

Recruiting and retaining more young people into the adult social care workforce

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Project research under way

| Research | Publication | Purpose |
|---|------------------|--|
| Quantitative research of the social care workforce | Late 2023 | Understand the current workforce and characteristics of under-25s |
| Qualitative research with social care providers | Spring 2024 | Find out providers' opinions on hiring under-25s |
| Qualitative research with under-25 careworkers | Summer 2024 | Find out their reasons for joining – and leaving – the sector and any problems they face |

This project

Social care has a particular problem recruiting and retaining younger staff.

Under-25s make up 17% of the working-age population but only 8% of all social care staff and 11% of care workers. The average age of a person joining the social care workforce is 35.

This new project will provide analysis, insight and recommendations for providers and policy-makers to help answer the central question:
how can the social care sector most effectively recruit and retain younger workers?

Younger people in adult social care: what does the data tell us?

Analysis of the Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set provided by Skills for Care

Key findings

- Only 8% of the adult social care workforce are under-25, compared to 11% of the overall workforce, 13% in retail and 50% of all waiters and waitresses.
- There is wide variation between providers: some providers have more than 1 in 5 under-25 in their workforce; others have no under-25s at all.
- This is despite considerable recruitment – of those who started in their current role less than a year ago, 17% are under 25.
- There is substantial turnover of under-25s over time: only 12% of under-25 direct care workers* in 2014 were definitely still in the social care sector nine years later.
- For some of those who stay, there are opportunities: some have gone on to management and professional roles in social care.

**Much of this research focuses on direct care workers – those directly working with people who need care and support. Most of those working in direct care are care workers or senior care workers.*

Notes on data quality: Not every worker will appear in this dataset, as contributing to this dataset is voluntary for independent providers – around half do. Numbers are therefore only indicative, particularly those looking at retention or progression over time.

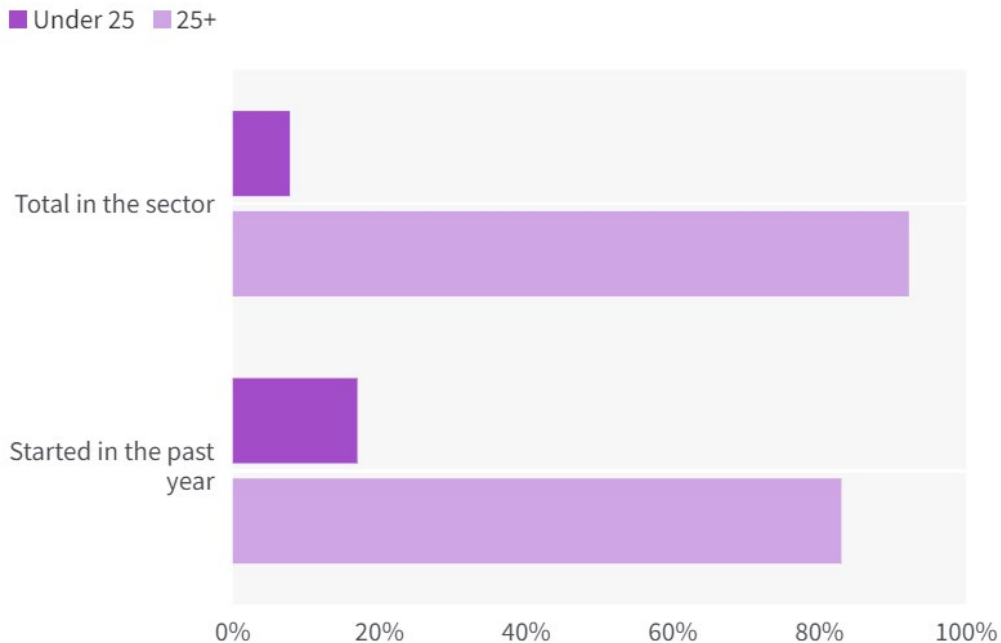
Who are the under-25s in social care workforce?

