

Our Gender Pay Gap Report 2023



We are proud to have a diverse workforce and that we attract applicants of different ages, backgrounds and nationalities to work with us. We believe we support this equality through fair and transparent reward, recruitment, training and promotion processes.

As part of this approach we review our processes to ensure that women and men are rewarded fairly and that all employees have access to training and career progression regardless of gender or current role within the company.

Whilst on first glance, our published gender pay gap figures suggest the average male has a higher hourly rate of pay, than the average female, this is in fact not the case and does not reflect the culture within the company.

The figures result from the fact that as a business in the healthcare sector we attract a greater proportion of female staff in our community pharmacies where branch hours can accommodate more flexible working patterns, whilst our branch managers and service centre staff are more evenly split between male and female. This causes some disparity across our results where the imbalance is not taken into consideration. Similar challenges will apply to other organisations in the community healthcare sector.

As a business, we are committed to the principle of equal opportunities and treatment for all employees and are confident that its gender pay gap is not as a result of paying males and females differently for the same or equivalent work.

We are never complacent, and we set out the steps we take to ensure that we keep this under review and make improvements wherever possible.

Gender Pay and Bonus Gaps

Whilst we treat all applicants equally, as a community pharmacy we find that we largely attract female applicants to work in our branches, with many applicants telling us that this is driven by their desire to work and help in the provision of healthcare in the communities in which they live.

We assist our employees to achieve a positive work life balance by providing access to flexible working patterns and a sympathetic attitude to any such requests wherever operationally possible.

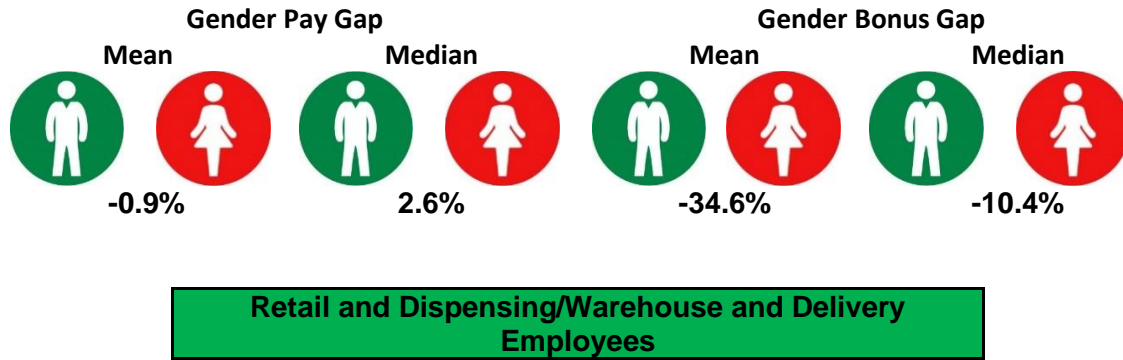
At our snapshot date of 5 April 2023, we employed **509** female employees and **83** male employees.

Of the 509 female employees, **31** were employed as branch pharmacists, **7** employed in the warehousing and delivery operation and **42** employed in the service centre.

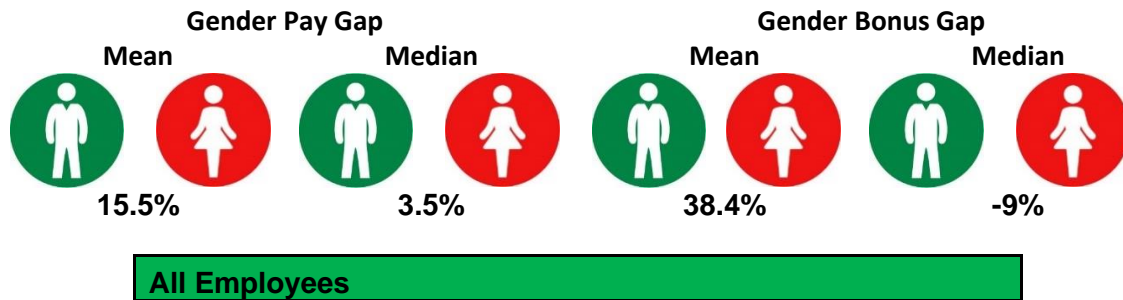
Of the 83 male employees, **13** were employed as branch pharmacists, **31** employed in the warehousing and delivery operation and **14** employed in the service centre.

At HI Weldrick Limited, all sectors of our business have distinct pay systems, which are appropriate and designed to market for the roles. Within each of these areas, we are confident that males and females are paid equally for undertaking equivalent roles. In order to achieve this, we ensure our policies and processes are fair and consistent, particularly around recruitment and selection, pay reviews, performance reviews and bonus payment practices.

