



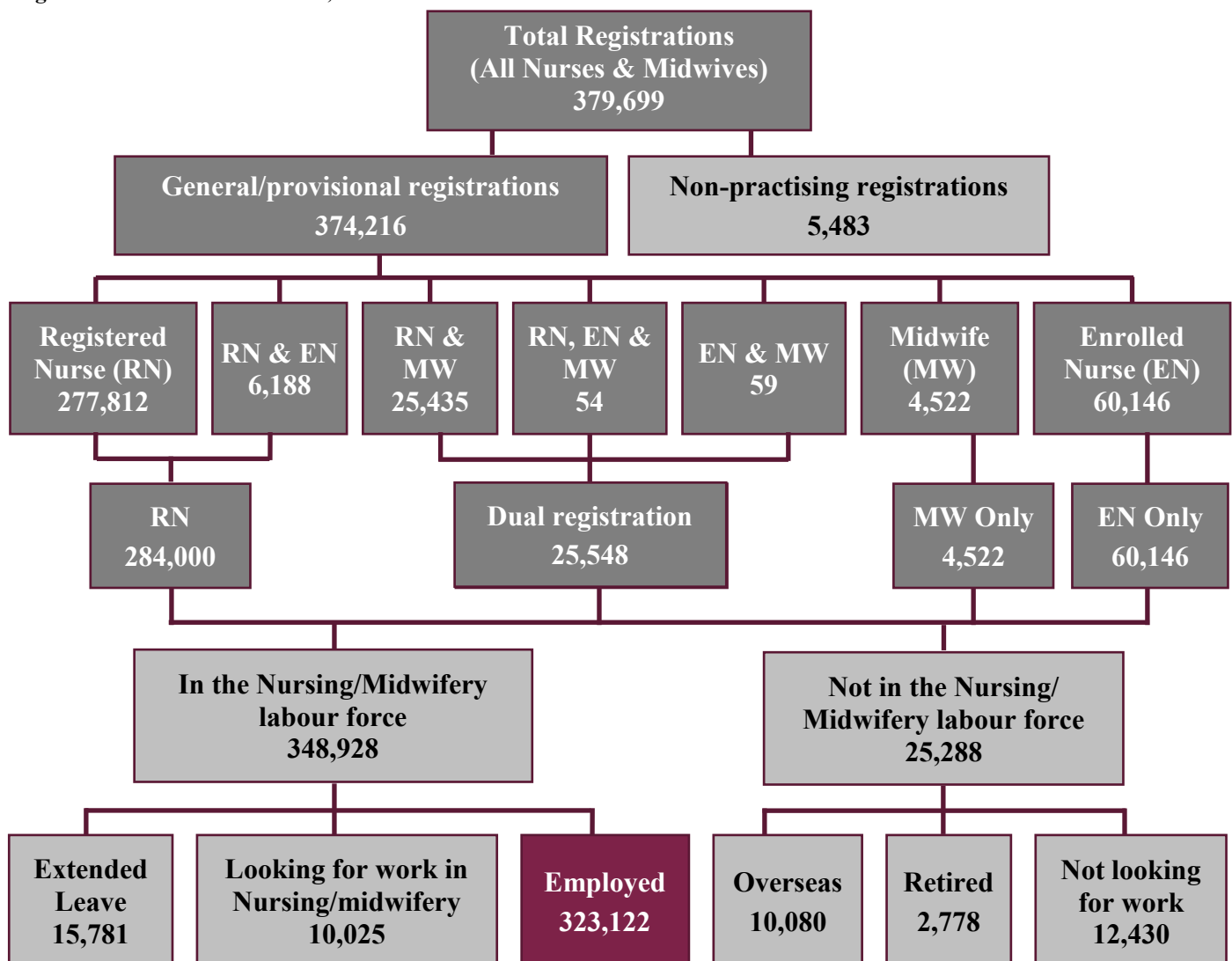
Nurses and Midwives

2017 Factsheet

All nurses and midwives must be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and meet the NMBA's registration standards in order to practise in Australia. There are three divisions of registration: Enrolled Nurse (EN), Registered Nurse (RN), and Midwife (MW). Eligible practitioners may register in one or multiple divisions. Those who are registered as both a nurse and midwife are considered to hold dual registration.

The Workforce

Figure 1: Nurses and Midwives, 2017



Between 2014 and 2017, the total number of nurses and midwives with general or provisional registration increased by 7.4% from 348,444 to 374,216 (an average annual growth of 2.4%). The number of employed nurses and midwives ('workforce') increased 7.7% from 300,077 to 323,122 over the same period. The nursing and midwifery unemployment rate has remained stable at approximately 3.0% of the labour force since 2014.

