
Introduction

Skills for Care, as the leading source of adult social care workforce intelligence, helps to create a skilled, valued and better-led adult social care workforce. We provide the practical tools and support to help adult social care organisations in England recruit, retain, develop and lead their workforce. We work with employers and related services to ensure dignity and respect are at the heart of service delivery.

This report presents data collected via a dedicated Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP)

Key findings

The latest survey of AMHPs in the social care workforce received responses from 137 local authorities in England. The findings from this survey, and those from previous years, are presented in this report as well as data from the Adult Social Care Workforce Dataset (ASC-WDS) covering social workers who are AMHP qualified employed by local authority adult social care services departments within local authorities.

Over the previous five years, the estimated number of AMHPs has remained stable at around 3,800. We estimate the full-time equivalent ratio was 0.40 and there were around 1,500 FTE AMHPs in 2024, which was similar to last year.

The survey found that to fully staff their 24-hour response service there would need to be an increase of 35% in the number of full-time equivalent AMHPs. Despite this requirement the vacancy rate was 12.7%, therefore the number of posts being advertised is less than the overall requirement for a fully established 24-hour AMHP service. AMHP leads anticipate an additional 39.5% AMHPs starting over the coming 5 years, of which the majority will be newly qualified/first time in the role and 25.5% will leave the role over this same period.

Data from the ASC-WDS showed that around a third of the AMHP workforce (32%) were aged 55 and above and therefore could retire over the coming 10 years. The survey found that 3.1% of AMHPs had retired in the previous 12 months, so succession planning is key to ensuring a stable workforce. The survey also found that 8.6% of the AMHP workforce were newly qualified/first time in the role in the previous 12 months.

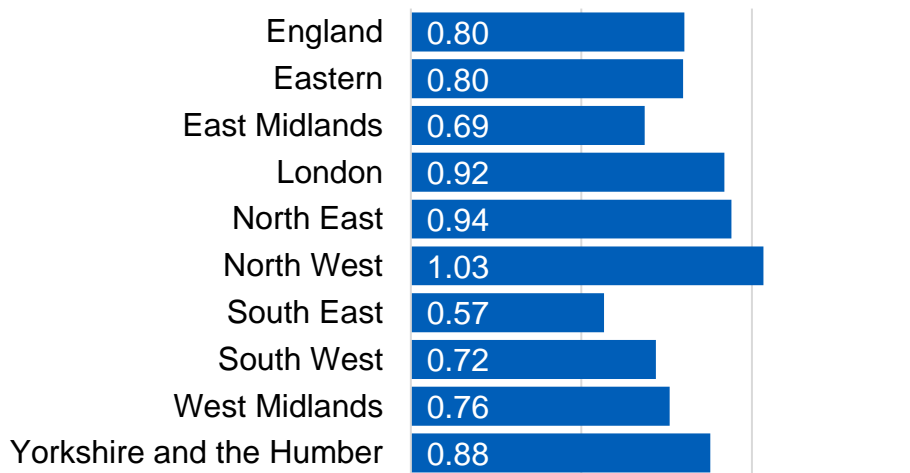
Half of respondents stated that their local authority ran a singular line managed AMHP duty system covering 24-hours 7 days of the week indicating a range of different delivery models.

To estimate the number of AMHPs from local authorities that did not respond to the survey, or were received incorrectly in previous years, we have modelled the relationship between social worker filled posts (using data from the ASC-WDS) and the number of AMHPs (using the survey). These estimates were checked against the average number of AMHPs between years if a local authority had responded previously.