How many under-25s are there?

More new starters are under-25

Only 8% of the total social care workforce are under-25.

This rises to 17% when looking at workers who started in their current role less than a year ago.



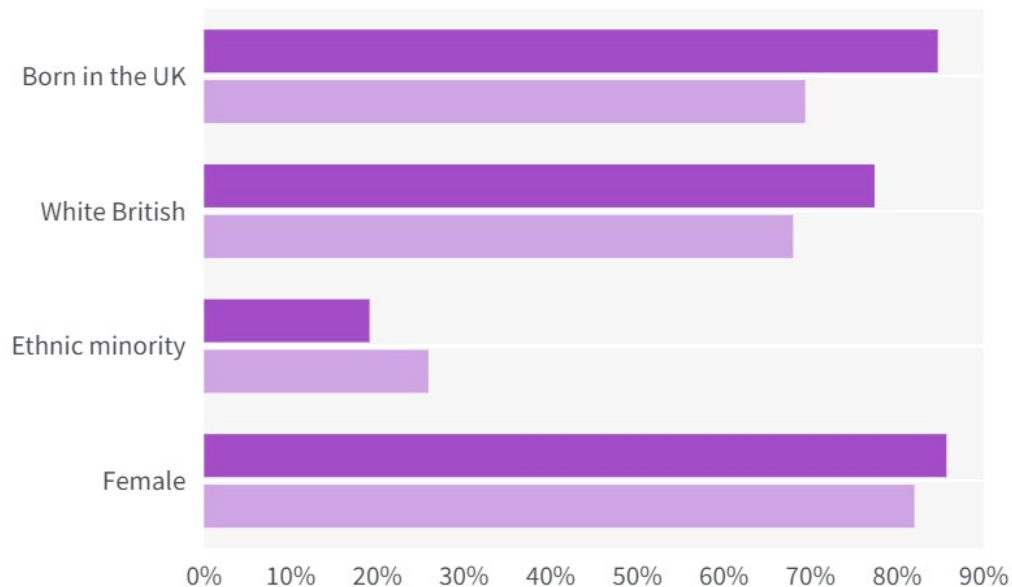
Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

TheKingsFund

Who are the under-25 workforce?

Under-25s tend to be female and white British

■ Under-25 ■ 25+



Compared to the older workforce, under-25 direct care workers are less likely to be from an ethnic minority background and more likely to be born in the UK, indicating young people do not move to the UK to work in social care.

Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

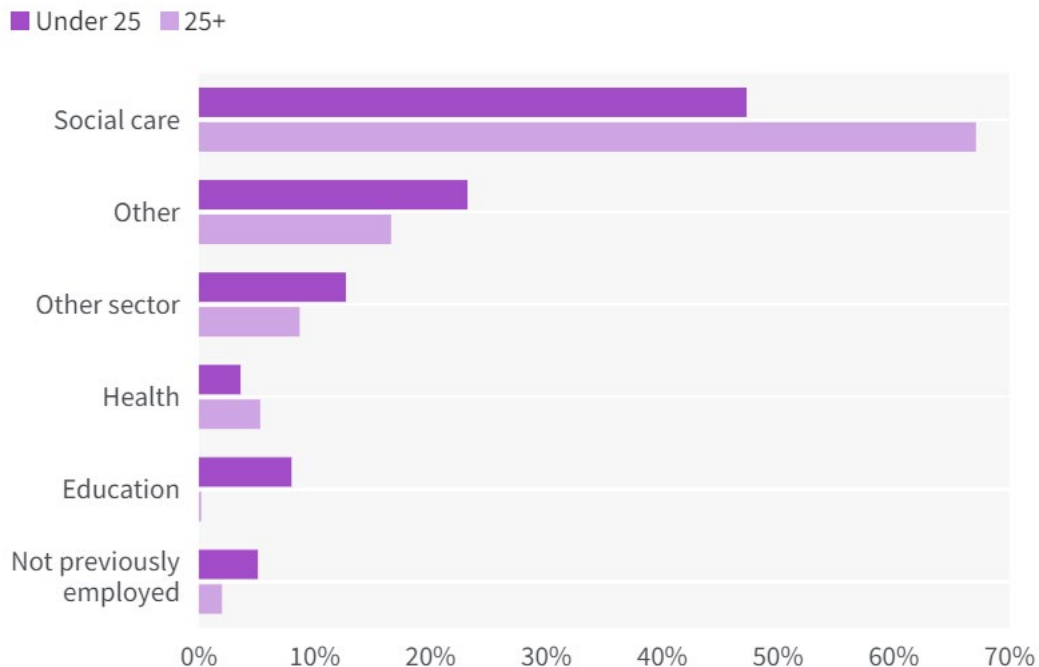
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Where have they come from?

