

## Appendix 1 - Summary of Provider Survey

### Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019

Reporting Period: 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026

### South Ayrshire HSCP –

#### 1. Purpose of the Report

This summary presents the findings of a **provider survey** by those providers who responded. Further work will be done for future annual submission with regards to increasing the number of responses. The survey was undertaken to support South Ayrshire HSCP's statutory reporting under the **Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019**. The survey sought assurance from all commissioned providers\* regarding:

- Knowledge, understanding and compliance with the Act
  - Practical steps taken to ensure safe and appropriate staffing
  - Challenges, risks and mitigations
  - Use of Care Inspectorate Safe Staffing resources
  - Areas where additional support may be beneficial
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#### 2. Overall Confidence and Compliance

- **Overall confidence was high:**  
The majority of providers rated their confidence at **4 or 5 out of 5**, indicating strong understanding of, and compliance with, the Act.
  - Providers consistently reported that the Act aligns well with **existing safe staffing, quality assurance and regulatory requirements**, rather than introducing wholly new practices.
  - Training on the Act had been widely completed by managers and staff, supported by internal policies and procedures.
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#### 3. Key Actions Taken by Providers

Providers described a wide range of actions to comply with the Act, including:

- Strong focus on staff wellbeing, skill mix and competence
- Use Formal safe staffing processes based on dependency and risk assessment
- Forward rota planning with regular review and adjustment
- Robust recruitment, induction and ongoing training programmes
- Regular supervision, team meetings, audits and quality assurance checks
- of digital systems and tools to monitor staffing levels and gaps

Many organisations highlighted that staffing decisions are **needs-led**, rather than based on minimum staffing thresholds alone.

#### 4. Challenges Identified

While many providers reported no significant challenges, a number of **common themes** emerged:

- Recruitment and retention difficulties, particularly in a competitive labour market
- Delays and pressures associated with filling vacancies
- Increased reliance on agency or bank staff in some services
- The complexity and scale of the Act requiring repeated review to fully embed understanding

These challenges were generally described as **manageable**, rather than presenting immediate risks to compliance.

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#### 5. Actions to Mitigate Challenges

Where challenges were identified, providers reported mitigation through:

- Use of regular agency staff familiar with the service
  - Increased pay, improved terms and conditions, and wellbeing initiatives
  - Enhanced supervision, communication and flexibility in rota planning
  - Investment in training, SVQs and career development pathways
  - Proactive management oversight of staffing levels and competence
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#### 6. Ongoing Risks

- Most providers reported **low or no ongoing risk** to compliance with the Act.
  - Where risks were noted, these focused on:
    - Continued recruitment pressures
    - Staff absences or turnover
    - Financial pressures impacting sustainability
  - Providers generally demonstrated clear awareness of these risks and described active management and mitigation arrangements.
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#### 7. Use of External Guidance and Support

- **Almost all providers confirmed they use the Care Inspectorate's Safe Staffing Programme** for guidance and resources.
- Many also referenced Care Inspectorate inspections, webinars, Turas learning, and internal quality and training teams as key sources of support.
- Only a small number of providers identified additional support needs, most commonly:
  - Access to funded training
  - Improved alignment between assessed need and commissioned funding

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- Fairer funding to support recruitment and retention
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### 8. Overall Conclusion

Appendix 1 provides **strong assurance** that commissioned providers in South Ayrshire have:

- A good understanding of the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019
- Embedded safe staffing principles into everyday practice
- Appropriate systems in place to manage risk and maintain compliance

While recruitment and financial pressures remain ongoing challenges for some providers, these are well understood and actively managed. Overall, the survey evidence supports SAHSCP's conclusion that **providers are largely compliant with the Act and committed to continuous improvement in safe staffing and quality of care.**

\*please note – the Scottish Government has requested updates on only new services commissioned during 2025/26. There is no requirement to report on previously commissioned/contracted services. SAHSCP survey was sent to all providers as the previous years return has a low uptake and the summary information suggested that there was still some learning required. This survey was able to identify improvements and also offer assurance that initial momentum with the implementation of the Act was sustained.