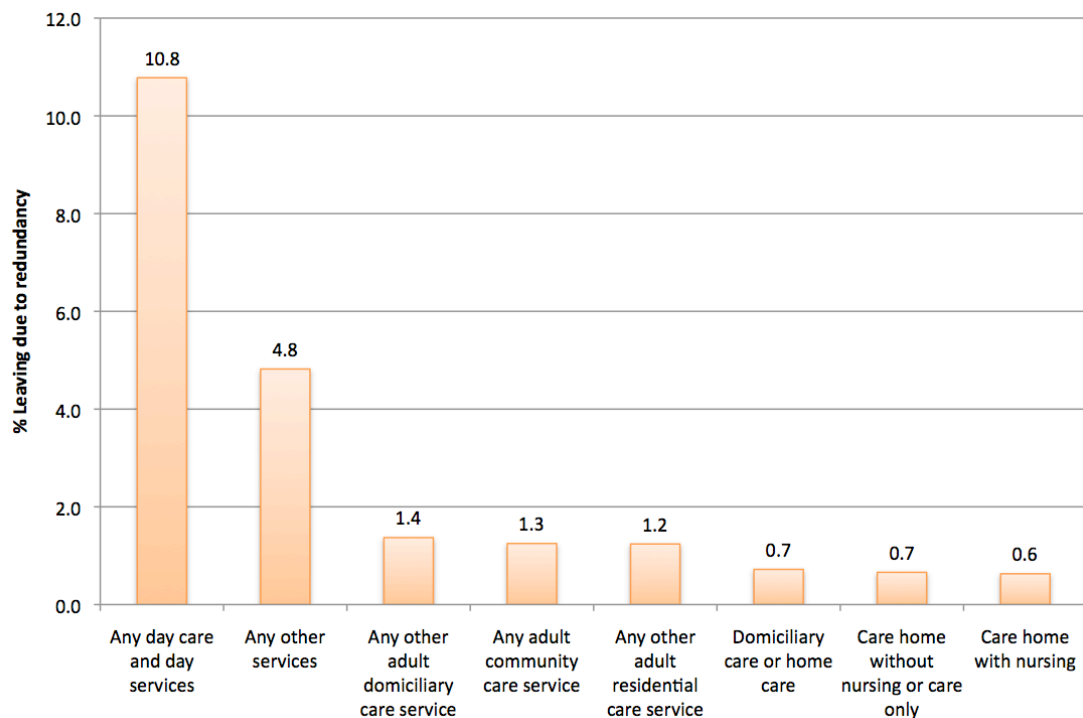
Table 8 Reasons for leaving as indicated by employers according to type of service provided, NMDS-SC December 2009

Reason for leaving	Type of service			
	All adult services	All children services	All health services	Other services
Redundancy	*0.9*	*9.2*	*2.8*	*2.4*
End of contract	1.0	1.3	2.0	5.2
Pay	*4.5*	*3.5*	*1.6*	*2.1*
'End of working life'	4.6	1.9	4.5	3.3
Dismissal	5.6	4.1	3.7	1.5
Career development	9.9	10.3	15.6	7.1
'Unsuitable nature of work'	*13.9*	*11.4*	*8.2*	*10.9*
'Unfavourable conditions'	*17.3*	*8.1*	*22.7*	*10.5*
Reason unknown	17.6	25.6	14.3	20.1
'Personal'	24.7	24.8	24.7	36.9
Number of leavers	70,970	1,590	706	2,289

Redundancy was particularly more prevalent among those working in 'children services' at nine percent in comparison to a range of less than one percent to

three percent in other settings (however, we should note the relatively smaller returns from children's services to the NMDS-SC and consider this statistic as indicative only). When redundancy is examined by specific type of services, Figure 3 shows that it is significantly more evident in the case of day care and day services. This ma be a reflection of the recent widespread closures of several day care centres across England (Roulstone and Morgan 2009, BBC News 2010, Hussein 2010c; Hussein and Manthorpe in press). Redundancy is lowest among domiciliary care and residential services reflecting the continuous shortages within these services (Eborall et al 2010).

