

Chiropractors



2017 Factsheet

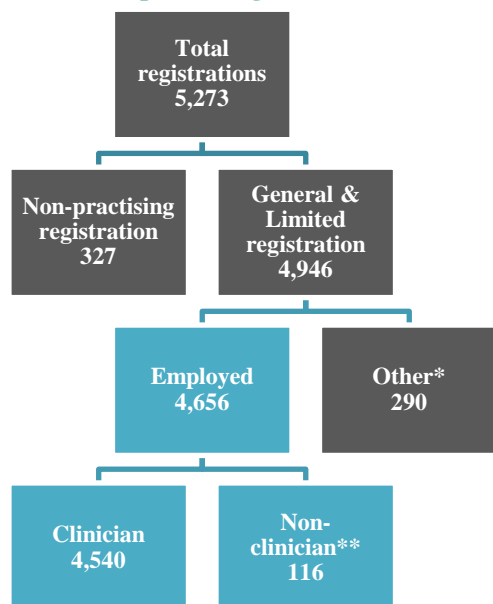
Chiropractors diagnose and treat back pain and disorders of the musculoskeletal system. Chiropractic treatments may include manipulation, massage or advice about movement.

To gain registration as a chiropractor, practitioners must complete a minimum five-year undergraduate or three-year postgraduate Master program of study approved by the Chiropractic Board of Australia.

The following analysis of the chiropractic workforce is drawn from the number of chiropractors with general/limited registration who were employed (4,656 in 2017) unless otherwise stated.

Workforce

Figure 1: Chiropractic registrations, 2017



*Other includes: working but on long leave, working outside of the profession, looking for work, overseas, and retired.

**'Non-clinician' includes roles reported by survey respondents that did not fit predefined survey categories.

The number of registered chiropractors increased by 7.6% from 4,902 in 2014 to 5,273 in 2017 (average annual increase of 2.5%). The number of employed chiropractors ('workforce') increased by 8.1% from 4,307 to 4,656 over the same period (an average annual increase of 2.6%).

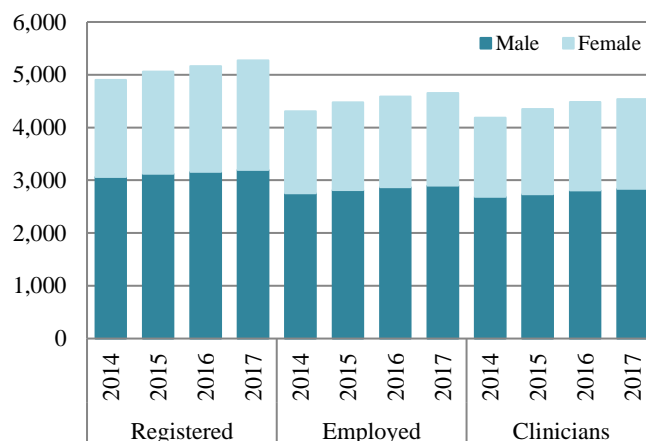
Table 1: Chiropractors, 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Avg. annual growth
Registered	4,902	5,059	5,162	5,273	2.5%
Employed	4,307	4,480	4,589	4,656	2.6%
Clinicians	4,187	4,348	4,485	4,540	2.7%

Demographics

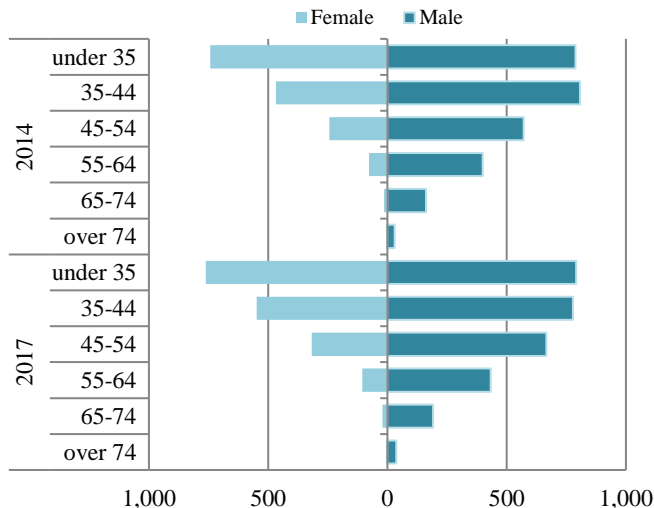
In 2017, female chiropractors comprised 37.8% of the workforce; an increase from 36.0% in 2014.