The following analysis of the nursing and midwifery 'workforce' is based on the number of employed nurses and midwives as indicated by the maroon shading in Figure 1 (323,122 in 2017) unless otherwise stated.

Quick facts — 2017

Figure 2: Summary, 2017

44.1	Average age
33.4	Average weekly hours
89.0	% female
63.9	% born in Australia
1.1	% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
80.4	% with Australian qualifications
72.3	% in major cities
1.7	Replacement rate

Table 1: Nurses and midwives by division, 2014 and 2017

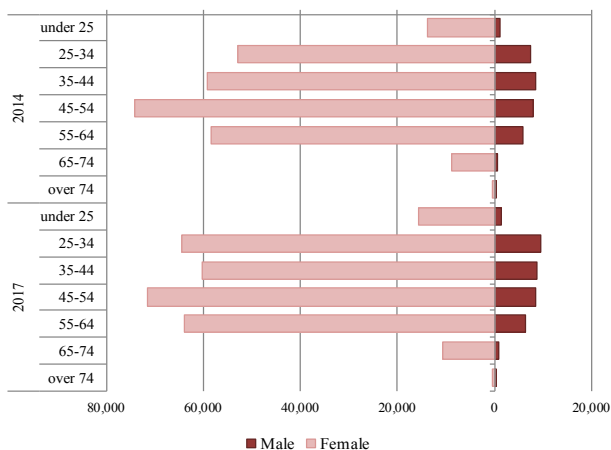
Division	2014	2017	Average annual growth
Registered Nurse	221,567	245,269	3.4%
Enrolled Nurse only	50,737	51,478	0.5%
Dual registration	25,077	22,568	-3.5%
Midwife only	2,696	3,807	12.2%
Total	300,077	323,122	2.5%

The number of nurses and midwives holding dual registration has decreased 9.6% from 28,266 in 2014 to 25,548 in 2017. This is most likely due to recency of practice requirements. In line with this, the number of dual registrants who were employed has decreased 3.5% from 25,077 to 22,568 over the same period.

Demographics

In 2017, 89.0% of the nursing and midwifery workforce was female. Since 2014, the number of males in the workforce has increased by 3,706 and they now comprise 11.0% of the workforce.

Figure 3: Age and gender distribution, 2014 and 2017



The average age of the workforce has decreased from 44.5 years in 2014 to 44.1 years in 2017. The proportion of nurses and midwives in the largest group (those aged 45-54 years) has decreased from 27.7% in 2014 to 24.9% in 2017.

Replacement rate

In 2017, there were 1.7 new registrants for every nurse and midwife that did not renew their registration from 2016. In 2016, the replacement rate was 1.8.

Note: the replacement rate differs to previously published figures as a large number of 'new registrants' had been omitted due to data extraction dates.

Hours worked

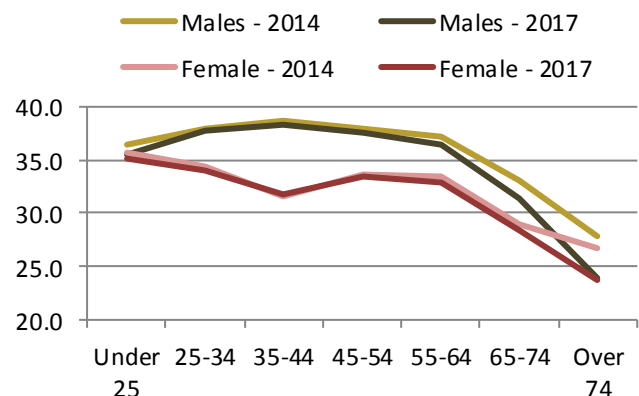
Since 2014, the number of average hours worked per week has decreased by 0.3 hours to 33.4 hours in 2017. The majority of these hours were worked in a clinical role (average 29.5 hours per week).

Table 2: Average total hours per week, 2014-2017

Average hours worked	2014	2015	2016	2017
Clinical	29.4	29.4	29.5	29.5
Non-clinical	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.0
Total	33.7	33.5	33.4	33.4

In 2017, male nurses and midwives worked more hours per week on average than females (37.3 hours vs 32.9 hours). The disparity in hours worked has decreased from an additional 4.6 hours for males in 2014 to 4.4 hours in 2017. The 35-44 year age group reported the largest difference with males working an average of 6.5 hours more than females.

Figure 4: Average total hours per week by gender and age group, 2014 and 2017



Males in the 35-44 age group worked the most hours, at 38.2 hours per week on average. Among females, the most hours were worked by the under 25 years age group at 35.0 hours per week on average.

