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Introduction

Introduction

This report examines pay gaps at Public Health Wales, based on data for 31 March 2025. This is the eighth year in which Public Health Wales has reported its gender pay gap under the statutory duty.

Public Health Wales is the national public health organisation for Wales. With its partners, it aims to increase healthy life expectancy, improve health and well-being, and reduce inequalities for everyone in Wales, now and for future generations.

Main findings

The main findings are as follows:

- Public Health Wales employed 2,589 staff on 31 March 2025, up from 2,376 on 31 March 2024. Women account for 72.5% of the workforce and outnumber men at all levels of the organisation, despite this, a significant gender pay gap (in favour of men) still occurs
- The organisation's mean¹ (average) gender pay gap is 13.6%, and the median² gender pay gap is 15.5%, both favouring men
- The 2025 figures show that both the overall mean and median gender pay gaps have narrowed, with the mean reducing from 14.5% in 2024 to 13.6% in 2025, and the median from 17.0% to 15.5%
- The gender gap is significantly smaller when medical and dental staff are excluded, narrowing to 8.4% (mean) and 12.8% (median). This is because a relatively small number of highly paid men in medical roles have a disproportionate impact on the overall organisational gender pay gap figures

¹This is the average value of all salaries and is influenced more by the highest and lowest salaries in the organisation.

²This is the middle value when all the values are arranged from highest to lowest and is less affected by very high or low salaries.

- Across most bands, the gender pay gaps are either zero or very small, and in some cases even favour women. Noticeable gaps only appear at senior levels in bands 8 and 9, and in band 8 this appears only on the median measure
- The overall mean ethnicity pay gap between White staff and those from ethnic minority groups at Public Health Wales is 2.2%, while the median ethnicity pay gap is 5.2%. However, further analysis by ethnic group shows variations among different ethnic groups, with the widest gap between Black, Black Welsh and Black British ('Black') and White staff
- The overall mean disability pay gap at Public Health Wales is 7.7% and the median disability pay gap is 6.2%
- Disability declaration rates have increased; however, disabled staff remain concentrated in lower pay bands, with relatively few disabled staff higher up the hierarchy.

Gender pay gap reporting

The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 require employers with 250 or more employees to annually publish information on their gender pay gap, and the distribution of men and women in each pay quarter.

A gender pay gap is the difference in average earnings between men and women in the workforce.

Gender pay gap: what to report

The gender pay gap reporting regulations state that employers with 250 or more employees must provide statistics on:

- the percentage of men and women in each pay quarter
- mean (average) gender pay gap for hourly pay
- median gender pay gap for hourly pay
- percentage of men and women receiving bonus pay
- mean (average) gender pay gap for bonus pay
- median gender pay gap for bonus pay

Source: [Gov.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

Key terms

Gender pay gap figures show the difference between the average earnings of men and women, expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. Where men's pay is higher on average than women's the result is a positive percentage; where women's pay is higher the result is a negative percentage

Equal work is work rated as equivalent under the NHS points-based analytical job evaluation scheme.

The effective date for the information on pay on which we conducted analysis is 31 March 2025

Each contract of employment with Public Health Wales is counted separately. The hourly rate is based on all relevant pay divided by total hours worked

Pay data is the anonymised dataset used for analysis

Hourly pay equals all gross cash payments before deductions but after salary sacrifice divided by the number of hours worked

Ordinary pay includes basic pay, allowances, holiday pay and shift premium pay

Spinal point salary is the value of the basic annual NHS salary

Length of service is defined as continuous length of service

Mean is the total sum of all salaries per hour divided by the number of salaries

Median is the middle value when all values are arranged in numerical order from smallest to largest

Pay quarter refers to a quarter of the workforce, ranked by their hourly pay

Gender pay gap

The gender pay gap is the difference in average earnings between men and women expressed as a percentage and we report on both the mean (average) and median. The mean and median are two measures of central tendency used to describe the average value of a dataset. The mean is calculated by adding up all the values in a dataset and then dividing them by the total number of values. It is sensitive to outliers, in this case very high or very low pay, and can be skewed by them, pulling the mean in their direction. The median is the middle value and is therefore less sensitive to extreme values.

The overall mean gender pay gap at Public Health Wales is 13.6% in 2025, a slight improvement on 14.5% in 2024. The median gender pay gap has also narrowed this year to 15.5%, down from 17.0% in 2024, after it had widened significantly from 6.4% in 2023.