Figure 2: Gender distribution, 2014-2017



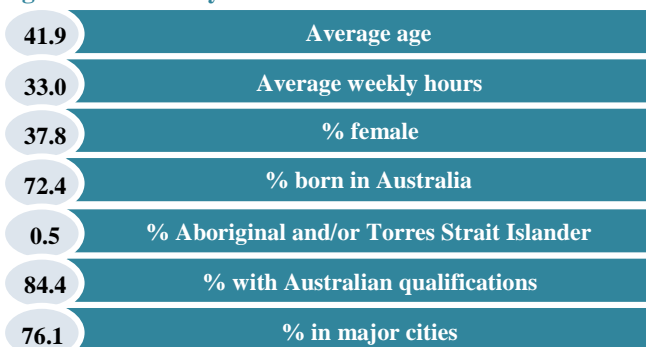
In 2017, the average age of the workforce was 41.9 years, increasing from 41.2 years in 2014. The proportion of the workforce aged 45 years and over increased from 34.9% in 2014 to 38.2% in 2017.

Figure 3: Age and gender distribution, 2014 and 2017



Quick Facts - 2017

Figure 4: Summary



Replacement Rate

In 2017, there were 1.5 new registrants for every chiropractor that did not renew their registration from 2016.

Hours Worked

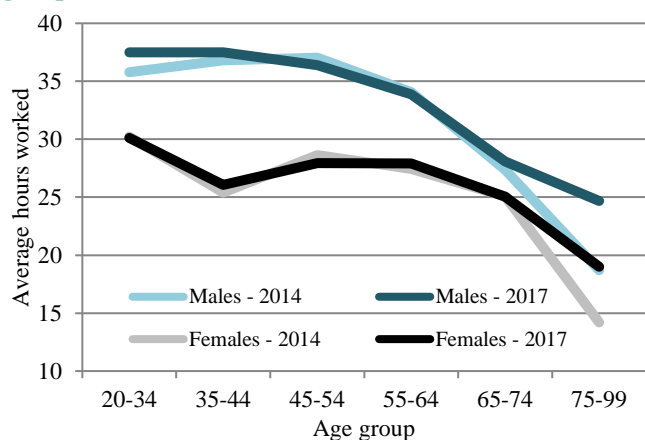
In 2017, chiropractors worked an average of 33.0 hours per week in total, and worked an average of 4.2 hours per week in non-clinical roles.

Table 2: Average hours per week, 2014-2017

Average hours worked	2014	2015	2016	2017
Clinical	28.6	28.3	28.8	28.8
Non-clinical	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.2
Total	32.8	32.5	33.2	33.0

In 2017, female chiropractors worked an average of 28.2 hours per week, a decrease from 28.3 in 2014. Male chiropractors worked an average of 35.9 hours per week, increasing from 35.4 hours in 2014. In 2017, males aged under 45 years worked the longest hours on average, at 37.5 hours per week

Figure 5: Average hours per week by gender and age group, 2014 and 2017



Principal Role

In 2017, over 97.5% of chiropractors worked as clinicians – an increase from 97.2% in 2014.

Table 3: Principal role, 2014 and 2017

Principal role	2014		2017	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Clinician	4,187	97.2	4,540	97.5
Administrator	34	0.8	48	1.0
Teacher or educator	52	1.2	41	0.9
Researcher	19	0.4	13	0.3
Other	15	0.3	14	0.3
Total	4,307	100	4,656	100

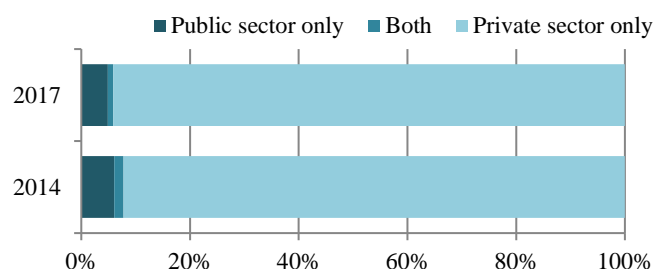
Endorsements

The number of chiropractors with an acupuncture endorsement has decreased from 32 in 2014 to 28 in 2017. All chiropractors with an acupuncture endorsement are located in VIC.

Principal Work Sector

In 2017, 4.9% of the workforce reported that in their principal role, they worked only in the public sector - a decrease from 6.1% in 2014.

