

2019

Nurse Practitioners



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.

A Nurse Practitioner (NP) is a Registered Nurse (RN) educated to a master's degree level. The NP role includes assessment and management of clients using nursing knowledge and skills and may include, but is not limited to, the direct referral of patients to other health care professionals, prescribing medications and ordering diagnostic investigations. The qualification requirement is a Masters of Nurse Practitioner

CONTENTS

Table 1 Nurse Practitioners

Quick Facts

Table 2: Nurse Practitioners average hours per week

Table 3: Nurse Practitioners clinical FTE by sector

Table 4: Nurse Practitioners age and gender

Table 5, 6, 7: Nurse Practitioners principal area of practice, work setting, and role

Table 8: Nurse Practitioners FTE distribution by Modified Monash Model (MMM2019)

Table 9: Nurse Practitioners distribution by state and territory

Note: This is an additional factsheet to the series of 4 published nursing and midwifery factsheets.

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 the Nurses and Midwives factsheet. Hence, when the individual factsheets in this series are added together, the total will vary from the Nurses and Midwives factsheet.

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2019

Nurse Practitioner



1

Workforce

Between 2016 and 2019, the total number of Nurse Practitioners with general or provisional registration increased by 32.4% from 1,417 to 1,876 (a compound annual growth rate of 9.8%). The number of employed Nurse Practitioners ('workforce') increased 31.8% from 1,341 to 1,767 over the same period (a compound annual growth rate of 9.6%).

The number of employed Nurse Practitioners who worked as clinicians increased 32.7% from 1,237 to 1,641 over the same period (a compound annual growth rate of 9.9%). Clinicians are Nurse Practitioners who indicated that the principal role of their main job was clinician (nurses, including managers and supervisors, involved in direct patient care). Non-clinicians are Nurse Practitioners who indicated that the principal role of their main job was administrator, teacher, educator, research or other.

Currently the workforce survey does not collect information on whether a nurse is employed in a job in which a nurse practitioner endorsement is required or utilised. This will be rectified in the 2020 data. The following analysis of the Nurse Practitioner 'workforce' is based on the number of nurses who held a Nurse Practitioner endorsement and were employed (1,767 in 2019), unless otherwise stated.

Quick Facts - 2019

Quick facts for the Nurse Practitioner workforce

Figure 2: Summary



& 67.9%
born in Australia



68.3%
in metropolitan
areas (MM1)



81.2%
female



39.3
average
weekly hours



50.1
average
age



0.9%
identified as
Aboriginal and/or
Torres Strait Islander



Table 1: Nurse Practitioners, 2016 – 2019

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Registered	1,417	1,556	1,717	1,876
Employed	1,341	1,462	1,614	1,767

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2016 – 2019

Table 2: Nurse Practitioners average hours per week, 2016 – 2019

Average weekly hours	2016	2017	2018	2019
Clinical hours	32.7	32.4	32.7	33.0
Non-clinical hours	6.9	7.0	6.7	6.3
Total hours	39.6	39.4	39.4	39.3

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2016 – 2019

Due to rounding figures may not sum to the expected total

* Clinical hours are the reported weekly hours worked in clinical roles (nurses, including managers and supervisors, involved in direct patient care)

^ Non-clinical hours are the reported weekly hours worked in non-clinical roles (including teacher, researcher, administrator or other)

Table 3: Nurse Practitioners clinical full time equivalent (FTE) by sector, 2016 – 2019

Sector	2016	2017	2018	2019
Public sector	806.3	883.4	989.3	1,077.3
Private sector	320.6	332.2	368.6	428.3
Total	1,126.9	1,215.6	1,357.9	1,505.6

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2016 - 2019

Includes nurses who reported working hours in public and / or private sectors in their clinical roles

Due to rounding figures may not sum to the expected total

Full time equivalent (FTE) based on 38 hours per week



Table 4: Nurse Practitioners age and gender, 2016 and 2019

Year	Age group	Female	Male	Total
2016	25-34	45	19	64
	35-44	236	104	340
	45-54	472	94	566
	55-64	300	37	337
	65 and over	29	5	34
2019	25-34	47	14	61
	35-44	283	128	411
	45-54	585	130	715
	55-64	452	51	503
	65 and over	67	10	77