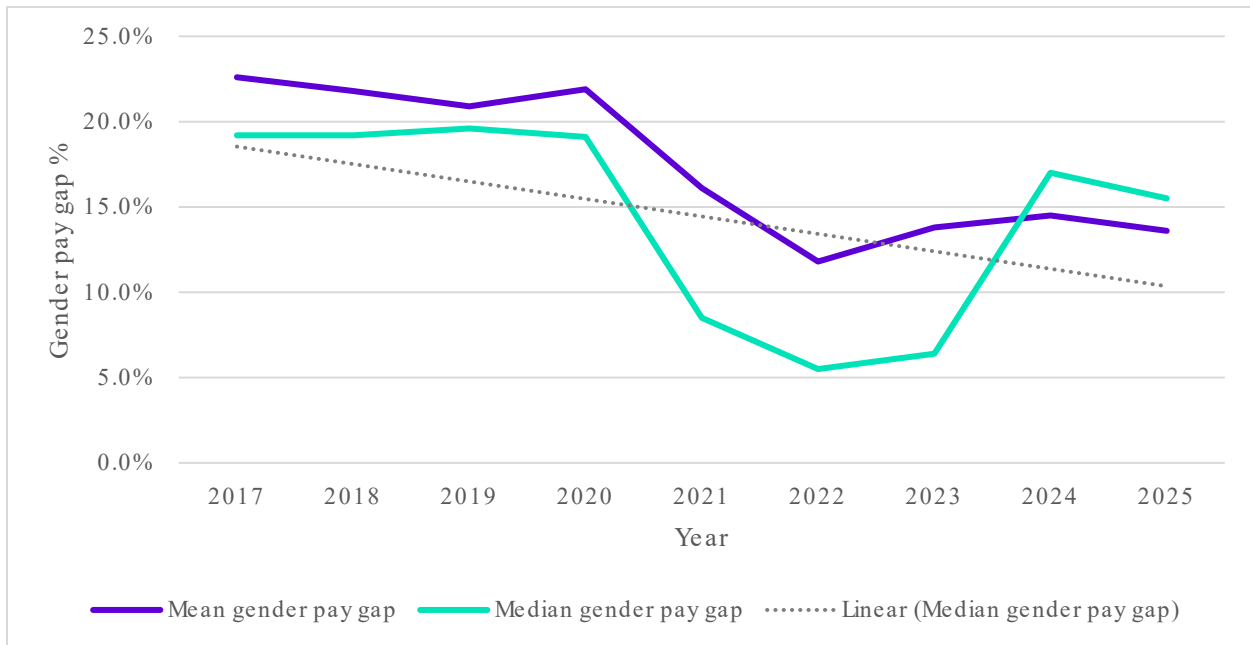
Table 1 Public Health Wales gender pay gap at 31 March 2025

	Mean	Median
Men	£27.07	£23.58
Women	£23.39	£19.92
£ difference	£3.68	£3.66
Gender pay gap	13.6%	15.5%

Note: hourly pay is shown to two decimal places.

Public Health Wales has been monitoring its gender pay gap internally and publishing annual statistics under the UK's reporting regulations since 2017. Figure 1 shows the mean and median gender pay gaps since 2017. The trendline indicates that, despite an increase in recent years, the overall gender pay gap has returned to the downward path seen in the earlier years of the period.

Figure 1 Public Health Wales gender pay gap 2017 to 2025



Headline gender pay gap reporting statistics are useful for providing a broad indication of average pay gaps, but these headline statistics are not sufficient to establish the causes of pay gaps. The following sections explore the gender pay gap at Public Health Wales in more detail and examine the likely contributing factors in each case.

Understanding what drives the gender pay gap

The gender pay gap is influenced by where men and women sit within the overall pay structure. To explain this, we start by looking at pay quarters. These divide all staff into four equal groups based on pay, from the lowest to the highest earners. We then compare the proportion of men and women in each group to show where differences occur.

Pay quarters provide a clear picture of how the workforce is spread across the pay distribution and insight into the relative proportions of men and women in the lower-paying and higher-paying areas of the pay distribution. At Public Health Wales, the greatest concentration of women is in the lowest pay quarter (Q1), while the lowest concentration of women, and

therefore the greatest concentration of men, is in the upper pay quarter (Q4), where pay is highest. This affects the average pay of men and women in the organisation and contributes to the gender pay gap (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Distribution of men and women in each pay quarter 2025

