

Diversity data relating to Social Work England's fitness to practise process (as at 31 March 2024)

Introduction

In 2023, we published [a report](#) that set out our initial analysis of the diversity data we collected from social workers. This explores the data we collected up until 31 March 2023. It provided an initial picture of what this data tells us about:

- fitness to practise referrals
- progression through our fitness to practise process

This analysis indicated that the following social workers are overrepresented:

- social workers aged 40 and over
- male social workers
- social workers who have a Black / African / Caribbean / Black British ethnicity

These groups were over represented in referrals, progression rates through the system, and in the cases referred to hearing.

We refreshed the data on 31 March 2024. We are now sharing updated figures for the key findings, as well as full data tables for all aspects of diversity that we have collected data for. You can read a [full breakdown of the demographics of the register](#).

Referrals received by us and cases reaching hearing

Between 2 December 2019 and 31 March 2024, we received 6,789 fitness to practise referrals that were linked to a social worker. Some of these cases will still be under investigation and may not yet have a decision at triage or case examination. In the same time period, 427 cases have been referred to a hearing.

We wanted to understand overrepresentation in the referrals we received, and in the cases that get referred to hearing. To do this, we looked at the percentage of cases by group. We compared these to the representation of that group on the register.

Percentage of referrals and cases referred to hearing by characteristic

Characteristic	Group	Percentage of social workers on the register	Percentage of referrals we received	Percentage of cases referred to a hearing
Age	40 and over	64%	65%	77%
Gender identity	Male	16%	22%	33%
Ethnicity	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	17%	19%	24%

Case progression rates

To understand the progression of social workers' cases through our fitness to practise process, we looked at 2 key points in the process:

1. triage to investigation
2. case examination to hearing

We considered the percentage of decisions we made to progress cases, and the percentage of decisions we made to close cases.

Case progression rates from triage to investigation

Case progression rates for all cases

All cases	Percentage of cases progressed from triage to investigation
All cases	38%

Case progression rates by age

Age	Percentage of cases progressed from triage to investigation
40 and over	41%
Under 40	34%

Case progression rates by gender identity

Gender identity	Percentage of cases progressed from triage to investigation
Male	50%
Female	35%

Case progression rates by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percentage of cases progressed from triage to investigation
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	47%
White	32%

Case progression rates from case examination to hearing

Case progression rates for all cases

All cases	Percentage of cases progressed from case examiner to hearing
All cases	30%

Case progression rates by age

Age	Percentage of cases progressed from case examiner to hearing
40 and over	33%
Under 40	23%

Case progression rates by gender identity

Gender identity	Percentage of cases progressed from case examiner to hearing
Male	35%
Female	28%

Case progression rates by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percentage of cases progressed from case examiner to hearing
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	36%
White	18%

Full data tables

Referrals received by us

Number of referrals by age

Age	Register	Referrals received
29 or under	10,607	670
30 to 39	26,072	1,729
40 to 49	27,224	1,912
50 to 59	25,642	1,882
60 and over	13,316	596

Number of referrals by gender identity

Gender identity	Register	Referrals received
Female	85,787	5,297
Male	16,959	1,483
Prefer not to say	65	6
Prefer to self-describe	50	3

Number of referrals by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Register	Referrals received
Asian / Asian British	6,278	364
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	16,794	1,158
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic groups	3,625	229
Other Ethnic group	536	40
White	67,831	4,229
Prefer not to say	2,157	154

Ethnicity	Register	Referrals received
Unknown	5,640	615

Number of referrals by disability

Disability	Register	Referrals received
No	83,535	5,131
Yes	9,315	731
Prefer not to say	4,844	362
Unknown	5,167	565

Number of referrals by gender identity same as sex at birth

Gender identity same as sex at birth	Register	Referrals received
No	6,447	438
Yes	87,498	5,478
Prefer not to say	3,583	293
Unknown	5,333	580

Number of referrals by sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	Register	Referrals received
Bisexual	2,397	150
Gay man	1,326	113
Gay woman	2,015	132
Heterosexual	83,230	5,226
Prefer not to say	7,955	549
Prefer to self-describe	558	35
Unknown	5,380	584

