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# The 'Count Me In' Survey: A Report on the Clinical Research Nurse/Midwifery workforce in Ireland

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IRNN 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference 14<sup>th</sup> November 2019  
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# 'COUNT ME IN' REPORT



- Funding
- Previous studies
- Background
- Results
- Recommendations



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# HRB/IRNN Grant; 2018-2021

- Support for professional development, networking of Clinical Research Nurses/Midwives (CRNs) in Ireland
- Funding for annual conference and other IRNN activities
- Funding to complete a national workforce survey
  - Proposed to complete part-time over 1 year
- Reviewers wanted project prioritised –
  - To be completed in 6 months

# PREVIOUS STUDIES – NCNM REPORT 2008



Funded by HRB/NCNM Sarah Condell completed a *'Report on The Role of the Nurse or Midwife in Medical-Led Clinical Research'* (2008)



- A literature review of the international experience of the nurse and midwife role in medical led research
- Site visits to research facilities
- Consultation with nurses/midwives currently in the role in Ireland (individual and focus-group interviews) (N=41)

NCNM: National Council for the Professional Development of Nurses and Midwives  
HRB: Health Research Board



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# PREVIOUS STUDIES – IRNN



## IRNN Survey 2010

- Aim:
  - Build a profile of CRNs/midwives (CRNs) working in Ireland
  - Discover how the IRNN could meet the needs of CRNs
- 41 respondents
- Identified the need for the IRNN to advocate for:
  - increased visibility for CRNs,
  - integration with nursing services in affiliated hospitals
- Members also wanted IRNN to provide continuing professional development

## IRNN Survey 2018

- Aim:
  - To establish how many CRNs are currently working in a research role
  - Determine their employment contractual status, their employing organisation, and their career progression needs
- 54 respondents
- Confirmed need for completion of a formal national study



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# BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY



## The Problem:

- No national approach to the employment of Nurses/Midwives (CRNs)
- Number of CRNs working in Ireland unknown
- CRN job titles, responsibilities and terms of employment between organisations
- Lack of job security, educational opportunities or career
- Poor integration of CRNs, and clinical research, into health

## Proposed solution:

- Collect quantifiable data to strengthen IRNNs ability to advocate for CRN recognition and support



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# RESPONSE RATE & DEMOGRAPHICS

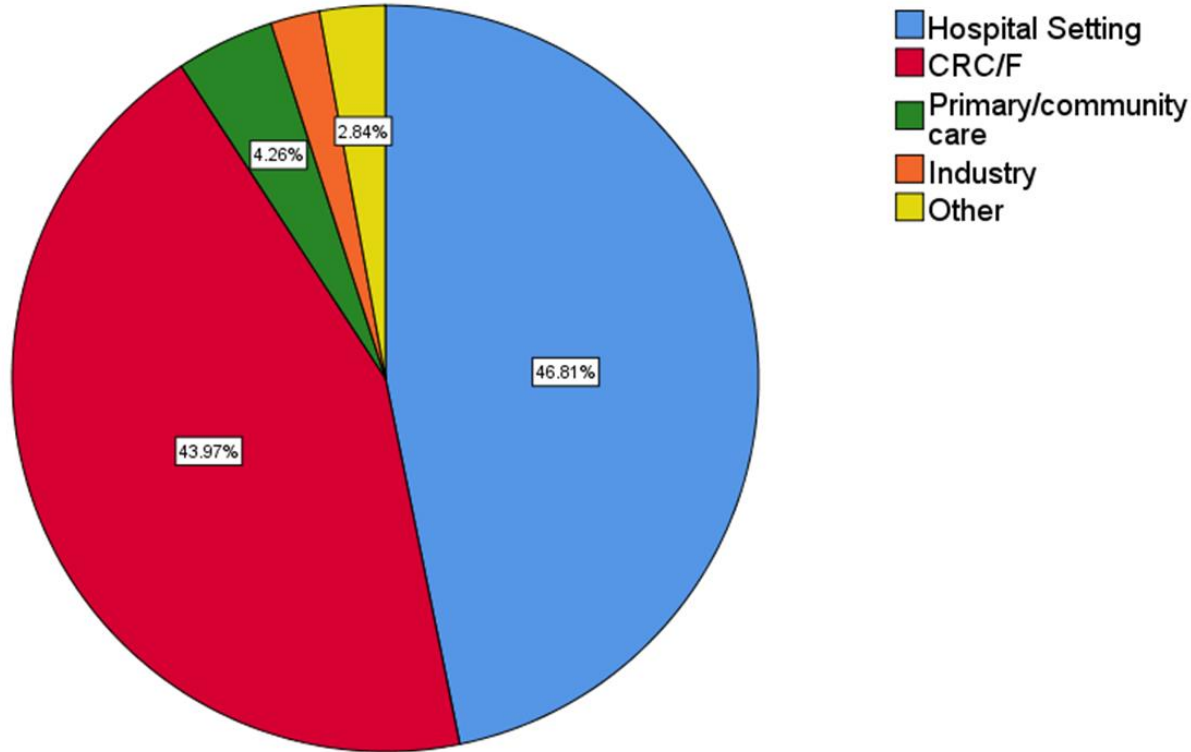


	Leinster - 84 (60.4%)
	Munster - 39 (27.3%)
	Connacht - 17 (11.9%)
	Ulster Rep. of Ireland - 1 (0.7%)
	Ulster United Kingdom - N/A

