

# **Profile of the Medical Workforce in NSW, 2002**

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Profile of the Medical Workforce in NSW, 2002

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# CONTENTS

<b>List of Tables and Figures.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
The annual medical labour force survey.....	1
Methodology .....	2
Notes to assist in interpreting data in this publication.....	3
<b>3. Medical Practitioners Working in NSW.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>4. Primary Care Practitioners Working in NSW .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>5. Specialists and Consultants Working in NSW.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>6. Specialists in Training Working in NSW.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>7. Non-specialist Hospital Salaried Medical Practitioners Working in NSW.....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>Appendix A: Additional Information on Medical Practitioners Registered in NSW in 2002 .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Appendix B: Survey Questionnaire.....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Appendix C: Health Services in NSW.....</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Appendix D: Notes to assist in interpreting data .....</b>	<b>89</b>

# LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

## Introduction

Table 1.1	Persons registered as Medical Practitioners in NSW, 2002.....	3
Table 1.2	Work status of working renewal cohort and other respondents, NSW, 2002 .....	3
Table 1.3a	Method 1: Trends in sample size, response rate, participation rate and workforce size 1992 to 2002 .....	4
Table 1.3b	Method 2: Trends in sample size, response rate, participation rate and workforce size 1992 to 2002 .....	5
Figure 1.1	Estimated size and growth rate of the NSW medical practitioner workforce, 1992 to 2002.....	5
Table 1.4	Survey respondents not currently working in medicine, type of work sought by sex, 2002.....	6
Table 1.5	Average intended years remaining in the workforce, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	6
Table 1.6a	Total employment settings, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	7
Table 1.6b	Total employment settings, FTE medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	8

## Medical Practitioners

Table 3.1	Age and Sex distribution of medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	13
Figure 3.1	Age and sex distribution of medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	13
Table 3.2	Medical Practitioners of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin working in NSW, 2002.....	13
Table 3.3	Age and sex distribution, number of medical practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002.....	14
Table 3.4	Percentage distribution of age and sex of medical practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002.....	15
Table 3.5	Estimated number of locations for medical practitioners working in NSW, by sex, 2002 .....	16
Table 3.6	Employment setting of main job by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	16
Table 3.7	Employment sector of main job, medical practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002 .....	17
Figure 3.2	Employment setting of main job by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	17
Table 3.8	Employment setting of second job, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	18
Table 3.9	Employment setting of third job, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	18
Table 3.10	Main geographical location by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	19
Figure 3.3	Estimated number of medical practitioners working in NSW (main job only) per 100,000 of the resident population, 2002.....	19
Table 3.11	Second geographical location by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	20
Table 3.12	Third geographical location by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	20
Table 3.13	Geographical location of main setting, medical practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002.....	21
Table 3.14	Geographical location of main setting by location of second setting, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	22
Table 3.15	Geographical location of main setting by location of residence, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	23
Table 3.16	Average hours per week as a clinician by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	24
Table 3.17	Average hours per week as an administrator by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	24
Table 3.18	Average hours per week as a teacher/educator by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	24
Table 3.19	Average hours per week as a researcher by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	25
Table 3.20	Average hours per week as a public health physician by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	25
Table 3.21	Average hours per week as an occupational health physician by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	25
Table 3.22	Average hours per week in other activities by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	26
Table 3.23	Hours per week usually worked in all medical locations, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	26

Table 3.24	Total hours per week usually worked in all medical jobs, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002	27
Figure 3.4	Distribution of total hours worked per week by sex, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002	27
Table 3.25	Weeks worked in the last year in scheduled patient sessions, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002	27
Table 3.26	Field of work of main job, medical practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002	28
Table 3.27	Type of medical work undertaken by medical practitioners working in NSW, by sex, 2002	29
Table 3.28	Type of medical work undertaken by medical practitioners working in NSW, by sex, 1992 to 2002	29
Table 3.29	Medical practitioners working in NSW and also registered in other states in Australia, by sex, 2002	30
Table 3.30	Year of first registration for medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002	30
Table 3.31	Resident status of medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002	30

## Primary Care Practitioners

Table 4.1	Age and Sex distribution of primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	31
Figure 4.1	Age and sex distribution of primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	31
Table 4.2	Age and sex of primary care practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002	32
Table 4.3	Percentage distribution of age and sex of primary care practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002	33
Table 4.4	Estimated number of locations for primary care practitioners working in NSW, by sex, 2002	34
Table 4.5	Main geographical location, by sex, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	34
Table 4.6	Second geographical location by sex, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	35
Table 4.7	Third geographical location by sex, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	35
Table 4.8	Main geographical location, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002	36
Table 4.9	Main geographical location by location of residence, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	37
Table 4.10	Hours worked per week usually worked in all medical locations, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	38
Figure 4.2	Distribution of total hours worked per week by sex, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	39
Table 4.11	Employment setting for all jobs by sex, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	39
Table 4.12	Area of practice by sex, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	39
Table 4.13	Qualifications by sex, primary care practitioners working in NSW, 2002	40
Table 4.14	Primary care practitioners working as a locum or through a deputising service by sex, 2002	40
Table 4.15	Number of primary care practitioners working at a main practice location, 2002	40

