

# The Standards for Employers of Social Workers

North East Region Social Work Health Check Report

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Report design: [www.pauldrummond.co.uk](http://www.pauldrummond.co.uk)

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Members of The Standards for Employers of Social Workers Group:

The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS)

The Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS)

British Association of Social workers (BASW)

The Department of Education (DfE)

The Department of Health (DHSC)

Health Education England

Joint University Council Social Work Education Committee (JucSWEC)

Local Government Association (LGA)

NSPCC

SCIE

Skills for Care (SfC)

Social Work England

UNISON the Public Service Union

What Works Centre

The Adult Principal Social Worker Network

The Children's Principal Social Worker Network

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This timely report examines a number of critical questions about the experiences of Social Workers in the North East region:

- How well do employers deliver the refreshed Standards?
- How do employees perceive their working environment?
- What factors influence them to remain engaged with their work and minded to stay with their organisations?

These questions feature prominently in regional and national news, as it is recognised that good social work can transform people's lives and protect them from harm. In order to achieve consistently high-quality outcomes for service users and their carers, social workers must have and maintain the skills and knowledge to establish effective relationships with children, adults, families, and professionals in a range of agencies and settings, and be the key connectors in communities.

The lessons that flow from the evidence in this report can and should shape the way leaders and managers in both the private and public sectors think about the people who work for them. They will also help to take forward the debate about what government and other policy makers can do to help promote a better environment to attract, develop and retain professional, compassionate and engaged staff who deliver high quality social work.

At the time of writing this report, with the country in the grip of the Covid-19 pandemic, the reliance on their services has never been greater.

Lastly, enormous appreciation is extended to all organisations that encouraged their staff to take part in this piece of research.

Please note that a supplement to this report will be issued in March that takes a closer look at how different types of social workers within the region engaged with the refreshed Standards.

The employer standards for social workers in England were last refreshed in 2020. They set out the key components of whole systems approaches, and employers can use them, along with an appropriate supervision framework, to help develop a working environment where social work practice and social workers can flourish, in turn supporting recruitment and retention. They are explained in headline detail below:

## **Standard 1 – Strong and clear social work framework**

This standard is about promoting a clear statement about the principles that constitute good social work practice, and how those principles function across the full range of social work settings.

## **Standard 2 – Effective workforce planning systems**

This standard is about using effective workforce planning systems to make sure that the right number of social workers, with the right level of skills and experience, are available to meet current and future service demands.

## **Standard 3 – Safe workloads and case allocation**

This standard is about ensuring employees do not experience excessive workloads, resulting in unallocated cases and long waiting times for individuals.

## **Standard 4 – Wellbeing**

This standard is about promoting a positive culture for employee wellbeing and supporting social workers to have the practical tools, resources and the organisational environment they need to practice effectively and safely.

## **Standard 5 – Supervision**

This standard is about making sure students and qualified practitioners can reflect critically on their practice through high quality, regular supervision being an integral part of social work practice.

## **Standard 6 – Continuing professional development (CPD)**

This standard is about social workers being provided with the time and opportunity to learn, keep their knowledge and skills up to date, and critically reflect on the impact this has on their practice.

## **Standard 7 – Professional registration**

This standard is about supporting social workers to maintain their professional registration with the regulator.

## **Standard 8 – Strategic partnerships**

This standard is about creating strong partnerships and good collaboration between employers, higher education institutions and other training providers.

More information about these standards can be found at:

[www.local.gov.uk/standards-employers-social-workers-england-0](http://www.local.gov.uk/standards-employers-social-workers-england-0)

The survey items used to measure these standards can be found in appendix 2.

### **Research Question 1**

How well do employers of social workers deliver the refreshed Employer Standards?

### **Research Question 2**

How do social workers perceive their working environment?

### **Research Question 3**

What factors influence them to remain in their organisations, or choose to leave?

The insights gained from this study provide a lens on the workplace environment experienced by employees involved in the delivery of social work across the North East Region. Some important features of the analysis are set out below in an 'at-a-glance' style. More granular details can be found in the report, with links to the relevant material.

### Research Question 1: Delivery of refreshed Employer Standards

Highest rated Standard overall:  
**Strong and Clear Social Work Framework, Professional Registration, Strategic Partnerships**

Lowest rated Standard overall:  
**CPD – Continuous Professional Development**

### Employee voices

Most frequent themes:

- Support
- Management
- Team
- Workload
- Resources

### Research Question 2: Perception of Workplace Experience

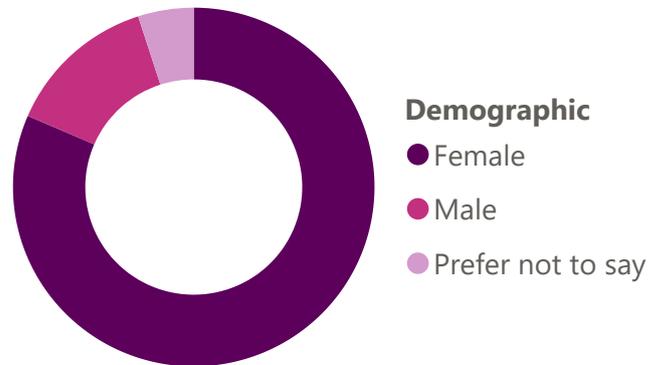
Top three survey items having biggest impact on social worker contribution:

1. I have been able to continue to access relevant learning opportunities and training through my organisation
2. I have good and effective relationships with key partners such as in the NHS, wider social care, education, housing, the third sector etc
3. My organisation takes appropriate action to prevent and deal with risks of violence, bullying and harassment in any aspect of my work.

### Research Question 3: Factors influencing Desire to Stay

Top three survey items having biggest impact on desire to stay:

1. My organisation facilitates my access to my Professional Association, Trade Union and other supportive organisations.
2. My organisation has ensured all staff are appropriately protected from the risk of infection by the virus and taken account of different individual risks of infection on grounds of (e.g.) age, ethnicity, prior health conditions, caring for others etc.
3. Within my organisation, I have an up to date plan of my professional development needs and how I and my employer will contribute to them (review).



**89%** of respondents were registered professionals

**81%** of respondents were female

**12%** of respondents have been in their role for less than 1 year

**12%** of respondents have been in their role for 1-2 years

**16%** of respondents have been in their role for 3-5 years

**17%** of respondents have been in their role for 6-10 years

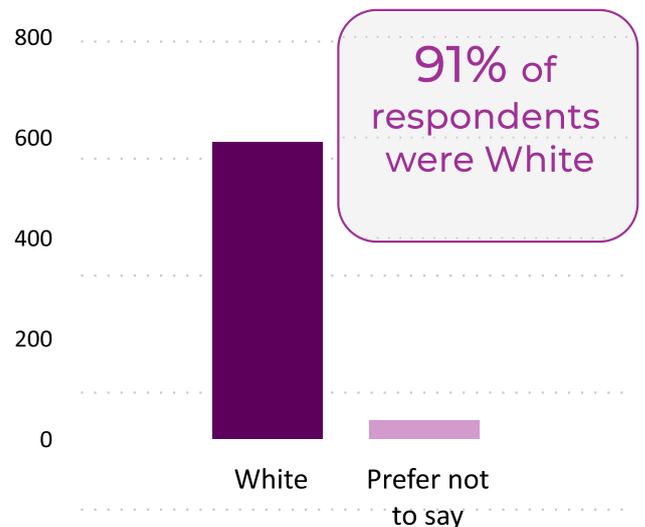
**23%** of respondents have been in their role for 11-20 years

**20%** of respondents have been in their role for more than 20 years

**45%** of respondents were Adult Social Workers

**38%** of respondents were Children's Social Workers

**9%** of respondents were Mental Health Social Workers



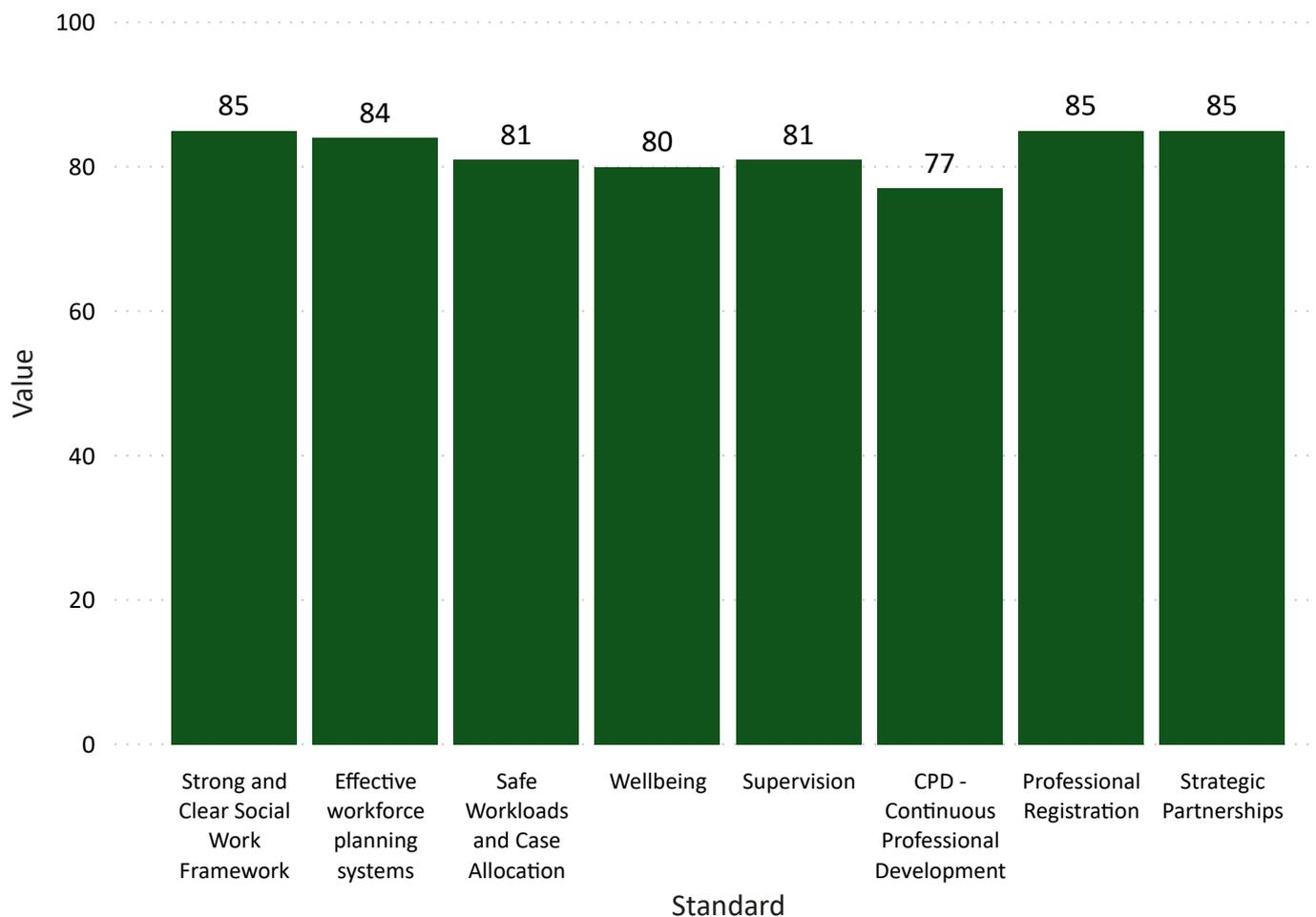
## How well do employers of social workers deliver the refreshed Employer Standards?