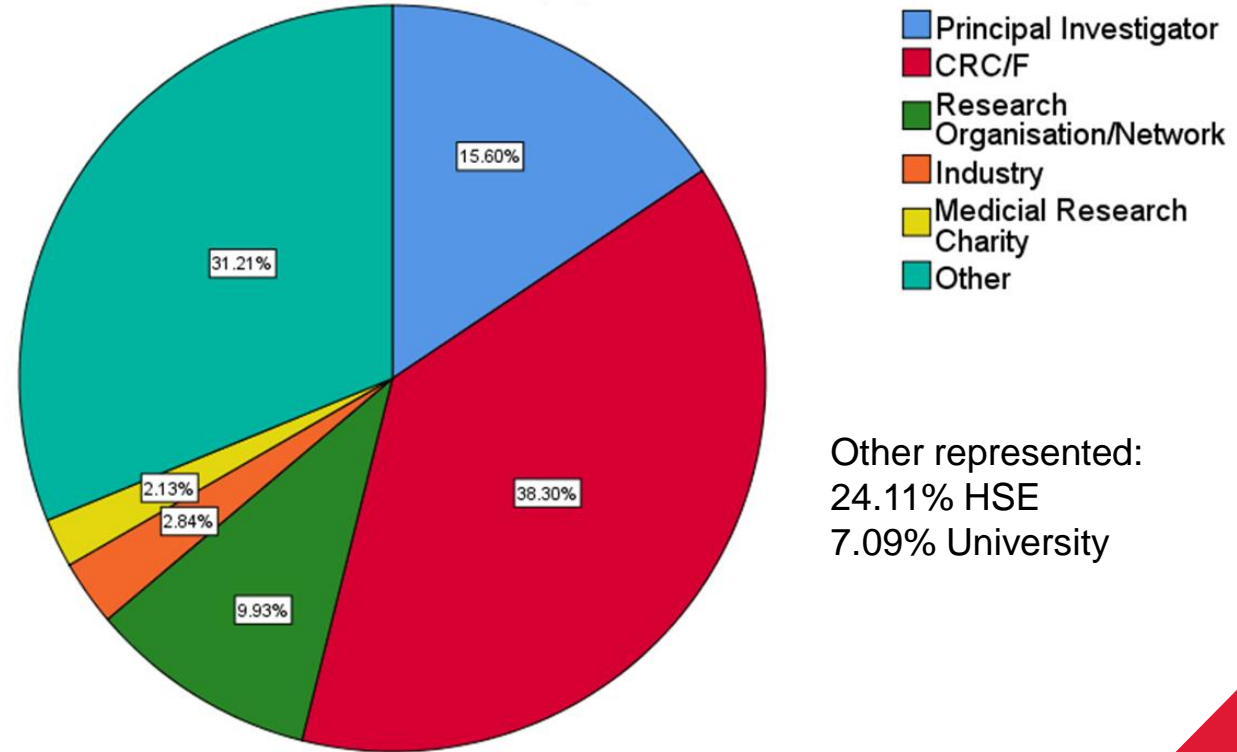
# WORK LOCATION and EMPLOYER



Work location



Employer

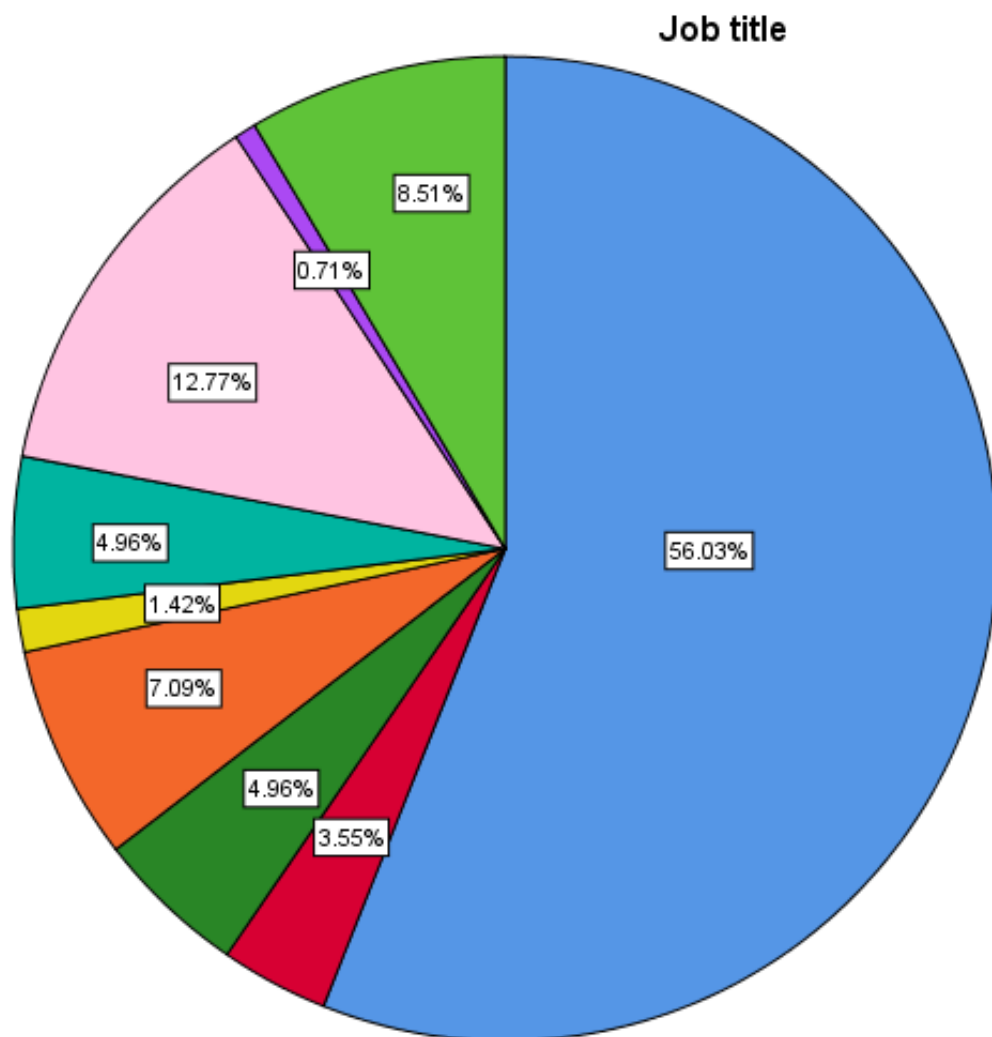


Other represented:  
24.11% HSE  
7.09% University





# ROLE TITLES



- (Clinical) Research Nurse
- (Clinical) Research Midwife
- Study/site Coordinator
- (Clinical) Research Coordinator