Figure 6: Sector in which clinical hours were worked, 2014 and 2017



Principal Work Setting

In 2017, 97.8% of chiropractors worked in some form of private practice setting (group, solo or locum), an increase from 97.6% in 2014.

In 2017, chiropractors working in Educational facilities reported the highest average weekly hours (37.2) and those in locum Private practice reported the lowest average weekly hours (28.2).

Table 4: Principal work setting, 2014 and 2017

Principal work setting	2014		2017	
	Head count	Avg. hours	Head count	Avg. hours
Group private practice	2,245	32.7	2,525	33.1
Solo private practice	1,912	33.2	1,955	33.0
Locum private practice	47	24.5	72	28.2
Educational facility	40	39.2	41	37.2
Commercial/business service	25	35.4	27	34.0
Other	13	24.9	17	34.7
Residential health care	17	27.0	11	29.5
Remaining work settings	8	25.8	8	32.9
Total	4,307	32.8	4,656	33.0

Principal Scope of Practice

In 2017, more than half (54.5%) of all chiropractors reported Chronic condition management or Acute care as their principal scope of practice. Aged care and Paediatrics were reported by 1% or fewer chiropractors as their principal scope of practice.

Between 2014 and 2017, the proportion of chiropractors reporting Sports, Chronic condition management or Rehabilitation as their principal scope of practice increased by 50% or more.

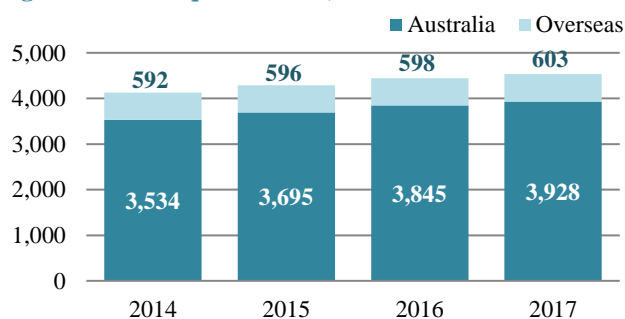
Table 5: Principal scope of practice, 2014 and 2017

Principal scope of practice	2014		2017		Growth 2014 to 2017
	Head-count	%	Head-count	%	
Chronic condition management	947	22.0	1,432	30.8	51.2%
Acute care	795	18.5	1,107	23.8	39.2%
Wellness care	1,477	34.3	987	21.2	-33.2%
Primary care	616	14.3	608	13.1	-1.3%
Rehabilitation	118	2.7	177	3.8	50.0%
Sports	105	2.4	160	3.4	52.4%
Other	97	2.3	66	1.4	-32.0%
Paediatrics	57	1.3	48	1.0	-15.8%
Aged care	18	0.4	22	0.5	22.2%
Unknown	77	1.8	49	1.1	-36.4%
Total	4,307	100	4,656	100	

Initial Qualification

The workforce survey asks chiropractors where they obtained their initial qualification. In 2017, 84.4% of the workforce obtained their initial qualification in Australia and 13.0% obtained their initial qualification overseas.

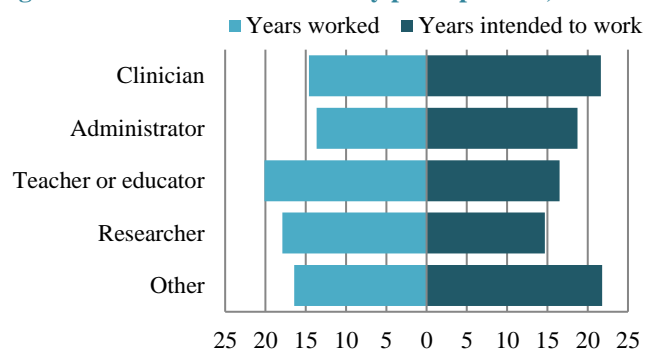
Figure 7: Initial qualification, 2014-2017



Working Intentions

In 2017, chiropractors had, on average, worked 15 years in the profession and intended to work for another 22 years. In 2014, chiropractors had worked 14 years on average, and intended to work for another 22 years.

Figure 8: Workforce intentions by principal role, 2017



Distribution

State and Territory

In 2017, the jurisdictions with the highest rates of full-time equivalent chiropractors per 100,000 population (FTE rate) were NSW and WA. Between 2014 and 2017, the total FTE rate increased from 15.8 to 16.4 and the ACT had the largest FTE rate increase (1.4).