Figure 3 Percentage of leavers identified by employers to leave as result of redundancy by specific type of service provision, NMDS-SC December 2009

Other variations are also present in relation to type of service provision. For example, Figure 4 shows that leaving due to levels of pay is highest among workers in domiciliary care or home care at 6 percent. Full details of reasons to leave by type of service are provided in Table 6.

Figure 4 Percentage of leavers due to levels of pay as reported by employers according to type of service provided, NMDS-SC December 2009
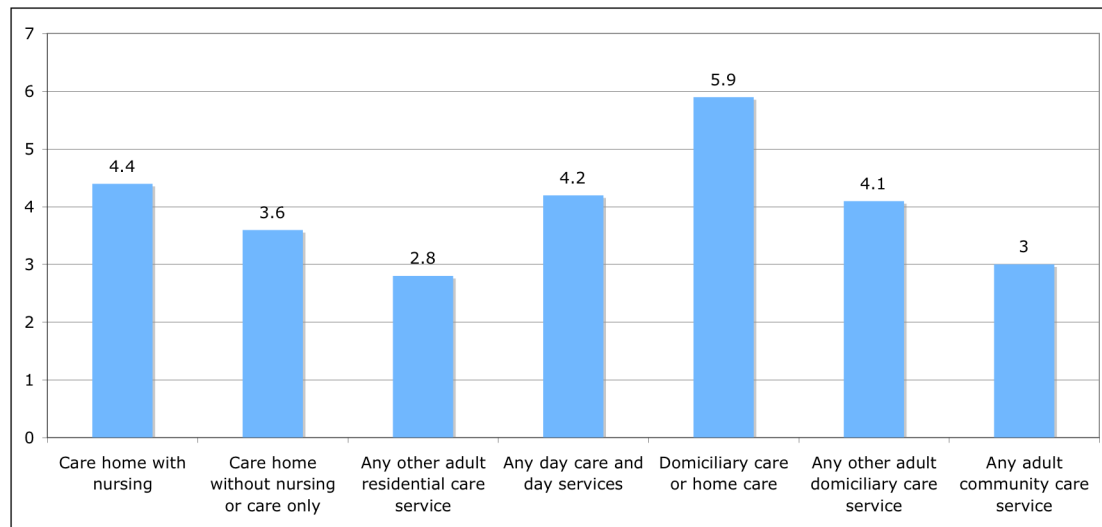
Establishment Size

When examining reported reasons for leaving care jobs by establishment size, the findings presented in Table 9 indicate that relatively more workers leave 'micro' employers due to 'lack of' career development at 14 percent and the proportion linearly declines as the size of establishment increases to reach 9 percent for medium/large employers. Such observation appears to be related to opportunities and promotional availability within different size organisations. On the other hand, pay seems to be of greater concern as the size of establishment increases, where only 2.4 percent of leavers of micro employers are perceived to do so because of pay in comparison to five percent among medium/large establishments.

Micro and small employers tended to cite 'personal' reasons more often than medium/large employers (28% vs. 22%). End of contract and redundancy are less prevalent reasons for leaving among medium/large employers than among people working for micro employers.

Table 9 Reported reasons for leaving care jobs by establishment size, NMDS-SC December 2009

Reasons for leaving	Establishment type[1]			
	Micro	Small	Medium/ Large	Not allocated
Pay	*2.4*	*3.8*	*5.2*	*1.8*
'End of working life'	4.5	5.2	3.9	3.0
'Personal'	28.3	28.1	22.2	10.3
'Unfavourable conditions'	*11.5*	*17.0*	*17.5*	*13.0*
'Unsuitable nature of work'	12.7	12.1	15.1	28.2
Career development	13.7	10.7	8.8	4.7
Dismissal	5.9	6.3	4.7	3.5
Redundancy	2.3	1.2	0.7	19.8
End of contract	2.6	1.3	0.8	7.1
Reason unknown	16.3	14.4	21.2	8.7
Number of leavers	3,367	34,297	37,224	667

Service user groups

The NMDS-SC contains detailed information on service user or client groups whose care is provided by different types of employers. In this section we investigate if perceived reasons to leave the sector vary by different groups of service users or clients. Findings presented in Table 10 show that 'redundancy' is least evident among those working with older people and other adult users.