Job Role

In 2017, 90.5% of nurses and midwives worked as clinicians - a small increase in comparison with 2014 (89.6%)

Table 3: Principal role, 2014 and 2017

Job role	2014	2017
Clinician	268,807	292,351
Administrator	14,446	14,322
Teacher or educator	9,604	9,953
Researcher	2,656	2,603
Other	4,562	3,892
Total	300,075	323,121

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded

Principal work sector

In 2017, 60.1% of nurses and midwives worked only in the public sector, 36.6% only in the private sector and 3.3% in both.

Table 4: Sector in which clinical hours were worked, 2014 and 2017

Employment sector	2014	2017
Public sector only	168,972	181,685
<i>Proportion (%)</i>	<i>60.4</i>	<i>60.1</i>
Private sector only	101,534	110,475
<i>Proportion (%)</i>	<i>36.3</i>	<i>36.6</i>
Both	9,377	9,971
<i>Proportion (%)</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>3.3</i>
Non response	20,194	20,991
Total	300,077	323,122

Principal area of practice

The workforce survey asks nurses and midwives the principal area of their main job, which may be in either nursing or midwifery. The 'principal area of practice' response items are different in the surveys for nurses and for midwives. For the purpose of this factsheet these responses have been combined into one list.

In 2017, ten principal areas of practice accounted for 75.1% of the nursing and midwifery workforce. In 2014, these same 'top ten' areas of practice also accounted for 75.1% of the workforce.

Between 2014 and 2017, the number of nurses and midwives reporting that their principal area of practice in Medical increased 15.6%, Peri-operative increased 15.1% and Aged care increased 4.7%.

In 2016, there was a change to the response options in the principal area of practice question in the survey ('continuum of care' was renamed 'antenatal, intra-partum and post-partum care').

Consequently, there are large changes between 2014 and 2017 in the number of nurses and midwives who reported working in the Maternity care area of practice (decreased by 25.9%) and the number working in the Antenatal, intra-partum and post-partum, and neonatal care areas combined (increased by 190.5%).

Table 5: Principal area of practice, 2014 and 2017

Principal area of practice	2014		2017		Change
	Head-count	Average Total Hours	Head-count	Average Total Hours	
Aged care	43,878	32.8	45,943	33.0	2,065
Medical	27,193	33.7	31,436	33.5	4,243
Peri-operative	23,509	33.2	27,052	33.2	3,543
Surgical	23,477	33.1	24,872	33.0	1,395
Mental health	20,557	36.5	22,123	36.2	1,566
Mixed medical/surgical	20,561	32.5	21,502	32.6	941
Other	19,447	33.7	19,036	33.3	-411
Emergency	16,507	34.6	18,855	34.5	2,348
Critical care	17,809	34.8	18,136	34.8	327
Practice nursing	12,313	29.1	13,836	28.9	1,523
Community nursing	12,300	32.2	13,046	32.2	746
Rehabilitation and disability	9,663	33.7	10,383	33.4	720
Management	8,888	40.0	9,180	38.9	292
Paediatrics	7,498	32.3	7,159	32.3	-339
Education	6,732	34.8	6,571	34.3	-161
Neonatal care	1,061	36.6	5,082	32.8	4,021
Antenatal, Intra-partum and Post-partum care	2,436	37.3	5,076	34.2	2,640
Child and family health	4,399	32.8	4,298	31.5	-101
Postnatal care	4,489	33.1	3,773	30.6	-716
Palliative care	3,305	32.7	3,425	32.7	120
Care during labour and birth	4,073	35.3	3,122	33.2	-951
Maternity care	2,855	39.8	2,115	35.8	-740
Research	2,117	33.3	2,091	33.2	-26
Drug and Alcohol	1,704	35.3	1,916	34.6	212
Antenatal care	1,617	32.9	1,455	31.2	-162
Health promotion	1,225	31.1	1,124	29.5	-101
Policy	464	36.6	515	36.0	51

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded; table sort order = 2017 headcount

In 2017, nurses and midwives whose principal area of practice was Management reported the highest average hours per week (38.9 hours) and those working in the Mental Health area of practice reported the second highest average hours worked per week (36.2 hours). Nurses and midwives in almost all principal areas reported working 30 hours per week or more on average except those in Practice nursing (28.9 hours) and Health promotion (29.5 hours).

Principal work setting

In 2017, 61.4% of nurses and midwives worked primarily in a Hospital setting. Residential health care facilities were the next most common setting (12.9%) followed by Community health care services (7.3%). These were also the most common work setting in 2014.