Map 1 shows the number of AMHPs per 10,000

Chart 2. Number of AMHPs per 10,000 people aged 15 and above in each region

Source: AMHPs survey 2024

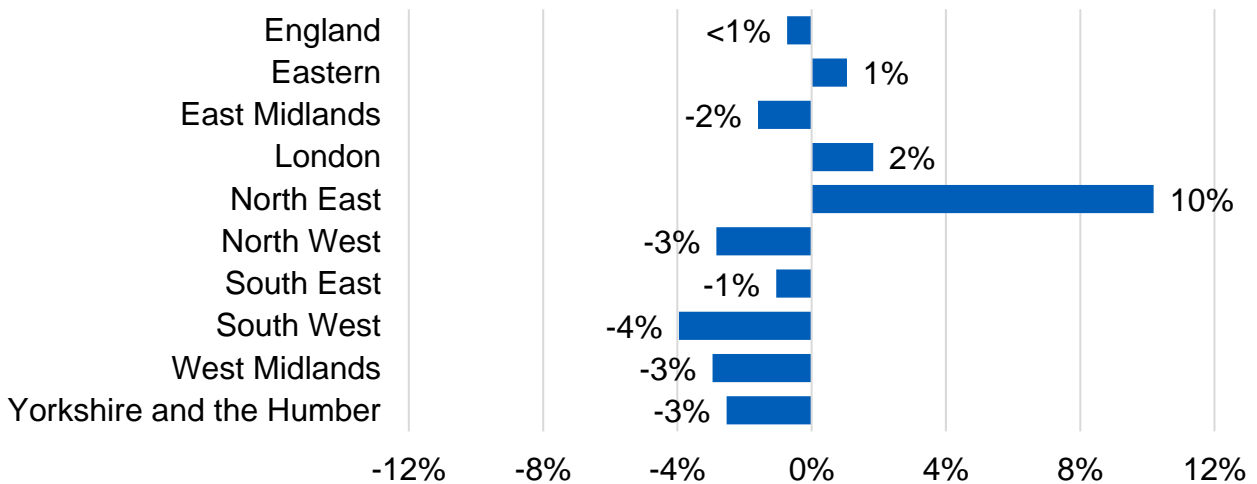


1.2 AMHP headcount comparison 2023 to 2024

The chart below shows the change in the estimated number of AMHPs between 2023 and 2024. The overall number of AMHPs (headcount of around 3,800) was almost the same in each year. The North East showed the largest increase at 11% (around 22 more AMHPs), whereas the South West showed the largest decrease at 3% (around 12 fewer AMHPs).

Chart 3. Change in the estimated number of AMHPs between 2023 and 2024

Source: AMHP survey 2024

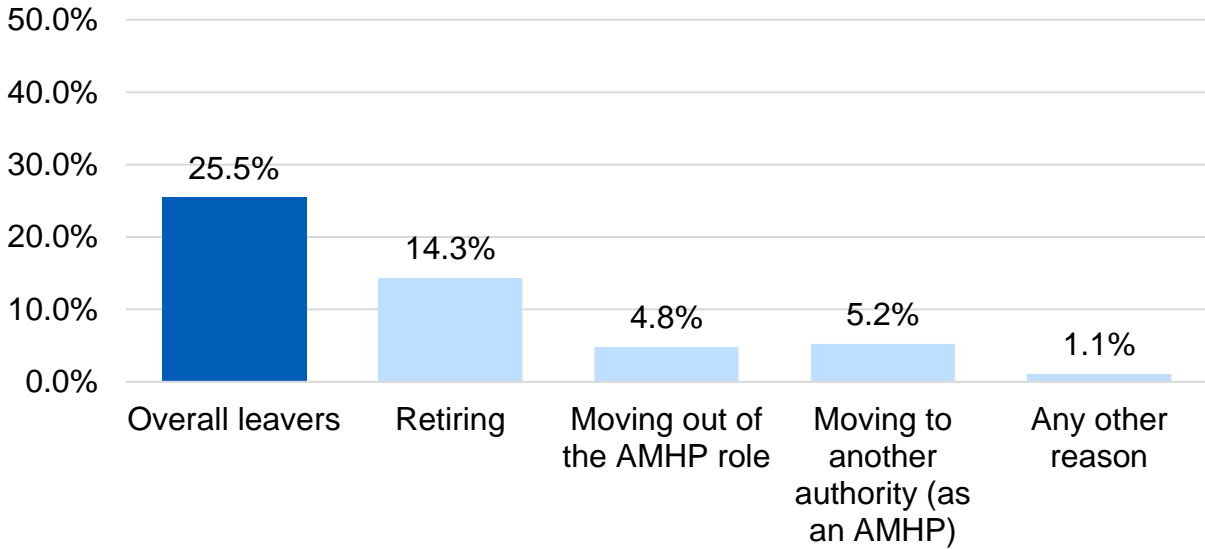


1.3 Findings from the AMHPs Survey

The survey also asked AMHP leads to anticipate how many AMHPs will leave their authority over the coming 5 years. The survey found an expected 25.5% AMHPs would leave the workforce over the coming 5 years, and the majority of these leavers would be people retiring (14.3% of AMHPs).

