What is WISN?

The WISN human resource planning and management tool gives health managers a way to analyze and calculate. The WISN approach is based on a health worker’s workload, with activity (time) standards applied for each workload component.

Using the WISN approach allows health managers to:
- Determine how many health workers are required to cope with actual workload in a given facility
- Estimate staffing required to deliver expected services of a facility based on workload
- Calculate workload and time required to accomplish tasks of individual staff categories
- Compare staffing between health facilities and administrative areas
- Understand workload of staff at a given facility
- Establish fair workload distribution among staff
- Assess the workload pressure of the health workers in that facility.

The WISN method is:
- simple to apply, using already collected, available data;
- versatile and applicable to staffing decisions for all personnel categories (medical staff, paramedical staff, non-medical staff, etc.) and at all health service levels;
- technically sound and field-tested, responding to the needs of today’s health service managers:
- easy to understand for non-medical managers;
- realistic in providing practical targets for budgeting and resource allocation.

The completely revised WISN User’s Manual comes with accounts of the practical application of WISN in a number of countries. It also includes newly developed software to run WISN studies and an easy-to-follow software instruction manual. Health managers will now be able to standardize applications, avoid having to construct data entry tables every time a new study is undertaken, and, eventually, perform cross-facility and cross-country analysis of staff distribution, their workload and productivity. Within national human resources planning, monitoring and evaluation cycles, this information will provide invaluable knowledge for establishing pragmatic and realistic health workforce staffing plans for all levels.
WISN can help you

- determine how best to improve your current staffing situation,
- identify inequities in current staffing of health facilities or work areas and better set priorities for allocating new staff or transferring existing staff,
- determine the best way to allocate new functions and transfer existing functions to different health worker categories. You can decide whether the number of existing cadres should be reduced, a new staff category created or tasks shifted between cadres.
- pinpoint where current professional performance is low in comparison with other facilities.
- plan future staffing of health facilities. Instead of current workload data, WISN allows you to use data on anticipated workloads of planned future services.
- examine the impact of different employment conditions on staff requirements. They include, for example, changes in the length of the working week, increased vacation or different in-service training policies.

WISN Software

The WISN approach includes software for recording, analyzing and reporting data related to staffing status and needs at health facilities of any size in any country. Learning to use this software is easy, assuming you are familiar with the terms, concepts and methodologies presented in Workload Indicators of Staffing Need (WISN): User’s Manual. Please review the WISN User’s Manual thoroughly before making use of the software.