## Specialists and Consultants

Table 5.1	Age and Sex distribution of specialists working in NSW, 2002	41
Figure 5.1	Age and sex distribution of specialists working in NSW, 2002	41
Table 5.2	Age and sex of specialists working in NSW, 1992 to 2002	42
Table 5.3	Percentage distribution of age and sex of specialists working in NSW, 1992 to 2002	43
Table 5.4	Estimated number of locations by sex, specialists working in NSW, 2002	44
Table 5.5	Main geographical location by sex, specialists working in NSW, 2002	44
Table 5.6	Second geographical location by sex, specialists working in NSW, 2002	45
Table 5.7	Third geographical location by sex, specialists working in NSW, 2002	45
Table 5.8	Main geographical location, specialists working in NSW, 1992 to 2002	46
Table 5.9	Main geographical location of work by location of residence, specialists working in NSW, 2002	47
Table 5.10	Hours per week usually worked in all medical locations, specialists working in NSW, 2002	48
Figure 5.2	Distribution of total hours worked per week by sex, specialists working in NSW, 2002	49
Table 5.11	Employment setting for all jobs by sex, specialists working in NSW, 2002	49
Table 5.12	Main specialist qualification, by specialisation and sex, 2002	50
Table 5.13	Number of specialist qualifications held by specialists, by specialisation and sex, 2002	51
Table 5.14	Main area of specialty practice by sex, specialists working in NSW, 2002	52
Table 5.15	Total areas of speciality practice by sex, specialists working in NSW, 2002	53
Table 5.16	Main area of specialty practice, specialists working in NSW, 1992 to 2002	54
Table 5.17	Percentage distribution, main area of practice, specialists working in NSW 1992 to 2002	55

## Specialists in Training

Table 6.1	Age and Sex distribution of specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	56
Figure 6.1	Age and sex distribution of specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	56
Table 6.2	Age and sex of specialists in training working in NSW, 1992 to 2002 .....	57
Table 6.3	Percentage distribution of age and sex of specialists in training working in NSW, 1992 to 2002 .....	58
Table 6.4	Estimated number of employment locations by sex, of specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	59
Table 6.5	Main geographical location by sex, specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	59
Table 6.6	Second geographical location by sex, specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	60
Table 6.7	Third geographical location by sex, specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	60
Table 6.8	Main geographical location by sex, specialists in training working in NSW, 1992 to 2002 .....	61
Table 6.9	Main geographical location of work by location of residence, of specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	62
Table 6.10	Hours per week, usually worked in all medical locations, specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	63
Figure 6.2	Distribution of total hours worked per week by sex, specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	64
Table 6.11	Employment setting for all jobs by sex, specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	64
Table 6.12	Year of completion of training, specialists in training working in NSW, 2002 .....	64
Table 6.12	Distribution of specialist areas by sex, specialists in training workforce in NSW, 2002 .....	65

## Non-Specialist Hospital Salaried Medical Practitioners

Table 7.1	Age and Sex distribution of non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	66
Figure 7.1	Age and sex distribution of non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	66
Table 7.2	Age and sex of non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002 .....	67
Table 7.3	Percentage distribution of age and sex of non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002 .....	68
Table 7.4	Estimated number of employment locations by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	69
Table 7.5	Main geographical location by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	69
Table 7.6	Second geographical location by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	70
Table 7.7	Third geographical location by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	70
Table 7.8	Main geographical location by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 1992 to 2002 .....	71
Table 7.9	Main geographical location of work by location of residence, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	72
Table 7.10	Hours per week usually worked in all medical jobs, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	73
Figure 7.2	Distribution of total hours worked per week by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	74
Table 7.11	Employment setting for all jobs by sector, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	74
Table 7.12	Type of position by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	75
Table 7.13	Qualifications by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	75
Table 7.14	Awaiting entry into a specialist course, by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	75
Table 7.15	Years as a hospital non-specialist by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	75
Table 7.16	Right of private practice by sex, non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002 .....	75

