

Dental Practitioners



Australian Government
Department of Health

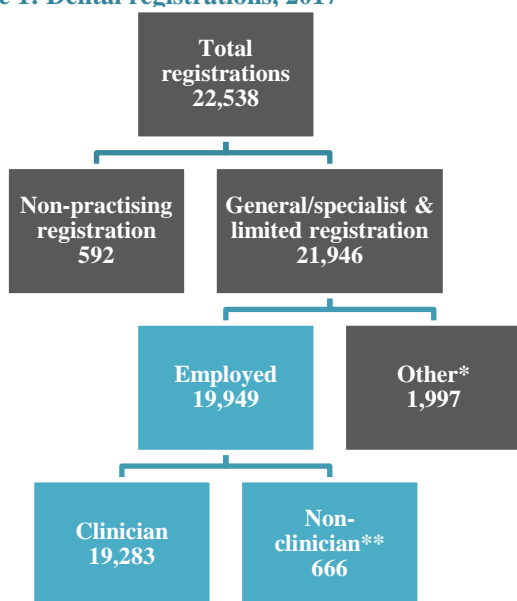
2017 Factsheet

The Dental Board of Australia registers Dentists, Oral Health Therapists, Dental Hygienists, Dental Therapists and Dental Prosthetists. These divisions are collectively presented in this factsheet as Dental Practitioners. The qualifications required for each division of Dental Practitioners are included in the individual division's factsheet.

The following analysis is drawn from the number of dental practitioners with general, specialist or limited registration that were employed (19,949 in 2017) unless otherwise stated.

Workforce

Figure 1: Dental registrations, 2017



Other includes: working but on long leave, working outside 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 dental practitioners increased by 7.5% from 20,975 in 2014 to 22,538 in 2017 (average annual increase of 2.4%). The number of employed dental practitioners increased by 7.7% from 18,530 to 19,949 over the same period (an average annual increase of 2.5%).

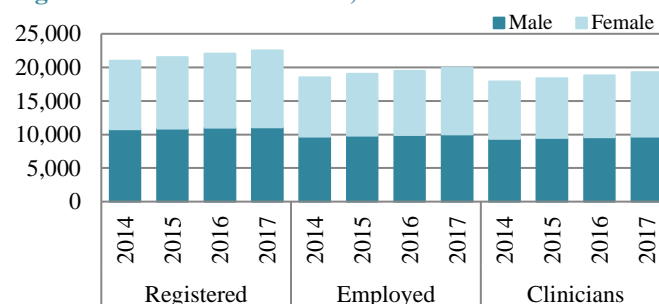
Table 1: Dental practitioners, 2014-2017

	2014	2015	2016	2017	Avg Annual growth
Registered	20,975	21,506	22,042	22,538	2.4%
Employed	18,530	19,051	19,490	19,949	2.5%
Clinicians	17,873	18,364	18,820	19,283	2.6%

Demographics

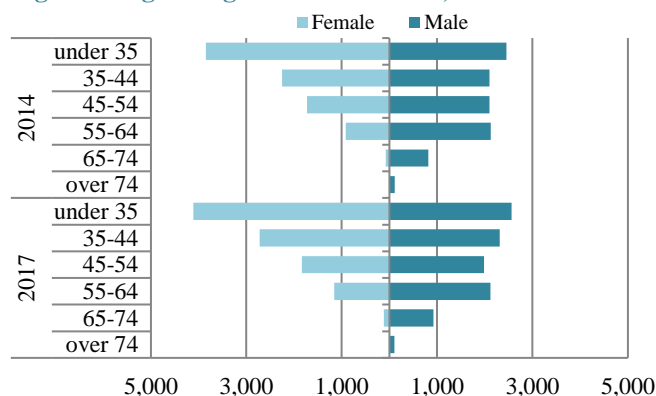
In 2017, 49.9% of dental practitioners were female, an increase from 47.6% in 2014.