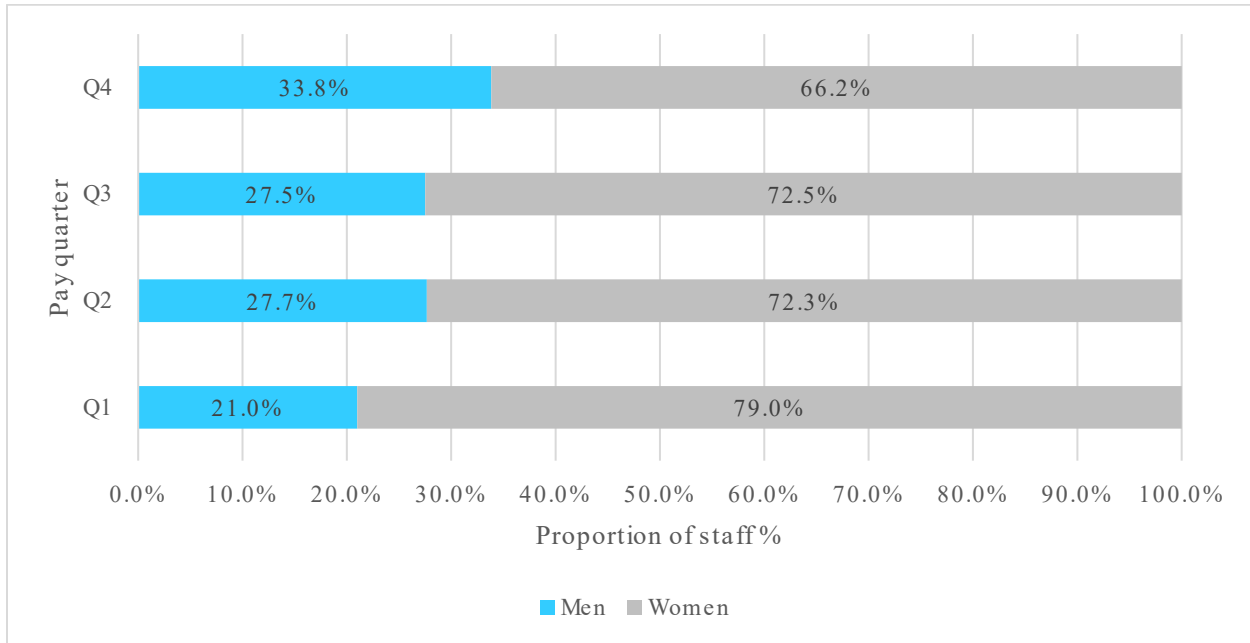
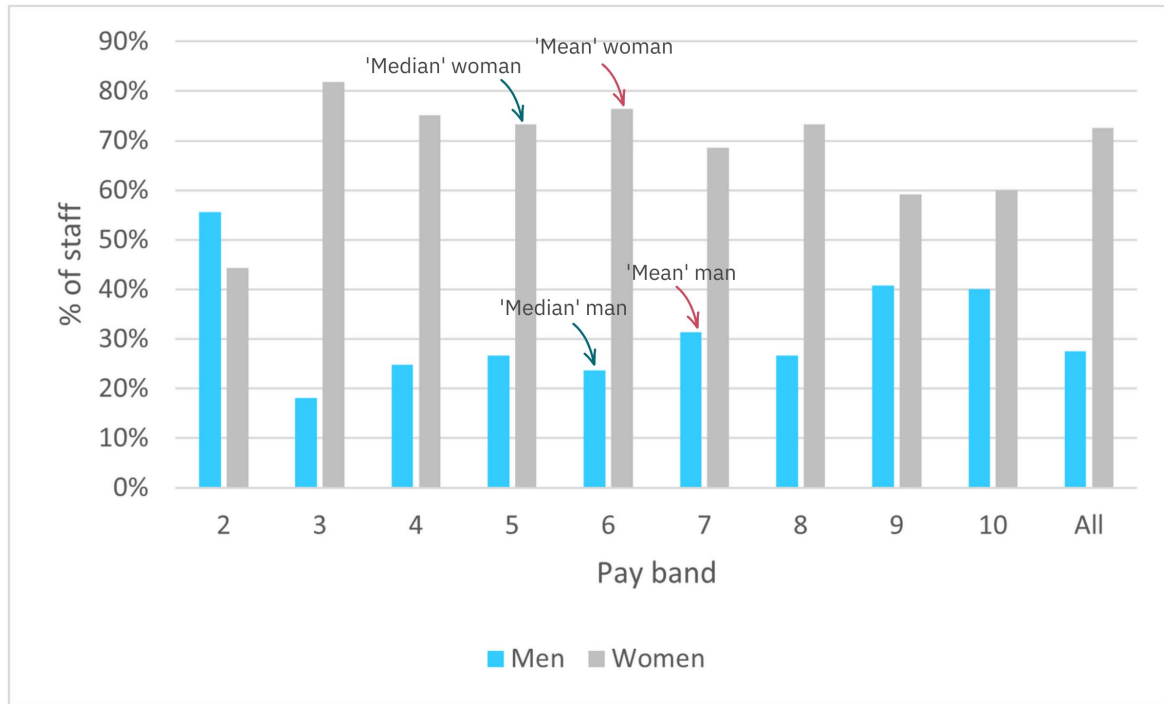


Figure 3 shows the distribution of men and women in each pay band.³ It shows that, apart from band 2 which includes a very small number of staff (5 men and 4 women), the proportions of men (blue columns) increase as we move up the pay structure. Meanwhile the proportions of women (grey columns) generally decrease as we move up the pay structure. The differing concentrations of men and women across the pay structure directly influence their respective average pay levels, thereby contributing to the gender pay gap.

³The pay bands have been constructed for analysis purposes, since the organisation operates two separate pay systems. The combined pay bands are as follows: ‘2’ Review Body (RB) Band 2, Non-Review Body (NRB) Band 2; ‘3’, RB/NRB Band 3; ‘4’, RB/NRB Band 4; ‘5’, RB/NRB Band 5; ‘6’, RB/NRB Band 6; ‘7’, RB/NRB Band 7, Specialist Registrar; ‘8’, RB/NRB Band 8A/B, GPs; ‘9’, RB/NRB Band 8C/D, Consultant; ‘10’, RB/NRB 9, Consultants and Directors.

We have also introduced the concept of the ‘mean man/woman’ and the ‘median man/woman’ which refer to the average and middle pay positions for men and women, as shown on the chart. The chart shows that both the median man and the mean man are located in a higher pay band, where pay is higher, thereby contributing to the gender pay gap.

Figure 3 How men and women are positioned within the pay structure 2025



Impact of medical and dental staff on the gender pay gap

Public Health Wales employs a diverse, multi-disciplinary workforce, including medical and dental roles. All staff are employed on one of two separate pay arrangements.⁴ The gender pay

⁴The majority of Public Health Wales staff are graded and paid according to Agenda for Change (AfC), the national pay system used by the NHS, while staff in the ‘Medical and Dental’ group are employed on pay and conditions determined by the Doctors’ and Dentists’ Review Body (DDRB). For this analysis we have grouped staff from the separate pay structures into combined pay bands. The combined pay bands are as follows: ‘2’ Review Body (RB) Band 2, Non-Review Body (NRB) Band 2; ‘3’, RB/NRB Band 3; ‘4’, RB/NRB Band 4; ‘5’, RB/NRB Band 5; ‘6’, RB/NRB Band 6; ‘7’, RB/NRB Band 7, Specialist Registrar; ‘8’, RB/NRB Band 8A/B, GPs; ‘9’, RB/NRB Band 8C/D, Consultant; ‘10’, RB/NRB 9, Consultants and Directors.

gap is significantly smaller when medical and dental staff are excluded. This is because a relatively small number of highly paid men in medical roles have a disproportionate impact on the overall organisational figures.