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2016 and 2019
 Total excludes unknown age or gender



Table 5: Nurse Practitioners principal area of practice, 2016 – 2019

Principal area	2016	2017	2018	2019
Emergency	303	318	348	368
Other	188	203	224	251
Mental health	116	131	149	168
Medical	124	142	150	162
Aged care	97	97	118	139
Community nursing	89	106	113	121
Practice nursing	53	48	59	77
Palliative care	51	59	73	72
Paediatrics	35	43	47	55
Mixed medical/surgical	32	34	35	53
Surgical	37	41	34	45
Neonatal care	27	35	36	42
Drug and Alcohol	22	30	34	41
Education	33	36	45	39
Critical care	32	37	45	36
Peri-operative	19	23	23	26
Management	27	26	26	23
Child and family health	18	21	18	16
Rehabilitation and disability	8	7	7	8
Research	9	10	10	7
Maternity care	10	8	11	7
Health promotion and Policy	11	7	9	11
Total	1,341	1,462	1,614	1,767

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2016 – 2019

Note: Principal area of practice can be in either their job as a Registered Nurse or Nurse Practitioner

Total includes unknown area of practice



Table 6: Nurse Practitioners principal work setting, 2016 - 2019

Principal work setting	2016	2017	2018	2019
Hospital	613	667	700	749
Community health care service	169	204	223	257
Outpatient service	166	172	198	225
Residential health care facility	74	78	89	98
General practitioner (GP) practice	74	69	85	88
Other	62	72	77	82
Independent private practice	0	61	79	80
Tertiary educational facility	33	35	43	48
Other private practice	73	38	35	47
Correctional service	19	17	25	32
Aboriginal health service	24	20	34	26
Other government department or agency	17	13	8	12
Remaining work settings	17	16	18	23
Total	1,341	1,462	1,614	1,767

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2016 – 2019

Note: Principal work setting can be in either their job as a Registered Nurse or Nurse Practitioner

Total includes unknown work settings



Table 7: Nurse Practitioners principal role, 2016 and 2019

Principal role	2016	2019
Clinician	1,237	1,641
Administrator	32	46
Teacher or educator	44	54
Researcher	12	20
Other	16	6
Australia	1,341	1,767

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2016 and 2019

Table 8: Distribution of full time equivalent (FTE) Nurse Practitioners by Modified Monash Model (MMM 2019), 2019

Modified Monash Model	Total FTE	Population	FTE per 100,000 population
MM1 - Metropolitan	1,217.5	18,003,544	6.8
MM2 - Regional centres	179.9	2,215,430	8.1
MM3 - Large rural towns	182.9	1,575,836	11.6
MM4 - Medium rural towns	68.3	962,453	7.1
MM5 - Small rural towns	62.2	1,740,415	3.6
MM6 - Remote communities	33.3	282,646	11.8
MM7 - Very remote communities	47.5	212,536	22.3
Australia	1,793.7	24,992,860	7.2

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2019
 ABS Estimated resident population by MMM (2018 preliminary unpublished) Total FTE includes unknown MMM
 Full time equivalent (FTE) based on 38 hours per week
<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2020/07/modified-monash-model---fact-sheet.pdf>



Table 9: Nurse Practitioners by state and territory, 2019

State and Territory	Headcount	FTE	Average weekly hours
New South Wales	402	409.2	38.7
Victoria	388	394.1	38.6
Queensland	477	485.1	38.7
South Australia	149	144.0	36.7
Western Australia	240	239.9	38.0
Tasmania	41	44.3	41.1
Northern Territory	21	23.8	43.1
Australian Capital Territory	46	50.1	41.4
Unknown	3	3.1	39.3
Australia	1,767	1,793.7	38.6

Source: NHWDS Nurses and Midwives, 2019

Commonwealth of Australia 2020

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References

- 1) National Health Workforce Dataset (NHWDS) Nurses and Midwives 2016-2019 (<http://hwd.health.gov.au>)
- 2) ABS Estimated resident population by MMM (2018 preliminary - unpublished)