**Table 10 Perceived reasons for leaving care jobs by service users' groups, NMDS-SC December 2009**

Reasons to leave	Users' group				
	Older people	Adult users	Children	Carers	Other users
Redundancy	0.9	0.9	2.5	2.6	14.7
End of contract	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.7	2.4
Pay	4.8	4.8	3.6	5.6	2.1
'End of working life'	4.8	3.9	3.1	4.6	6.2
Dismissal	5.2	5.5	4.3	4.0	3.2
Career development	9.1	9.9	9.3	8.4	7.6
'Unsuitable work nature'	14.3	14.3	19.0	17.1	13.8
Reason unknown	17.1	17.7	21.1	14.7	8.7
'Unfavourable conditions'	18.2	17.9	15.5	17.8	18.9
'Personal'	24.7	24.1	20.4	23.6	22.3
Total number of leavers‡	55,929	48,764	9,422	9,229	905

‡ Some employers are likely to provide service to more than one group of users, thus total number of leavers will exceed those who left during the previous 12 months.

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[1] Establishment size is grouped as follows: micro employers = less than 10 staff members, small = 10-49 staff members, medium = 50-199 and large = 200 or more staff members.

Figure 5 shows that redundancy appears to be higher within establishments providing services to children and carers, while dismissal rates appear to be very similar among the four groups (4-5 %). 'Unsuitable nature of work' appears to be less likely to be perceived by employers as reasons for leaving care jobs when dealing with older people and other adult users (14% vs. 19% among those working with children). On the other hand, unfavourable organization conditions are less frequently mentioned for staff working with children (although numbers here are relatively small).

Figure 5 Percentage of staff leaving for different reasons among employment providing services to different user groups, NMDS-SC December 2009
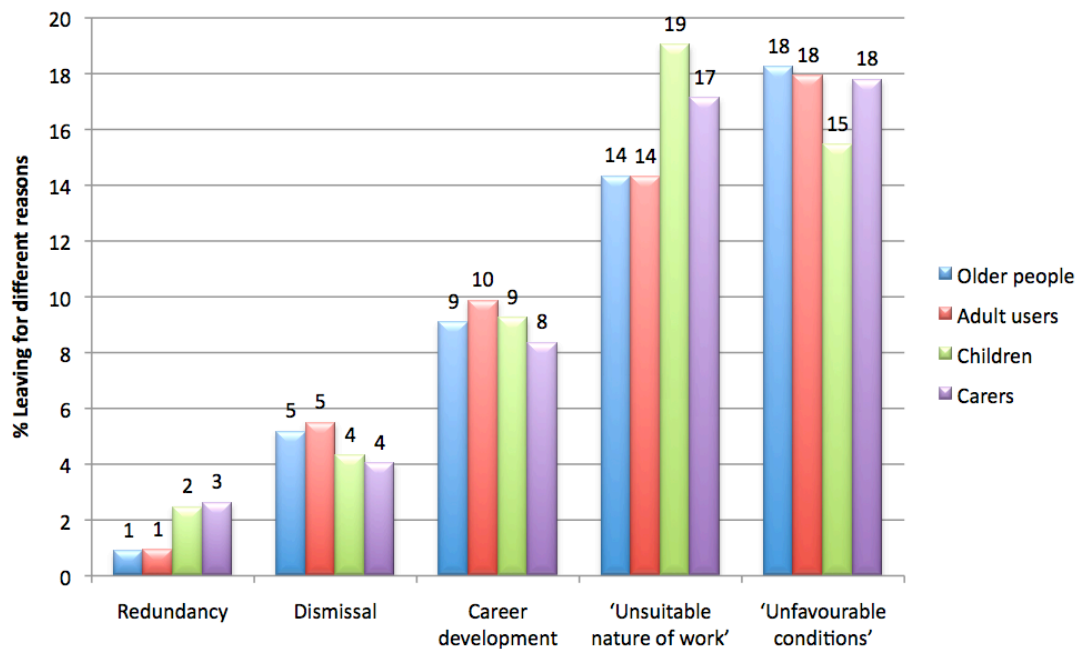
# Summary of identified reasons for leaving

The current analysis unfurls a number of threads; the first is that both job switching and occupation switching appear to be operating in the care sector, with the former being more evident. Job switching can be identified through those leaving to destinations within the care sector and for reasons that are more likely to be related to their current employer, for example, unfavourable organisation conditions. It is also likely that large groups of those leaving for career development reasons are job rather than occupation switchers. On the other hand, those leaving to work in the retail sector or who are perceived to leave their jobs due to the 'nature of work' are likely to be occupation switchers, who may be leaving the care sector altogether, at least in the short term. However, employers did not provide reasons for leaving for a large proportion of leavers and also used 'personal' reasons for a high number of cases.

