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INTRODUCTION

The annual pharmacist workforce survey

Introduction

Each year, as part of the annual registration process for pharmacists in NSW, an Annual Workforce Survey is sent to each pharmacist currently registered with the Pharmacy Board of New South Wales. This report provides an overview of information from the 2003 workforce survey.

The response rate to the survey was slightly higher than for 2002, increasing from 81.1% to 81.8%. The continued support of the Pharmacy Board of New South Wales, professional organisations and pharmacists participating in the survey is appreciated.

Availability of survey information

The previous summary of the Annual Survey data was produced in 2004, entitled "Profile of the Pharmacist Workforce in NSW, 2003". This profile reproduces the same data as for the 2003 survey, including the analysis of data on hospital pharmacists. 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 pharmacists 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 2003 Survey

Information from the 2003 Annual Workforce Survey relates to the 2003 registration renewal period. Renewal notices and surveys were forwarded in October 2003 to pharmacists registered with the Pharmacy Registration Board of New South Wales at that time. The renewal fee was due by the end of December in order for the pharmacist to be retained on the register, as non-financial pharmacists had their status altered by Board consent in mid January. Survey respondents completed the survey with

information about their usual working situation at that time. Information regarding the registration status of pharmacists was provided by the Board which related to the period for 2003.

Workforce Survey coverage

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

- **New registrants:** New registrants include new local graduates, interstate graduates and overseas trained pharmacists registering for the first time with the NSW Board who have had their qualifications recognised in NSW. These persons will normally not receive the Workforce survey, but some new registrants do receive the survey form if they also renew in the same financial year. If new registrants return a survey form, they are reclassified for the purposes of this profile as renewals (see Table 1.1).
- **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 pharmacists are restorations simply due to late payment and may have returned a survey form.
- **Technical restorations:** Some dentists are restorations simply due to late payment, as they are removed from the register and then reinstated on receipt of the payment of the renewal fee. These dentists have usually completed a survey form, and therefore if they have provided survey data they have been included in the data analysis for this profile. Prior to the 2000 profile the definition of respondents was those pharmacists **renewing** their registration who completed or part completed a survey form.

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

The definition of response has been applied to those respondents who completed the question on workforce status. In addition, a number of dentists have not completed the question on workforce status, but have completed the majority of the remainder of the survey form including the provision of a New South Wales postcode for work location, as well as other data such as hours worked. It was therefore decided for data completeness, to include both of those categories in the definition of respondents, as a workforce status could be derived.

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 workforce 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 workforce characteristics of pharmacists 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 3.5: Field of pharmacy- second job, n= 904) 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.

0 is used for zero.

Bold is used to indicate a total or subtotal.

— denotes not applicable.

n/a denotes data is not available.

Category of Pharmacist Registration

Table 1.1: Persons registered as Pharmacists in NSW, 2003

Category of registration	No. Row %		No. Row %		No. Row %	
	Female		Male		Total	
New registrations(only status) ²	98	60.5%	64	39.5%	162	100.0%
Restorations	20	47.6%	22	52.4%	42	100.0%
"True" restorations	5	31.3%	11	68.8%	16	100.0%
"Technical" restorations ³	15	57.7%	11	42.3%	26	100.0%
Renewals	3,571	50.8%	3,457	49.2%	7,028	100.0%
Deletions	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	100.0%
New registrations (total) ²	206	59.7%	139	40.3%	345	100.0%

Notes:

¹ The table includes information on pharmacists financial with the Board during 2003

² Some pharmacists are included in more than one category during the twelve month period. There were 345 new registrations in total, but 183 of those were also renewals within the survey period. These have been counted as renewals.

³ There were 26 restorations who had survey forms of the total of 62 restorations, and are therefore categorised as "technical restorations", because they renewed their registration after the cut off date and were then restored to the register.

In 2003, there were 7,054 pharmacists financially registered with the Pharmacy Board of NSW, an increase of 171 from the 6,883 pharmacists registered in 2002. Of these, 3,586 (50.8%) were female and 3,468 (49.2%) were male. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the number of pharmacists in each category of registration.

Response rate to Workforce Annual Survey

The response rate to the 2003 Pharmacy Workforce Annual Survey was 81.8%, higher than the response rates in 2002 of 81.1%.

Table 1.2: Response Rate to Pharmacist Annual Workforce Survey, 2001 - 2003

	No.	Rate	No.	Rate		
	2001		2002		2003	
Formal response rate						
<i>Survey respondents</i> ¹ who were <i>renewals</i> ²	5,427		5,464		5,769	
<i>Total renewals</i> ²	6,537	83.0%	6,739	81.1%	7,054	81.8%

- Notes:**
1. A "survey respondent" is defined as a renewal who provides information to the question on working status. There were 1,076 survey forms either with no data on workforce status and workforce status could not be determined, or with no match to Board information. 209 pharmacists 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 pharmacists are presented in Tables 1.3 and 1.4. Tables 3.1 to 3.36 describe the working renewals cohort only.

