

1

INTRODUCTION

The annual psychologist labourforce survey

Introduction

As part of the annual registration process for psychologists in NSW, an Annual Labourforce Survey is sent to each psychologist currently registered with the Psychologists Registration Board of New South Wales. This report provides an overview of information from the 2001 workforce survey.

The definition of response rate used for this profile defines the survey population as renewals and "technical" restorations (psychologists who were unfinancial because they did not renew their registration in time, but were then restored upon receipt of payment). Survey responses occur where the workforce status can be derived from the survey data collected on the Annual Labourforce Survey form. Based on this approach, the response rate for the survey was 72.4%, a large decrease on the response rate of 89.2% in 2000 (see Sections below on Survey Coverage and Response Rate to Labourforce Survey). The continued support of the Psychologists Registration Board of New South Wales, professional organisations and psychologists participating in the survey is appreciated.

Availability of survey information

This is the second comprehensive profile of Labourforce Survey data produced for psychologists registered in New South Wales, following the publication of 2001 data in *Profile of the Psychologist Labourforce, 1999* (NSW Health Department, 2002). This profile has been produced in the same format as for other health professional groups registered in New South Wales, including medical practitioners, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, physiotherapists and podiatrists. The definition of response rate, including technical restorations as well as renewals, is consistent with the definition used in the *Profile of the Nursing Workforce in NSW, 1999* (NSW Health Department, 2002).

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 psychologists 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 2001 Survey

Information from the 2001 Annual Labourforce Survey relates to the 2001 registration renewal period. Renewal notices and surveys were forwarded in March 2001 to psychologists registered with the Psychologists Registration Board of New South Wales at that time. The renewal fee was due by the end of June in order for the psychologist to be retained on the register, as non-financial psychologists had their status altered by Board consent in early July. Survey respondents completed the survey with information about their usual working situation at that time. Information regarding the registration status of psychologists was provided by the Board in order to match the registration status with the survey data.

Labourforce Survey coverage

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

- **New registrants who registered for the first time between April and June:** New registrants include new local graduates, interstate graduates and overseas trained psychologists registering for the first time with the NSW Board who have had their qualifications recognised in NSW. New registrants registering for the first time between April and June do not receive the labourforce survey, but other new registrants who registered for the first time between July the preceding year and March of the registration year receive the survey form as they also renew in the same financial year.
- **"True" Restorations who restored their registration between April and June:** "True" restorations have been restored to the register after a period in which they were not financial. Psychologists who restore to the Register are separated into the two groups in the same way as new registrants so that only those restoring between April and June are not sent a survey form.
- Some psychologists 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. This group have been defined as **"technical" restorations**. These psychologists 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.

For compatibility with other 2001 profiles prepared for health workforce groups registered in NSW, the definition of response has been restricted to those respondents who completed the question on workforce status. In addition, it has been identified that a number of psychologists 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. The adoption of this definition of respondents, means that the data are compatible with the definition of the workforce used by the Australian Institute of Health & Welfare in preparing national profiles.

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, the impact of unknown data may include:

- The absence of data due to non-response results in an under-representation of the size of the workforce in individual tables.
- The labourforce 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 labourforce). Weighting the survey data according to non-response alone may result in an over-estimation or under-estimation in some categories.

- The labourforce characteristics of psychologists who are not part of the survey target group (that is, some of the 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 3.26: Total hours usually worked per week by psychologists- second job, and Table 3.34: Employment category for psychologists working in NSW – second job, n=832) 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 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.

A copy of the survey form is attached as Appendix 1.

The location of home and work for psychologists has been analysed by Area Health Service for psychologists working in both the public and private sectors. The NSW Health Department sets the boundaries of each Area Health Service by postcode, and this approach has been used in the analysis. A map of each Area Health Service is included in Appendix 2. There is no intent to imply that psychologists working in the private sector are employed by Area Health Services, and the approach is used for comparative purposes only.

Category of Psychologist Registration

Table 1.1: Persons Registered as Psychologists in NSW, 2001

Category of registration ¹	No.		%		No.		%	
	Female		Male		Total			
New registrants	85	78.7%	23	21.3%	108	100.0%		
Restorations	20	87.0%	3	13.0%	23	100.0%		
"True" restorations	20	87.0%	3	13.0%	23	100.0%		
"Technical" restorations	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%		
Renewals ^{2&3}	3,659	68.9%	1,650	31.1%	5,309	100.0%		
Deletions	203	69.3%	90	30.7%	293	100.0%		

- Notes:**
- 1 The table includes information on psychologists who were financial with the Board during 2001
 - 2 There are 466 records with multiple status in the new, renewal & restoration categories and six records with a multiple status of renewal and deletion, indicating more than one transaction status during the time period covered by the Board data
 - 3 The records with multiple status have been counted as renewals in the above table
 - 4 Two records with no sex recorded are excluded from the above table (2 renewals) and from any further analyses apart from response rate and calculation of workforce size

In 2001, there were 5,590 psychologists financially registered with the Psychologists Registration Board of NSW. Of these, 3,853 (68.9%) were female and (31.0%) were male, with two registrants with unknown sex (0.1%). Table 1.1 provides an overview of the number of psychologists in each category of registration.

Response rate to Labourforce Annual Survey

The response rate to the 2001 Psychology Labourforce Annual Survey was 72.4 per cent, a large decrease from the 2000 response rate of 89.2%.

