Plastic surgery
2016 Factsheet

Plastic and Reconstructive surgery is a wide ranging specialty involving manipulation, repair and reconstruction of the skin, soft tissue and bone. Plastic surgery is a specialty not restricted to one organ or tissue type. The main emphasis is on maintaining or restoring form and function, often working in a team approach with other specialties. A minimum of five years full-time advanced training through the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons is required to specialise in this area.

Workforce

In 2016, there were 424 plastic surgeons employed in Australia, of whom 76.9% worked in the private sector. Nearly 97% of plastic surgeons who completed the 2016 National Health Workforce Survey indicated they were clinicians.

Demographics of clinicians

Males represented 85.9% of clinicians in 2016 and had an average age of 52.7 years. Females represented 14.1% of clinicians and were on average 5.4 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>85.9%</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>46.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinician total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest number of clinicians was in Victoria with 31.1% of clinicians indicating their principle place of practice was in this state.

Distribution of clinicians

In 2016, the majority (91.5%) of clinicians were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model classification system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of clinicians by remoteness, Modified Monash Model (MMM*)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MMM category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Further information on the Modified Monash Model is available at doctorconnect.gov.au

Quick facts of clinician workforce

- 24.3% Aged 60 or older
- 51.9 Average age
- 48.7 Average hours per week
- 14.1% Female
- 91.5% Located in a major city
- 40.9% Intend to retire within 10 years

There was an average of 1.7 clinicians per 100,000 population across Australia in 2016. South Australia had the highest ratio of clinicians with 2.2 per 100,000 population, followed by the Victoria with 2.1 per 100,000 population.
New fellows

The number of plastic surgery new fellows fluctuated between 2013 and 2015. The number of new fellows in 2015 (12) was 14.3% less than the number in 2013 (14).

![Number of new fellows, 2013-15](image)

Vocational training

In 2016, 32.9% of vocational trainees were female. The total number of trainees in 2016 was 28.8% higher than the number in 2013.

![Trainee numbers, 2013-16](image)

Vocational intentions

In 2016, there were 148 Hospital Non-Specialists (HNS*) who indicated their intention to undertake vocational training in plastic surgery.

![Vocational trainees, 2013-16](image)

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

![Minimal concern](image) [Significant concern]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ageing of workforce</td>
<td>Workforces with higher average ages are more susceptible to higher exit rates due to retirements.</td>
<td>[Significant concern]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement rate</td>
<td>This measure indicates whether trainee numbers are sufficient to replace the numbers leaving the workforce.</td>
<td>[Significant concern]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of training program</td>
<td>This measure indicates how long it takes to train a replacement workforce.</td>
<td>[Significant concern]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Ages of HNS who intend to undertake plastic surgery training, 2016](image)

References

4) ABS 3101.0 – Australian Demographics Statistics. Released 22/09/16.

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