

# Nurses in Primary Health Care

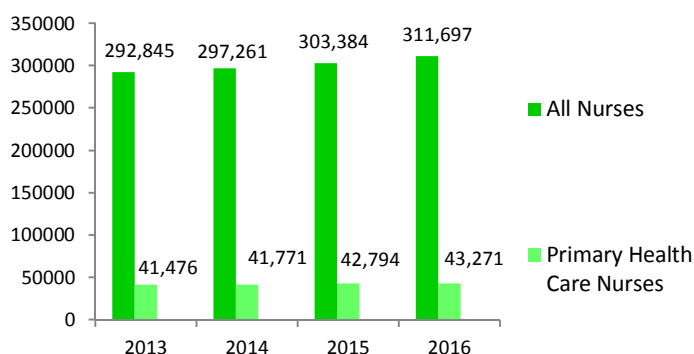
## 2016 factsheet



Primary health care is the first level of contact that individuals, families and communities have with the health care system. Nurses working in primary health care are employed in a variety of roles including health promotion and education, treatment and prevention of illness, community development and in a range of settings including community health care, general practice, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health services and drug and alcohol services. Evidence demonstrates that health systems with strong primary health care are more efficient, have lower rates of hospitalisation, fewer health inequalities and better health outcomes, including lower mortality.

### Workforce

The primary health care nursing workforce in 2016 (43,271) has increased by 4.3% (1,795) compared to the workforce in 2013 (41,476), with an average annual increase of 1.4%. This compares to the total nursing workforce in 2016 (311,697) which has increased by 6.4% since 2013, with an annual average increase of 2.1%. Of the Primary Health Care Nurse workforce, there were 217 Nurse Practitioners working in primary health care in 2016, compared with 135 in 2013.

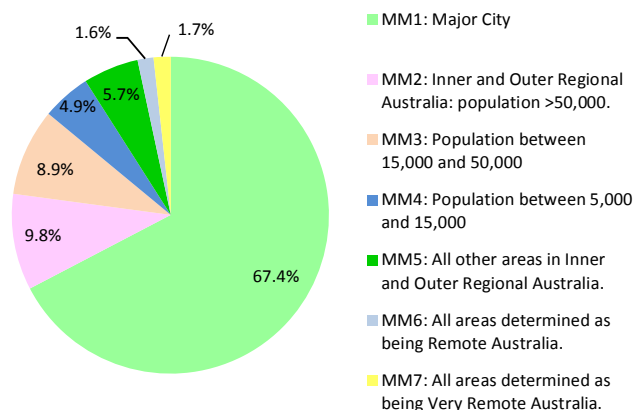


Category	% in primary health care settings	Average age	Average weekly hours per week	All nurses average weekly hours per week
Male	6.7%	45.1	36.6	37.4
Female	93.3%	47.4	29.5	32.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>29.9</b>	<b>33.4</b>

### Distribution

Most primary health care nurses (67.4%) were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model classification system.

### Modified Monash Model (MMM)



The MMM is a new classification system that categorises metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas according to both geographical remoteness and town size. The MMM uses two key indicators for the classification of "rurality", that being the ABS measure of remoteness; the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS-RA) which is based on population Census data from 2011 and the local town size.

### Quick facts

43,271

Number of nurses in primary health care

47.2

Average age

29.9

Average hours per week

93.3

% Female

67.4

% Located in a major city

### Relationship between work role, area of practice and job setting

Principal Role	Principal Area of Practice	Number of Nurses				
		2013	2014	2015	2016	
Clinician/ Clinical manager	Community health	11,647	11,630	11,660	11,869	
	Child and family health	5,291	5,066	5,159	4,826	
	Practice Nursing	11,656	11,987	12,607	12,908	
	Rehabilitation and disability	8,819	9,089	9,459	9,651	
	Health promotion	889	741	707	711	
	Other nursing sector*	2,206	2,189	2,235	2,303	
	<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>40,508</b>	<b>40,702</b>	<b>41,827</b>	<b>42,268</b>
Administrator	Community health	30	36	38	40	
	Child and family health	15	15	15	15	
	Practice nursing	197	259	241	251	
	Rehabilitation and disability	15	13	9	12	
	Health promotion	29	29	29	29	
	Education	8	9	7	5	
	Management	286	372	337	370	
	<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>580</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>722</b>
	Teacher/ educator	Community health	14	21	11	7
Child and family health		23	19	10	8	
Practice nursing		41	34	35	36	
Rehabilitation and disability		np	5	np	np	
Health promotion		31	38	24	26	
Education		161	144	145	128	
Management		np	5	np	np	
<b>Subtotal</b>			<b>273</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>209</b>
Other		Community health	5	4	6	np
	Child and family health	7	7	np	4	
	Practice nursing	86	46	33	52	
	Rehabilitation and disability	9	5	4	np	
	Health promotion	np	np	8	np	
	Education	np	np	np	np	
	Management	np	5	5	5	
	<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>115</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>72</b>
	<b>Total</b>		<b>41,476</b>	<b>41,771</b>	<b>42,794</b>	<b>43,271</b>
<b>Registered Nurses (RN)</b>		<b>33,731</b>	<b>33,627</b>	<b>34,451</b>	<b>34,739</b>	
<b>Enrolled Nurses (EN)</b>		<b>7,545</b>	<b>7,742</b>	<b>7,880</b>	<b>7,977</b>	

\*np denotes that there are 3 or fewer nurses in a category. \*Other nursing sector refers to job settings of locum private practice, general practitioner (GP) practice, other private practice, Aboriginal Health Service and drug and alcohol service.

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## References

Registered and employed workforce data, National Health Workforce Dataset 2013-16.  
(<http://data.hwa.gov.au/datasets.html>).