Among medical and dental staff, the mean gender pay gap is 8.9%, and the median gap is 8.7%. In comparison, the overall organisational gender pay gap stands at 13.6% (mean) and 15.5% (median). When medical and dental staff are excluded, the gap narrows to 8.4% (mean) and 12.8% (median).

The smaller gender pay gap for staff in medical and dental roles than that for the organisation as a whole reflects the fact that both men and women in this group are relatively highly paid and their salaries sit within a much more limited spread than in most other staff groups.

Once all staff are combined, this staff group has a strong influence on the overall pay gap. Medical and dental staff are in the highest pay bands, and there is a larger share of men in these roles —around half of the group, compared with about a quarter elsewhere in the organisation. This concentration of higher-paid men increases the impact this group has on the organisation's overall gender pay gap.

Figure 4 Gender pay gap by staff group 2025

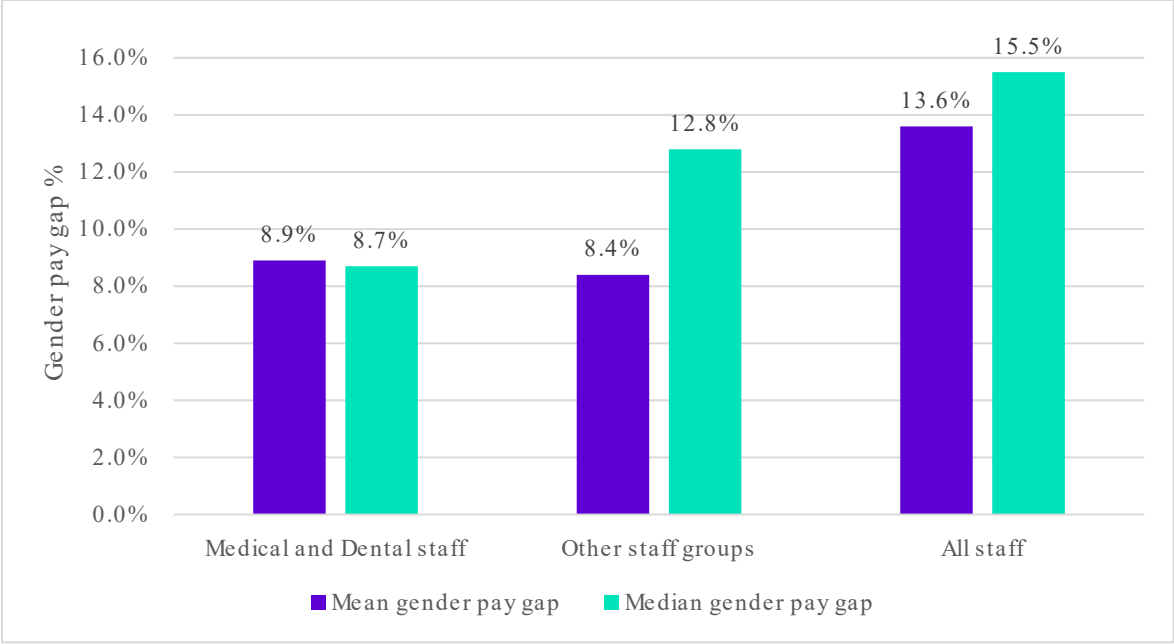
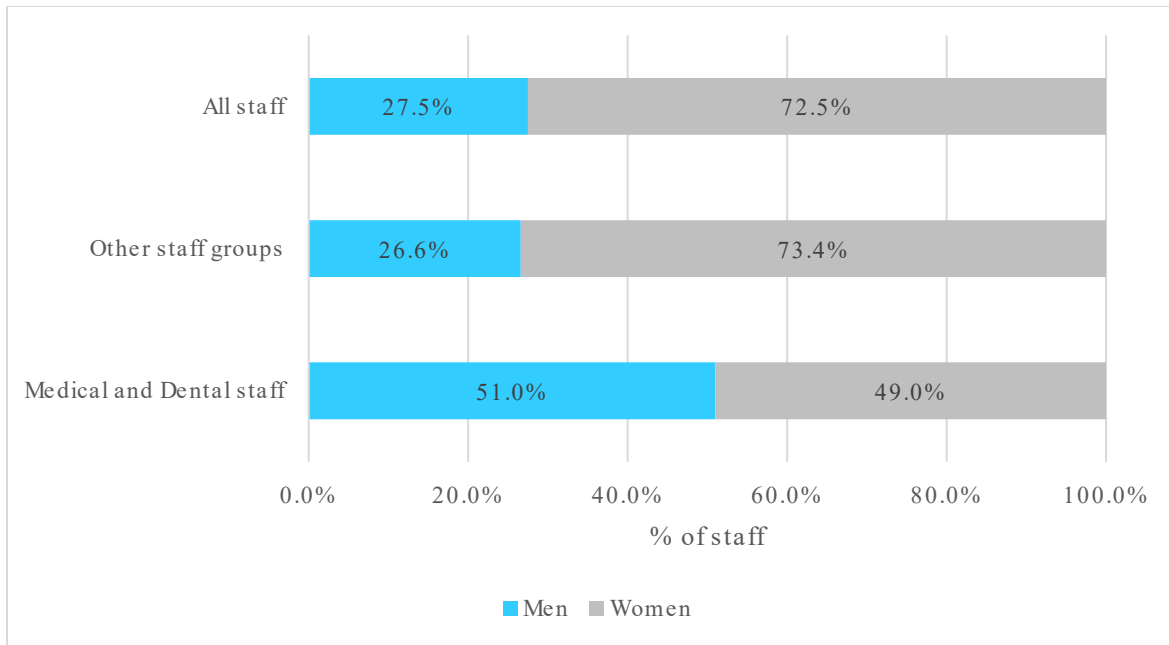


