
1

INTRODUCTION

The annual physiotherapist labourforce survey

Introduction

Each year, as part of the annual registration process for physiotherapists in NSW, an Annual Labourforce Survey is sent to each physiotherapist currently registered with the Physiotherapists Registration Board of New South Wales. This report provides an overview of information from the 2000 workforce survey.

The response rate to the survey has remained at high levels with a rate of 92.9% in 1999 and 89.4% in 2000. The continued support of the Physiotherapists Registration Board of New South Wales, professional organisations and physiotherapists participating in the survey is appreciated.

Availability of survey information

The previous summary of the Annual Survey data was produced in 2002, entitled "Physiotherapy Labourforce Annual Survey, New South Wales, 1999". This profile reproduces the same data as for 1999. Additional survey analysis data such as additional cross tabulations can be obtained by forwarding a written request to the contact address in the front of the publication. Contact should be made to clarify the information required and to determine if a fee may apply. A charging policy is available on request.

Strict procedures are followed to ensure the privacy of individual physiotherapists who respond to the Survey. There is no access to identifying data, as individual names and addresses are not provided by the Board on the data file. Survey information will not be made available in any format that enables the identification of individual respondents.

Methodology

Timing of the 2000 Survey

Information from the 2000 Annual Labourforce Survey relates to the 2000 registration renewal period. Renewal notices and surveys were forwarded in October 2000 to physiotherapists registered with the Physiotherapists Registration Board of New South Wales at that time. The renewal fee was due by the end of December in order for the physiotherapist to be retained on the register, as non-financial physiotherapists had their status altered by Board consent in mid December. Survey respondents completed the survey with information about their usual working situation at that time. Information regarding the registration status of physiotherapists was provided by the Board which related to the period from January 2000 to December 2000.

Labourforce Survey coverage

Information from the Annual Labourforce Survey does not cover all registered physiotherapists in NSW. Only those registrants renewing their registration are forwarded a survey form. This excludes:

- **New registrants:** New registrants include new local graduates, interstate graduates and overseas trained physiotherapists registering for the first time with the NSW Board who have had their qualifications recognised in NSW. These persons will normally not receive the labourforce survey, but some new registrants may receive the survey form if they also renew in the same financial year.
- **Restorations:** Restorations are persons who have been restored to the register after a period in which they were not financial. These persons will not normally receive the annual survey. Some physiotherapists are restorations simply due to late payment and may have returned a survey form, and this group are defined as technical restorations.
- **Prior Payments:** persons who have paid for several years' registration in advance. These persons will normally only receive the labour force survey in the first year they are listed as prior payment.
- **Registration status pending:** generally persons due for renewal between October and December who have not re-registered by the end of the survey period. These persons will most likely appear as deletions or restorations in the following year.

Care should be taken when interpreting this data as some individual physiotherapists may be included in more than one of the categories during the twelve month period.

Figures have not been adjusted for non-response

Data in this publication have not been adjusted for unknown information (both survey non-response and registration data such as year of birth). When interpreting the tables, consideration should be given to the impact of unknown data:

- The absence of data due to non-response results in an under-representation of the size of the workforce in individual tables.
- The labour force characteristics of non-respondents may differ from the characteristics of survey respondents (for example, respondents may be more likely than non-respondents to be in the workforce). Weighting the survey data according to non-response alone may result in an over-estimation or under-estimation in some categories.
- The labour force characteristics of physiotherapists who are not part of the survey target group (that is, new registrants and restorations) may differ from the characteristics of the survey population.

Calculating total unknown data for the survey

In determining the total unknown data for a particular question, consideration should be given to:

- **Unknown data for the question or questions comprising the table**, as indicated at the foot of each table. This may also include information that is unknown due to registration data (eg, year of birth) being unavailable from the Board.
- **Non-response to any filtering questions.** Data on second job will be affected by the lack of the explicit question “Do you have a 2nd job?” The number of persons with second jobs has been estimated from the highest response to any one question (Table 3.31: Work location of physiotherapists- second job, n=627) and used to estimate unknown data in relevant questions.
- **Non-response to the survey.** Survey response rates are presented in Table 1.1.