Chart 8. Anticipated AMHP leavers in the coming 5 years by category

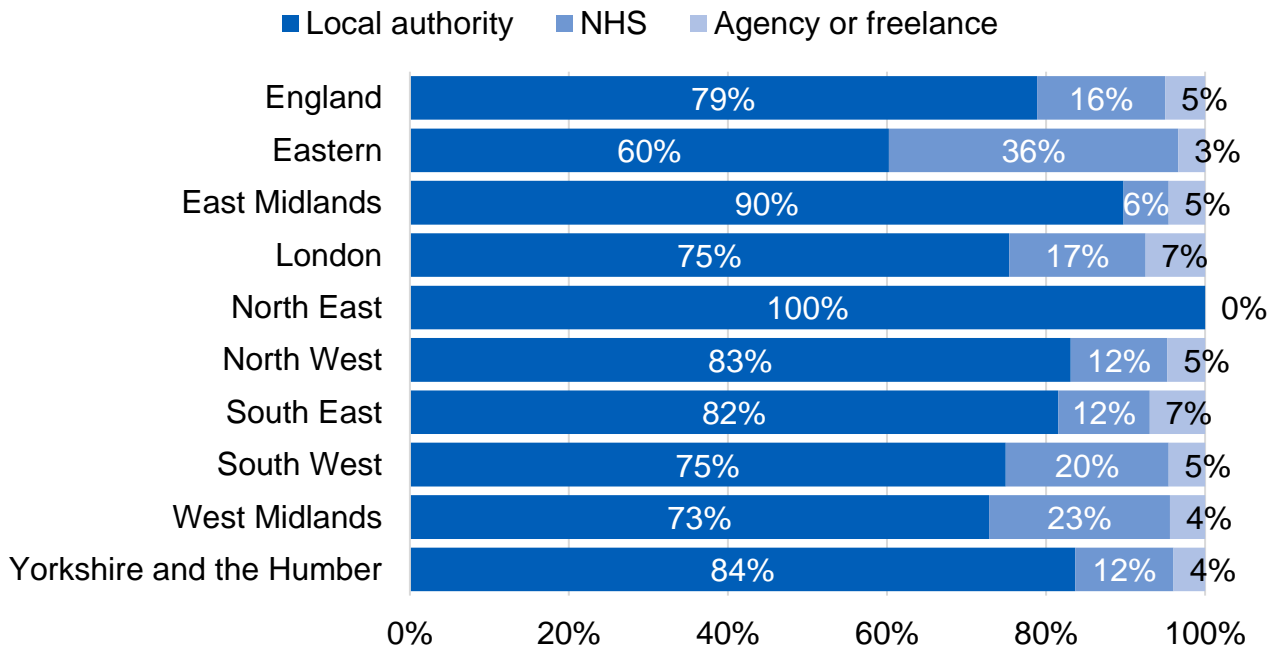
Source: AMHP survey 2024



The survey showed that the majority of AMHPs were employed by the local authority (79%), compared to 16% who were employed by the NHS and 5% who were agency or freelance workers. This pattern was reflected in each region, however there was some variance, for example the Eastern region had much higher proportion employed by the NHS (36%) where the North East had 0% employed by the NHS.

Chart 9. Proportion of AMHPs by employer

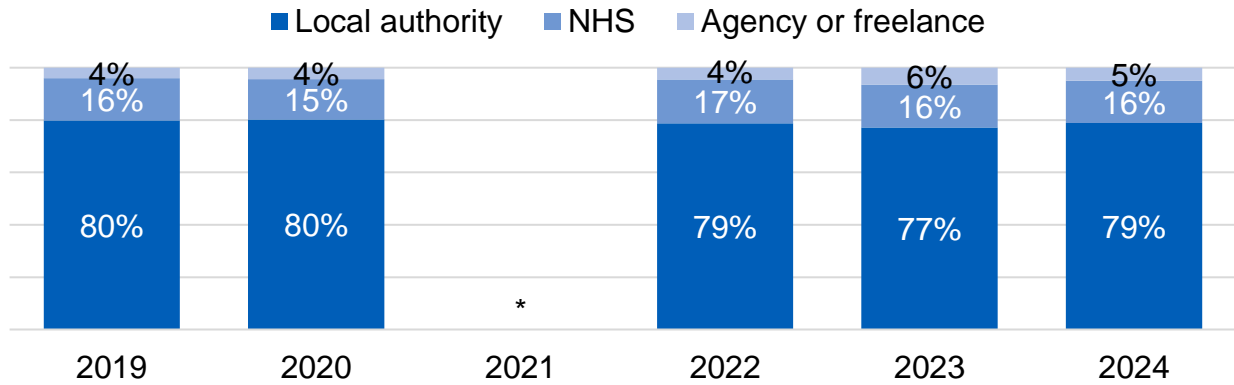
Source: AMHP survey 2024



The chart below shows the proportion of agency AMHPs increased from 4% in 2022 to 5% in 2024. The increased use of agency staff could indicate difficulty recruiting into full-time positions and have financial implications for local authorities.