Under-25s come from a wider range of sectors than 25+

47% of the under-25 direct care workforce are recruited from social care, compared to 67% of 25+.

More under-25s than older workers come from education, other sectors, or have not been previously employed.

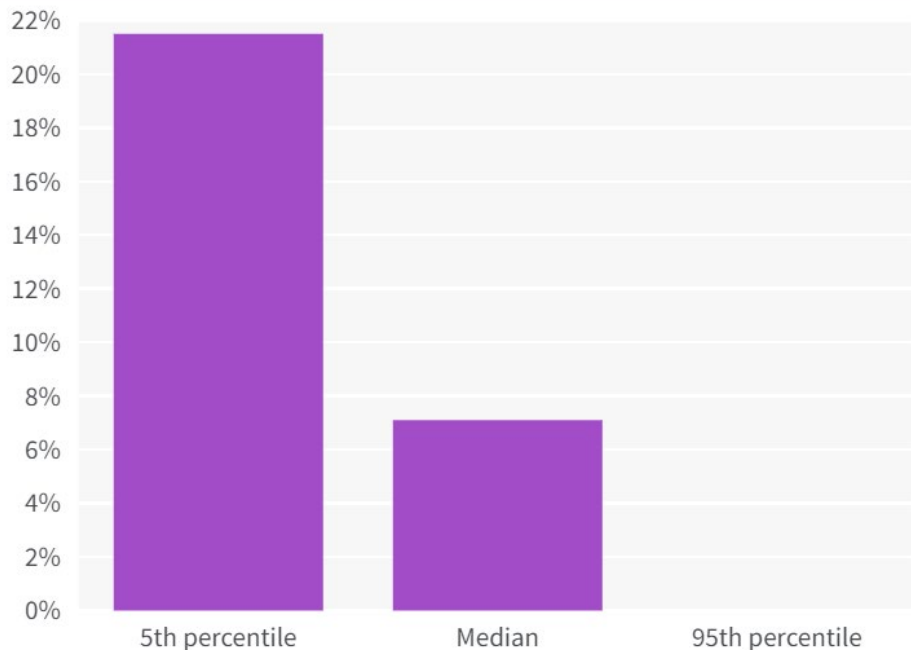


Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

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Who employs under-25s?

There is variation in the proportion of under-25s employed by providers



Overall, 8% of the total adult social care workforce are under-25, but this masks substantial variation by provider.

More than 5% of providers* have at least 20% under-25s, and more than 5% have none.