- (Clinical) Trials Nurse
- (Clinical) Trials Coordinator
- Research (Nurse) Manager
- Research Site Manager
- Other

## 'Other' titles

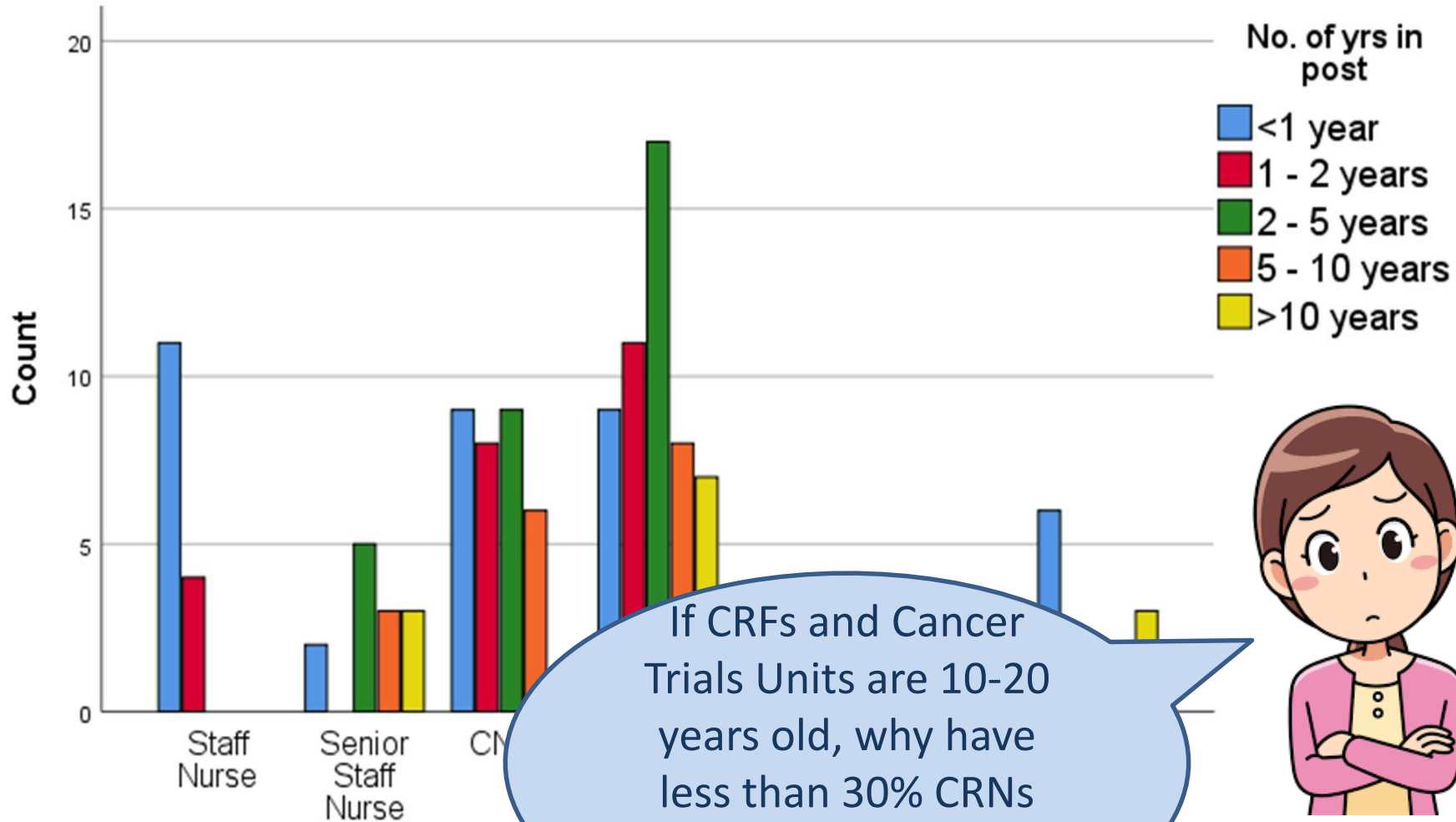
- Research project manager
- Clinical Trials Manager
- Project lead
- Clinical service development manager
- Education lead
- RANP
- Research Associate
- Not specified