Chart 10. Proportion of AMHPs by employer between 2019 and 2024

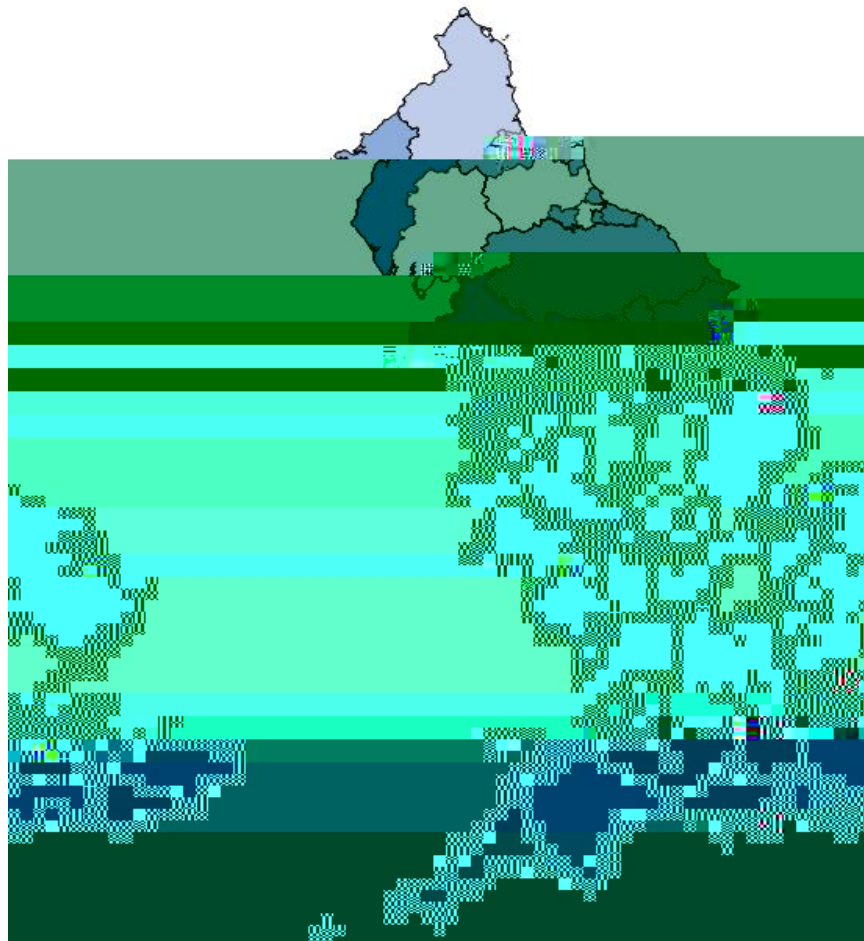
Source: AMHP survey 2024



The map below shows the percentage of AMHPs employed by the NHS in each local authority area. Many areas reported none of their AMHPs were employed by the NHS, such as all areas within the North East. However, the map also shows a high concentration from Herefordshire in the west to Suffolk in the east.

Map 2. Percentage of AMHPs employed by the NHS

Source: AMHP survey 2024



The survey found that 95% of AMHPs were social workers, with 4% registered nurses along with less than 1% occupational therapists and very few psychologists. In half of local authority areas that were surveyed, all AMHPs were social workers, which means no AMHPs from these local authorities were from nursing, occupational therapy or psychology professions. The Eastern region had the highest proportion of AMHPs whose primary role was as a registered nurse (10%).

Chart 11. Proportion of AMHPs by profession

Source: AMHP survey 2024

Around two thirds (59%) of AMHPs combine their role with another role, while around one in three AMHPs solely perform the role of an AMHP (28%).

The survey asked for the headcount of AMHPs that worked in specific services such as working age adults, forensic, older people . The responses in the chart below show the majority of AMHP teams provide services to working age adults. Respondents were also given a free-text option for this question,

Chart 16. Proportion of AMHPs by service type

Source: AMHP survey 2024

The survey asked respondents for number of full-time equivalent AMHPs, in addition to the headcount. To help respondents calculate this, we provided a tool which would give their overall FTE figure based on the total hours worked per AMHP over their rota period. Full-time was classified as working 40 hours per week.