Figure 1 provides a visualisation of the mean scores across all Employer Standards.

The data shows that overall Standard 1 (Strong and Clear Social Work Framework), Standard 7 (Professional Registration) and Standard 8 (Strategic Partnerships) were most favourably rated with a score in the good range and Standard 6 (CPD - Continuous Professional Development) was least favourably rated but still with a score in the good range.

More granular analysis of the mean scores for the region can be found in appendix 2.

Figure 1: North East Scores



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

## How do social workers perceive their working environment?

Key Driver Analysis (KDA) was used to discover which aspects of the Employer Standards were most potent (impactful) in driving employee contribution in the workplace. These aspects are highlighted below in figures 2 & 3. The model used in this research – The Employment Deal Diagnostic (TEDD®) – and the technique behind KDA are explained in more detail in appendix 1.

The analysis revealed that: a) At the standard level, employers' delivery of various forms of Covid related support has the highest potency in driving employee contribution and b) At the more granular level, the most potent element emerged as: *I have been able to continue to access relevant learning opportunities and training through my organisation.*

Figure 2: Employee Contribution at the Standard Level

| Standards                              | Standard | Mean |
|--|----------|------|
| Covid                                  | Covid    | 75   |
| Wellbeing                              | 4        | 80   |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation     | 3        | 81   |
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework | 1        | 85   |
| Professional Registration              | 7        | 85   |

Figure 3: Employee Contribution at the more Granular Level

| Survey item   | Standard | Mean |
|---|----------|------|
| I have been able to continue to access relevant learning opportunities and training through my organisation                               | Covid    | 85   |
| I have good and effective relationships with key partners such as in the NHS, wider social care, education, housing, the third sector etc | 8        | 88   |
| My organisation takes appropriate action to prevent and deal with risks of violence, bullying and harassment in any aspect of my work.    | 4        | 81   |

## What factors influence them to remain in their organisations, or choose to leave?

Key Driver Analysis was also used to discover which aspects of the working environment were most potent in driving employee retention – the propensity or mindedness for employees to stay with their existing employers. These aspects are highlighted below in figures 4 & 5. The model used in this research – The Employment Deal Diagnostic (TEDD®) – is explained in more detail in appendix 1.

The analysis revealed that: a) At the standard level, employers' delivery of wellbeing-related support has the highest potency in driving desire to stay and b) At the more granular level, the most potent element emerged as: *My organisation facilitates my access to my Professional Association, Trade Union and other supportive organisations.*

Figure 4: Desire to Stay at the Standard Level

| Standards                              | Standard | Mean |
|--|----------|------|
| Wellbeing                              | 4        | 80   |
| Covid                                  | Covid    | 75   |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation     | 3        | 81   |
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework | 1        | 85   |
| Effective workforce planning systems   | 2        | 84   |

Figure 5: Desire to Stay at the more Granular Level

| Survey item   | Standard | Mean |
|---|----------|------|
| My organisation facilitates my access to my Professional Association, Trade Union and other supportive organisations.   | 4        | 81   |
| My organisation has ensured all staff are appropriately protected from the risk of infection by the virus and taken account of different individual risks of infection on grounds of (e.g.) age, ethnicity, prior health conditions, caring for others etc. | Covid    | 87   |
| Within my organisation, I have an up to date plan of my professional development needs and how I and my employer will contribute to them (review)   | 6        | 70   |
| I can raise concerns about the quality and suitability of my supervision with an appropriate person in the organisation if I need to  | 5        | 80   |
| I have continued to have satisfactory one to one supervision  | Covid    | 84   |

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide free text comments throughout the survey. The bubble chart below outlines the frequency rank of the top five themes from the free text comments. There are free text examples colour coordinated to the relevant theme.

Figure 6: Key Themes Bubble Chart



Survey respondents were given an opportunity, via the use of free-text, to provide more insights into their reasons for being a social worker. A selection of responses is provided below in figure 7.

Figure 7: Reasons For Working In Social Work Free Text Comments



Survey respondents were given an opportunity, via the use of free-text, to provide more insights into challenges faced in the workplace. A selection of responses is provided below in figure 8.

Figure 8: Biggest Challenges Faced Free Text Comments

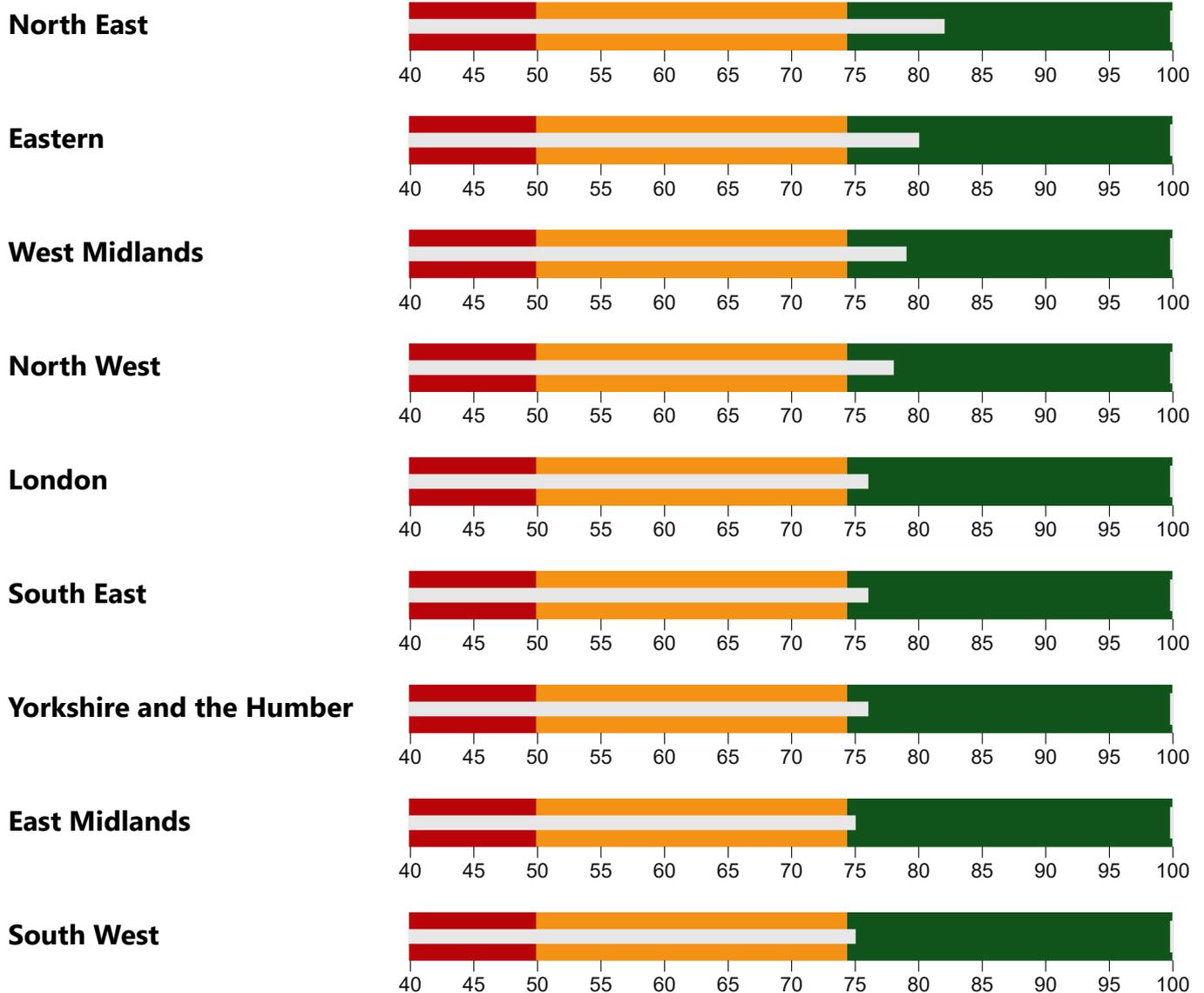




Figure 11 displays the combined overall mean scores for each standard, as reported by each region. A more granular analysis is available in appendix 3.

The results show a variance of 7% across the surveyed population. The North East region had the highest favourability rating in the good range and the South West had the least favourable rating – but also in the good range.

Figure 11: Overall Average by region





**(75+)**  
Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**



**(51 - 74)**  
Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**



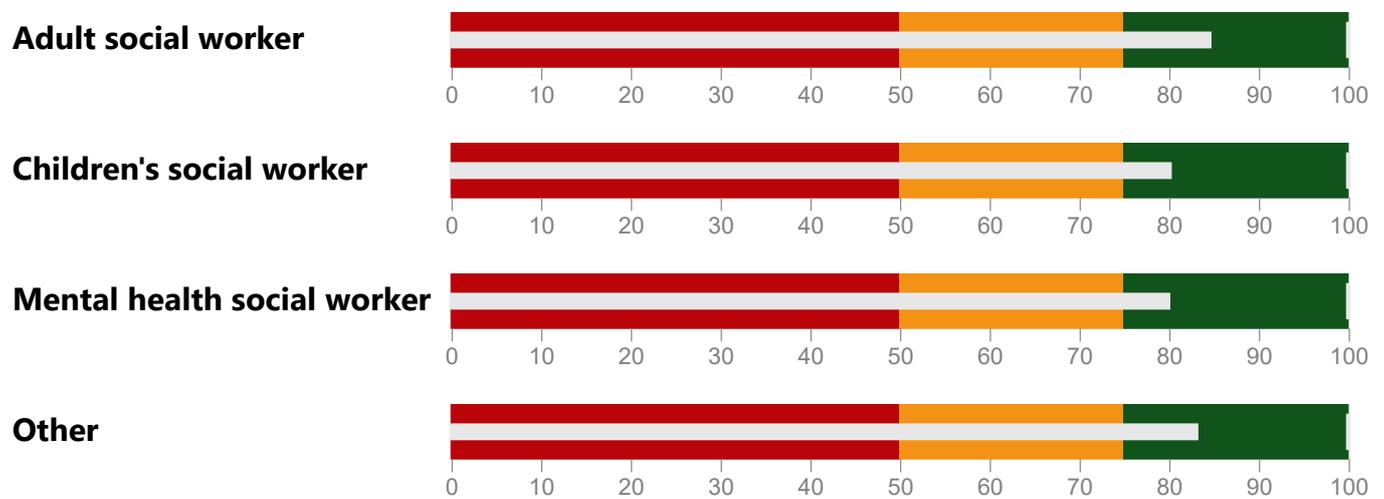
**(50 or less)**  
Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

Figure 12 below displays the combined overall mean scores for each standard as reported by type of social worker for the North East Region.