**The numbers in this chart only show providers with more than 50 employees*

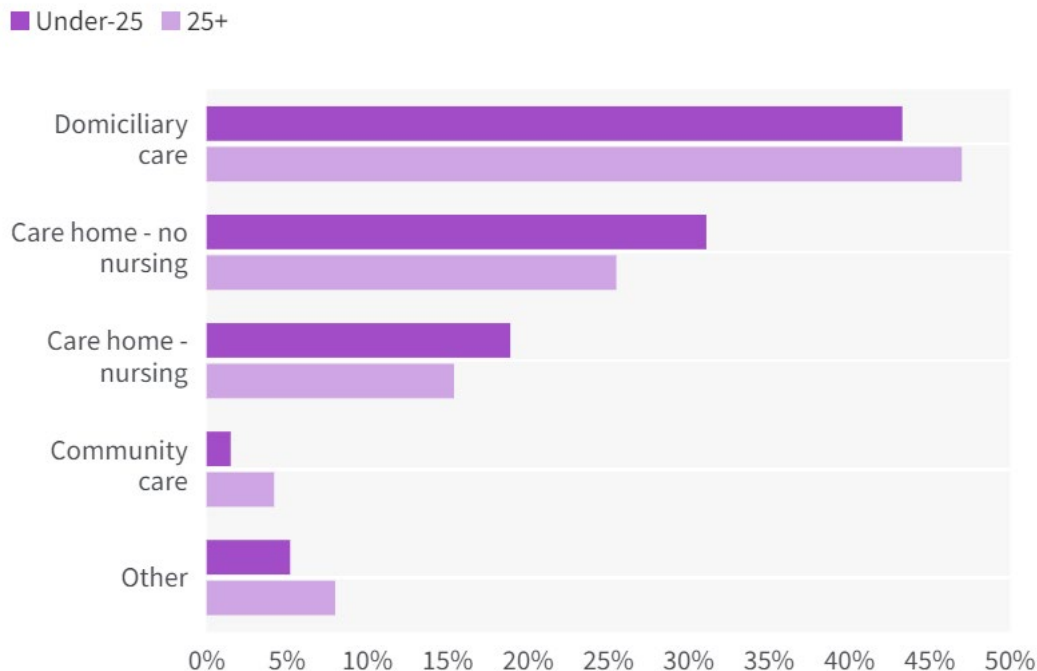
Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

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Where are under-25s employed?

A higher proportion of under-25s is employed in care homes

A higher proportion of under-25 direct care workers is employed in care homes, and a lower proportion in home care or community care.

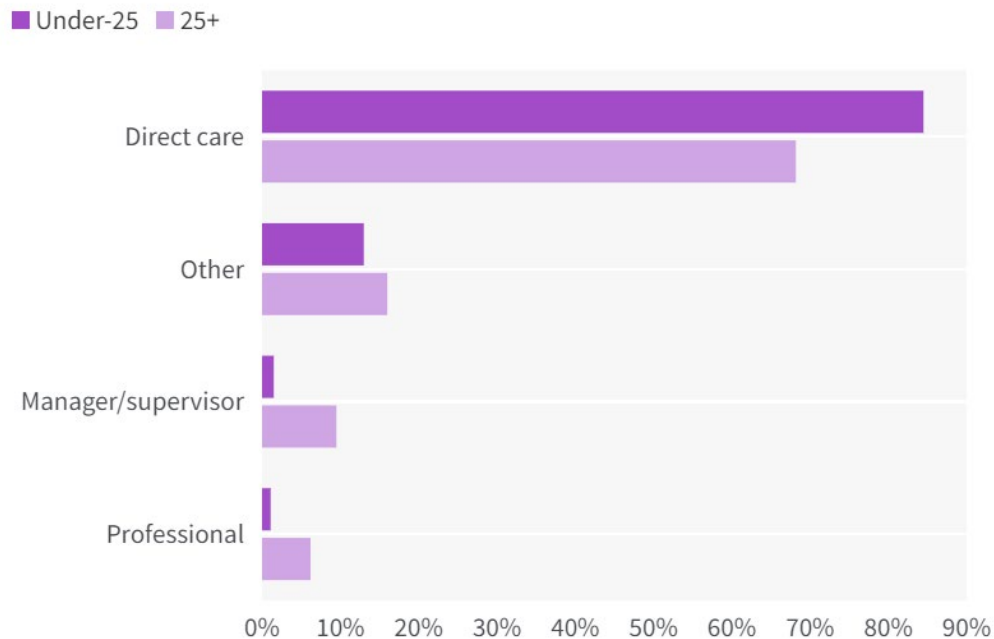


Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

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What kind of work do under-25s do?