The findings related to differentials in declared/perceived reasons for leaving resonate with other research and the wider literature. For example, proportionally more workers leave their private sector care jobs because of pay and unfavourable organisational conditions which is consistent with the significantly lower pay rates operating in this sector. In this section we present a summary of key reasons that may be indicative of occupation switching, such as 'nature of work', and those indicative of job switching such as pay, organisation conditions and career development.

Nature of work

Figure 6 shows that unsuitability of nature of work as a reason for leaving care jobs is highest among those working in domiciliary care and day care settings and among those working in medium to large establishments at 17 percent, 16 percent and 15 percent respectively. On the other hand, it is least often cited for people formerly working in health care settings at only eight percent. The latter is possibly related to skills requirements to work in the health sector reflecting certain level of investment to secure work in certain jobs. 'Nature of work' was slightly more prevalent as a reason cited for leaving among people working for private sector employers but the differences are not large when compared to other sectors. Figure 6 shows that more employers providing services to children cited unsuitable nature of work as reasons for leaving care jobs more often than those working with other groups, particularly older people and other adults (19% vs. 14%) (but numbers working with children are proportionally low in the NMDS-SC returns).

Figure 6 Percentages of leavers perceived to have left care jobs due to 'nature of work' by different employers' characteristics, NMDS-SC December 2009
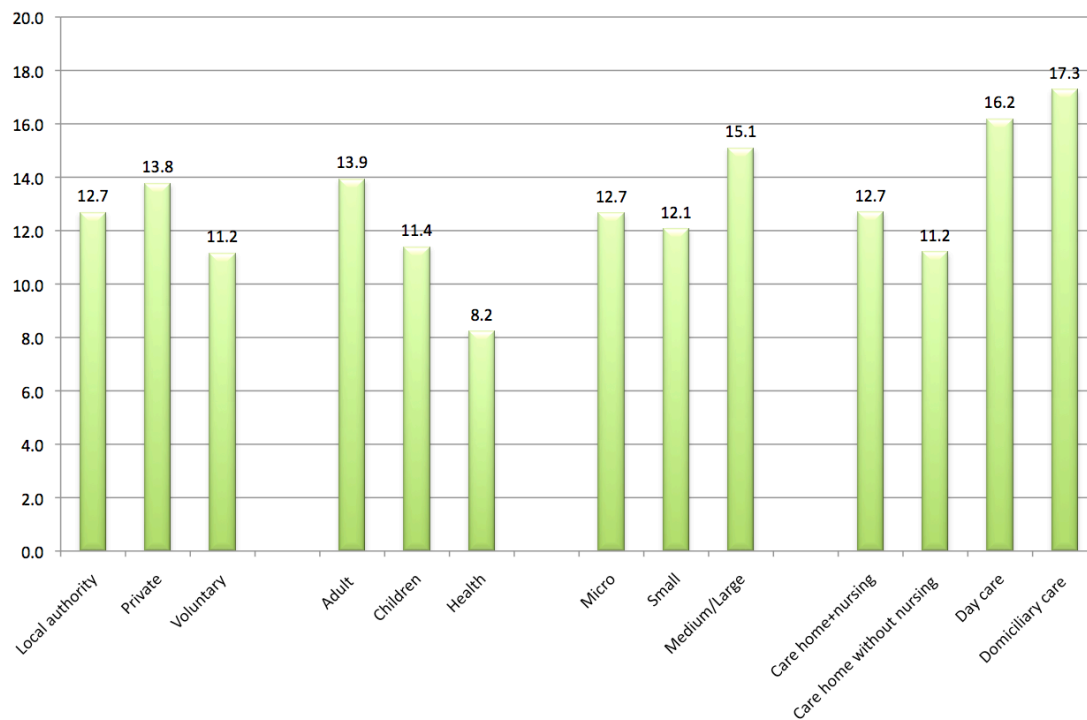
Unfavourable organisation conditions and pay