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# YEARS IN POST & GRADE



You only asked about their current role!

If CRFs and Cancer Trials Units are 10-20 years old, why have less than 30% CRNs been in post more than 5 years?

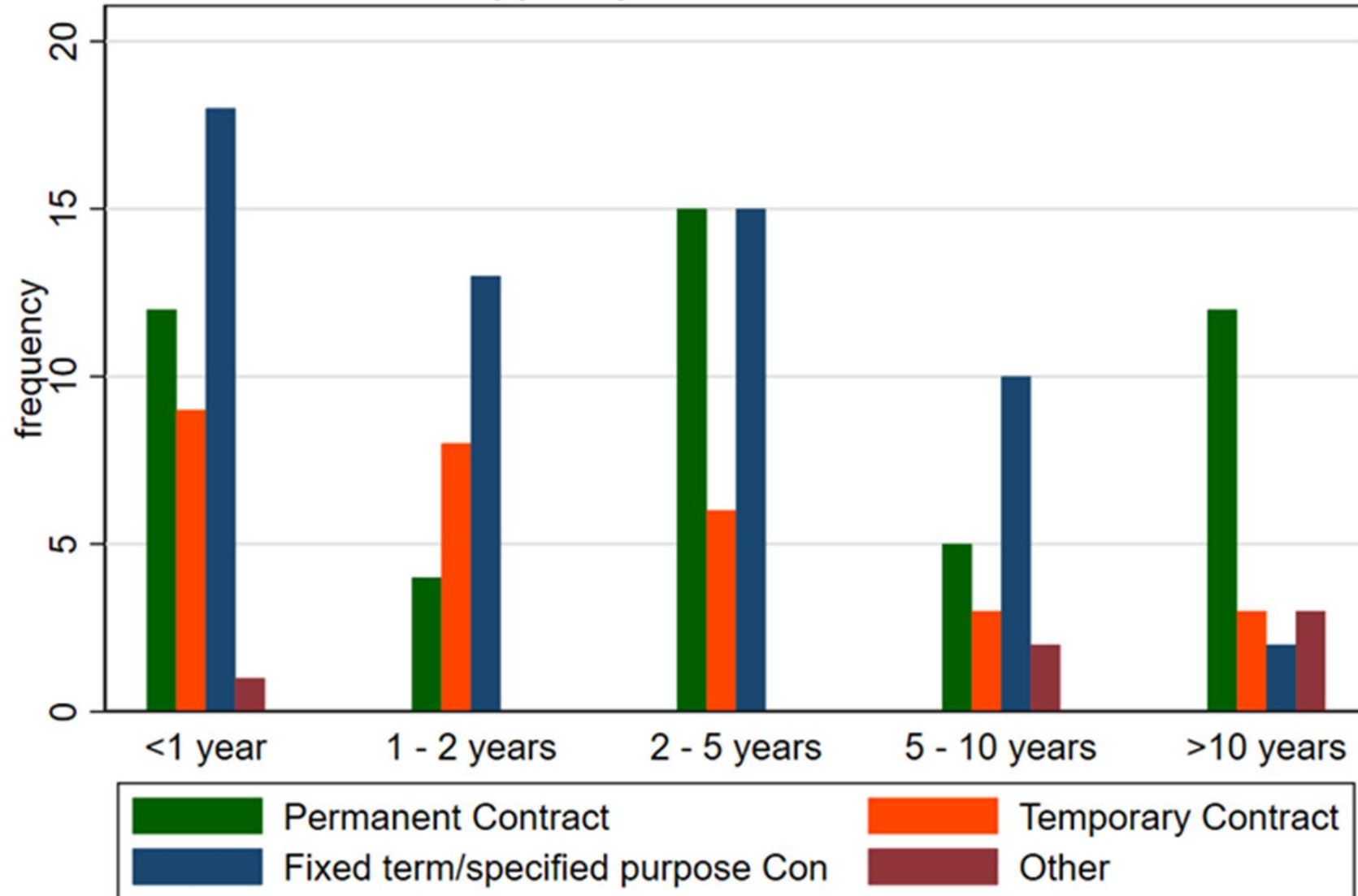


and why are you paying them at a senior grade?

# CONTRACT TYPE AND YEARS IN POST



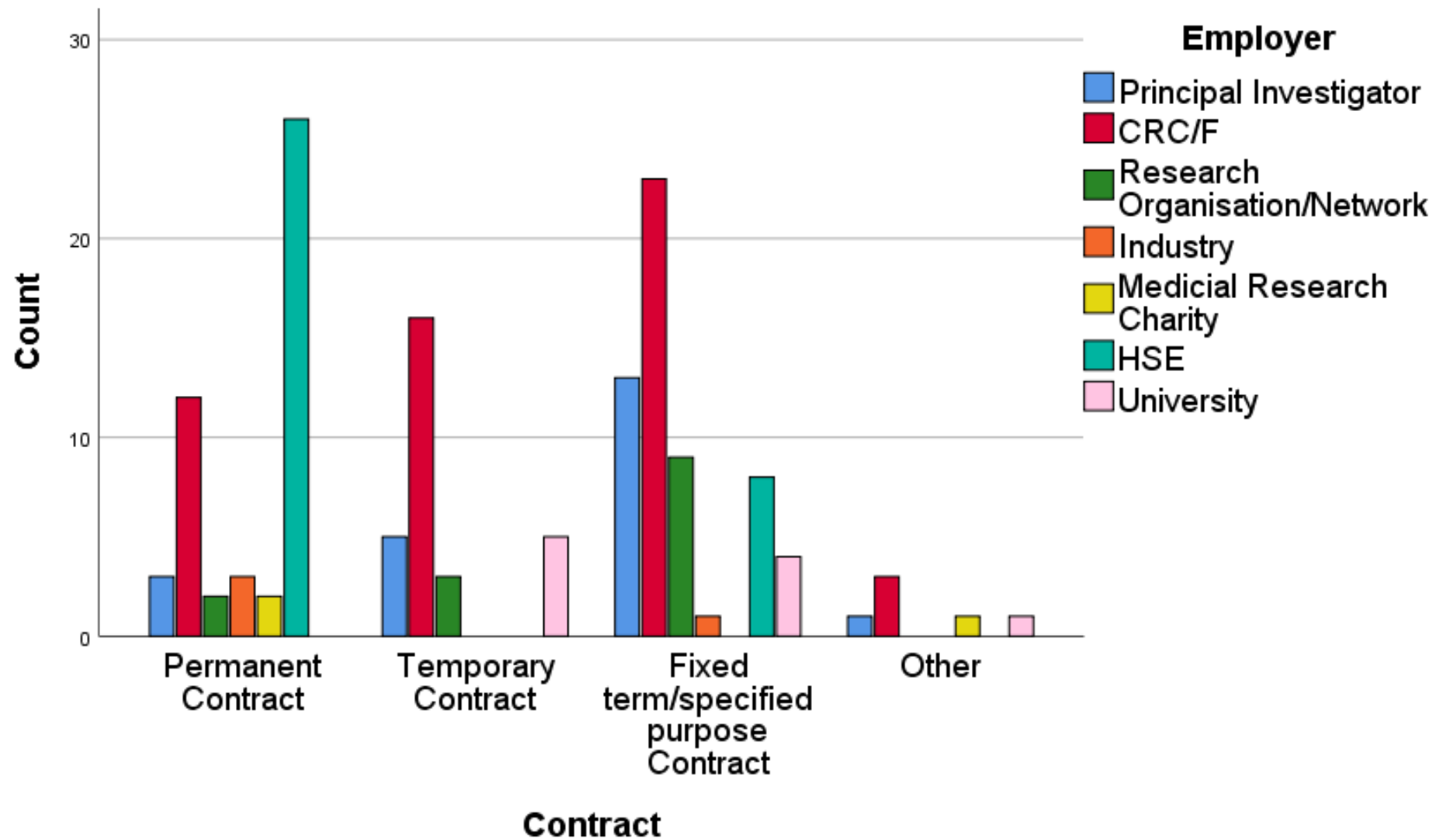
Contract type by Number of Years in Post