Under-25s are more likely to work in direct care



Of the total under-25 workforce, 84% are direct care workers, compared to 68% of 25+.

13% of under-25s are employed in other (non-professional or managerial) roles, compared to 16% of the 25+ workforce.

Within this, a higher proportion of under-25s are employed in ancillary roles, and a lower proportion in administrative or office roles.

Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

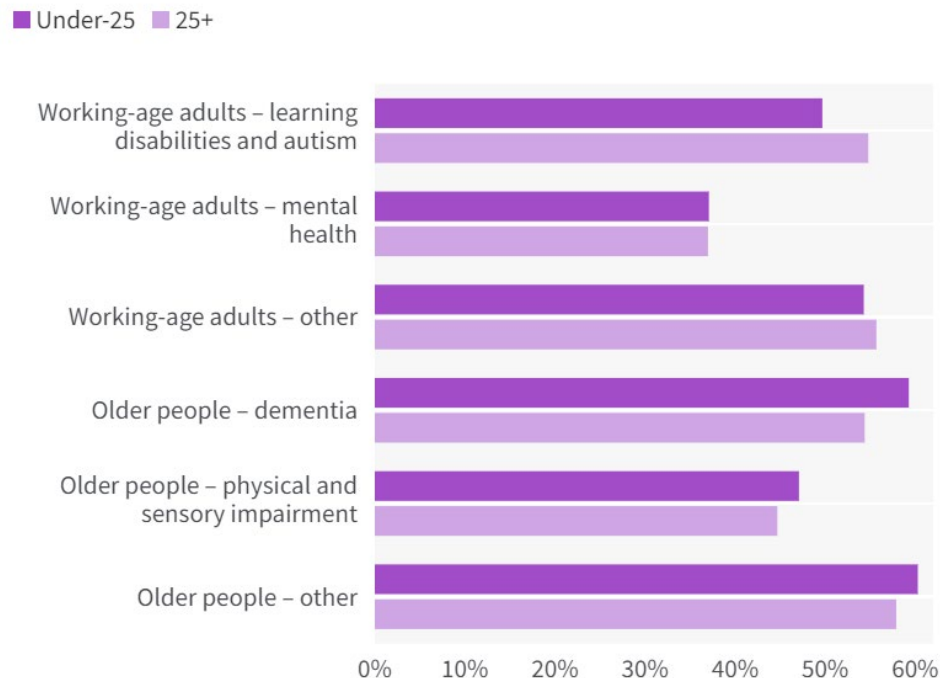
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Who do under-25s care for?

Under-25s are slightly more likely to work with older people

Compared to the older workforce, under-25 direct care workers are more likely to care for an older person with dementia, and less likely to care for an adult with a learning disability or autism.

Note that care workers will care for multiple people with different needs, so percentages will not add up to 100%.



Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

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What do under-25s earn?

Under-25s are paid less than over-25s



As expected, under-25s are paid less than older workers: £19,700 a year on average for under-25s and £20,600 for 25+.

More of the under-25 direct care workforce have their pay reported* as an hourly rate rather than an annual salary (86%, compared to 75% of 25+).