Leaving a job because specific employers' working conditions are not favourable can be regarded as a sign of 'job' switching rather than 'occupation' switching. Figure 7 clearly shows that this a strongly perceived reason to leave, particularly among people working in the private sector, while this is least evident within the voluntary sector (19% vs. 12%). Voluntary organisations have been described in the literature as 'spaces of hope' and are thought to improve self-confidence (Baines and Hardill 2008) being characterised by their attraction for a wide range of people (Miligan and Condradson 2006). On a similar level, people working within micro (less than 10 employees) employment are the least to be perceived to leave their jobs because of unfavourable conditions of employment, reflecting the possible role of supportive team relationships as well as perhaps more opportunity to engage or to develop relationships with service users. Unfavourable organisation conditions were cited in 24 percent of cases in East Midlands (Table 5) which may be a point worth exploring further.

Figure 7 Percentage of leavers due to 'unfavourable conditions' and pay by providers' sector, size and user group, NMDS-SC December 2009
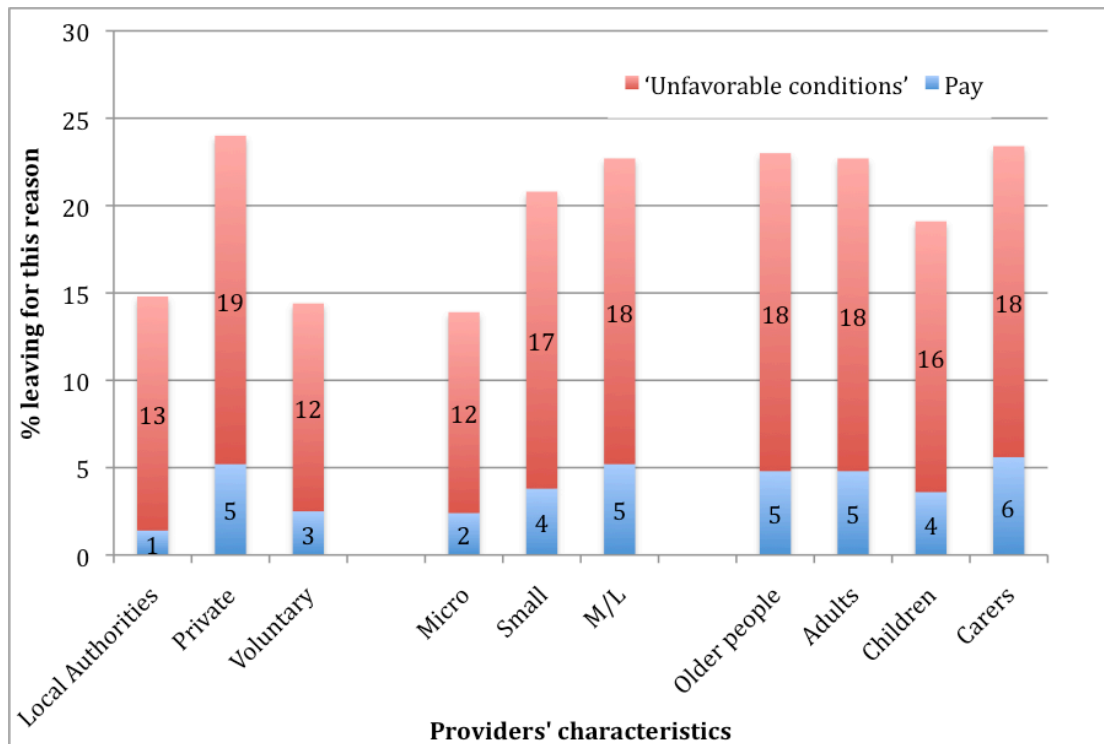

In terms of pay, workers in local authorities and those working within micro organizations are the least likely to be perceived to leave their jobs due to low pay, in contrast to those working in the private sector and in medium to large establishments. Leaving because of pay was also highest among workers in domiciliary care at 6 percent (see Table 6); and those working in Yorkshire and the Humber at 7 percent (Table 5).