Figure 2: Gender distribution, 2014-2017



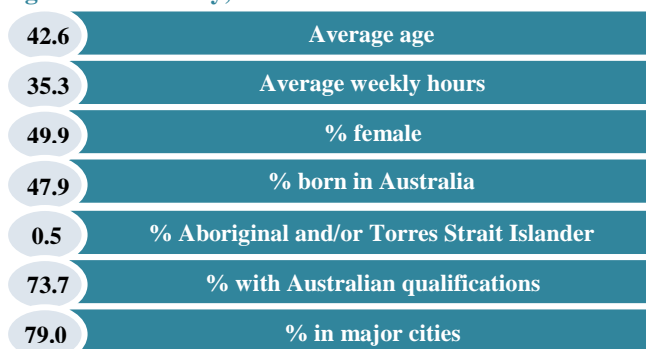
In 2017, the average age of dental practitioners was 42.6 years, remaining unchanged from 2014. Between 2014 and 2017, the proportion of male dental practitioners aged 45 years and over decreased from 27.8% to 25.7%.

Figure 3: Age and gender distribution, 2014 and 2017



Quick Facts - 2017

Figure 4: Summary, 2017



Replacement Rate

In 2017, there were 1.7 new registrants for every dental practitioner that did not renew their registration from 2016.

Hours Worked

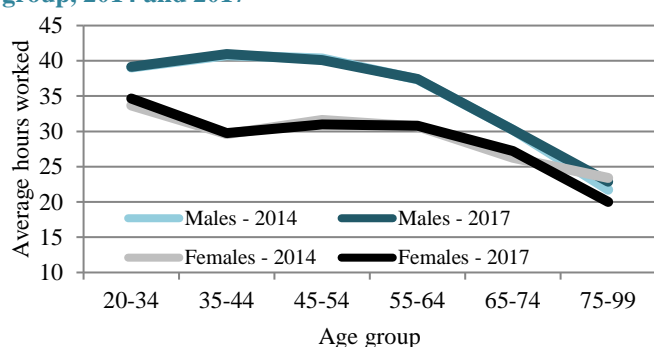
In 2017, dental practitioners worked an average of 35.3 hours per week in total, and worked an average of 3.8 hours per week in non-clinical roles.

Table 2: Average hours per week, 2014-2017

Average hours worked	2014	2015	2016	2017
Clinical	31.3	31.2	31.4	31.4
Non-clinical	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.8
Total	35.3	35.1	35.4	35.3

In 2014 and 2017, male dental practitioners worked an average of 38.4 hours per week. In 2017, female dental practitioners worked an average of 32.1 hours per week, increasing from 31.9 hours in 2014. Males aged 35-44 worked the longest hours per week, at 41.0 hours on average.

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



Job Role

Principal role

In 2017, 96.7% of dental practitioners worked as clinicians in their principal role, an increase from 96.5% in 2014.

Table 3: Principal role, 2014 and 2017

Principal role	2014		2017	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Clinician	17,873	96.5	19,283	96.7
Administrator	213	1.1	263	1.3
Teacher or educator	281	1.5	241	1.2
Researcher	82	0.4	59	0.3
Other	81	0.4	103	0.5
Total	18,530	100	19,949	100

Second job

In 2017, 18.6% of dental practitioners reported a second job role in dental practice, a decrease from 18.9% in 2014.

Table 4: Second job role, 2014 and 2017

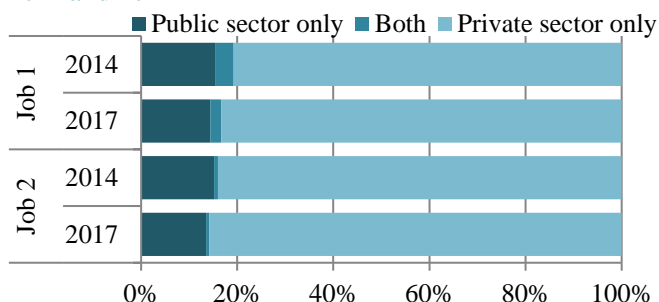
Principal role	2014		2017	
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%
Clinician	2,646	14.3	2,964	14.9
Administrator	234	1.3	194	1.0
Teacher or educator	457	2.5	436	2.2
Researcher	84	0.5	39	0.2
Other	83	0.4	72	0.4
Total	3,504	18.9	3,705	18.6

Principal work sector

In 2017, 14.4% of the workforce reported that in their principal role, they worked only in the public sector, a decrease from 15.6% in 2014.

Of those dental practitioners reporting a second job role in 2017, 13.5% reported they worked only in the public sector, a decrease from 15.2% in 2014.