Skills for Care have noted that it was difficult for respondents to answer this question as we are aware of the variety of working patterns that AMHPs undertake.

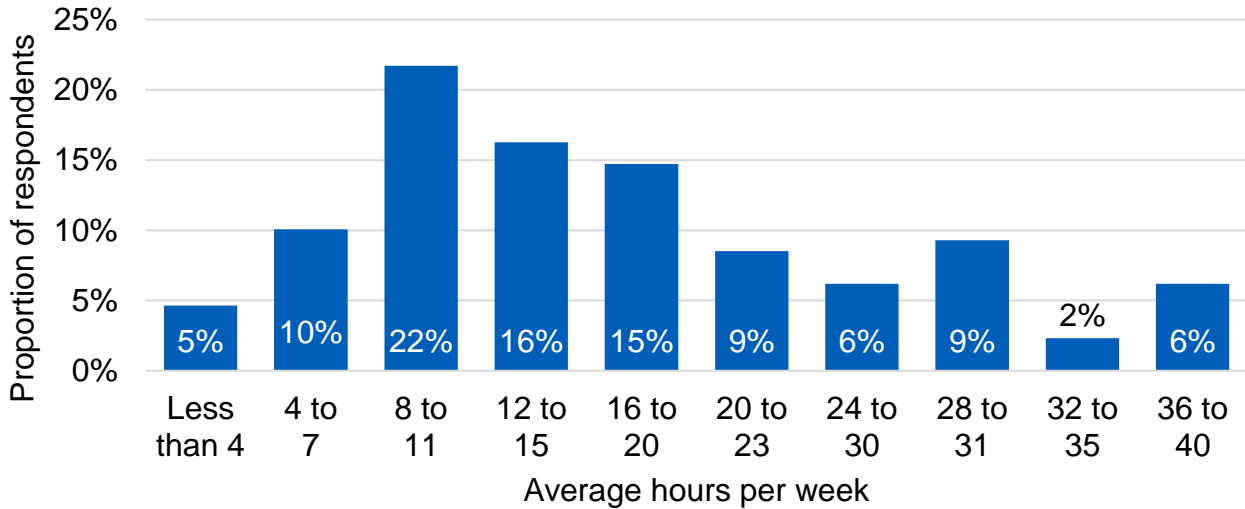
The estimated AMHP headcount was 3,800 and the estimated FTE ratio was 0.40, which equates to around 1,500 full-time equivalent AMHPs in 2024. This ratio is similar to last year, and therefore the number of FTE AMHPs were around the same in 2023.

As we have collected the FTE number of AMHPs over multiple years, we have used these returns to quality check the responses and fill gaps from areas that did not respond. Therefore, the FTE figures in this report are an estimate based on the data available at the time and may be different to previous reports.

On average, we estimated that AMHPs worked 16 out of 40 hours per week in their statutory role. However, there was a wide range of responses across areas. Around 18% had an FTE ratio of 0.7 or more, therefore their AMHPs worked 28 or more hours per week in their statutory role. Around 36% of respondents had an FTE ratio less than 0.3, therefore their AMHPs worked less than 12 hours per week in their statutory role. The chart below includes 129 local authority areas.

Chart 17. Proportion of respondents by AMHPs average hours per week in their statutory role

Source: AMHP survey 2024



The survey asked respondents for the number of FTE AMHPs needed to fully staff their 24-hour response service. From the 117 respondents to this question, they required an increase in staff of 35%. This does not imply that local authorities are not meeting their statutory duty to provide 24-hour services.

We also asked for the number of AMHP vacancies in their AMHP rota. From 117 respondents to this question, they had a vacancy rate of 12.7%. Therefore, the number posts being advertised is less than the overall requirement for a 24-hour AMHP service.

The survey asked respondents if their local authority ran a singular line managed AMHP duty system covering 24-hours 7 days of the week or did it have a partnership arrangement. Half of respondents had a singular line managed system, but this proportion varied regionally with the West Midlands having the highest proportion of 24/7 services (77%) and Eastern having the lowest (33%).

