Emergency medicine

2016 Factsheet

Emergency medicine physicians are acute generalists with specialist skills in resuscitation and diagnosis in the acute phase of illness. With a wide range of procedural and technical skills, emergency medicine physicians provide care for patients of all ages and with a wide range of clinical needs. It takes a minimum of five years of full-time training with the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine to specialise in emergency medicine.

Workforce

In 2016, there were 1,761 emergency medicine physicians employed in Australia, of whom 9.5% worked in the private sector. The majority (92.4%) of emergency medicine physicians who completed the 2016 National Health Workforce Survey indicated they were clinicians.

Demographics of clinicians

Males represented 68% of clinicians in 2016 and had an average age of 46.3 years. Females represented 32% of clinicians and were on average 2.9 years younger than male clinicians.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>% of clinicians</th>
<th>Average age</th>
<th>Average hours per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinician total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Distribution of clinicians

In 2016, most clinicians (81.5%) were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model classification system.

Quick facts of clinician workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Aged 60 or older</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average hours per week</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Female</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Located in a major city</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Intend to retire within 10 years</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New South Wales had the highest number of clinicians in 2016 at 26.4%.

In the graph below, three jurisdictions (New South Wales [5.5], South Australia [5.9] and Victoria [6.6]) had less clinician’s than the national average of 6.7 per 100,000 population. The Northern Territory had the highest at 12.2 per 100,000 population.

New fellows

The number of new fellows from the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine increased 91.3% from 2013 to 2015. Overseas trained new fellows who obtained their specialist qualification outside of Australia decreased by 30.4% during this period.
In 2015, 35.9% of new fellows were female.

Vocational training

The number and proportion of female trainees increased each year between 2013 and 2016. During this period, the number of female trainees increased by 13.4%, whereas the number of male trainees decreased by 2.6%.

Vocational intentions

In 2016, there were 511 Hospital Non-Specialists (HNS*) who indicated their intention to undertake vocational training in emergency medicine.

Workforce dynamics indicator*

The workforce dynamics indicator highlights areas of concern in the future. The indicators measured and their current status is highlighted in the table below.

* Further information on the workforce dynamics Indicator is available at health.gov.au

References

2) Australasian College for Emergency Medicine.
4) ABS 3101.0 – Australian Demographics Statistics. Released 22/09/16.
5) Australian Medical Association (AMA) Career Pathways Guide

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