

Outcry as most new nurses fail to find full-time work

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) study found that of 500 newly-qualified nurses questioned, 71 per cent were still searching for a Band Five nursing job, the level at which nurses begin their career.

Most (86 per cent) were not confident of finding permanent work and 93 per cent agreed that recruitment freezes and job cuts were the reason they were having difficulty finding a permanent job, the study found.

More than eight out of ten said they would consider retraining or looking for work in another profession if the problem continued.

But the Government said it believed the RCN had "overestimated" the figures. A spokeswoman for the Department of Health said: "In many places, there are still jobs available for newly-qualified nurses."

RCN general secretary Dr Beverly Malone said: "Short-term, quick-fix recruitment freezes in the NHS not only disillusion staff, they have a direct impact on patient care.

"We need these nurses in the NHS now - not sometime in the future when trusts have solved their financial problems."

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