Table 6: Principal work setting, 2014 and 2017

Principal work setting	2014		2017	
	Head-count	Average Total Hours	Head-count	Average Total Hours
Hospital	182,765	34.1	198,287	33.8
<i>FTE Clinical hours - public*</i>	112,544.5		121,410.8	
<i>FTE Clinical hours - private*</i>	37,111.9		40,304.8	
Residential health care facility	39,569	33.0	41,587	33.2
Community health care service	23,185	34.0	23,609	33.6
General practitioner (GP) practice	10,794	28.7	12,208	28.7
Outpatient service	9,594	33.6	11,033	33.3
Other	11,279	34.3	9,971	33.6
Independent private practice	-	-	5,694	29.5
Other private practice	6,778	29.7	3,776	30.6
Tertiary educational facility	3,424	35.5	3,709	34.5
Other government department or agency	3,284	36.8	3,109	35.3
Correctional service	1,437	38.4	1,720	37.6
Aboriginal health service	1,511	39.4	1,597	38.2
School	1,398	29.9	1,545	29.5
Defence forces	1,152	37.3	1,341	37.4
Commercial/business service	1,462	33.6	1,308	32.7
Other educational facility	1,011	32.2	957	32.3
Group midwifery practice / caseload	282	32.6	794	38.3
Hospice	798	31.3	715	31.2
Specialist (O&G) practice	162	30.1	162	29.0
Locum private practice	191	30.8	-	-

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded; table sort order = 2017 headcount
*The hospital setting FTE has been calculated based on clinical hours worked in the private or public sector.

Between 2014 and 2017, the number of nurses and midwives working in Hospital settings increased by 8.5%, Residential health care facilities increased by 5.1% and Community health care services increased by 1.8%.

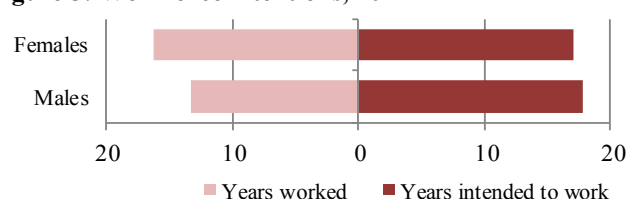
There have been changes to the response options in the principal work setting question in the survey ('independent private practice' was added in 2017,

and 'private midwifery practice' was renamed 'group midwifery practice/caseload' in 2016). Consequently, there are changes between 2014 and 2017 in the number of nurses and midwives who reported working in Other, Other private practice and Group midwifery practice/caseload settings.

Working Intentions

In 2017, nurses and midwives had worked 16 years on average and intended to stay in the workforce for another 17 years. There were some gender differences: males reported having worked fewer years than females (13 years vs 16 years).

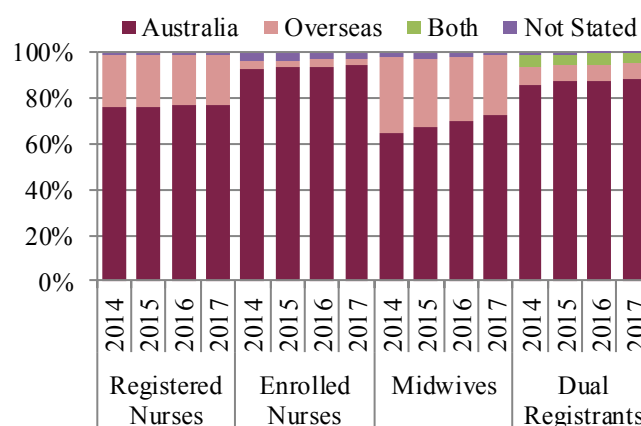
Figure 5: Workforce intentions, 2017



Initial qualification

The workforce survey asks where nurses and midwives obtained their initial qualification. In 2017, 80.4% obtained their initial qualification(s) in Australia, 17.8% obtained their initial qualification(s) overseas and 0.4% obtained both Australian and overseas qualifications.

Figure 6: Initial qualification by division, 2014-2017



Distribution

State and territory

In 2017, more than three quarters (75.9%) of the workforce was located in three states: NSW (28.1%), VIC (27.2%) and QLD (20.6%).

In 2017, the highest rate of nurses and midwives per 100,000 population were in the NT and SA while NSW and WA had the lowest rates. Between 2014 and 2017, QLD had the largest rate increase (111.7), conversely SA had the largest rate decrease (27.0).

From 2014 to 2017, the average hours worked per week decreased across all States and Territories. In 2017, nurses and midwives in the NT worked the highest average hours per week (38.2 hours) and those in SA worked the fewest hours (31.8 hours).