Work Status

There were 5,769 pharmacists who provided data on workforce status, with 4,383 working renewal survey respondents in 2003, unadjusted for non response. Working renewals are those respondents who:

- Were financially registered and renewed their registration in 2003
- Returned a workforce survey indicating their work status; and
- Indicated that their work status was one of the following three categories:
 - Working in pharmacy only in NSW
 - Working in pharmacy mainly in NSW, but also in other states
 - Working in pharmacy in NSW, but on extended leave (see Table 1.3)

Table 1.3: Work status of Pharmacist Workforce Survey respondents¹, NSW, in 2003

Work Status	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
	Female		Male		Total		Female
Working in pharmacy							
Only in NSW	2,228	75.2%	2,085	74.3%	4,313	74.8%	51.7%
Mainly in other states, but also in NSW	22	0.7%	41	1.5%	63	1.1%	34.9%
Mainly in NSW, but also in other states	10	0.3%	19	0.7%	29	0.5%	34.5%
Only in states other than NSW	116	3.9%	165	5.9%	281	4.9%	41.3%
Working in NSW but currently on leave	31	1.0%	10	0.4%	41	0.7%	75.6%
Working overseas	119	4.0%	100	3.6%	219	3.8%	54.3%
Not Working in/ practicing in pharmacy							
Currently not working	239	8.1%	235	8.4%	474	8.2%	50.4%
Currently working, not in pharmacy	196	6.6%	153	5.4%	349	6.0%	56.2%
Total	2961	100.0%	2,808	100.0%	5,769	100.0%	51.3%
<i>Non-response to survey question¹</i>	510	14.7%	556	16.5%	1066	15.6%	

Notes: 1. There were 6,835 forms from pharmacists renewing their registration, of whom 1,076 did not reply to the question on work status and a work status could not be derived. Ten pharmacists from this group had no data on sex (see Note 1 to Table 1.2)

The workforce participation rate was 76.0% in total, and similar for males and females.

Pharmacists seeking work

Table 1.4: Seeking Work in Pharmacy in NSW, 2003

Nature of work sought	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
	Female		Male		Total		Female
Not looking for work in pharmacy	337	87.8%	350	91.6%	687	89.7%	49.1%
Looking for work in pharmacy:							
- either full time or part time	4	1.0%	6	1.6%	10	1.3%	40.0%
- full time	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	2	0.3%	50.0%
- part time	40	10.4%	24	6.3%	64	8.4%	62.5%
- not specified	2	0.5%	1	0.3%	3	0.4%	66.7%
Total	384	100.0%	382	100.0%	766	100.0%	50.1%
<i>non response</i>	51	11.7%	6	1.5%	57	6.9%	

Note: Table includes only those survey respondents in Table 1.3 who indicated that they were not currently working or currently working but not in pharmacy (n=823)

Only 10.4% of those not currently working or working but not in pharmacy indicated that they were seeking work in pharmacy.

Estimating Workforce Size

Table 1.5: Estimating the Size of the Pharmacist Workforce, 2001-2003

	No.		
	2001	2002	2003
Size of Workforce (Unadjusted) ¹	4,221	4281	4383
Total respondents to work status	5,427	5464	5769
% working	77.8%	78.3%	76.0%
No. of renewals ²	6,537	6,739	7,054
1) estimated workforce from renewals	5,084	5,280	5,359
No. of new registrants ³	123	128	162
2) estimated workforce from new reg. (90%)	111	115	146
No. of restorations ³	25	16	16
3) estimated workforce from restorations (80%)	20	13	13
Total Estimated Workforce (1+2+3)	5,215	5,408	5,518
Total number of new registrations	219	284	345
Total number of financial restorations	43	62	42

- Notes:**
- 1 The unadjusted size of the workforce is based on renewals and technical restorations who answered the work status question as working in NSW (see Section on work status). This is the workforce size unadjusted for non response.
 - 2 The number of renewals includes renewals and technical restorations
 - 3 The total number of new registrants and restorations in each year are shown below the table. However, a

The method of estimating workforce size from the 1999 Medical Workforce Survey has been applied in the above table. When applied to the data, this results in an estimated 5,359 working renewals, 146 working new registrants, and 13 working registrants in other categories, with a total estimated workforce size of 5,518 pharmacists, an increase of 110 or 2.0% from the estimated 5,408 pharmacists working in 2002. The estimated workforce size for 2003 has nearly reached the estimate of 5,530 working pharmacists for 2000.

Estimating Full-Time Equivalent Workforce (FTE)

The numbers of hours worked by pharmacists on average per week for all jobs together (see Table 3.11) can be converted to full-time equivalents (FTEs) which becomes a measure of the productive workforce. This is shown in Table 3.14, where the total hours worked by pharmacists 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 workforce 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 3.14 has not been adjusted to the estimated size of the workforce accounting for non response, and therefore shows an FTE workforce of 4580.2 pharmacists compared to a headcount of 4,265 pharmacists (see Table 3.11). Therefore the FTE ratio is 1.074, indicating that pharmacists are 7.4% more productive on average than the workforce equivalent (based on 35 hours per week). The FTE ratio of 1.074 applied to the estimated workforce size of 5,518 headcount calculated above results in an estimated FTE workforce of 5,926.3 pharmacists, an increase of 177.6 FTE from the estimated workforce of 5,748.7 FTE pharmacists in 2002.