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# CONTRACT TYPE & EMPLOYMENT



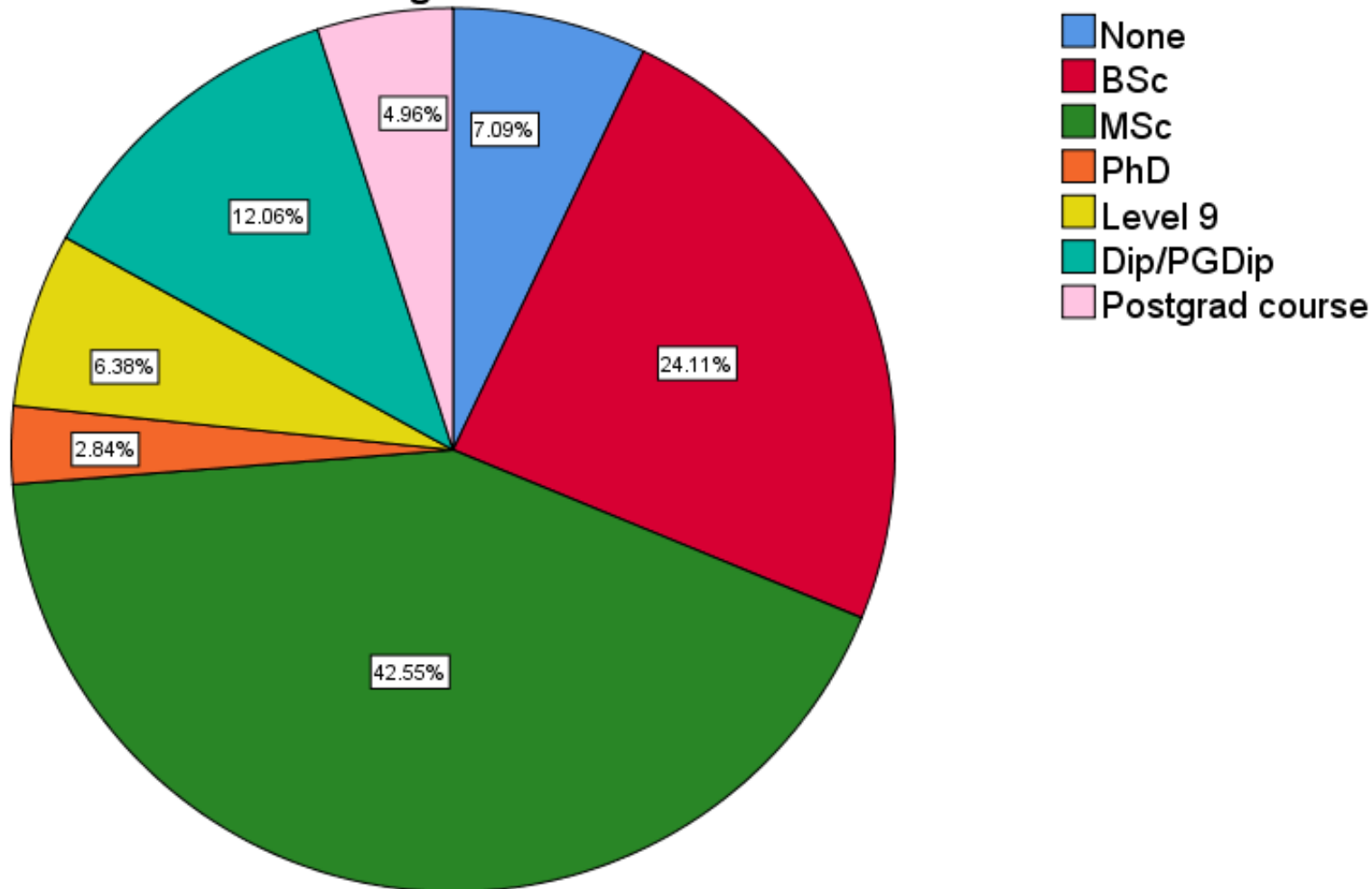
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# ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS



Highest Academic Qualification



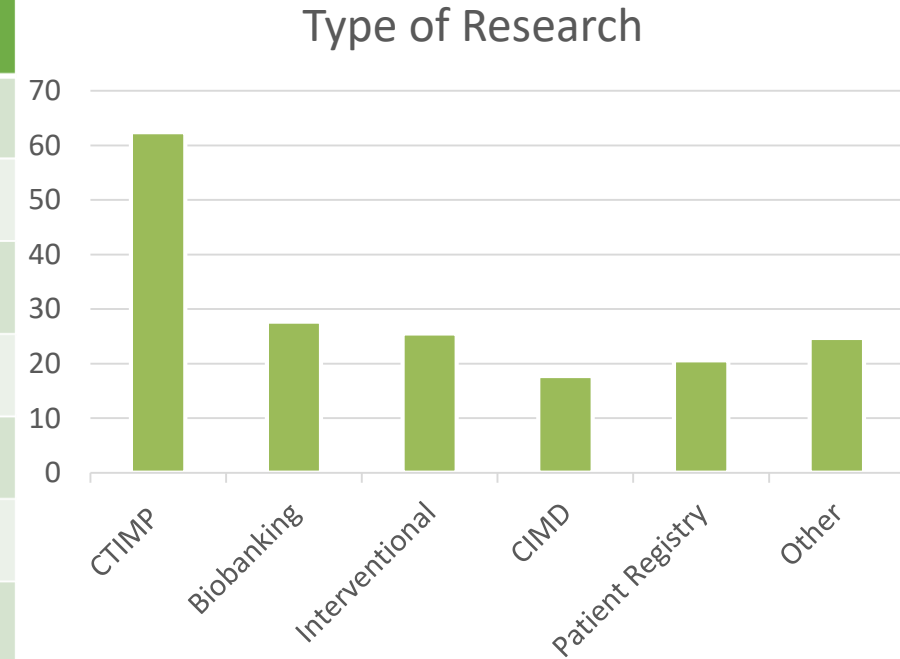
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# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES



Responsibility	%	Responsibility	%
Participant recruitment	85.5	Study set-up	69.5
Informed consent process	78	*Staff orientation/training	65.2
Adverse event management	78	*Project management	48.2
Study visits	77.3	*Ethics application	47.5
Site file management	77.3	IMP management	44
Case report form completion	73.8	*Study development	39
Sample processing	70.9	*Research site management	34



\* Indicates higher level or management functions



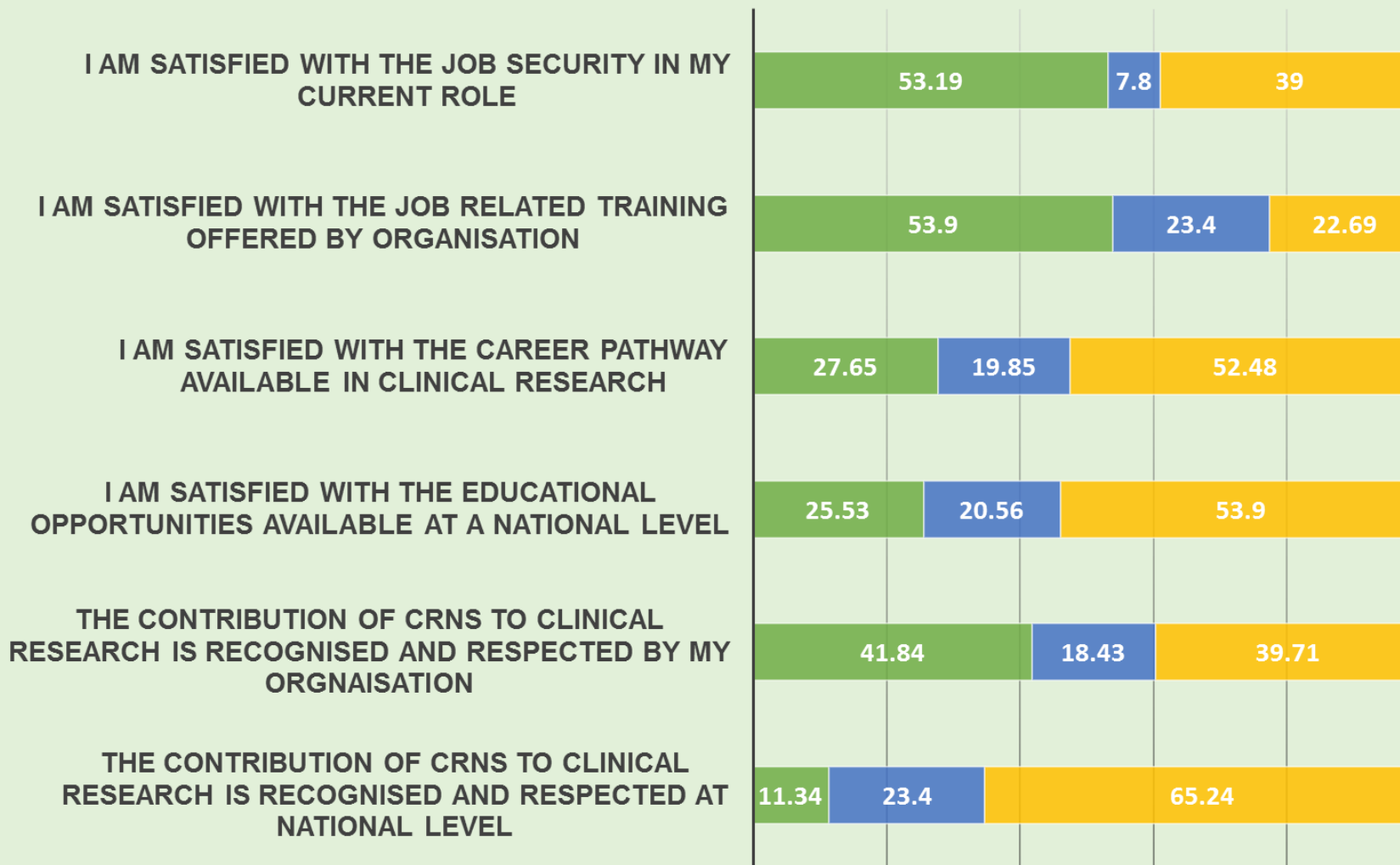
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# ROLE SATISFACTION