A more granular analysis is provided by the tables in appendix 4.

The results show a 5% variance across the surveyed population. Adult Social Workers had the highest favourability rating in the good range and Children’s Social Workers and Mental Health social workers had the least favourable, but also in the good range.

Figure 12: North East region overall average by type of social worker



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

Figure 13 displays the regional ranking for Adult Social Workers based on the overall mean scores for each standard.

The results show a 12% variance across the surveyed population. The North East region is in the good range and ranks first nationally with a score of 85.

Figure 14 displays the regional ranking for Children’s Social Workers based on the overall mean scores for each standard.

The results show a 10% variance across the surveyed population. The North East region is in the good range and ranks joint first nationally with a score of 80.

Figure 13: Regional ASW Ranking

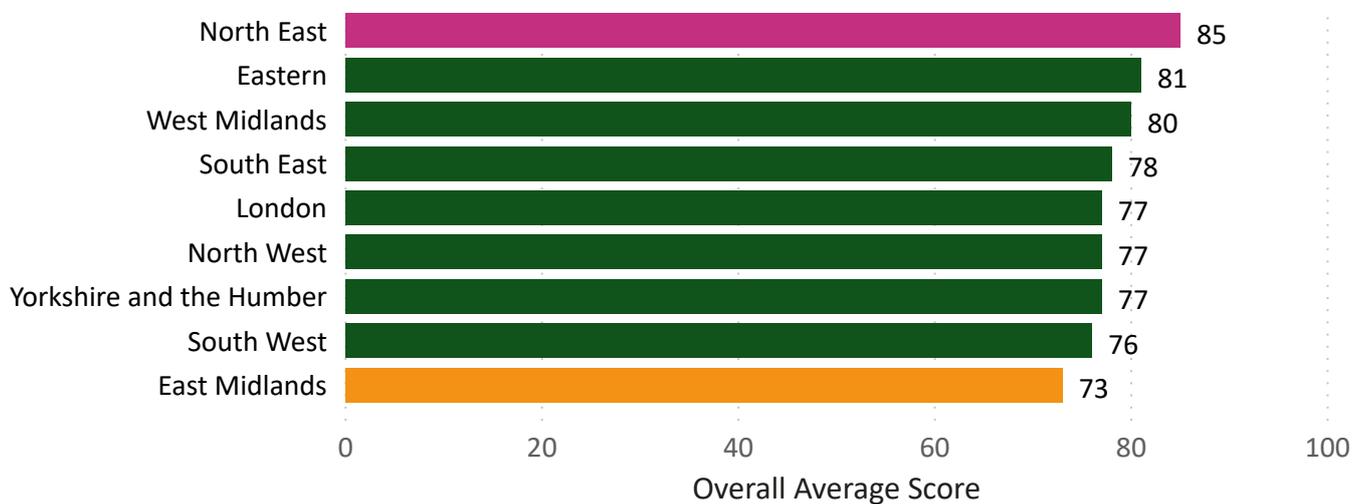
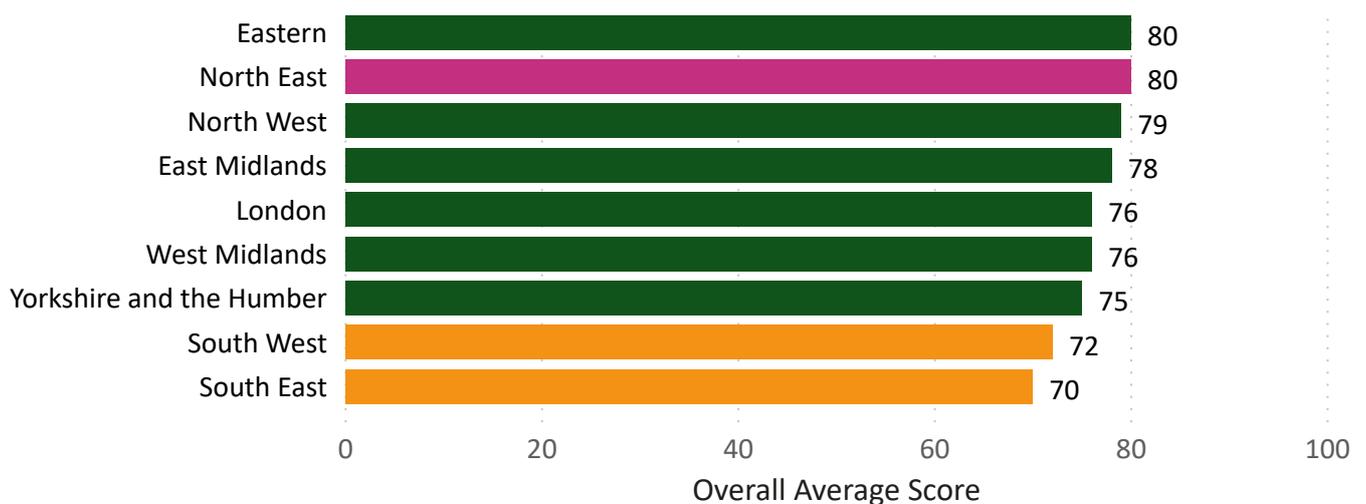


Figure 14: Regional CSW Ranking

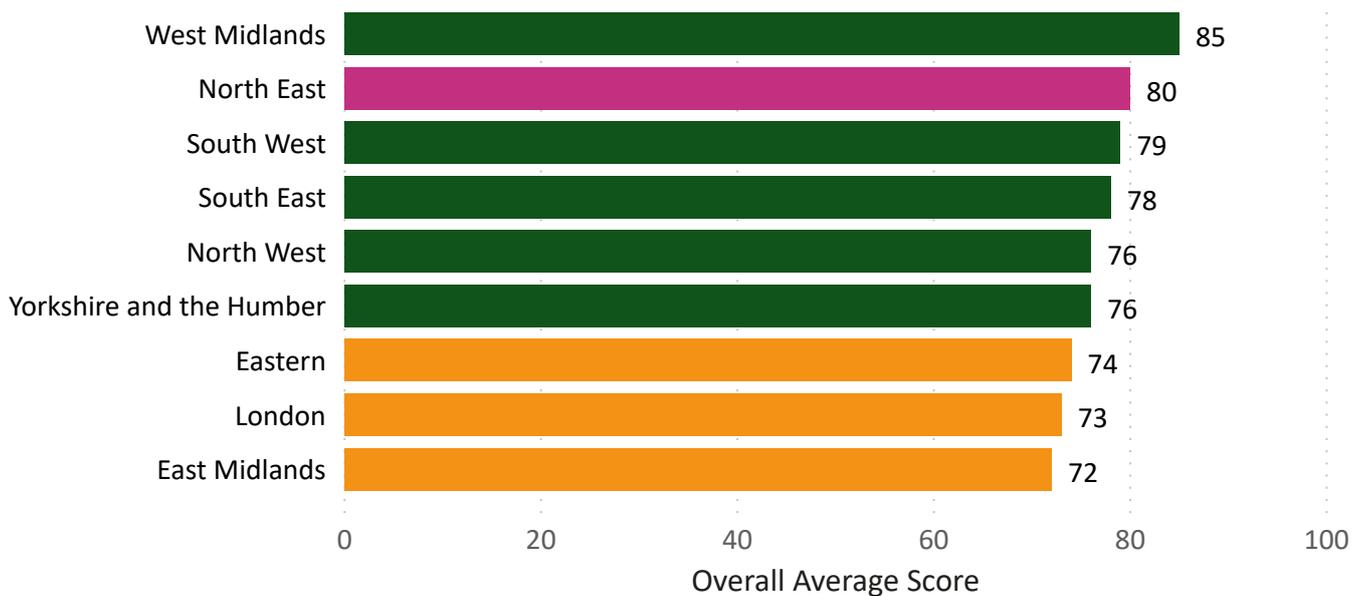


|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <br><b>(75+)</b><br>Good score / outcome to be celebrated.<br><b>SUSTAIN</b> | <br><b>(51 - 74)</b><br>Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.<br><b>MONITOR</b> | <br><b>(50 or less)</b><br>Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.<br><b>IMPROVE</b> |
|---|--|---|

Figure 15 displays the regional ranking for Mental Health Social Workers based on the overall mean scores for each standard.

The results show a 13% variance across the surveyed population. The North East region is in the good range and ranks second nationally with a score of 80.

Figure 15: Regional Mental Health Social Worker Ranking



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

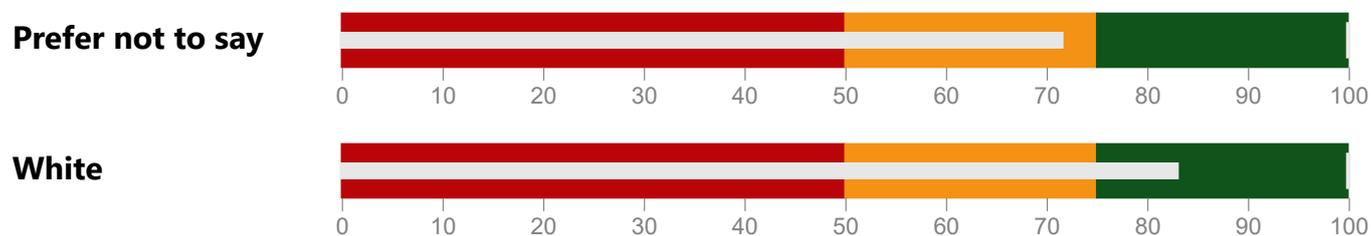
Figure 16 displays the overall mean scores for each standard as reported by ethnicity for the North East Region.

A more granular analysis is provided by the tables in appendix 4.

The results show a 12% variance across the surveyed population. The standards were rated highest by those who identified as *white*. The standards were rated least well in the moderate range by those who *prefer not to say*.

**Please note that several ethnicity groups within the North East had less than 10 respondents and are not displayed in this graph.**

Figure 16: North East region overall average by ethnicity



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

Figure 17 displays the regional ranking for the Asian population based on the overall mean scores for each standard.

The results show a 7% variance across the surveyed population. The North East region is in the good range and ranks first nationally with a score of 83.

Figure 18 displays the regional ranking for the Black population based on the overall mean scores for each standard.

The results show a 13% variance across the surveyed population. The North East region is in the moderate range and ranks first nationally with a score of 72.