Figure 5 Proportion of men and women by staff group 2025



Gender pay gaps by pay band

Looking at the gender pay gap within each pay band adds further weight to this explanation. Across most bands, the gaps are either zero or very small, and in some cases even favour women. This indicates that men and women are paid broadly the same for work at the same level, consistent with equal pay principles. Noticeable gaps only appear at senior levels in bands 8 and 9, and in band 8 this appears only on the median measure. Band 8 spans two pay ranges, and the median man falls in the higher of these two ranges, while the median woman falls in the lower range. Band 9 has the largest proportion of men and is also the main pay band for consultants, whose salaries are higher than those for other senior roles at this level, resulting in the widest gender pay gap by band. Meanwhile the pay gap at band 10 is minimal, despite men accounting for a large proportion of this band. This is because both men and women here are in similar roles (very senior, strategic, and executive leadership positions across both clinical and non-clinical areas) – all receiving relatively high pay.

This pattern reinforces the earlier point: the overall gender pay gap is not driven by unequal pay within bands, but by the higher concentration of men in the top part of the pay structure,

particularly among medical and dental staff who are concentrated in bands 8 and 9. Figure 7 presents gender pay gaps by pay band when medical and dental staff are excluded and it evidences a narrower gender pay gap in the higher pay bands and overall.

