What does the British Social Attitudes survey tell us about the NHS?

The survey has been asking members of the public in England, Scotland and Wales for their views on a wide range of social issues for more than 30 years.

The 2015 survey results for the health and social care-related questions – funded by the King’s Fund – show that 60% of the British public were ‘satisfied’ with the NHS, down by five percentage points on the previous year. Satisfaction is high by historic standards, but is significantly lower than its peak of 70% in 2010.

A closer analysis of the data shows satisfaction is not a straightforward measure of NHS performance. When people were asked why they were satisfied, quality of care was most frequently cited. However, the NHS being free at the point of use, and the good range of services and treatments available were key factors for many and relate to the founding principles of the NHS.

This implies people responding to the survey are not only reflecting on their use of the health service, but on their views about a whole range of factors including politics, policy and public institutions.

Supporters of the political party in power have historically tended to report higher levels of satisfaction than supporters of the party in opposition.

The NMC is responsive to nurses’ ever-changing needs, says Janet Finch

The Nursing and Midwifery Council is committed to being a dynamic organisation that values innovation, invests in technology, and works to engage and influence the next generation of nurses and midwives.

Technology is increasingly central to health and social care services, and one of our recent initiatives – NMC Online – is proving particularly successful. Introduced in June 2014, the service enables each of the 685,000 nurses and midwives on our register to manage every aspect of their registration digitally, including the new revalidation process.

This makes the procedures for staying on the register and updating personal details faster and easier; leaving nurses and midwives with more time to focus on delivering a high standard of patient care.

NMC Online allows us to send out emails with updates and important information, rather than printed letters, which saves time and money.

We have launched a dedicated website for revalidation (revalidation.nmc.org.uk), which breaks down each stage of the process and provides support in the form of films, case studies and supplementary information.

Our responsibility as a regulator is to protect the public. To do this effectively, we must be responsive to the constantly evolving environment in which nurses and midwives work.

By updating our processes so they reflect the digital world we live in, we are shaping regulation to be fit for the future.

Janet Finch is chair of the Nursing and Midwifery Council
@nmcnews

Continued confidence

Public satisfaction in the NHS has fallen – but the underlying trend shows the service remains resilient

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Bump on board

Give expectant mothers a break, says Jane Bates

‘Pregnancy is not an illness.’ I’ve heard nurses and midwives say this many times. In fact, I must have said it myself. And it isn’t of course.

But the physiological changes it brings about are indisputable. Even those who enjoy every moment of pregnancy cannot deny that the body they have been used to, for two or three decades, suddenly becomes unfamiliar.

With the first trimester might come nausea and sickness, and certainly tiredness and hunger. The third trimester