Figure 17: Regional Ranking - Asian Population

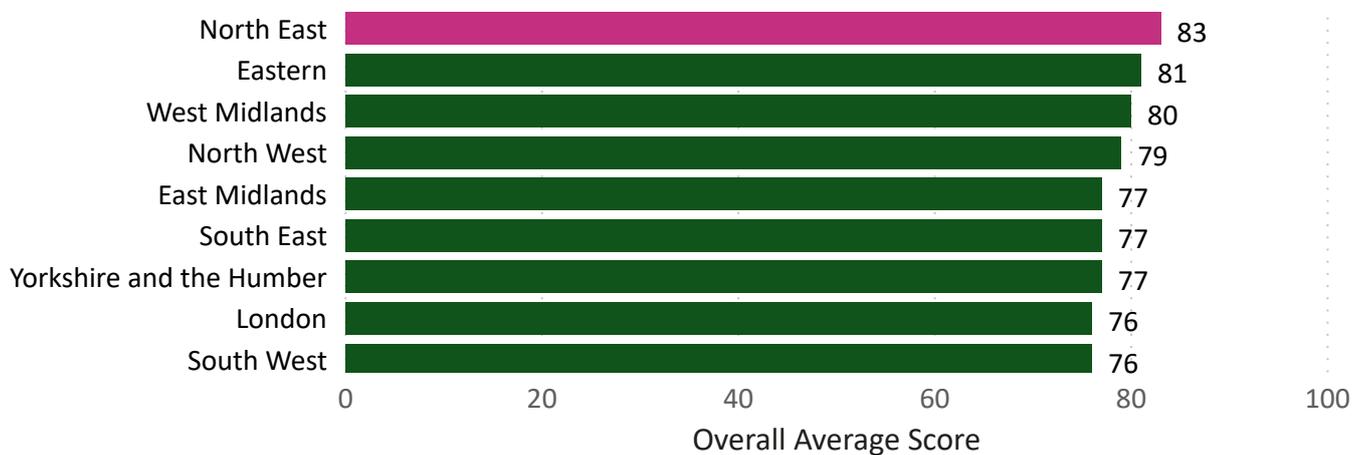
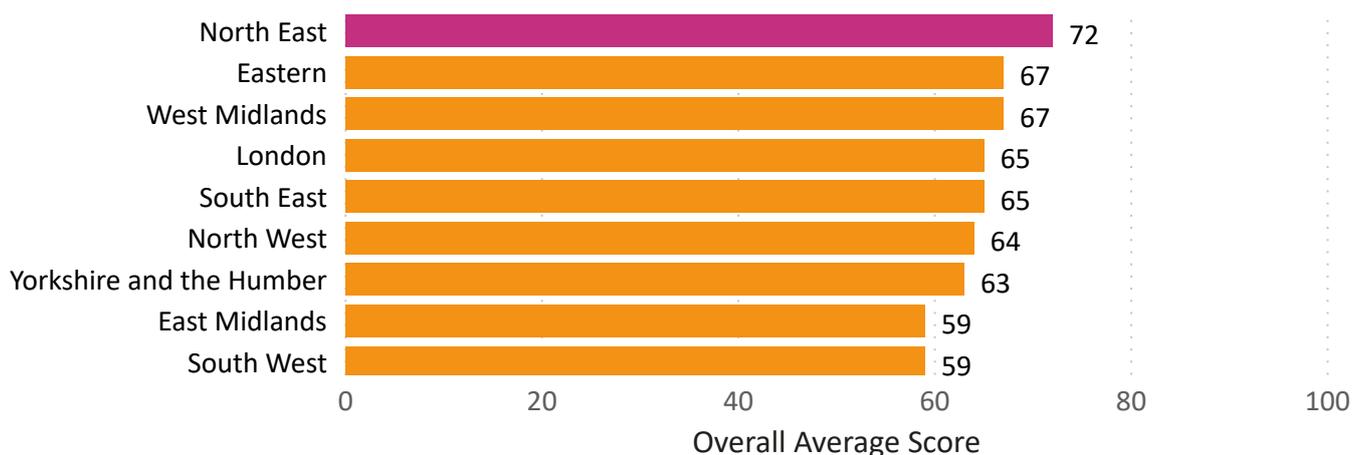


Figure 18: Regional Ranking - Black Population



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

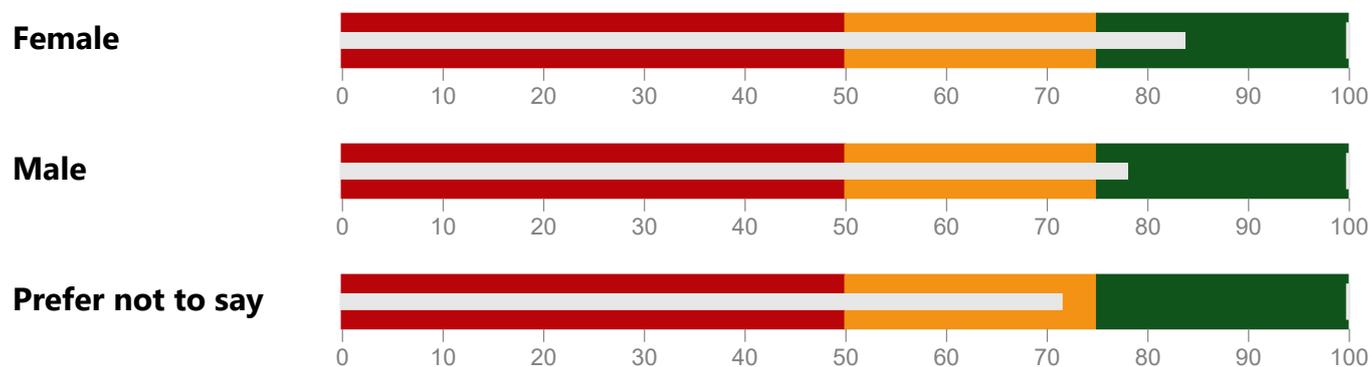
**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

Figure 19 displays the overall mean scores for each standard as reported by gender for the North East Region.

A more granular analysis is provided by the graph in appendix 4.

The results show a 12% variance across the surveyed population. Those who identified as *female* had the highest favourability rating in the good range and those who *prefer not to say* had the least favourable, in the moderate range.

Figure 19: North East region overall average by gender



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

Figure 20 displays the regional ranking for the female population based on the overall mean scores for each standard.

The results show a 7% variance across the surveyed population. The North East region is in the good range and ranks first nationally with a score of 84.

Figure 21 displays the regional ranking for the male population based on the overall mean scores for each standard.

The results show an 8% variance across the surveyed population. The North East region is in the good range and ranks fifth nationally with a score of 78.

Figure 20: Regional Ranking - Female Population

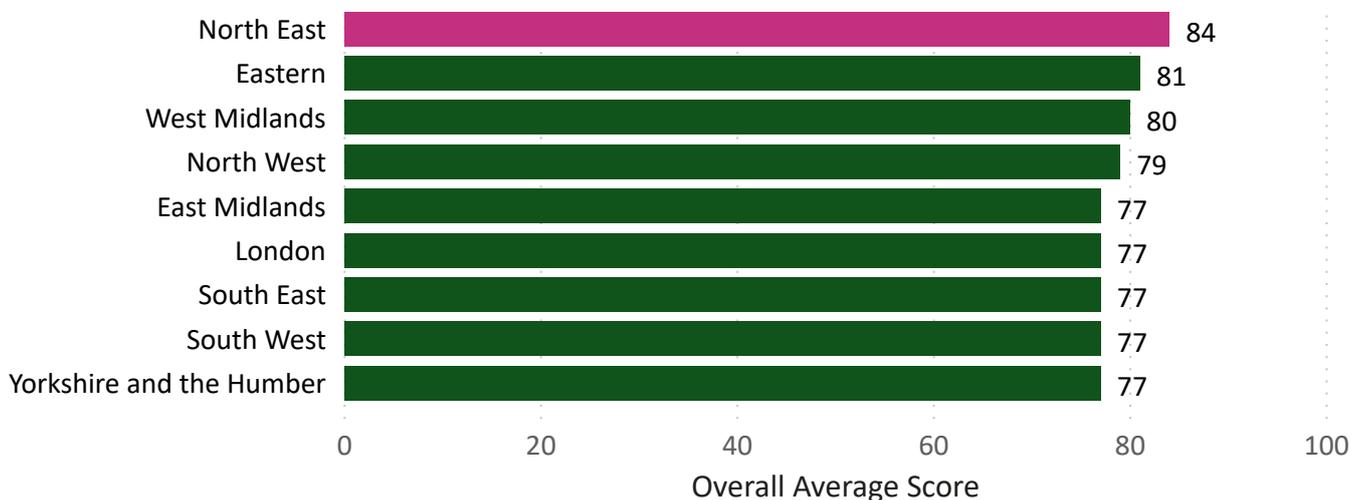
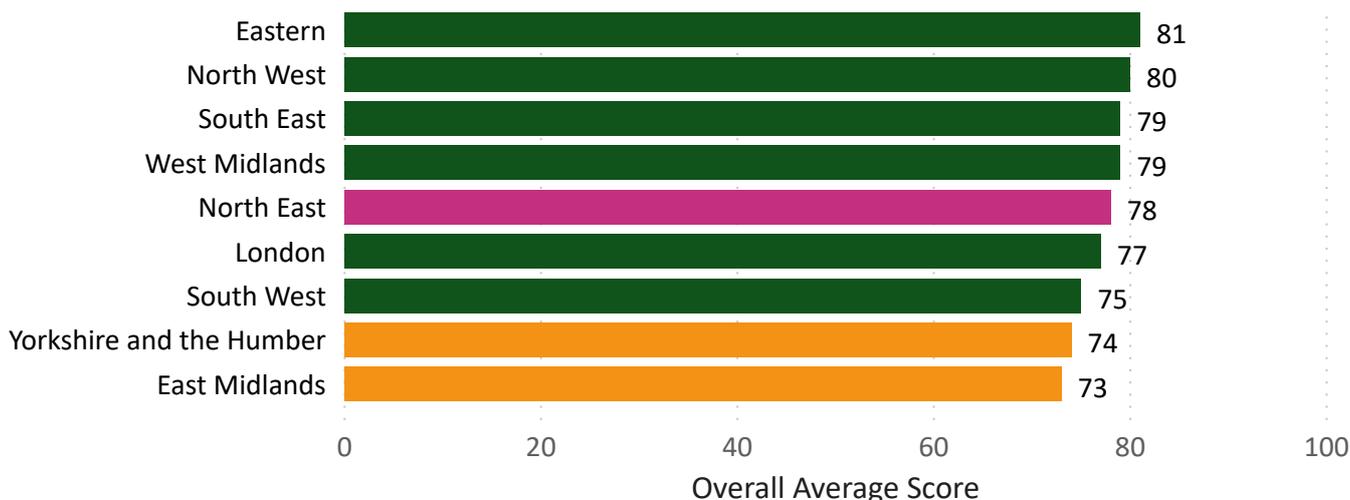