**This does not necessarily mean they are paid this way, but is a reasonable proxy for payment method.*

Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

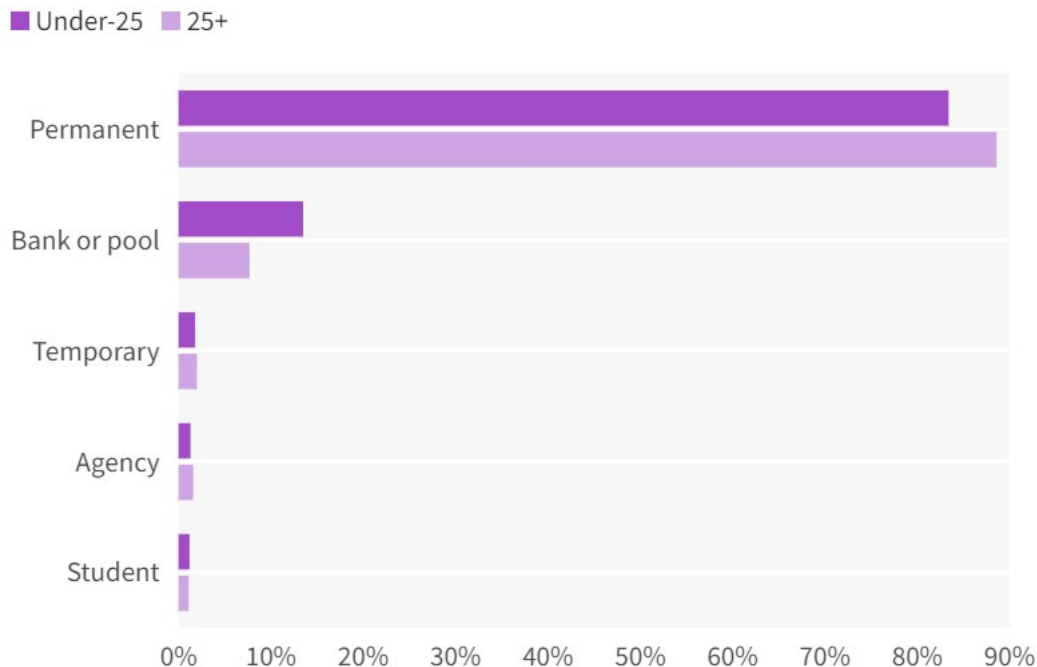
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How are under-25s employed?

Under-25s are in less stable employment

Under-25 direct care workers are less likely to be permanent. Compared to older workers, more than double the proportion of under-25s are bank or pool staff.

31% of the under-25 direct care workforce are on zero-hours contracts, compared to 25% of 25+.

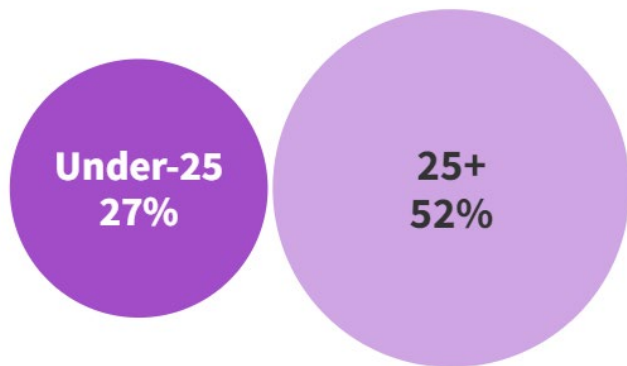


Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

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Do under-25s have qualifications?

Fewer under-25s hold a social care qualification



Compared to older workers, under-25 direct care workers are around half as likely to hold an adult social care qualification.

For those coming straight from education, the proportion of under-25s with a social care qualification increases to 34%.

Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

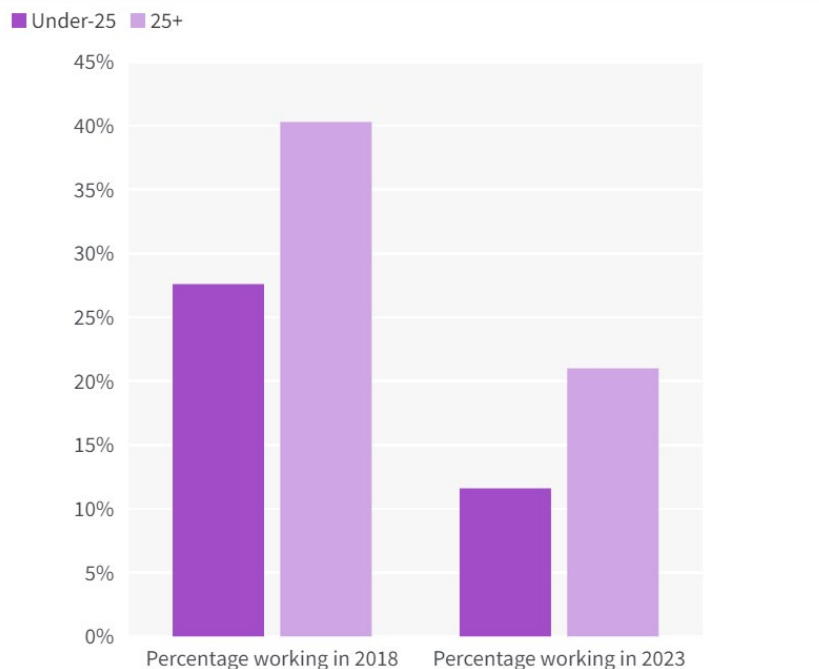
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What happens to under-25 careworkers over time?

Following under-25 direct care workers in 2014 – where are they in 2018 and 2023?

Do under-25s stay in the sector?

12% of under-25s in 2014 are still in the sector in 2023



Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

TheKingsFund

Of under-25 direct care workers in 2014, at least* 28% appeared in the data as still working in the sector** in 2018 and 12% in 2023 (note that the 2023 comparison is only with those working in 2014, not 2018).

This is worse than older workers, where 40% were still visible in the sector in 2018 and 21% in 2023.

Some of those in the sector in 2014 and 2023 were not visible in the sector in 2018.

**Due to the incompleteness of the data, this number will be higher, for example, workers may have remained in the sector but moved to an organisation that does not participate in this data collection.*

***Those who were visible in the 2014 **and** at least one of 2018 or 2023 data. Others will have remained in the sector but cannot be included here as they do not appear in all datasets.*

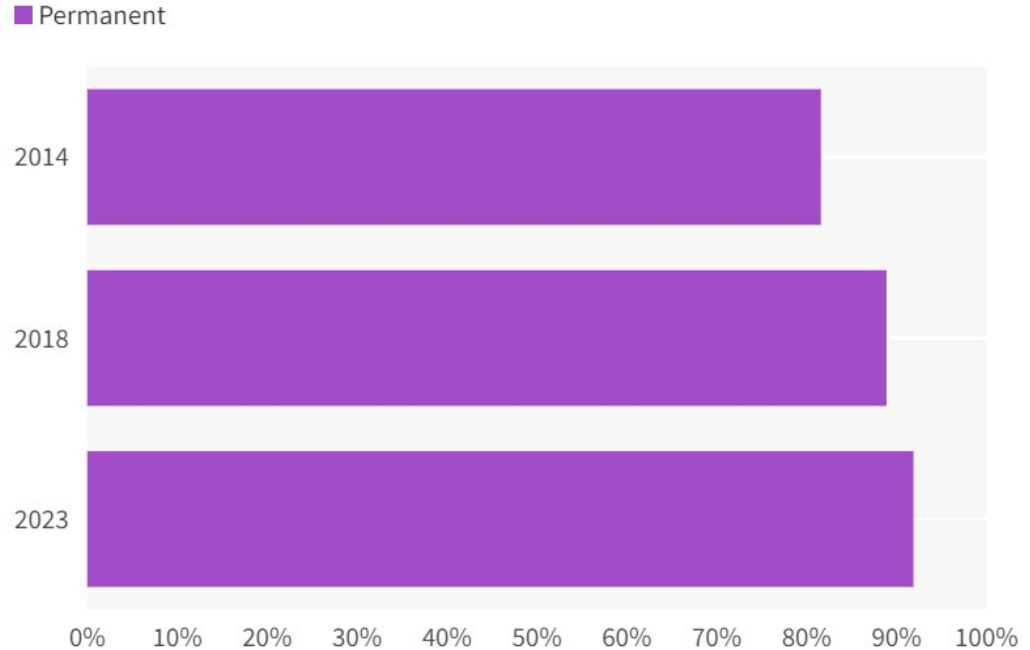
If under-25s stay, do they gain job security?

