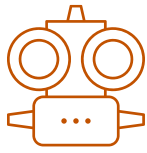
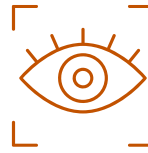


This portrait of an optometrist is based on findings from the General Optical Council Registrant and Workforce Perceptions Survey 2024. The results presented aim to highlight what the current optometrist workforce looks like, how optometrists feel about working in the profession, workplace challenges, and plans for the future. To read the survey research report, please visit [the GOC's website](#).

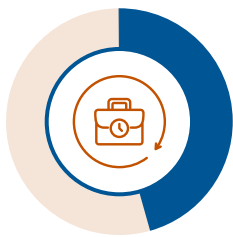
WORKFORCE



18,000
Registered
Optometrists



Approximately
14,040
working full time equivalent



44%
work full-time

vs



56%
work part-time

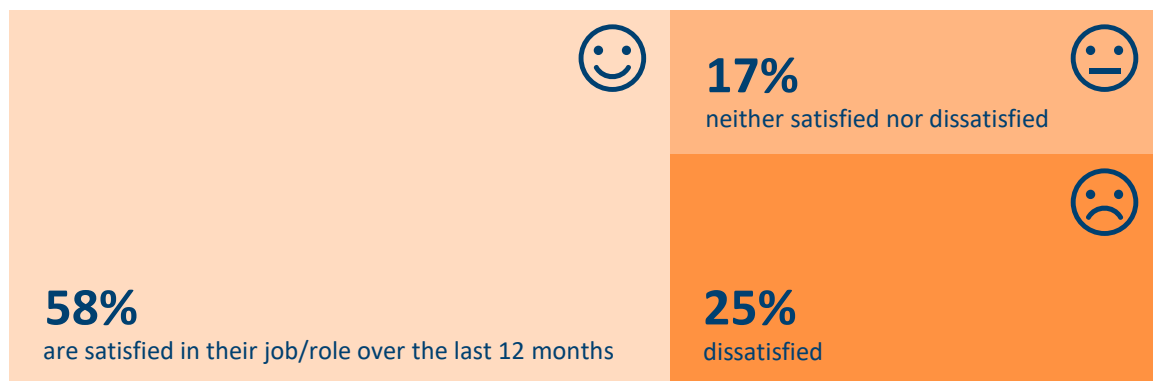


56%
are involved in the
delivery of enhanced
eye care services



29%
work as locums

JOB SATISFACTION



Main reasons for satisfaction

69%
Work is rewarding and interesting

60%
Good work/life balance

58%
Good working environment

Main reasons for dissatisfaction

66%
Do not feel valued

66%
Heavy workload

47%
Poor salary

HARASSMENT, BULLYING, OR ABUSE

49% have experienced it in the last 12 months



Experiences of harassment, bullying or abuse more common amongst...



54%
female optometrists



61%
younger optometrists aged <35



67%
those with a disability

Harassment, bullying or abuse at work was received from...



41%
patients



21%
managers



17%
other colleagues

DISCRIMINATION

32% have experienced it in the last 12 months



Experiences of discrimination in their role at work in the last 12 months amongst...



45%
younger optometrists aged <35



49%
ethnic minority groups



55%
those with a disability

Discrimination at work was received from...



27%
patients



13%
managers



9%
other colleagues

The most common types of discrimination experienced are...



51%
race



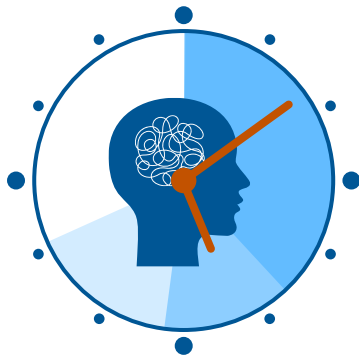
29%
sex



29%
age

EXPERIENCES OF POOR WORKING CONDITIONS

In the last 12 months...



69% have worked beyond their hours



56% have felt unable to cope with their workload



37% have found it difficult to provide patients with the level of care they need

BARRIERS TO DELIVERING SAFE CARE FOR PATIENTS



Time pressures / short testing times

“Short testing times which can put an optometrist under pressure to manage time and adequate patient care.”



Sales / commercial pressures / targets

“Commercial interests making anything more than a straight forward routine exam where I may need to perform additional tests leaving me to have to constantly justify my clinical decisions”



Volume of patients / overbooking / ghost clinics

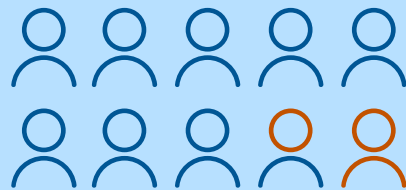
“Chains trying to cram in as many patients as possible by using ghost / maxi clinics.”

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE



43% plan to gain additional qualifications/skills

10% plan to switch to locum work



15% plan to leave the profession



Main reasons for planning to leave the profession are...



60% Disillusionment with the profession



59% To reduce stress, burnout and fatigue



51% Commercial pressures