Figure 21: Regional Ranking - Male Population

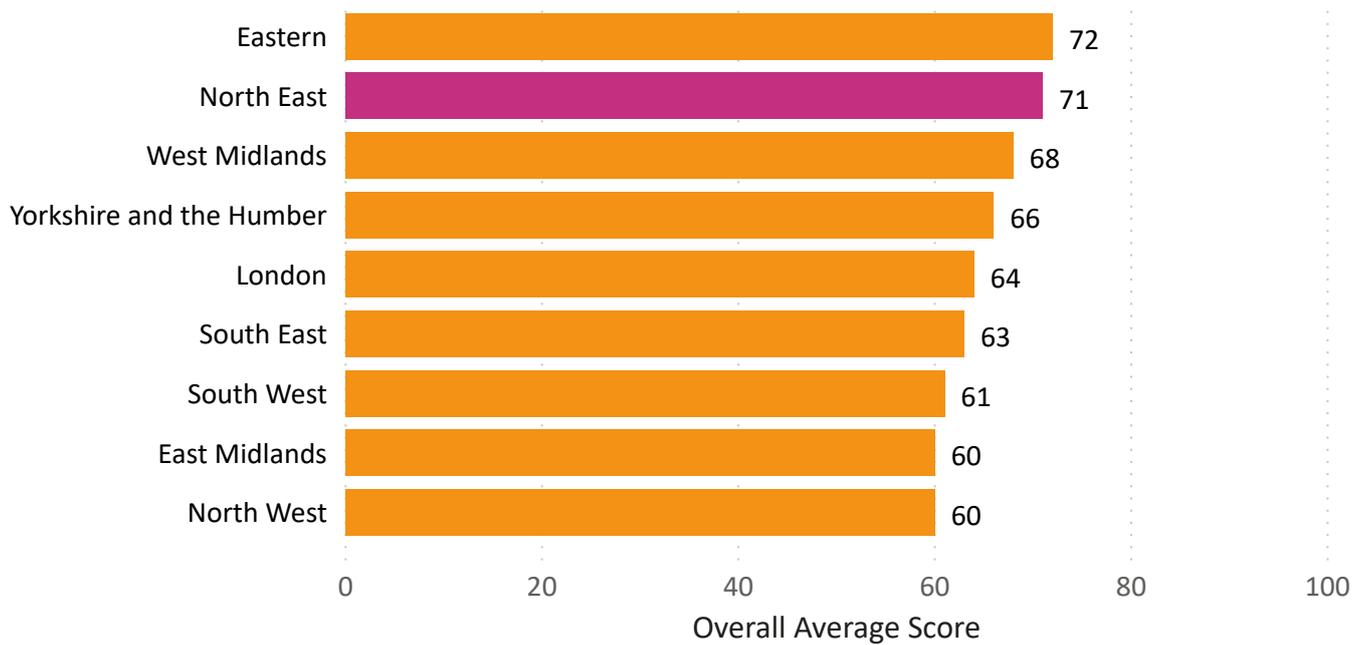


|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <br><b>(75+)</b><br>Good score /<br>outcome to be<br>celebrated.<br><b>SUSTAIN</b> | <br><b>(51 - 74)</b><br>Moderate score /<br>outcome. Capable<br>of improvement.<br><b>MONITOR</b> | <br><b>(50 or less)</b><br>Relatively poor score<br>/ outcome. A clear<br>signal to take steps<br>to improve.<br><b>IMPROVE</b> |
|---|--|--|

Figure 22 displays the regional ranking based on the overall mean scores for each standard for those who choose *prefer not to say*.

The results show a 12% variance across the surveyed population. The North East region is in the moderate range and ranks second nationally with a score of 71.

Figure 22: Regional Ranking - Prefer not to say Population



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

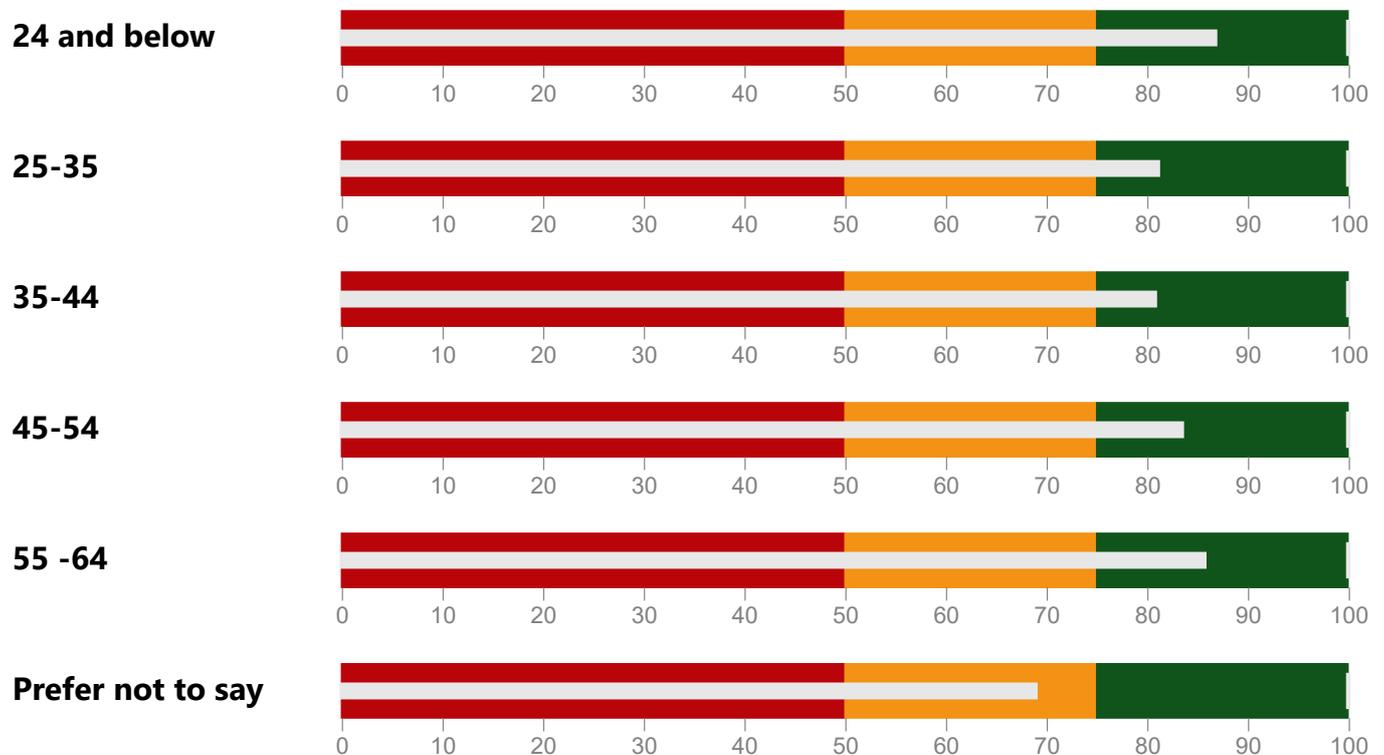
Figure 23 displays the overall mean scores for each standard as reported by age for the North East Region.

A more granular analysis is provided by the graph in appendix 4.

The results show an 18% variance across the surveyed population. Respondents in the 24 and below range had the highest favourability rating in the good range and those who prefer not to say had the least favourable, in the moderate range.

**Please note that there were less than 10 respondents from the North East in the 65 and older age bracket, consequentially this age bracket is not presented in this graph.**

Figure 23: North East region overall average by age



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

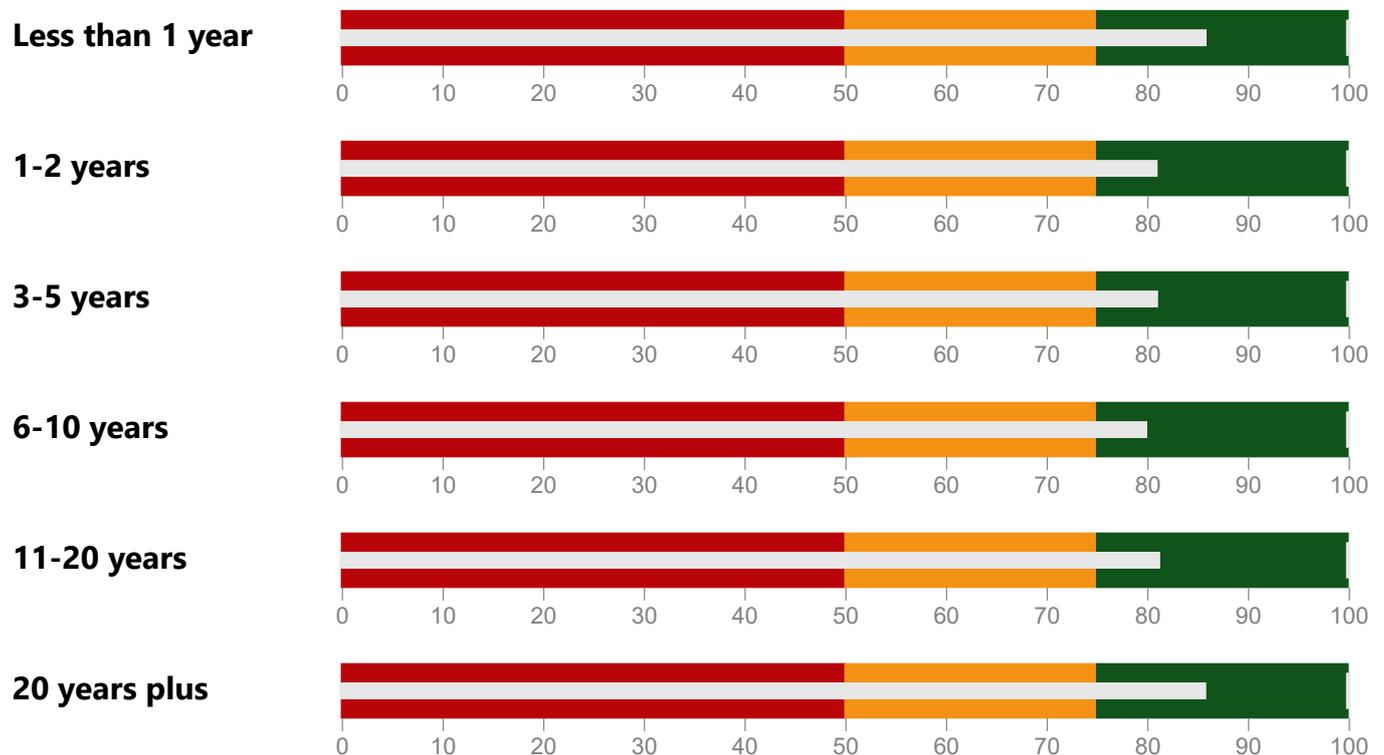
**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

Figure 24 displays the overall mean scores for each standard as reported by length of service for the North East Region. A more granular analysis is provided by the graph in appendix 4.