Those still in the sector had steadier jobs

Of the 2014 under-25 direct care workforce who were in the sector* in 2018 and 2023, more were permanent in 2023 and fewer were bank or pool.

This contrasts with the whole workforce, where the proportion of permanent contracts was stable (~94%) between 2014 and 2023.

Those who were visible in the data in 2014 **and 2018 **and** 2023. Others will have remained in the sector but cannot be included here as they do not appear in all datasets*



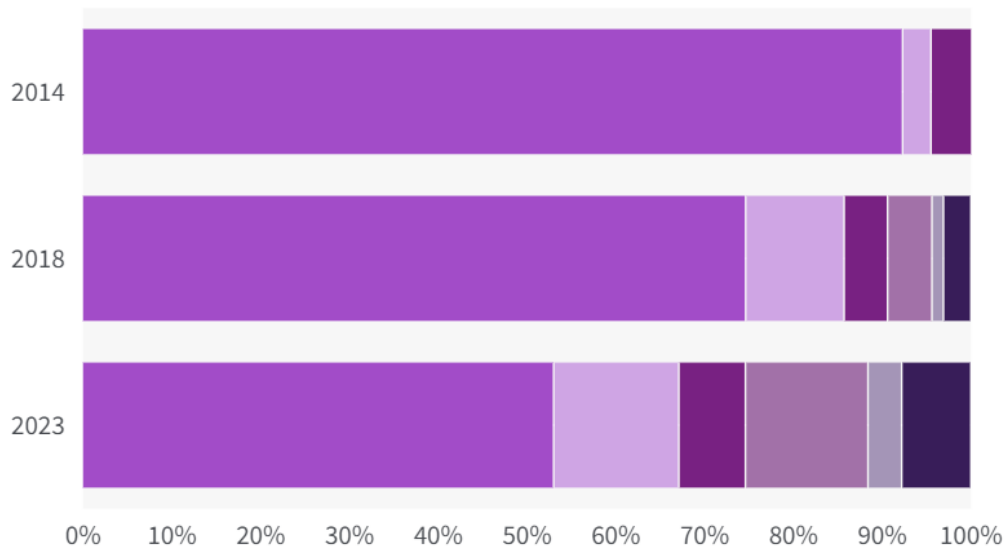
Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

TheKingsFund

If under-25s stay, do they progress?

Some had progressed into management or professional roles

■ Care worker ■ Senior care worker ■ Other direct care worker
■ Manager/Supervisor ■ Professional ■ Other



Of the 2014 under-25 direct care workers (who were also visible in the sector in 2018), 14% were managers or supervisors in 2023, and 4% were professionals.

But 75% were still direct care workers.

Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

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If under-25s stay, does their pay go up?

Salaries increase over time

In 2014, under-25 direct care workers had an average annual salary of £16,600. Those still visible in the sector in 2018 and 2023 were paid £22,400 on average in 2023 (adjusting for inflation).

Changing role impacts on salary; those in managerial or professional roles are paid substantially more than those who remain as direct care workers.

Note that direct care workers' salaries have still increased, at least in part, due to the National Minimum/Living Wage increases over this period.



Source: Skills for Care ASC-WDS data

TheKingsFund

| Direct care | Manager/ supervisor | Professional | Other role |
|-------------|------------------------|--------------|------------|
| £20,200 | £29,500 | £36,100 | £22,200 |