Table 7: Distribution by state/territory, 2017

State & Territory	Headcount	Total FTE	Average total hours	² Rate per 100K population
NSW	90,833	82,852	34.7	1,155.4
VIC	87,737	74,383	32.2	1,387.9
QLD	66,448	59,144	33.8	1,348.1
SA	28,116	23,531	31.8	1,631.2
WA	32,473	28,261	33.1	1,260.9
TAS	7,892	6,769	32.6	1,511.4
ACT	5,442	4,981	34.8	1,321.9
NT	4,087	4,104	38.2	1,651.4
Australia	323,122	284,120	33.4	1,313.6

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been included in the Australia total.
²ABS - 3218.0 - Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2016-17

Remoteness area

In 2017, 72.3% of nurses and midwives worked in Major cities, 17.8% in Inner regional, 7.9% in Outer regional and 2.0% in Remote/Very remote locations.

In 2014, the proportions of the workforce across remoteness areas were similar, with 71.7% working in Major cities, 18.1% in Inner regional, 8.1% in Outer regional and 2.1% in Remote/Very remote locations.

Table 8: Distribution by remoteness area, 2017

Remoteness Area	Headcount	Total FTE	Average total hours	² Rate per 100K population
Major cities	233,571	205,505	33.4	1,322.1
Inner regional	57,518	49,321	32.6	1,310.1
Outer regional	25,561	22,803	33.9	1,248.2
Remote	4,079	3,949	36.8	1,396.6
Very remote	2,350	2,502	40.5	1,171.6
Australia	323,122	284,120	33.4	1,313.6

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been included in the Australia total.
²ABS - 3218.0 - Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2016-17

In 2017, the average hours worked generally increased with remoteness, from 32.6 hours in Inner regional to 40.5 hours in Very Remote areas.

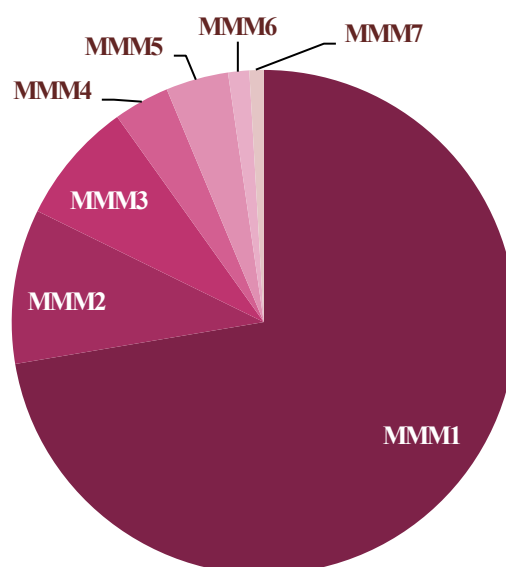
Between 2014 and 2017, there was a decrease in average hours worked across all remoteness areas.

Modified Monash Model

In 2017, the majority of FTE Nurses and midwives (72.3%) were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model (MMM) classification system, a small increase from 71.9% in 2014.

Note: See www.doctorconnect.gov.au for more information

Figure 7: FTE Distribution by MMM, 2017



Tele-Health

The workforce survey asks nurses and midwives to report hours practiced via tele-health in nursing, midwifery, or both in the previous year. Responses have been combined to provide an average for the workforce.

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

In 2017, 6.3% (20,220) of the workforce responded to the tele-health question. On average respondents practiced via tele-health 12.1 hours per week.

Remoteness area breakdown for tele-health refers to the location of the nurse or midwife, not the location of the person receiving the service.

Table 9: Tele-health workforce remoteness location, 2017

Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote
63.5%	17.8%	11.9%	3.6%	3.3%

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded

Note: There are 5 factsheets in this series: 1 Nurses and Midwives, 2 Registered Nurses, 3 Midwives, 4 Enrolled Nurses, 5 Nurse Practitioners.

This factsheet is based on the total headcount, whereas the headcount in the individual fact sheets in this series are based on a job role or hours worked in the profession. This means, if a practitioner has a job role or worked hours in more than one profession, they will be counted in each profession's factsheet, but only once in this factsheet. Hence, when the individual factsheets in this series are added together, the total will vary from this factsheet.

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References

- 1) Registered and employed workforce data, National Health Workforce Dataset 2014—2017 (<http://hwd.health.gov.au>)
Note: These numbers have changed due to an error in the NHWDS for 2013-2016 and won't match the previous years figures in the 2016 factsheets.
- 2) ABS - 3218.0 Regional Population Growth, Australia (<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3218.0>), released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 31/08/2018