Career development

Leaving a job because of career development can be a sign of active retention in the sector or commitment to it because skills development is generally key to gaining promotion within the sector, as long as career development is sector relevant. Figure 8 shows that a particularly high percentage of leavers in London do so because of career development ambitions (14%). On the other hand, workers in domiciliary care settings are least likely to leave for career development purposes (7%). No large differences are observed in relation to sector, with slightly higher proportions in the voluntary sector than local authorities leaving for career development (11% vs. 8%, Table 7).

Figure 8 Percentages of leavers because of career development as indicated by employers by region and type of service, NMDS-SC December 2009
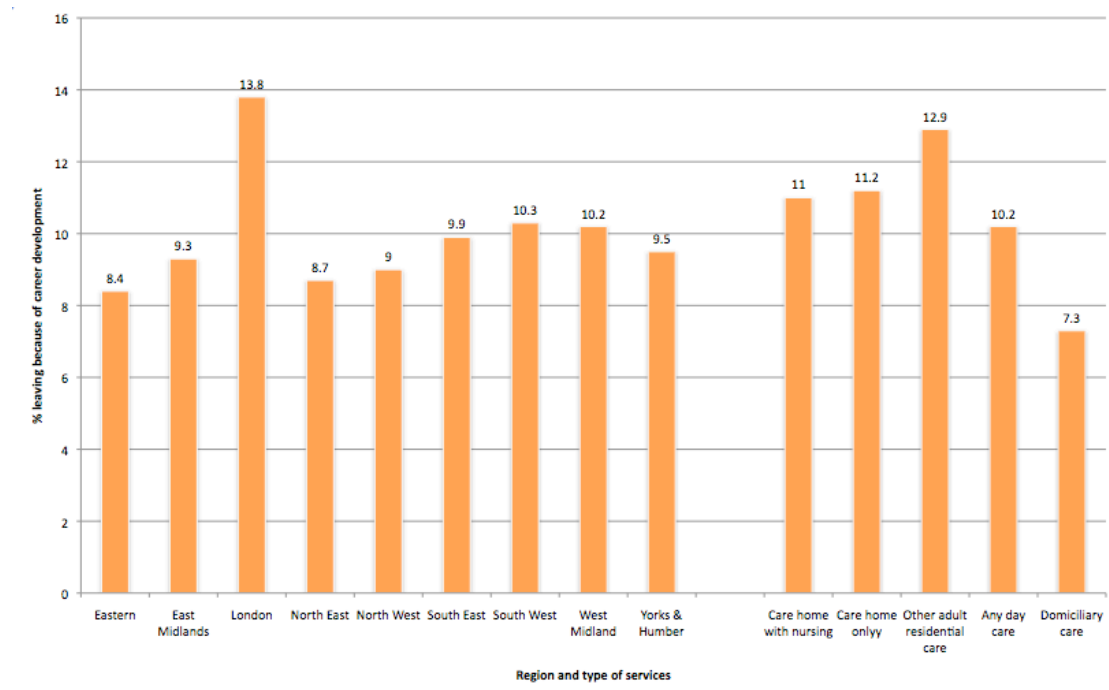
Leavers from the health sector were more likely to be perceived do so for reasons of career development than those working in adults' or children's services (16% vs. 10%). Proportionally more leavers from micro establishment are reported to leave for career development reasons than larger employers; possibly due to lack of internal promotional opportunity within smaller organisations (14% among micro establishments vs. 9% among medium/large establishments). No significant differences in leaving because of career development are observed in relation to work with different user groups.

Conclusion

With the projected increase in social care jobs from 24% to 65% by 2025 (Eborall et al 2010), it is fundamental to improve current staff retention and maintain quality and skills. This is particularly important with the changing nature of care work and the increased emphasis placed by the government on workforce skills and training levels (Department of Health 2009). The current Issue of *SCWP* provides a picture of the care workforce stability and job shifting patterns using NMDS-SC returns up to end of 2009. The current data provide valuable information on the perception of a considerably large sample of all social care employers on a rarely examined topic of patterns of job shifting among the care workforce. However, the data only highlight employers' voices, which may be different from those relating to workers themselves. Additionally, relatively large proportions of employers did not know the exact reasons for leaving the jobs. Nevertheless, the data provide an important building block in understanding the dynamics of job and occupation shifting within the care sector and will inform the ongoing Longitudinal Care Workers study currently being undertaken by the Social Care Workforce Research Unit (http://www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/sspp/interdisciplinary/scwru/res/capacity/locs.html). As part of a wider remit, the latter study will collect information on intention, and actual, job shifting from a sample of social care workers in England.