It should be noted that limitations in the survey data prevent a distinction between non-response and alternatives such as “no”, “other” or “zero”. Information regarding this is noted at the foot of the relevant tables.

Conventions used in this publication

Throughout this publication, figures within the tables may not add to the total shown where it has been necessary to round numbers. Percentages printed as 0.0 may denote less than 0.05%.

Italics are used to report unknown data.

- is used in place of zero (0).

Bold is used to indicate a total or subtotal.

— denotes not applicable.

n/a denotes data is not available.

Category of Physiotherapist Registration

In 2000, there were 5,632 physiotherapists financially registered with the Physiotherapists Registration Board of NSW, an increase of 188 on 1999. Of these, 4,307 (76.5%) were female and 1,325 (23.5%) were male. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the number of physiotherapists in each category of registration.

Table 1.1: Persons registered as Physiotherapists in NSW, 2000

Category of registration	No.		%		No.		%	
	Female		Male		Total			
New registrations(only status) ²	228	64.6%	125	35.4%	353	100.0%		
Restorations	18	81.8%	4	18.2%	22	100.0%		
"True" restorations	18	81.8%	4	18.2%	22	100.0%		
"Technical" restorations ³	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%		
Renewals	4,061	77.2%	1,196	22.8%	5,257	100.0%		
Deletions	42	85.7%	7	14.3%	49	100.0%		
New registrations (total) ²	356	66.2%	182	33.8%	538	100.0%		

Notes:

- 1 The table includes physiotherapists who were financial with the Board during 2000.
- 2 Some physiotherapists are included in more than one category during the twelve month period. There were 538 new registrations in total, but 185 of those were also renewals within the survey period. These have been counted as renewals.
- 3 No restorations of the total of 22 had survey forms, and therefore no respondents were categorised as "technical restorations", (defined as renewing their registration after the cut off date and then being restored to the register).

Response rate to Labourforce Annual Survey

The response rate to the 2000 Physiotherapy Labourforce Annual Survey was 89.4 per cent, slightly less than the 1999 response rate of 92.9%.

Table 1.2: Response Rate to Physiotherapy Annual Labour Force

	No.	Rate	No.	Rate
	1999		2000	
Formal response rate				
<i>Survey respondents</i> ¹ who were <i>renewals</i> ²	4,608		4,700	
<i>Total renewals</i> ²	4,961	92.9%	5,257	89.4%

- Notes:**
1. A "survey respondent" is defined as a renewal who provides information to the question on working status. There were 235 survey forms with no data on workforce status. However further analysis indicated that 86 respondents had zero work status, but showed a NSW postcode for place of work, and so were allocated to category 1: working only in NSW in physiotherapy. The above response rate includes this group as respondents. There were 149 persons who returned a form but workforce status could not be determined. 408 physiotherapists did not return any survey form
 2. "Renewal" is defined as a person recorded as renewing their registration although other actions may also have been recorded (technical restoration, new registration).

Determining the response rate to the survey is complicated by the relationship between the survey and the renewal process. While new registrants and restorations do not generally receive the survey, some may if they also receive a renewal notice within the twelve month survey period. Additionally, some persons sent renewal notices do not renew their registration and therefore do not return surveys. All survey responses from financially registered physiotherapists are presented in Tables 1.3 and 1.4. Tables 3.1 to 3.42 describe the working renewals cohort only.