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



Note: 'Not applicable' responses are excluded from the chart

Principal Work Setting

In 2017, 81.1% of dental practitioners worked in a Group or Solo private practice setting in their principal role, an increase from 79.3% in 2014, and 8.9% worked in a Public setting, a decrease from 9.7% in 2014.

Table 5: Principal work setting, 2014 and 2017

Principal work setting	2014		2017	
	Principal role	Second job	Principal role	Second job
Group private practice	9,019	1,753	10,118	2,062
Solo private practice	5,676	738	6,054	1,064
Public clinic	1,803	268	1,772	258
Hospital	879	314	876	313
Tertiary education facility	293	304	257	277
Defence forces	144	26	160	29
Locum private practice	175	82	155	77
Other	175	70	151	62
Commercial/ business service	74	20	102	21
Other community health care service	87	21	101	29
Aboriginal health service	82	23	89	20
Other gov dept	56	17	37	21
Remaining work settings	67	48	77	46
Total	18,530	3,684	19,949	4,279

Note: In this instance the principal work setting headcount for the reported second job does not equal the principal role for the reported second job. This occurs when the survey respondent indicates a second job work setting but not a second job principal role.

In 2017, dental practitioners working in a Hospital setting reported the highest average weekly hours (37.1) and those in Residential health care facilities

(included in 'Remaining work settings') reported the lowest average hours (22.8).

Principal Job Area

In 2017, 63.6% of dental practitioners reported general dental practice as their principal job area, up from 62.3% in 2014 and 7.6% principally worked in dental hygiene, down from 7.9% in 2014.

Table 6: Principal job area, 2014 and 2017

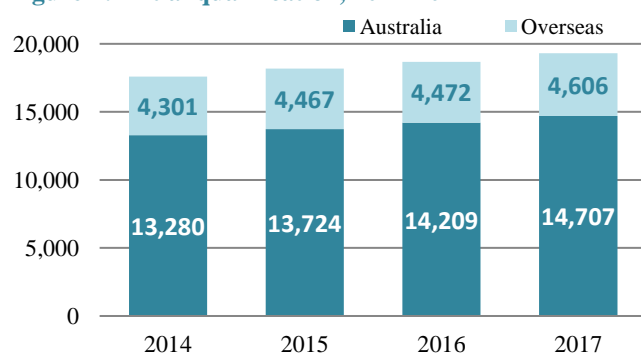
Principal job area	Headcount	
	2014	2017
General dental practice	11,551	12,679
Dental hygiene	1,455	1,516
Dental prosthetics	1,113	1,172
Dental therapy	1,033	965
Orthodontics	782	832
Oral health therapy (dental hygiene)	523	626
Oral health therapy (dental therapy)	348	414
Public health dentistry	316	305
Prosthodontics	248	262
Periodontics	230	229
Oral and maxillofacial surgery	208	221
Endodontics	180	184
Paedodontics	171	177
Other	150	139
Oral surgery	95	108
Special needs dentistry	61	50
Oral medicine	32	35
Remaining job areas	34	35
Total	18,530	19,949

Primary Speciality

In 2017, 9.9% of dentists reported a primary speciality, down from 10.2% in 2014. Further detail on primary specialties is presented in the Dentist Factsheet.

Initial Qualification

Figure 7: Initial qualification, 2014-2017



Note: 'Not stated/Unknown' responses are excluded from this chart

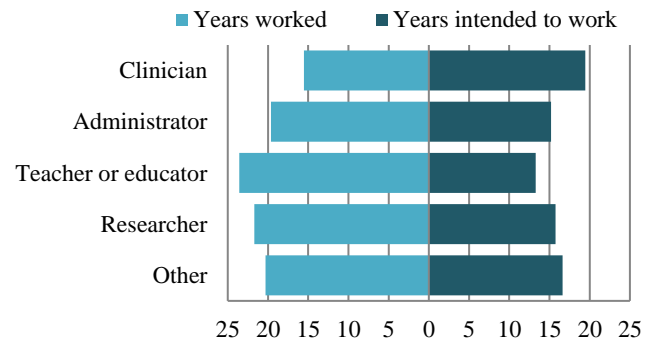
The workforce survey asks dental practitioners where they obtained their initial qualification. In 2017, 73.7% of oral health practitioners obtained

their initial qualification in Australia and 23.1% obtained their initial qualification overseas.