One of the main findings of the current analysis is that a large percentage of leavers remain within the sector, or in related sectors such as health, while very small proportions are perceived to leave for the retail sector. This indicates that there is job rather than occupation switching, and implies that occupation embeddedness is present within the care sector.

The analysis highlights important sectoral differences in perceived reasons for leaving care jobs. Previous analysis showed that the voluntary sector has low turnover rate and gained more staff (Issue 1: Hussein 2009b); the current analysis indicates the potential of this sector to attract staff particularly those at 'end of working life'; and that it has one of the lowest rates of leaving due to 'unsuitable nature of work' and 'unfavourable organization conditions'. It can be argued that the voluntary care sector may be attracting the right people (for paid care work) and offering good work environment.

On the other hand the private sector appears to have clear issues with pay and unfavourable organization conditions. Care workers who leave the private sector are more likely to be perceived to do so because of pay and organistaional conditions than in other sectors. The conclusion that high work load and low pay are common within this sector resonates well with the observed high turnover rate and negative net flow rates presented in previous Issues (Issue 1: Hussein 2009b). These findings may relate to the composition of the care workforce within the care sector, where nearly three quarters of the workforce are direct

care workers (Issue 2: Hussein 2009a). Pay rates for this group are particularly lower than that of other professional and supervisory roles (Issue 6: Hussein 2010b). Additionally for direct care workers, those working in the private sector have significantly lower pay rates than in other sectors (Issue 7: Hussein 2010a). Research from the United States has also identified wages as a significant factor in job retention among the home care workforce, which is comparable to the direct care workforce in England (Faul et al 2009).

Redundancy as a reason for leaving reflects recent changes in the care provision with day care closures as discussed in Issue 4 of this periodical (Hussein 2010c, Hussein and Manthorpe in Press). Domiciliary care appears to be losing staff due to both pay and nature of work. Opportunities for career development may be important factors in retaining staff, although reasons for leaving due to career development are highest in London and the health sector. However, the current data does not allow us to distinguish whether high levels of leaving due to career development relate to greater opportunities to advance within the care sector or if they are a sign of occupational shifting and the desire to gain further qualifications.

The current analysis provides a catalyst in understanding perceived destinations and reasons for job shifting within the care sector in England. Attracting and retaining suitable care staff are essential in maintaining a stable workforce to meet the growing demand for long-term care and new models of support in England. On one hand, occupation embeddedness appear to be present in the sector implying that even with observed job shifting, a large proportion of staff are retained within the care sector. However, the perception of employers that pay and organizational conditions are of particular problems within the private sector raise some questions about the quality of service and sustainability of care within private provision.

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About NMDS-SC

The NMDS-SC is the first attempt to gather standardized workforce information for the social care sector. It is developed, run and supported by Skills for Care and aims to gather a 'minimum' set of information about services and staff across all service user groups and sectors within the social care sector in England. The NMDS-SC was launched in October 2005, and the online version in July 2007; since then there has been a remarkable increase in the number of employers completing the national dataset.

Two data sets are collected from employers. The first gives information on the establishment and service(s) provided as well as total numbers of staff working in different job roles. The second data set is also completed by employers; however, it collects information about individual staff members. Skills for Care recommends that employers advise their staff they will be providing data through the completion of the NMDS-SC questionnaires. No written consent from individual members of staff is required, however, ethnicity and disability are considered under the Data Protection Act to be *'sensitive personal data'*, thus it is recommended that consent for passing on these two items needs to be explicit. For further details on NMDS-SC please visit http://www.nmds-sc-online.org.uk/

The NMDS-SC has provided the sector with a unique data set, providing information on a number of the workforce characteristics. However, it is important to highlight the emerging nature of the NMDS-SC, mainly due to the fact that data have not been completed by *'all'* adult social care employers in England, at this stage. Therefore, some of the findings may be under- or over-represented as a result of this. It is also equally important to bear in mind that data are completed by employers and not workers. This may also prompt some technical considerations when interpreting the findings. *Social Care Workforce Periodical* addresses such considerations in its discussions of findings.