Figure 6 Gender pay gaps by pay band 2025

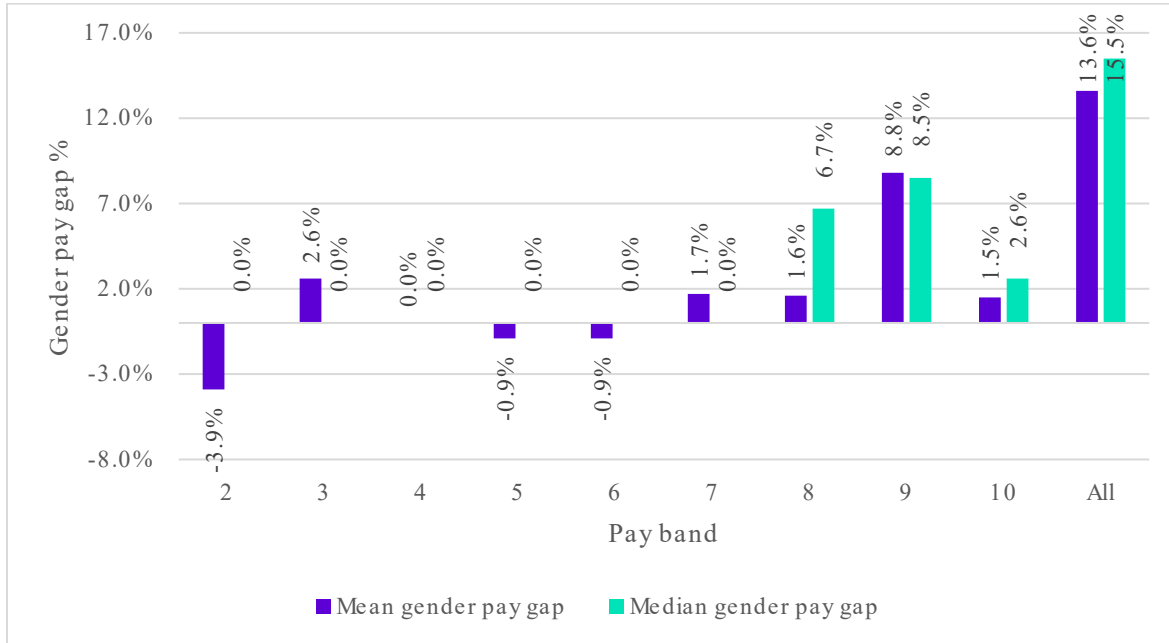


Figure 7 Gender pay gaps excluding medical and dental staff by pay band 2025

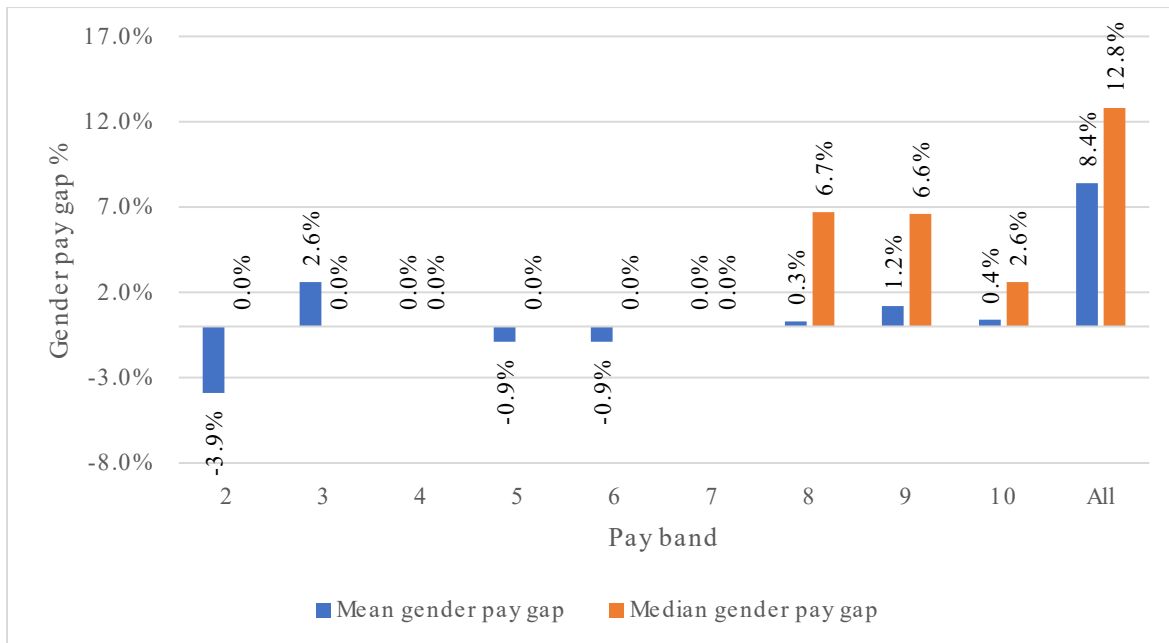
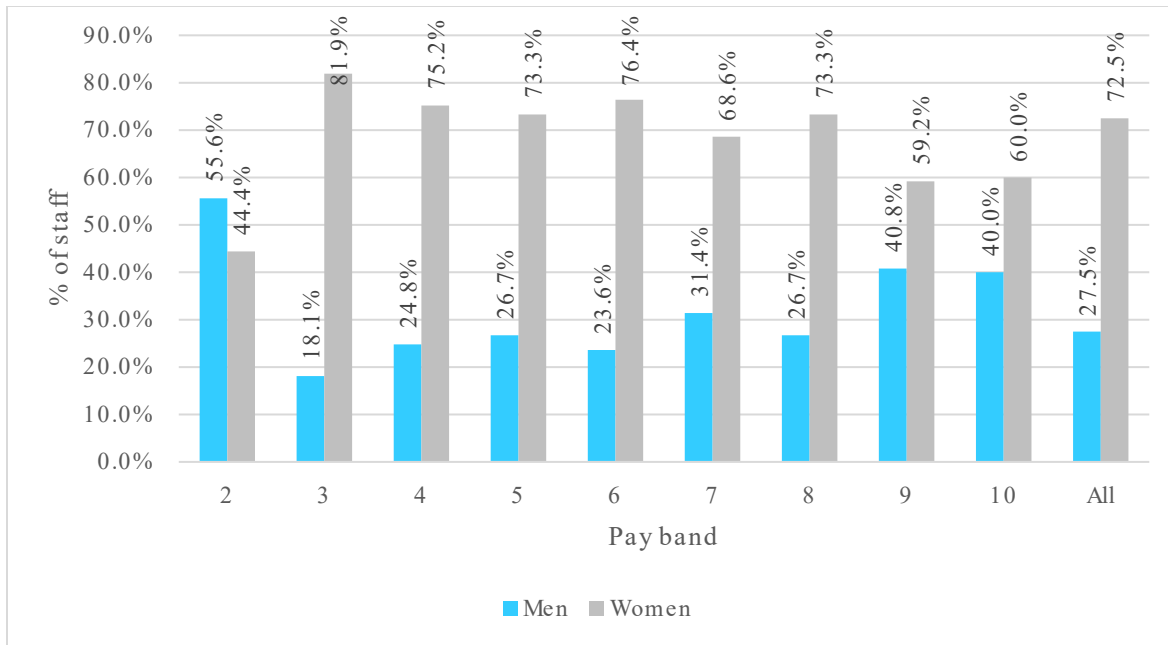


Figure 8 Proportion of men and women in each pay band 2025



Ethnicity pay gaps

An ethnicity pay gap is the difference in average pay between staff from different ethnic backgrounds.

Public Health Wales employs a total of 243 staff from ethnic minorities (groups under-represented in the wider population), comprising 153 women and 90 men, up from 214 staff in 2024. The largest group identify as Asian, representing 116 staff (around half of all minority ethnic staff). Men are a higher proportion of Asian (37.9%) and Black (47.7%) staff compared with other ethnic groups and the White workforce (which, by contrast, is only 25.5% male). By contrast the Mixed and Other groups contain lower proportions of male staff (22.9% and 28.6% respectively).

Public Health Wales has been monitoring its diversity figures, and the proportion of staff reporting that they identify with a particular ethnic minority group has shown a gradual but sustained increase, rising from 6.1% in 2022 to 10.3% in 2025. Over the same period the declaration rate has also improved.

Table 2 Ethnicity declaration rates and proportion of ethnic minority staff, 2022-2025

Snapshot date	% of ethnic minority staff†	% not declared
31 March 2022	6.1%	13.6%
31 March 2023	8.2%	10.2%
31 March 2024	10.0%	9.8%
31 March 2025	10.3%	8.5%

The ethnicity pay gap is the percentage difference in average pay between comparative ethnic groups and the reference group ('White' staff). The overall mean ethnicity pay gap at Public Health Wales is relatively narrow (and not statistically significant) at 2.2%, while the median ethnicity pay gap is wider at 5.2%. Both the mean and median gaps have widened since 2024 – from a mean negative gap of -2.5% (that is, in favour of ethnic minority staff) and a median gap of 2.3%.