The results show a 6% variance across the surveyed population. Those with *less than 1 year's* experience had the highest favourability rating in the good range and those who had *6-10 years* of service had the least favourable but also in the good range.

Figure 24: North East region overall average by length of service



**(75+)**  
 Good score / outcome to be celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

**(51 - 74)**  
 Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

**(50 or less)**  
 Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

The evidence set out in this report provides an opportunity for organisations and related agencies involved in the delivery of social work to undertake *conversations for change* about how to improve the engagement and retention of staff through the adoption and delivery of the refreshed Employer Standards.

The research revealed a number of key themes, which have been examined in some detail within the main body of the report. These findings are broadly and succinctly summarised below:

### 1: Perception of Employer Standards

Overall, all eight standards were perceived favourably with scores in the good range – the highest rated standards being *Strong and Clear Social Framework*, *Professional Registration and Strategic Partnerships*. *Continuous Professional Development* was rated least favourably but still with a score in the good range.

While the overall results should be a source of encouragement to employers, ongoing efforts will be required to sustain and improve those levels. It is also important to note that views of employers' COVID-19 responses were well received overall – with employees reporting that they had received *good levels of support to work remotely and opportunities to maintain enough high quality, safe contact with colleagues*. The most challenging downsides of the pandemic were reported as an increase in severity of need of people being referred with consequential negative impacts on *feeling positive and able to cope with workload* and ability to work in a strength-based way.

These findings should be explored further and the lessons infused into the 'new normal' operating environment 'post Covid-19'.

### 2: Biggest impact on staff engagement

The quality of the employment relationship is shaped by the reliable delivery of obligations and promises by the employer. For example, the expectation that as an employee you will have access to adequate support, be treated fairly and offered the training essential to one's job role. In the narrative analysis, there were many positive comments regarding the existence of strong support structures. The key driver analysis highlights the importance of *having access to relevant learning opportunities and confidence in the organisation to take appropriate action to deal with risks of violence and bullying in the workplace*.

### 3: Biggest impact on staff retention (desire to stay)

The desire to stay with an organisation is a measure of organisational commitment. The evidence pointed strongly to key shaping influences such as employees *feeling safe in their role*, *having access to good supervision* and an *ongoing professional development plan*.

The new Employer Standards were refreshed most recently in 2020. The Local Government Association hosts the standards on its website on behalf of the sector and continues to work with stakeholder partners on their regular review through the Standards for Employers Working Group.

Supplementary items specifically related to the impact of Covid-19 and job/organisational engagement were added. The latter were drawn from TEDD® – an approach based on the concept of Social Exchange Theory (SET), which places the notion of reciprocity and mutuality at the heart of the employment relationship (also called the employment deal). This is used to create an expression of how employee engagement is encouraged, experienced and personified (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005; Conway and Briner, 2009; Francis et. al, 2012; Guest, 2014; Reddington and Weber, 2016).

A simplified illustration is shown in Figure 27 below. For a more detailed explanation, refer to an online report – [Developing a New Employment Deal for Local Government \(2017\) 1](#).

The model allows the delivery of the employer standards and Covid effort to be regarded as *Employer Contributions*, thereby permitting key driver analysis when viewing *Employee Contributions* and *Desire to Stay* as targets of interest.

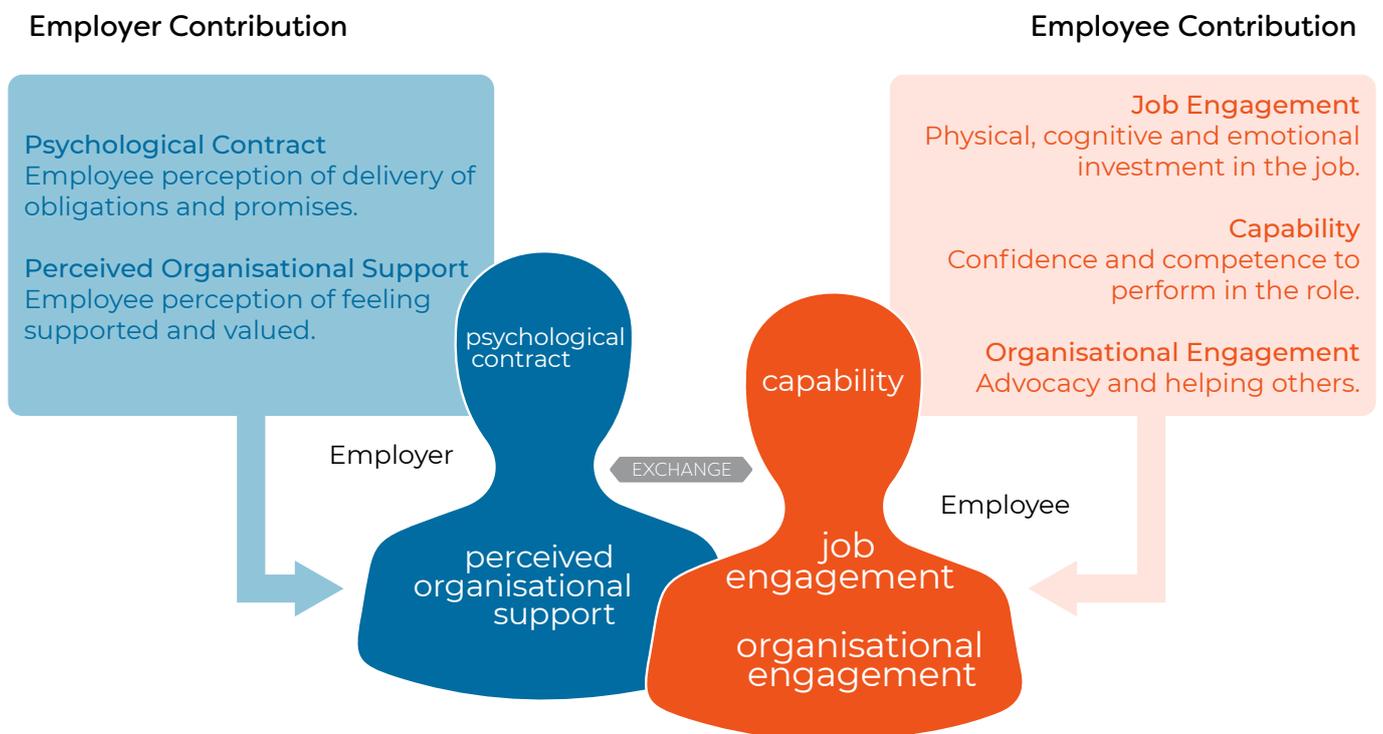


Figure 25: The Employment Relationship

The survey comprised the following elements:

- a. 59 rateable items using a 5 point Likert scale ranging from ‘Strongly Agree’ through ‘Strongly Disagree’ covering perceptions of the 8 Employer standards, the impact of Covid-19 and job/organisational engagement.
- b. Respondents had an opportunity to enhance their answers to the rateable questions with free text.
- c. A single free text item specifically requested a one-word answer about the ‘personality’ of the organisation.
- d. Demographics seeking information about a respondent’s job role, length of service, employment status, work location, age, gender and ethnicity.

The survey question set can be found in appendix 2.

The data collection phase for social services provider organisations in England was initiated through an email campaign managed by the LGA. These emails were sent out between 16th – 20th November, before the official launch date of the survey on 23 November. Further email reminders were sent out until the closing date on 22nd December 2020 to all contacts that had given permission via GDPR to be approached for marketing purposes. The emails were sent out centrally, region-by-region. Various social media channels were also used to raise awareness of the exercise, supplemented by newsletters (such as Social Work England).

All of these initiatives were designed to drive enquiries to a specific LGA workforce email address. The LGA team assumed ownership of the relationship with each participating organisation and provided further support and guidance to facilitate participation in the project, supported by the Kinetiq research team as appropriate.

All organisations that expressed a willingness to participate were checked for eligibility to do so by the LGA and the successful ones were then provided with a link to an online survey home page and a unique code that would allow more granular analytics to be performed on the data.

The LGA published regular response level updates to encourage maximum engagement with the exercise.

The quantitative (numeric) data was exposed to a variety of statistical analysis techniques:

- Cronbach's Alpha – a test for internal consistency and reliability of the responses.
- Test for Significance – a formal procedure for assessing the confidence of claims made from the analysis of the data
- Multiple Regression - a formal procedure to predict the value of a variable based on the value of two or more other variables. This is the basis of **key driver analysis**, explained in more detail on page 29.

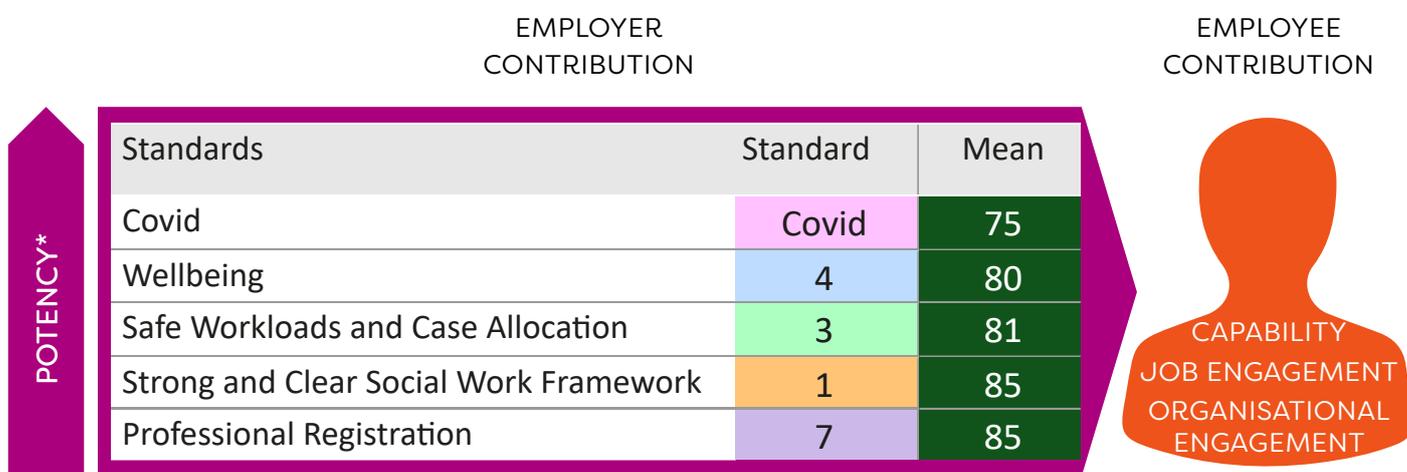
The results for the rateable items were calculated using mean values, as illustrated below. The thematic analysis of the qualitative data (free text) was conducted individually then collectively by the research team. Numeration (i.e. the frequency in which a theme appears within the data) was used to pull together the final set of themes, since numeration is one way of indicating their relative importance (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009) and is widely used by researchers where this type of evidence is a significant source. The other technique used was sentiment weighting. Employees' responses to the free-text questions were analysed using NVivo (a qualitative software analysis package), which helped to identify and extract opinions, emotions and attitudes from the qualitative data.