Table 1.2: Response Rate to Psychologist Annual Labourforce Survey, 2000 & 2001

	No.		Rate	
	2000	2001		
Formal response rate				
<i>Survey respondents¹ who were renewals or technical restorations²</i>	4,430	3,845		
<i>Total renewals and technical restorations²</i>	4,966	5,311	89.2%	72.4%

- Notes:**
1. A "survey respondent" is defined for 2000 and 2001 as a renewal or technical registration who provides information to the question on work status, or whose work status can be derived from other data. With these adjustments, there were 1,139 psychologists in 2001 who did not return a survey form, and 327 survey forms with work status question unanswered and no capacity to derive the work status from a NSW postcode for place of work.
 2. A renewal is defined as a person who paid their registration fee on time, and a technical restoration is defined as a renewal but who was late in paying the renewal fee, and was therefore de-registered and then restored. There were no technical restorations in 2001

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 receive the survey if they gain this status between April and June, other new registrants and restorations do receive a renewal notice within the twelve month survey period. There are therefore registered psychologists with multiple transaction statuses within the year, who are all treated as renewals. Additionally, some persons sent renewal notices do not renew their registration and therefore do not return surveys. All survey responses from financially

registered psychologists are presented in Tables 1.3 and 1.4. Tables 3.1 to 3.48 describe the working renewals cohort only.

Work Status

There were 3,252 working renewal survey respondents in 2001. Working renewals are those respondents who:

- Were financially registered and renewed their registration in 2001 or were technical restorations as their renewal lapsed until they became financial again
- Returned a labourforce survey indicating their work status or provided sufficient data for a status of working in NSW to be derived; and
- Indicated that their work status was one of the following three categories:
 - Working in psychology only in NSW
 - Working in psychology mainly in NSW, but also in other states
 - Working in psychology in NSW, but on extended leave (see Table 1.3)

Table 1.3: Work status of Psychologist Survey Respondents¹, NSW, in 2001

Work Status	No.		%		No.		%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Working in psychology								
Only in NSW	2,110	823	78.4%	71.4%	2,933		76.3%	71.9%
Mainly in NSW, but also in other states	112	126	4.2%	10.9%	238		6.2%	47.1%
Mainly in other states, but also in NSW	30	39	1.1%	3.4%	69		1.8%	43.5%
Only in states other than NSW	48	35	1.8%	3.0%	83		2.2%	57.8%
Working overseas	50	25	1.9%	2.2%	75		2.0%	66.7%
Working in NSW but currently on leave	76	5	2.8%	0.4%	81		2.1%	93.8%
Not Working in/ practicing in psychology								
Currently not working	125	45	4.6%	3.9%	170		4.4%	73.5%
Currently working, not in psychology	140	54	5.2%	4.7%	194		5.0%	72.2%
Total	2,691	1,152	100.0%	100.0%	3,843		100.0%	70.0%
<i>Returned form, no working status data</i>	196	131	5.4%	7.9%	327		6.2%	
<i>No survey form</i>	772	367	21.1%	22.2%	1,139		21.5%	

Notes: 1. There were 4,170 forms received from psychologists renewing their registration, of whom 327 did not reply to the question on working status, and did not provide a NSW postcode for place of work. (see Note 1 to Table 1.2)

The workforce participation rate was 84.6%, indicating that only 15.4% of survey respondents are either working mainly or totally outside NSW, working overseas, not working or not working in psychology.

Psychologists seeking work

Table 1.4: Seeking work in Psychology in NSW, 2001

Nature of work sought	No.		%		No.		%	
	Female	Male	Total	Female				
Not looking for work in psychology	169	68.4%	69	75.0%	238	70.2%	71.0%	
Looking for work in psychology:								
- full time	22	8.9%	7	7.6%	29	8.6%	75.9%	
- part time	30	12.1%	7	7.6%	37	10.9%	81.1%	
- casual	19	7.7%	9	9.8%	28	8.3%	67.9%	
- any type of work	7	2.8%	0	0.0%	7	2.1%	100.0%	
Total	247	100.0%	92	100.0%	339	100.0%	72.9%	
<i>Non response</i>	18	6.8%	7	7.1%	25	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 psychology (n=364)

Estimating Workforce Size

The 1999 Profile of the Medical Workforce in NSW (NSW Health Department, 2001) 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 (84.6% for psychologists in 2001)
- Assume 90% of new registrants are working in NSW
- Assume 80% of other registrants are working in NSW (excluding deletions)

This results in 4,492 working renewals, 97 working new registrants, and 18 working registrants in other categories, with a total estimated workforce size of 4,608 registered psychologists.

Estimating Full-Time Equivalent Workforce (FTE)

The numbers of hours worked by psychologists on average per week for all jobs together (see Table 3.27) can be converted to full-time equivalents (FTEs) which becomes a measure of the productive workforce. This is shown in Table 3.30, where the total hours worked by psychologists 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 3.30 shows a workforce of 3391.4 FTE psychologists, based on response to the question on hours worked from 3,191 psychologists. The data in this table have not been adjusted to the estimated size of the workforce accounting for non response. The FTE ratio is calculated by dividing the FTE workforce by the headcount. The FTE ratio of 1.0628 applied to the estimated workforce size of 4,608 headcount results in an estimated FTE workforce of 4,897.3 FTE psychologists.