In 2017, chiropractors in the NT worked the most hours per week on average (36.6 hours) and those in WA worked the fewest (31.3 hours).

Table 6: Chiropractic workforce, distribution by state/territory, 2017

State / Territory	Headcount	Total FTE	Avg. total hours	² FTE Rate per 100,000 population
NSW	1,599	1,439.4	34.2	18.3
VIC	1,224	1,032.1	32.0	16.3
QLD	779	691.4	33.7	14.0
SA	347	287.6	31.5	16.7
WA	567	466.8	31.3	18.1
TAS	50	43.4	33.0	8.3
ACT	63	57.9	34.9	14.1
NT	25	24.1	36.6	9.8
Total	4,656	4,045.0	33.0	16.4

Remoteness Area

In 2017, 93.2% of chiropractors worked in either major cities or inner regional locations, compared to 93.0% in 2014.

Between 2014 and 2017, the largest shift in average hours worked was in very remote areas, decreasing from 39.1 hours per week in 2014 to 31.1 hours in 2017. However, the largest increase in FTE rates was in very remote areas (1.8) due to an increase in the number of chiropractors and a decrease in the population in these areas.

Table 7: Distribution by remoteness area, 2017

Remoteness Area	Headcount	Total FTE	Avg. total hours	² FTE rate per 100,000 population
Major cities	3,545	3,094.6	33.2	17.5
Inner regional	796	675.3	32.2	15.4
Outer regional	259	226.9	33.3	11.1
Remote	41	35.2	32.7	12.1
Very remote	13	10.6	31.1	5.3
Total	4,656	4,045.0	33.0	16.4

Other Work Location Outside Major Cities

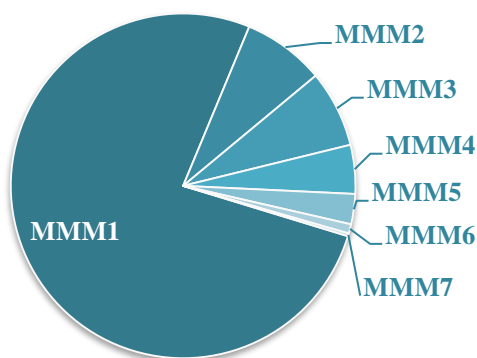
In 2017, 6.7% of the chiropractic workforce reported that they had worked in a regional, rural or remote location, in addition to their principal job location. Of these respondents, 46.8% had worked in an inner regional location, 29.4% had worked in an outer regional location, and 9.4% had worked in remote or very remote locations.

Modified Monash Model

In 2017, the majority (76.5%) of FTE chiropractors were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model (MMM) classification system, up from 75.7% in 2014. MMM4 locations had the highest FTE rate of chiropractors (21.0), followed by MMM3 (18.6). The lowest FTE rate was in MMM7 locations (5.1).

(See www.doctorconnect.gov.au for more information on the MMM.)

Figure 9: FTE distribution by MMM location, 2017



Tele-Health

The workforce survey asks chiropractors to report their hours practiced via tele-health in chiropractic in the previous year.

Note: Tele-health is the use of telecommunication techniques for the purpose of providing telemedicine, medical education, and health education over a distance.

A total of 151 chiropractors (3.2%) provided a response to the Tele-Health question in 2017. On average, these respondents practiced via Tele-

Health for 15.5 hours per week, with 80.1% of Tele-Health services provided by chiropractors in major cities.

Table 8: Tele-Health osteopaths by remoteness location, 2017

Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote
80.1%	10.6%	7.9%	0.7%	0.7%

Note: Remoteness location refers to the location of the Tele-Health practitioner, not the location of the person receiving the service.

References

- 1) National Health Workforce Dataset (NHWDS): Allied Health Practitioners 2014-2017.
- 2) ABS - 3218.0 - Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2016-17, Released 31/08/18.

Notes

- 1) 'NP' denotes figures that are not published (suppressed) for confidentiality reasons
- 2) The 2013-2016 NHWDS have been revised due to an error in recoding the missing values for job role. As such the figures may not match those that were previously published.
- 3) FTE number measures the number of standard-hour workloads worked by employed health practitioners. The FTE number provides a useful measure of supply because it takes into account both the number of practitioners who are working and the hours that they work. FTE number is calculated based on the total hours worked in a 'standard working week'. The standard working week is assumed to be 38 hours, equivalent to 1 FTE for all practitioners with the exception of medical practitioners where it is assumed to be 40 hours.

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