The research team were then able to blend statistical and free-text data to provide an enriched interpretation, with the relative importance of the different themes revealed when matched with the key drivers.

| Example Survey Question:  |                |       |                            |          |   |            |
|---|----------------|-------|----------------------------|----------|---|------------|
| My supervisor and/or manager encourage and motivate me in my career development |                |       |                            |          |   |            |
|   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neither Agree Nor Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree                             |            |
|   | 100            | 75    | 50                         | 25       | 0   | Score      |
| Respondent 1  | ✓              |       |                            |          |   | 100        |
| Respondent 2  |                |       |                            |          | ✓   | 0          |
| Respondent 3  |                |       |                            | ✓        |   | 25         |
| Respondent 4  |                | ✓     |                            |          |   | 75         |
| Respondent 5  |                | ✓     |                            |          |   | 75         |
| Respondent 6  |                |       | ✓                          |          |   | 50         |
|   |                |       |                            |          | <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>325</b> |
|   |                |       |                            |          | <b>Respondents' Overall Score (Total ÷ 6)</b> | <b>54</b>  |

Key Driver Analysis (KDA) helps to focus on those features of the employment relationship that have the greatest impact on how employees contribute at work, expressed as job engagement, organisational engagement and capability – see figure 26 below. Using an analysis technique known as multiple regression, the key drivers (predictor variables) are shown as rateable items from the survey with their associated mean scores and arranged in ascending order of potency on Employee Contribution (outcome variable). The relevance of these results is explained in more detail on pages 8 and 9 of this report.

Figure 26 : Illustration of Key Drivers impacting Employee Contribution



\*Potency is an expression of the impact a change in the predictor variable has on the outcome variable.



| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework   |       |
|--|-------|
| Questions  | Score |
| 1. My organisation has a well-defined framework/approach to social work practice so I am clear about my role and accountability                              | 86    |
| 2. I am able to use my professional judgement, creativity and autonomous decision making where appropriate   | 86    |
| 3. I receive an appropriate balance of professional support and reflective challenge (e.g. through supervision) to keep learning and developing my practice. | 82    |
| 4. I have access to support and advice from senior social work leader/s within my organisation (e.g. Principal Social Worker or Senior Managers)             | 87    |

| Effective workforce planning systems  |       |
|---|-------|
| Questions   | Score |
| 1. Through my organisation, I can access the post-qualifying training and development support I need to do my role and keep progressing | 87    |
| 2. My supervisor and/or manager encourage and motivate me in my career development.   | 85    |
| 3. My organisation ensures fair and equal treatment of all staff.   | 80    |

| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation  |       |
|---|-------|
| Questions   | Score |
| 1. I am usually allocated (or otherwise pick up) work through a fair process that takes account of my workload, my capabilities/skills and my health and wellbeing. | 77    |
| 2. I can discuss workload and stress issues helpfully with my supervisor or manager and agree satisfactory ways forward   | 86    |
| 3. I know where to go to get help in my organisation if I am concerned about my wellbeing in respect of amount or nature of work I am expected to do                | 86    |
| 4. I would feel able to contact my Professional Association and/or Trade Union if I am concerned about safe working   | 85    |
| 5. I usually have a satisfactory level of control over my workload and the resources I need to fulfil my responsibilities   | 73    |



| Well-being   |       |
|--|-------|
| Questions  | Score |
| 1. I am encouraged and empowered by my organisation to make time for my own self-care and wellbeing activities   | 73    |
| 2. I have time and space for supportive peer to peer and team discussion   | 77    |
| 3. My organisation recognises the emotional demands of social work and provides me with the supervision, support and tools I need to deal with this                            | 76    |
| 4. My organisation takes appropriate action to prevent and deal with risks of violence, bullying and harassment in any aspect of my work.                                      | 81    |
| 5. My organisation is actively committed to anti-racism and a positive, inclusive culture of opportunity for members of staff of all backgrounds and protected characteristics | 89    |
| 6. My organisation facilitates my access to my Professional Association, Trade Union and other supportive organisations.   | 81    |
| 7. I feel cared for by my managers and/or supervisor.  | 84    |
| 8. I feel safe in my role & the work I am expected to do.  | 81    |
| 9. I have access to private, quality space in order to meet my supervisor & people I work with.  | 80    |
| 10. My employer has in place caring and effective systems for reporting and responding to concerns I raise, and will act to ensure I am able to work safely.                   | 80    |

| Supervision   |       |
|---|-------|
| Questions   | Score |
| 1. I have uninterrupted, scheduled supervision at a suitable frequency with an appropriately skilled social work supervisor             | 84    |
| 2. Supervision helps me critically reflect on my work including working relationships, emotions and use of evidence                     | 80    |
| 3. I identify my learning needs and access professional development opportunities and training through supervision                      | 82    |
| 4. Supervision helps me reflect on how I meet professional regulatory standards   | 78    |
| 5. My supervisor coaches me in the development my professional judgement, creativity and autonomous decision making                     | 80    |
| 6. I can raise concerns about the quality and suitability of my supervision with an appropriate person in the organisation if I need to | 80    |



| CPD - Continuous Professional Development  |       |
|--|-------|
| Questions  | Score |
| 1. My organisation provides effective induction for all social workers when they join the organisation   | 79    |
| 2. (If you completed the ASYE in the last three years in your current organisation) My ASYE programme was effective in helping me learn and develop as a social worker and be more confident.                  | 76    |
| 3. My organisation provides regular/annual appraisals (or performance reviews) that are relevant for social workers.   | 78    |
| 4. Within my organisation, I have an up to date plan of my professional development needs and how I and my employer will contribute to them (review)   | 70    |
| 5. I have dedicated time, resources, opportunities and support to carry out my CPD and record my learning in line with regulatory requirements   | 66    |
| 6. My organisation has non-discriminatory and transparent systems to enable all social workers to develop their professional skills, knowledge, specialisms and careers including access to accredited courses | 83    |
| 7. I take action to ensure I am up to date with my CPD   | 89    |

| Professional Registration   |       |
|---|-------|
| Questions   | Score |
| 1. I have found the registration/re-registration process with Social Work England straightforward                                     | 87    |
| 2. My organisation supports me in keeping my CPD record up to date on the Social Work England website                                 | 81    |
| 3. My organisation understands, supports and provides conditions for social work practice that help me meet my professional standards | 86    |
| 4. My organisation promotes a working environment that upholds ethical practice and quality standards                                 | 87    |
| 5. I am aware of the circumstances under which I could be referred to the regulator   | 90    |
| 6. I am confident my organisation would support me if I challenged unsafe practice or reported other concerns about services          | 82    |

| Strategic Partnerships   |       |
|--|-------|
| Questions  | Score |
| 1. I have good and effective relationships with key partners such as in the NHS, wider social care, education, housing, the third sector etc       | 88    |
| 2. My employer has a clear policy for recruiting, training and supporting social workers to train as practice educators, and practice supervisors. | 82    |

 **(75+)**  
Good score /  
outcome to be  
celebrated.  
**SUSTAIN**

 **(51 - 74)**  
Moderate score /  
outcome. Capable  
of improvement.  
**MONITOR**

 **(50 or less)**  
Relatively poor score  
/ outcome. A clear  
signal to take steps  
to improve.  
**IMPROVE**

\*Indicates scores are reverse logic, i.e. a higher score is a relatively poor outcome:

**(0-50)**

**(51 - 74)**

**(75+)**

| Covid  |       |
|--|-------|
| Questions  | Score |
| 1. I have been supported by my organisation to continue to work safely and effectively within a clear social work practice framework.  | 86    |
| 2. I have had access to the practice guidance and technology I have needed to work online/remotely with people using services and colleagues   | 88    |
| 3. My organisation has ensured all staff are appropriately protected from the risk of infection by the virus and taken account of different individual risks of infection on grounds of (e.g.) age, ethnicity, prior health conditions, caring for others etc. | 87    |
| 4. I have been able to maintain enough, high quality, safe contact with the people I work with to ensure their welfare and to meet my statutory and/or organisational responsibilities   | 86    |
| 5. I have experienced an increase in severity of need in people being referred to me and/or my team  | 82    |
| 6. I have felt positive and able to cope with work most of the time  | 71    |
| 7. I have continued to have satisfactory one to one supervision  | 84    |
| 8. My supervisor has helped me manage my overall wellbeing and work life balance.  | 80    |
| 9. I have been able to continue to access relevant learning opportunities and training through my organisation   | 85    |
| 10. Changes during the pandemic have enabled me to work in a more strength based way with my clients.  | 65    |

| Employee contribution                        |       |
|--|-------|
| Questions                                    | Score |
| 1. I am confident in carrying out my role    | 88    |
| 2. I feel a sense of pride about my job      | 91    |
| 3. I would recommend my employer to a friend | 85    |

 **(75+)**  
SUSTAIN  
Good score /  
outcome to be  
celebrated.

 **(51 - 74)**  
MONITOR  
Moderate score /  
outcome. Capable  
of improvement.

 **(50 or less)**  
IMPROVE  
Relatively poor score  
/ outcome. A clear  
signal to take steps  
to improve.

\*Indicates scores are reverse logic, i.e. a higher score is a relatively poor outcome:

**(0-50)**

**(51 - 74)**

**(75+)**

The tables below outline the regional averages for the eight Employer Standards

| Tension  |       |
|--|-------|
| Questions  | Score |
| I am often required to do more with less resources | 79    |

| Overall satisfaction   |       |
|--|-------|
| Questions  | Score |
| Overall, I am satisfied with my employment 'deal' – what my employer provides for me and what I am expected to provide in return | 81    |

| Desire to stay  |       |
|---|-------|
| Questions   | Score |
| As I see currently see things, I do not intend to leave my employer over the next 12 months | 84    |