To strengthen insights into the organisation's ethnicity pay gaps, we have expanded our reporting from a broad two-group comparison to a more detailed five-group breakdown (Asian, Black, Mixed, Other, and White).⁵ While the resulting smaller sample sizes for the five-group breakdown mean that results should be interpreted with some caution, this approach identified important variations for staff by ethnic group which were masked by previous analysis using only a single 'minority' category.

This five-group analysis shows that the pay gap remains widest between Black, Black Welsh and Black British ('Black') and White staff. Although the mean pay gap here has narrowed from 14.7% in 2024 to 13.1% in 2025, the median gap has widened from 13.4% to 18.0%. This reflects the shifting distribution of Black staff across the organisation: while there has been welcome progress with increased representation in senior roles, there has also been growth in the number of Black staff in the lowest pay bands (Bands 2 and 3) since our 2024 analysis. These

⁵The number of staff identifying as 'Other' ethnic group is too small to allow meaningful analysis.

changes, taken together, help explain why the pay gap remains the widest for this group despite improvements at the top of the organisation.

The pay gap between staff from Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups and White staff remains relatively wide using the mean measure of pay at 8.2%, although this has narrowed slightly from 11.6% in 2024. The median pay gap, however, remains small at 3.9% and is not statistically significant. It is important to note that this is the smallest group in the analysis, with a total of 48 staff in total, meaning results may fluctuate from year to year.

For Asian, Asian Welsh and Asian British ('Asian') staff, the pay gap has widened in 2025. Although the mean gap remains in favour of Asian staff at -4.5%, the median pay gap is now marginally above the threshold typically considered significant at 5.2%. In 2024, the mean hourly pay gap for Asian staff was -17.0% (that is, in favour of Asian staff) with a zero median pay gap. The shift observed this year is largely driven by an increase in the proportion of Asian staff in the middle of the pay distribution, which has the effect of lowering the overall average pay for this group relative to White staff.

Table 3 Public Health Wales ethnicity pay gaps at 31 March 2025

	Mean	Median
White staff	£23.97	£20.45
Ethnic minority staff	£23.43	£19.38
- Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh ('Asian')	£25.86	£18.37
- Black, Black British or Black Welsh ('Black')	£18.86	£18.37
- Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups ('Mixed')	£19.53	£18.37
Ethnicity pay gap	2.2%	5.2%
- Asian/White pay gap	-4.5%	5.2%
- Black/White pay gap	13.1%	18.0%
- Mixed/White pay gap	8.2%	3.9%

Note: It is possible that these groupings, which combine ethnicities into broader groups, mask differences between specific ethnic minority groups but currently the numbers do not enable more granular analysis.

Figures 9 and 10 provide a breakdown of staff by ethnicity and pay band for 2024 and 2025 and show some clear shifts. For Black, Black Welsh or Black British staff, the high concentration in Pay Band 5 seen in 2024 has reduced in 2025, with representation now spread more evenly across the middle and higher bands, alongside continued – though slightly reduced – presence in the lower bands.

The distribution of Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British staff shows a more balanced pattern in 2025, with greater numbers of such staff across the middle of the pay distribution (particularly Bands 5-7) compared with 2024. Staff from Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups are also more evenly spread across Bands 3 to 8 in 2025, with noticeable increases in Bands 5 and 7. White staff proportions remain broadly stable, with only modest increases in some middle and higher bands. Overall, the 2025 data show more equal distribution across pay bands for most minority ethnic groups compared with 2024.