By way of illustration of this, if we remove service centre staff and pharmacists from the calculations, our gender pay gap figures for retail and dispensing staff in our community pharmacies, warehouse and delivery operations are as follows:



This can be compared to the data for the whole company as below:



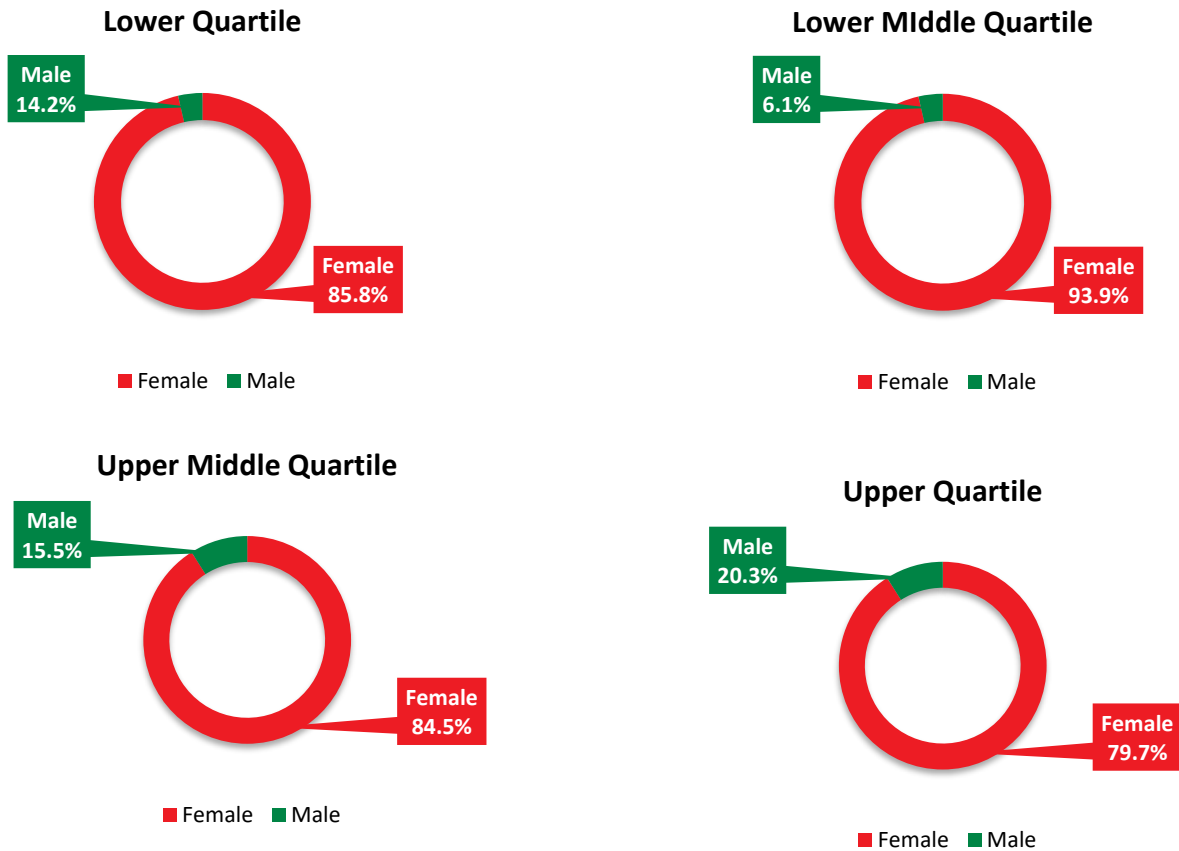
Note : The mean is the average of all the numbers in the dataset
 The median is the numerical value which splits the top 50% of the population from the bottom 50%

As the above demonstrates, any gender pay gap that exists within our 'total' figures is not at all driven by any variance in like for like pay within our community pharmacies.

Gender Distribution

The below chart illustrates the gender distribution across the HI Weldrick Limited workforce in four equally sized quartiles. As is clear from the information, the greatest variance in the proportion of males and females is in the lower middle pay quartile, whereas the other quartiles are more similar.

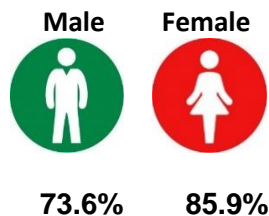
Employees by pay quartile



Proportion of males and females receiving bonus

There is a material and opposite variance in the proportion of males and females receiving bonus as per the below chart.

Percentage of employees who receive bonus pay



As set out in both the above chart and the gender distribution chart, both of these factors are driven by the fact that a higher proportion of males are employed in the service centre roles than in community pharmacies. Roles within the service centre typically attract higher standard pay rates but with a lower opportunity to earn bonus.

Our commitment to gender equality

As a brand we have a positive commitment to diversity and inclusion in all parts of our workforce. Initiatives which are already under way or which we plan to put into effect include:

1. Continuing to ensure that decision making on pay and progression is appropriate, considering equality and diversity.
2. Offering additional training and development in order to attract colleagues in community pharmacies (who are overwhelmingly female) to apply for roles within the support functions in the company.
3. Presenting at schools and careers fayres within the local communities to attract females into STEM roles.
4. Providing unconscious bias training to employees in charge of recruitment and managing teams.
5. Continuing to promote our existing policies on flexible working and shared parental leave.
6. Ensuring we remain aligned with changes in employment legislation to provide fairness for all.

Our Gender Pay Gap Report has been compiled using the calculations prescribed by the Equality Act 2020 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 and confirm that they have been checked and the information in the report is accurate.

This statement confirms that the published information is accurate at the time of publishing and is signed by Jenna Wheeler, Head of Finance.