## Satisfaction scale



■ Strongly agree/ agree (%)
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree (%)
 ■ Disagree/ strongly disagree (%)



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# CAREER PATHWAY SATISFACTION x EMPLOYER



Statement: 'I am satisfied with the career pathway available to me'	Employed by:							
	Principal Investigator	CRC/F	Research Organisation/Network	Industry	Medical Research Charity	Health Services	University	Total
Strongly Agree	1	8	2	0	0	2	0	13
Agree	1	11	3	2	1	7	1	26
Neither Agree nor Disagree	7	10	2	1	1	6	1	28
Disagree	6	11	6	1	0	9	4	37
Strongly Disagree	7	14	1	0	1	10	4	37
Total	22	54	14	4	3	34	10	141

59% of CRNs employed by a PI were dissatisfied with career pathway

55.8% CRNs employed by HSE dissatisfied with career pathway



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# FREE TEXT COMMENTS



“New staff can start on the same salary with no experience or training, they will ultimately make a lot of mistakes and learn on the job, but this is not good for the quality of the research outcomes”.

“I feel strongly there should be a career pathway, that having completed 1-2 years we should be in a permanent role, with increments. I have over 20 years’ experience in research but to secure a fixed purpose contract I had to accept a drop in salary.”

“I would like to be recognised by my success to date. There is no opportunity for promotion, I have proven my capabilities time and time again and it still isn't recognised.”



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# RECOMMENDATIONS: CONTRACTS



- CRNs should be employed as core staff
  - in permanent posts with all associated entitlements
  - at a grade appropriate to their roles, responsibilities, and prior clinical and research experience
  - Allocated to duties as appropriate to the needs of the study
  - Annual increments or salary review on par with other nursing services
- Sites with sufficient staff numbers should aim for a workforce skill mix from entry level (staff nurse/midwife) through to specialist, advanced practice or management grades
  - Novice CRNs should be supported by more experienced colleagues and have a realistic expectation of career progression based on competency and experience.



# RECOMMENDATIONS: SUPPORT



- CRNs should be supported in accessing educational programmes appropriate to their specialised area of practice
- A national CRN support function/office should be established to:
  - Provide professional support and advice for CRNs
  - Source or develop training and education resources
  - Maintain the CRN database
  - Support IRNN in its activities

This should be a key function of the national clinical research infrastructure, not dependent of volunteers!



# RECOMMENDATIONS: INFRASTRUCTURE



We encourage the Health Research Board (HRB) and Department of Health (DOH) to review the status of CRNs and consider either:

- Agreed numbers of CRNs employed through health services (regardless of source of salary) or
- CRNs employed through academic institutions should hold honorary contracts with the their affiliated hospital to enable:
  - seamless research activity
  - access to nursing education and professional support

**CRNs should be involved in all decisions about future employment status and career pathway**



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# CRN Database




<https://irnn.ie/crn-database-submission/>

CRN Database Submissi

https://irnn.ie/crn-database-submission/

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You are being invited to enter your details into the CRN database for future contact by the IRNN. You can request to have your details amended or removed at any time by contacting [hello@irnn.ie](mailto:hello@irnn.ie). The CRN Database will be maintained by authorised members of the IRNN working committee and may be used for future research into the role of the CRN or aspects of clinical research. Should this be the case you will be contacted via the IRNN with information about the proposed project. The IRNN will not share your contact details directly with other researchers. Data collected on the CRN Database will be stored for 5 years after which time consent to retain your data for an indefinite period will be sought.

Are you submitting to the IRNN database for the first time or do you wish to update your existing entry?

New Submission

Name:

Job title:

Place of work:

Contact number:

Your Email:



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- Study participants

No conflicts of interest to declare



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