Figure 9 Proportion of staff in each ethnic group by pay band 2024

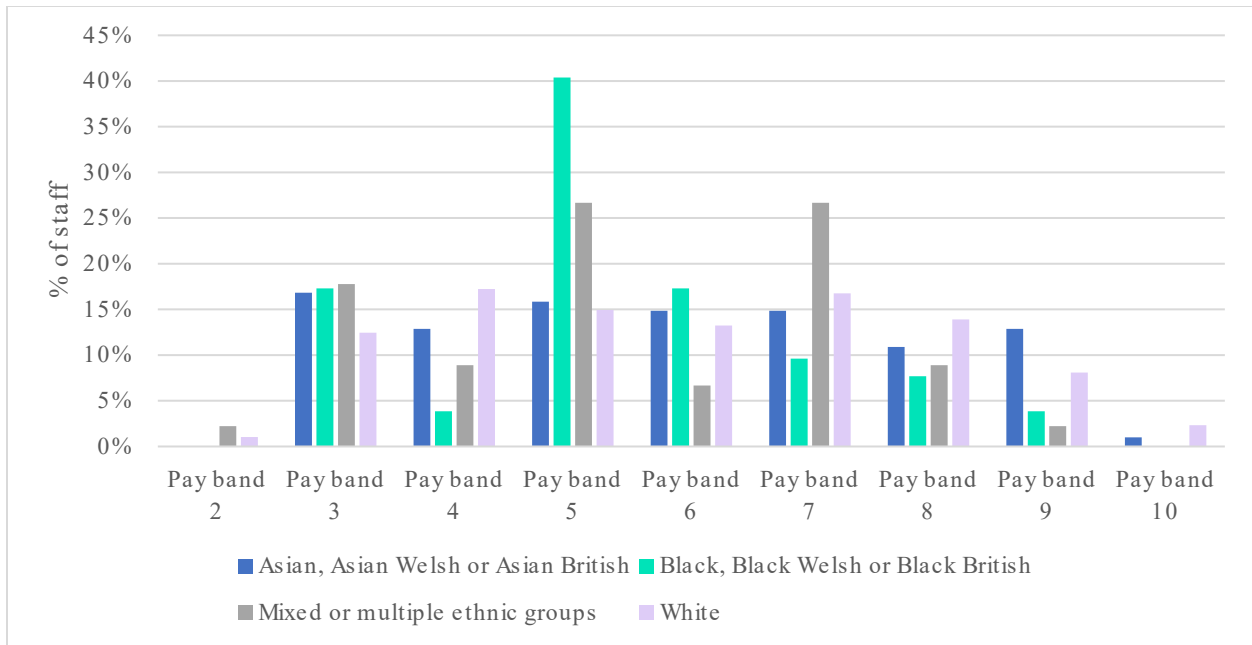
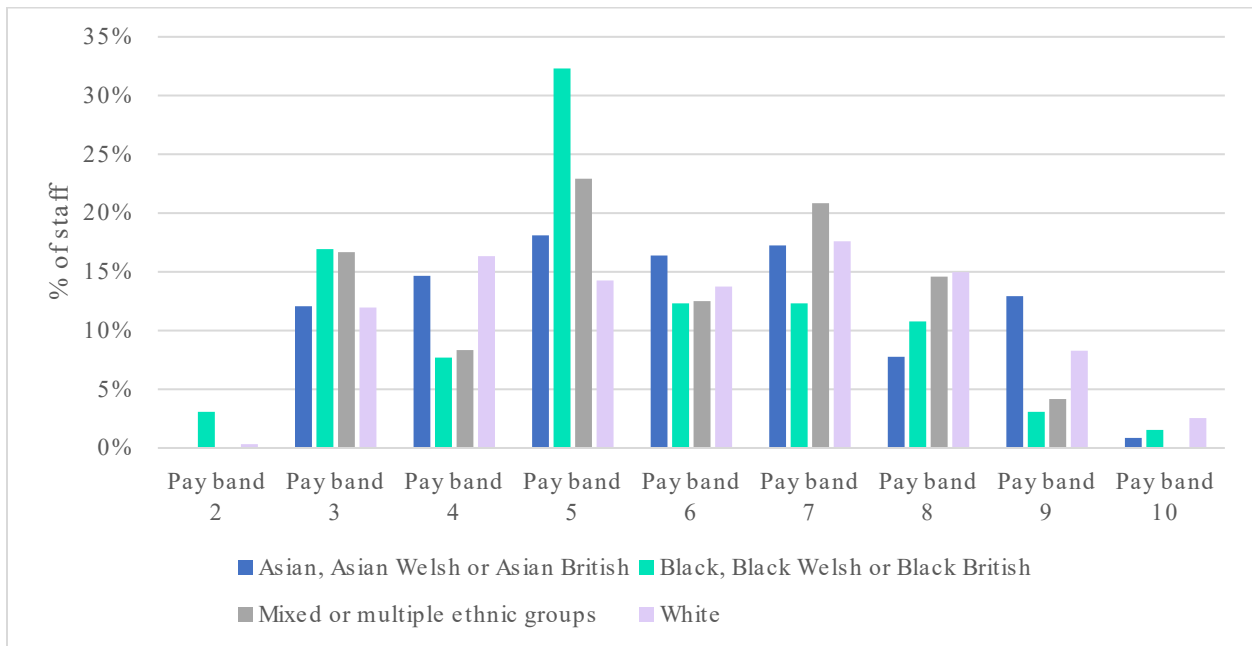


Figure 10 Proportion of staff in each ethnic group by pay band 2025



Disability pay gap

A disability pay gap is the difference in average earnings between disabled and non-disabled staff.

In total 223 staff (161 women and 62 men) report having a disability or long-term condition. This is up from 169 staff in 2024, representing an increase from 7.1% in 2024 to 9.7% in 2025, and reflecting improved declaration rates and greater workforce representation. However, most of this increase has occurred among staff in lower and middle pay bands, where the proportion of disabled staff is higher. Representation of such staff remains lower in the higher pay bands. As a result, the overall disability pay gap has widened, largely due a greater declaration rate and therefore a change in the distribution of disabled staff relative to the previous year's figures.

Table 4 Disability or long-term health condition declaration rates, 2022-2025

Snapshot date	% reporting a disability or long-term health condition†	% not declared
31 March 2022	6.0%	21.0%
31 March 2023	6.0%	15.5%
31 March 2024	7.1%	13.3%
31 March 2025	9.7%	8.7%

†excludes not stated and unspecified.

The disability pay gap refers to the difference in average hourly pay between disabled and non-disabled staff across the whole organisation. The overall mean disability pay gap at Public Health Wales is 7.7% (up from 5.4% in 2024) and the median gap is 6.2% (up from 2.3%).

Table 5 Disability pay gap at 31 March 2025

	Mean	Median
Non-disabled staff	£23.90	£20.45
Disabled staff	£22.05	£19.19

£ difference	£1.85	£1.27
Disability pay gap	7.7%	6.2%

Note: hourly pay is shown to two decimal places.