Chart 18. Proportion of local authorities in each region with a 24/7 AMHP services

Source: AMHP survey 2024

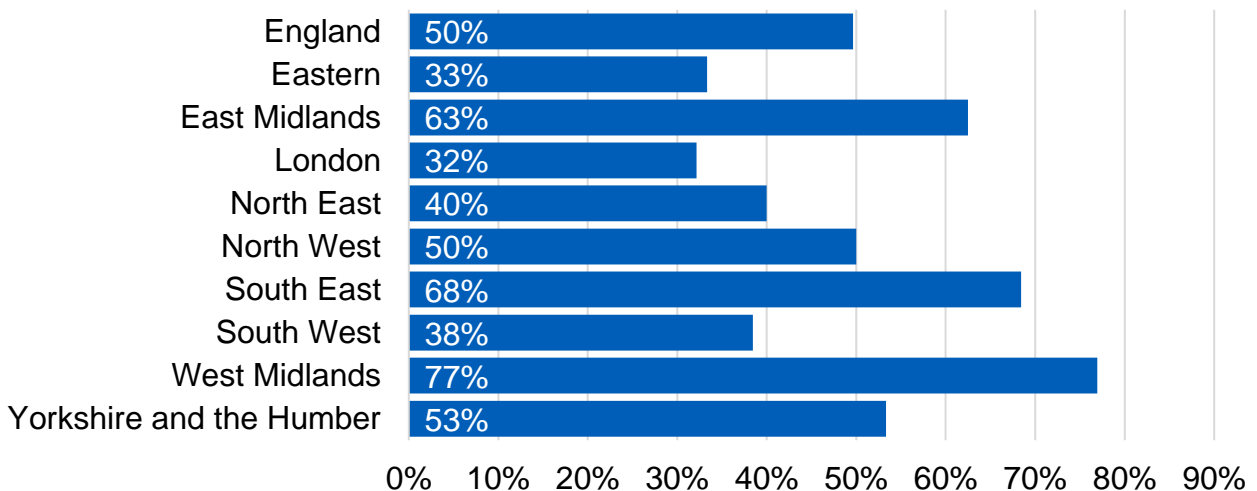
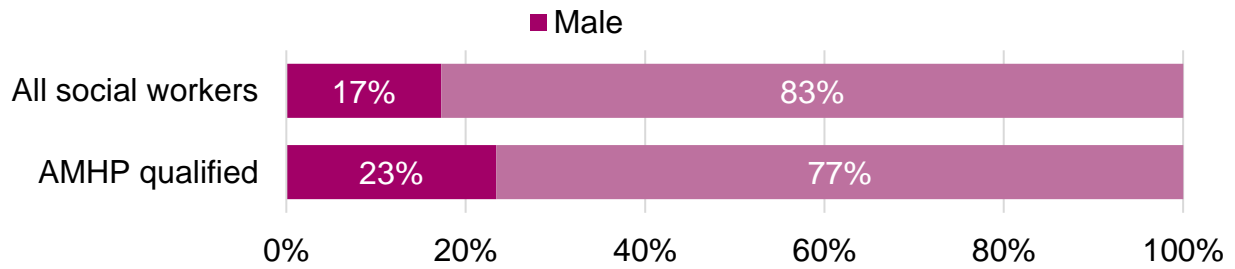


Chart 20. Proportion of social workers and qualified AMHPs by gender

Source: ASC-WDS September 2023



2.2.3 Ethnicity

The ASC-WDS showed that 72% of social workers identified as being of white ethnicity compared to 79% of AMHP qualified social workers. The second highest ethnic group of the two roles were people that identified as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, with 18% of social workers and 13% those who were AMHP qualified.

London showed the highest ethnic diversity (40% of AMHPs with a white ethnic background) and the North East showed the least ethnic diversity (93% of AMHPs with a white ethnic background). These proportions generally reflect the population of these regions.

Chart 21. Proportion of social workers and qualified AMHPs by ethnicity

Source: ASC-WDS September 2023

2.2.3 Nationality

The ASC-WDS showed that 91% of social workers and 96% of those qualified as an AMHP had a British nationality. The chart below shows **that** 2% of AMHPs held an EU nationality and the remaining 2% held a non-EU nationality.

Chart 22. Proportion of social workers and qualified AMHPs by nationality

Source: ASC-WDS September 2023

2.3 Experience in current role

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2.4 Experience in sector

Chart 24 shows that social workers with an AMHP qualification had more experience in the adult social care sector than social workers in general. The average experience in sector for an AMHP is 12.2 years compared to 9.6 years for all social workers. The largest difference was in the 10 or more years experience group where 53% of AMHPs have this level of experience compared to 36% of social workers. Again, this suggests that social workers can progress to becoming AMHPs later in their career.

Chart 24. Proportion of social workers and qualified

Further resources

We provide outstanding workforce intelligence

Further resources

Local area information