**(75+)**  
Good score / outcome to be celebrated.

SUSTAIN



**(51 - 74)**  
Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.

MONITOR



**(50 or less)**  
Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.

IMPROVE

The following tables outline the North East region scores across type of social worker, ethnicity, gender, age and length of service

| Standard                                  | Eastern | London | North East | North West | West Midlands |
|---|---------|--------|------------|------------|---------------|
| ▲   |         |        |            |            |               |
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework    | 85      | 82     | 85         | 81         | 82            |
| Effective workforce planning systems      | 81      | 77     | 84         | 79         | 80            |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation        | 79      | 76     | 81         | 78         | 79            |
| Wellbeing                                 | 79      | 74     | 80         | 76         | 78            |
| Supervision                               | 78      | 74     | 81         | 77         | 78            |
| CPD - Continuous Professional Development | 76      | 70     | 77         | 70         | 75            |
| Professional Registration                 | 82      | 79     | 85         | 82         | 83            |
| Strategic Partnerships                    | 82      | 79     | 85         | 82         | 80            |
| Overall average                           | 80      | 76     | 82         | 78         | 79            |
| N   | 718     | 1402   | 646        | 1589       | 997           |

| Standard                                  | East Midlands | South East | South West | Yorkshire and the Humber |
|---|---------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|
| ▲   |               |            |            |                          |
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework    | 80            | 80         | 79         | 80                       |
| Effective workforce planning systems      | 75            | 76         | 75         | 76                       |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation        | 77            | 78         | 78         | 75                       |
| Wellbeing                                 | 72            | 74         | 74         | 73                       |
| Supervision                               | 73            | 76         | 75         | 74                       |
| CPD - Continuous Professional Development | 68            | 70         | 68         | 71                       |
| Professional Registration                 | 78            | 78         | 78         | 79                       |
| Strategic Partnerships                    | 79            | 78         | 77         | 81                       |
| Overall average                           | 75            | 76         | 75         | 76                       |
| N   | 942           | 1189       | 915        | 657                      |



North East region Standard scores by type of social worker

| Standard                                  | Adult social worker | Children's social worker | Mental health social worker | Other |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework    | 87                  | 84                       | 83                          | 85    |
| Effective workforce planning systems      | 86                  | 82                       | 83                          | 82    |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation        | 83                  | 78                       | 80                          | 85    |
| Supervision                               | 83                  | 79                       | 75                          | 84    |
| CPD - Continuous Professional Development | 82                  | 72                       | 78                          | 75    |
| Professional Registration                 | 88                  | 84                       | 84                          | 84    |
| Strategic Partnerships                    | 87                  | 83                       | 82                          | 85    |
| N   | 290                 | 244                      | 57                          | 48    |

North East region Standard scores by ethnicity

| Standard                                  | Prefer not to say | White |
|---|-------------------|-------|
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework    | 73                | 86    |
| Effective workforce planning systems      | 74                | 85    |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation        | 67                | 82    |
| Supervision                               | 68                | 81    |
| CPD - Continuous Professional Development | 67                | 78    |
| Professional Registration                 | 75                | 86    |
| Strategic Partnerships                    | 81                | 85    |
| N   | 37                | 590   |

North East region Standard scores by gender

| Standard                                  | Female | Male | Prefer not to say |
|---|--------|------|-------------------|
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework    | 87     | 81   | 71                |
| Effective workforce planning systems      | 85     | 80   | 74                |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation        | 83     | 77   | 66                |
| Supervision                               | 82     | 78   | 71                |
| CPD - Continuous Professional Development | 78     | 74   | 68                |
| Professional Registration                 | 87     | 81   | 75                |
| Strategic Partnerships                    | 86     | 78   | 80                |
| N   | 524    | 87   | 32                |



**(75+)**  
Good score /  
outcome to be  
celebrated.



**(51 - 74)**  
Moderate score /  
outcome. Capable  
of improvement.



**(50 or less)**  
Relatively poor score  
/ outcome. A clear  
signal to take steps  
to improve.

North East region Standard scores by age

| Standard                                  | 24 and below | 25-35 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55 -64 | Prefer not to say |
|---|--------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------------------|
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework    | 88           | 85    | 84    | 86    | 89     | 67                |
| Effective workforce planning systems      | 93           | 85    | 82    | 85    | 85     | 69                |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation        | 85           | 79    | 79    | 84    | 86     | 63                |
| Supervision                               | 87           | 80    | 78    | 82    | 85     | 65                |
| CPD - Continuous Professional Development | 82           | 75    | 75    | 78    | 82     | 67                |
| Professional Registration                 | 89           | 85    | 85    | 86    | 87     | 76                |
| Strategic Partnerships                    | 83           | 82    | 84    | 87    | 88     | 80                |
| N   | 26           | 143   | 169   | 160   | 112    | 27                |

North East region Standard scores by length of service

| Standard                                  | Less than 1 year | 1-2 years | 3-5 years | 6-10 years | 11-20 years | 20 years plus |
|---|------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| Strong and Clear Social Work Framework    | 88               | 83        | 84        | 84         | 84          | 88            |
| Effective workforce planning systems      | 91               | 85        | 83        | 82         | 80          | 86            |
| Safe Workloads and Case Allocation        | 85               | 79        | 79        | 77         | 80          | 86            |
| Supervision                               | 84               | 81        | 82        | 75         | 78          | 85            |
| CPD - Continuous Professional Development | 82               | 76        | 73        | 75         | 77          | 80            |
| Professional Registration                 | 88               | 84        | 84        | 84         | 85          | 87            |
| Strategic Partnerships                    | 85               | 79        | 82        | 85         | 86          | 89            |
| N   | 79               | 78        | 105       | 109        | 148         | 127           |

**(75+)**

Good score / outcome to be celebrated.

**(51 - 74)**

Moderate score / outcome. Capable of improvement.

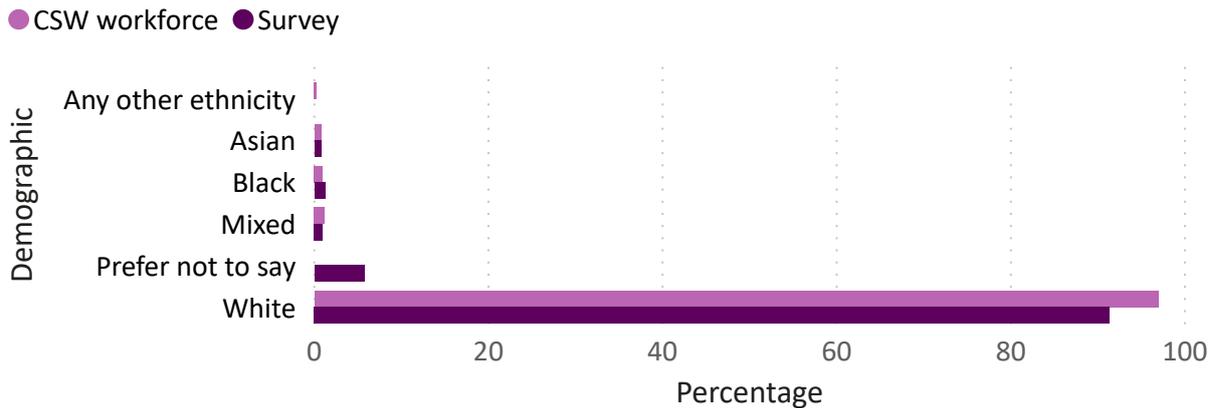
**(50 or less)**

Relatively poor score / outcome. A clear signal to take steps to improve.

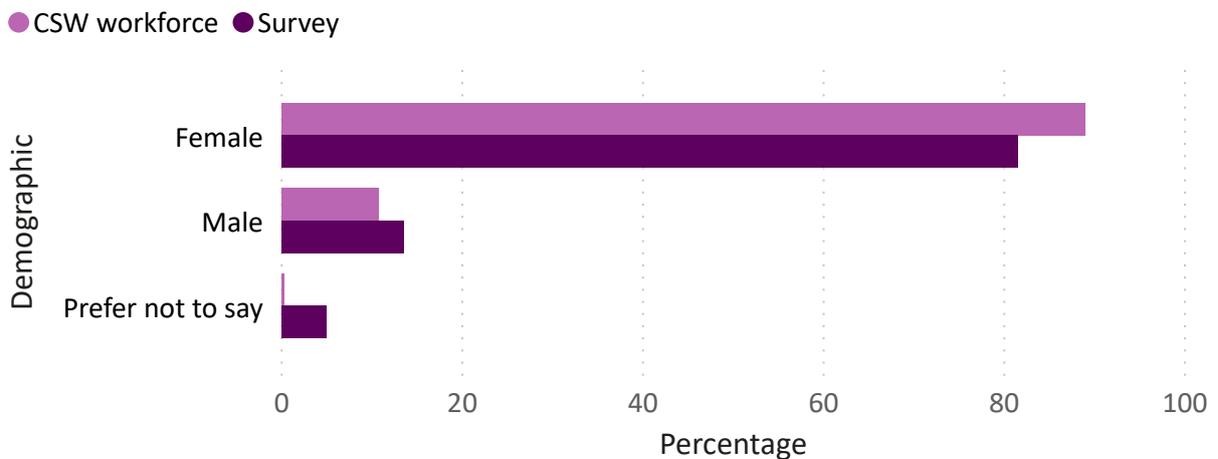
The figures below provide a comparison of the demographic representation of survey respondents from North East to the national picture for the Children’s Social Workers workforce.

**Please note the CSW national workforce dataset was the sole source that allowed for regional comparison.**

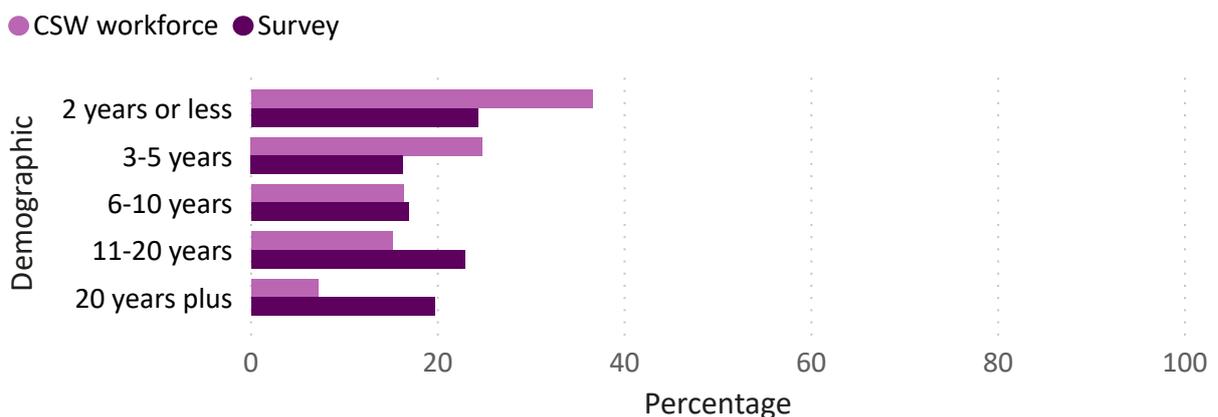
Survey Respondents and Children's Social Workers Workforce Ethnicity Comparison



Survey Respondents and Children's Social Workers Workforce Gender Comparison



Survey Respondents and Children's Social Workers Workforce Length of Service Comparison



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