Number of referrals by religion or belief

Religion or belief	Register	Referrals received
Buddhism	707	49
Christianity	42,336	2,786

Religion or belief	Register	Referrals received
Hinduism	817	48
Islam	3,808	233
Judaism	459	34
Sikhism	841	50
None	39,155	2,385
Other	2,001	135
Prefer not to say	7,363	484
Unknown	5,374	585

Triage outcomes

Number of triage outcomes by age

Age	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
29 or under	359	157
30 to 39	843	453
40 to 49	875	574
50 to 59	862	607
60 and over	247	203

Number of triage outcomes by gender identity

Gender identity	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
Female	2,605	1,415
Male	578	573
Prefer not to say	2	4
Prefer to self-describe	1	2

Number of triage outcomes by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
Asian / Asian British	179	108
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	475	414

Ethnicity	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic groups	104	68
Other Ethnic group	17	15
White	2,131	1,024
Prefer not to say	66	53
Unknown	214	312

Number of triage outcomes by disability

Disability	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
No	2,533	1,350
Yes	306	225
Prefer not to say	152	130
Unknown	195	289

Number of triage outcomes by gender identity same as sex at birth

Gender identity same as sex at birth	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
No	200	121
Yes	2,658	1,471
Prefer not to say	131	103
Unknown	197	299

Number of triage outcomes by sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
Bisexual	65	49
Gay man	49	34
Gay woman	72	30
Heterosexual	2,545	1,392
Prefer not to say	239	177
Prefer to self-describe	17	11

Sexual orientation	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
Unknown	199	301

Number of triage outcomes by religion or belief

Religion or belief	Cases closed	Cases progressed to investigation
Buddhism	17	20
Christianity	1,311	813
Hinduism	17	23
Islam	109	73
Judaism	19	10
Sikhism	23	15
None	1,229	524
Other	63	43
Prefer not to say	198	174
Unknown	200	299

Case examiner outcomes

Number of case examiner outcomes by age

Age	Cases closed with no impairment	Cases closed with accepted disposal	Cases referred to a hearing
29 or under	54	29	28
30 to 39	193	52	69
40 to 49	226	59	140
50 to 59	227	57	137
60 and over	79	20	53

Number of case examiner outcomes by gender identity

Gender identity	Cases closed with no impairment	Cases closed with accepted disposal	Cases referred to a hearing
Female	585	148	285
Male	192	69	140
Prefer not to say	1	0	1

Gender identity	Cases closed with no impairment	Cases closed with accepted disposal	Cases referred to a hearing
Prefer to self-describe	1	0	1

Number of case examiner outcomes by ethnicity

Ethnicity	Cases closed with no impairment	Cases closed with accepted disposal	Cases referred to a hearing
Asian / Asian British	39	11	23
Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	137	42	102
Mixed / Multiple Ethnic groups	24	5	12
Other Ethnic group	4	3	6
White	481	114	135
Prefer not to say	23	3	9
Unknown	71	39	140

Number of case examiner outcomes by disability

Disability	Cases closed with no impairment	Cases closed with accepted disposal	Cases referred to a hearing
No	589	146	229
Yes	86	22	34
Prefer not to say	44	12	28
Unknown	60	37	136

Number of case examiner outcomes by gender identity same as sex at birth

Gender identity same as sex at birth	Cases closed with no impairment	Cases closed with accepted disposal	Cases referred to a hearing
No	59	12	18
Yes	610	158	251
Prefer not to say	48	9	19
Unknown	62	38	139

Number of case examiner outcomes by sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	Cases closed with no impairment	Cases closed with accepted disposal	Cases referred to a hearing
Bisexual	17	3	6
Gay man	15	6	5
Gay woman	17	5	1
Heterosexual	588	147	238
Prefer not to say	77	17	35
Prefer to self-describe	2	1	2
Unknown	63	38	140

Number of case examiner outcomes by religion or belief

Religion or belief	Cases closed with no impairment	Cases closed with accepted disposal	Cases referred to a hearing
Buddhism	11	3	1
Christianity	321	79	154
Hinduism	9	1	6
Islam	29	5	15
Judaism	6	2	0
Sikhism	2	4	3
None	248	62	64
Other	11	7	10
Prefer not to say	77	16	36
Unknown	65	38	138