Work Status

There were 3,459 working renewal survey respondents in 2000. Working renewals are those respondents who:

- Were financially registered and renewed their registration in 2000
- Returned a labourforce survey indicating their work status; and
- Indicated that their work status was one of the following three categories:
 - Working in physiotherapy only in NSW
 - Working in physiotherapy mainly in NSW, but also in other states
 - Working in physiotherapy in NSW, but on extended leave (see Table 1.3)

Table 1.3: Work status of Physiotherapy Labourforce¹, NSW, in

Work Status	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%	%
	Female		Male		Total		Excludes N/R	Female
Working in physiotherapy								
Only in NSW	2,573	68.1%	782	73.1%	3,355	69.2%	71.4%	76.7%
Mainly in other states, but also in NSW	39	1.0%	21	2.0%	60	1.2%	1.3%	65.0%
Mainly in NSW, but also in other states	31	0.8%	15	1.4%	46	0.9%	1.0%	67.4%
Only in states other than NSW	61	1.6%	29	2.7%	90	1.9%	1.9%	67.8%
Overseas	220	5.8%	108	10.1%	328	6.8%	7.0%	67.1%
In NSW, but on extended leave	57	1.5%	1	0.1%	58	1.2%	1.2%	98.3%
Not Working in physiotherapy								
Currently not working, and not looking for work	478	12.6%	29	2.7%	507	10.5%	10.8%	94.3%
Currently not working, but looking for work	46	1.2%	5	0.5%	51	1.1%	1.1%	90.2%
Currently working but not in physiotherapy	171	4.5%	34	3.2%	205	4.2%	4.4%	83.4%
Work Status Unknown								
Non-response to survey ²	103	2.7%	46	4.3%	149	3.1%		69.1%
Total	3,779	100.0%	1,070	100.0%	4,849	100.0%	100.0%	77.9%

- Notes:**
1. There were 4,849 forms from physiotherapists renewing their registration, of whom 149 did not reply to the question on work status and a work status could not be derived. (see Note 1 to Table 1.2)
 2. Percentages include the non-response to the survey. These need to be recalculated to determine the proportion of respondents by work status.

Physiotherapists seeking work

Table 1.4: Nature of work sought by physiotherapists who were not working in physiotherapy, but were seeking work in 2000

Nature of work sought	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
	Female		Male		Total		Female
Looking for work other than in physiotherapy	157	75.1%	30	78.9%	187	75.7%	84.0%
Looking for work in physiotherapy							
- either full time or part time	5	2.4%	5	13.2%	10	4.0%	50.0%
- full time	8	3.8%	1	2.6%	9	3.6%	88.9%
- part time	39	18.7%	2	5.3%	41	16.6%	95.1%
Total	209	100.0%	38	100.0%	247	100.0%	84.6%
Non-response:	8	3.7%	1	2.6%	9	3.5%	

Note: Table includes only those survey respondents in table 1.3 who indicated that they were not currently working but looking for work, or currently working but not in physiotherapy (n = 256)

Estimating Workforce Size

The 2000 Profile of the Medical Workforce in NSW (NSW Health Department, 2000) estimated the size of the medical workforce in New South Wales, using the following approach:

- Assume the proportion of survey respondents working in NSW represents the proportion of all renewals working in NSW (73.6% for physiotherapists in 2000)
- Assume 90% of new registrants are working in NSW
- Assume 80% of other registrants are working in NSW (excluding deletions)

This results in 3,869 working renewals, 318 working new registrants, and 18 working registrants in other categories, with a total estimated workforce size of 4,204 physiotherapists.

Estimating Full-Time Equivalent Workforce (FTE)

The numbers of hours worked by physiotherapists on average per week for all jobs together (see Table 3.26) can be converted to full-time equivalents (FTEs) which becomes a measure of the productive workforce. This is shown in Table 3.22, where the total hours worked by physiotherapists in each age and hours worked group are divided by 35 to calculate the FTE workforce. Thirty five hours is used as the measure of full time work based on labourforce definitions developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

A ratio of FTEs to the total headcount workforce can then be calculated, to determine the relative productivity of the workforce.

Table 22 has not been adjusted to the estimated size of the workforce accounting for non response. The FTE ratio of 0.941 applied to the estimated workforce size of 4,204 headcount results in an estimated FTE workforce of 3,956 FTE physiotherapists.