Working Intentions

In 2014 and 2017, dental practitioners had, on average, worked 16 years in the profession and intended to work for another 19 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 dental practitioners per 100,000 population (FTE rate) were SA and the ACT. Between 2014 and 2017, the total FTE rate increased from 73.3 to 75.2 and the NT had the largest FTE rate increase (5.8).

In 2017, dental practitioners in the NT worked the most hours per week on average (37.5 hours) and those in SA worked the fewest (33.4 hours).

Table 8: Distribution by state/ territory, 2017

State / Territory	Headcount	Total FTE	Avg. total hours	² FTE rate per 100,000 population
NSW	6,172	5,840.1	36.0	74.3
VIC	4,743	4,364.9	35.0	69.0
QLD	4,125	3,902.9	36.0	79.2
SA	1,671	1,468.1	33.4	85.2
WA	2,357	2,088.8	33.7	81.1
TAS	349	338.0	36.8	64.7
ACT	374	349.4	35.5	84.9
NT	148	145.9	37.5	59.0
Total	19,949	18,507.4	35.3	75.2

Note: 'Not stated/Unknown' are excluded from this table but are included in the total

Remoteness Area

In 2017, 93.2% of dental practitioners worked in either major cities or inner regional locations, compared with 93.0% in 2014.

Between 2014 and 2017, the largest shift in average hours worked was in very remote areas, decreasing from 41.0 to 36.4 hours per week.

However, due to the increase in the number of dental practitioners in very remote areas, the FTE rate in these areas increased by 6.7.

Table 9: Distribution by remoteness area, 2017

Remoteness Area	Headcount	Total FTE	Avg. total hours	² FTE rate per 100,000 population
Major cities	15,755	14,536.9	35.1	82.3
Inner regional	2,830	2,686.1	36.1	61.2
Outer regional	1,172	1,099.4	35.7	53.7
Remote	130	126.3	36.9	43.2
Very remote	54	51.7	36.4	25.8
Total	19,949	18,507.4	35.3	75.2

Note: 'Not stated/Unknown' are excluded from this table but are included in the total

Other Work Location Outside of Major Cities

In 2017, 4.9% of dental practitioners reported that they had worked in a regional, rural or remote location, in addition to their principal or second job location. Of these respondents, 72.2% had worked in an inner regional or outer regional location, and 12.0% had worked in either remote or very remote locations.

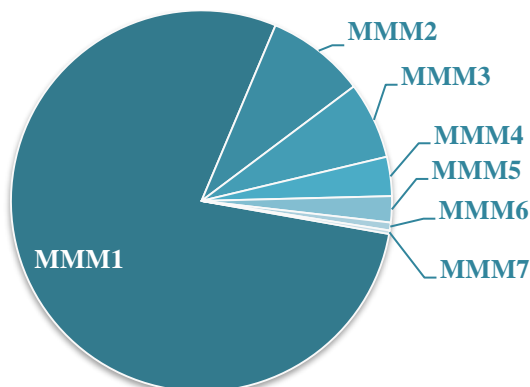
Modified Monash Model

In 2017, the majority (78.5%) of FTE dental practitioners were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model (MMM) classification system, a small increase from 78.2% in 2014.

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

MMM1 locations had the highest FTE rate of dental practitioners (82.8) followed by MMM4 (69.5). The lowest FTE rate was in MMM5 locations (22.7).

Figure 9: FTE Distribution by MMM, 2017



Tele-Health

The workforce survey asks dental practitioners to report their hours practiced via tele-health in dental practice in the previous year.

Note: Tele-health is the use of telecommunication techniques for the

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purpose of providing telemedicine, medical education, and health education over a distance.

A total of 1,403 dental practitioners (7.0%) provided a response to the Tele-Health question in 2017. On average, these respondents practiced via Tele-Health for 19.7 hours per week, with the majority (81.6%) of Tele-Health services provided by practitioners based in a major city.

Table 10: Tele-health dental practitioners by remoteness location, 2017

Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote
81.6%	11.8%	5.3%	0.7%	0.6%

Note: The tele-health workforce remoteness location refers to the location of the 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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