## Appendix A

Table A1.1	Type of registration by sex, all medical practitioners registered in NSW, 2002 .....	76
Table A1.2	Age and sex, all medical practitioners registered in NSW, 2002 .....	76
Figure A1.1	Comparison of age distribution of all medical practitioners registered in NSW and medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	76
Table A1.3	Registration actions by age and sex of registrants—new registrations, restorations and renewals NSW, 2002 .....	77
Table A1.4	Year of first registration in NSW by sex, all medical practitioners registered in NSW, 2002.....	78
Table A1.5	Working status of all survey respondents by sex, NSW Medical Labour Force Survey, 2002 .....	78
Table A1.6	Working status of all survey respondents, NSW Medical labour Force Survey, 1992 to 2002.....	79
Table A1.7	New registrants in NSW by sex, 1992 to 2002 .....	79
Table A1.8	Employment setting of all jobs by sex, FTE non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	80
Table A1.9	Employment setting of all jobs by sex, FTE non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	81
Table A1.10	.....Employment setting of all jobs by sex, FTE non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	82
Table A1.11	Employment setting of all jobs by sex, FTE non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002.....	83

## Appendix B

Figure A2.1	Survey questionnaire.....	84
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## Appendix C

Table A3.1	Estimated residential population by Health Service, 1998 Census data.....	87
Figure A3.1	Geographical boundaries, Health Services in NSW, 2002.....	88

## Appendix D

Notes to assist in interpreting this publication .....	89
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# INTRODUCTION

## The annual medical labour force survey

### (a) Overview

Each year a labour force survey questionnaire is forwarded to medical practitioners renewing their registration in NSW. Information from the survey contributes to constructive discussion of medical workforce planning issues for the NSW Health Department, Australian Government, Health Services, professional colleges and associations, the NSW Medical Board, medical faculties and other interested bodies.

Response rates to the survey have been high during the past decade, with 92.8% in 1992 and 90.0% in 2000. However, the response rate declined to 73.0% in 2002, probably due to changes in the survey collection method. This was after a sample collection in 2000 of 25.1% (see Section on Timing of the 2001 and 2002 Surveys) The continued support of the NSW Medical Board, professional organisations and medical practitioners in the distribution and completion of the survey is appreciated.

### (b) Availability of survey information

The *Profile of the Medical Labour Force* has been published to provide detailed information about the medical labour force. The last *Profile of the Medical Labour Force* was published in 2002, documenting 2000 data. In addition to comprehensive data from the most recent survey, longitudinal data is included where data is available from the surveys undertaken from 1992 onwards. Where there are inconsistencies in the data, these are noted (see the note below on longitudinal data, page 3).

Each year a brief summary of the current year's survey data is prepared by the NSW Health Department and is distributed to all medical practitioners registered in NSW. A copy of the pamphlet is available on request from the Department (contact details are included at the front of this publication).

Additional survey analysis can be obtained by forwarding a written request to the contact address in the front of the publication. Contact should be made to clarify the information required and to determine if a fee may apply. A charging policy is available on request.

Strict procedures are followed to ensure the privacy of individual medical practitioners who respond to the survey. An agreement between NSW Health and the NSW Medical Board prevents access to identifying data. Survey information will not be made available in any format that enables the identification of individual respondents.

## Methodology

### (a) Timing of the 2001 and 2002 Surveys

Information from the 2002 Annual Medical Labour Force Survey relates to the 2002 registration renewal period. Up until 2001 renewal notices and surveys were forwarded in August to all medical practitioners registered with the NSW Medical Board at that time, and the renewal fee was due by 31 October in the same year in order for the medical practitioner to be retained on the register. Survey respondents completed the survey with information about their usual working situation at that time.

In 2001 the Board changed its process of registration so that renewal notices and survey forms are now sent out on a monthly basis. This resulted in the collection of three months' of survey forms in 2001. The response rate was 25.1%.

### (b) Utilisation of Board Information

The data on medical practitioners' sex, year of birth and major qualifications are provided by the Board to eliminate the need to collect this information annually on the survey form.

### (c) Survey coverage

Information from the medical labour force survey does not cover all registered medical practitioners in NSW. Previously only those registrants renewing their registration were forwarded a survey, and only renewals were included in the definition of the survey population. However in 2001 and 2002 some new registrants and restorations also received and returned forms, and therefore new decision making rules were applied regarding calculation of survey population and sample size. These categories are defined as follows:

- **New registrants:** New registrants include new local graduates, interstate graduates and overseas trained medical practitioners registering for the first time with the NSW Medical Board. It includes medical practitioners gaining both conditional and full registration in NSW.
- **Restorations:** Restorations are persons who have been restored to the Register after a period in which they were not financial.
- **Technical restorations :** Technical restorations are medical practitioners who are restorations simply due to late payment, as they are removed from the Register and then reinstated on receipt of the payment of the renewal fee. If this group has provided survey data they have been included in the data analysis for this profile and classified as technical restorations.
- **Technical renewals:** There are a group of medical practitioners who either pay their registration fee early (say in December for January renewals in the year of the survey), or who pay in advance and earn a credit as they will not be able to make their payment at the usual time. If these medical practitioners were sent a survey form in the year of renewal and are still financial in that year they have now been included in the survey population, and their returned survey forms included as respondents. This group has now been defined as **technical renewals, even though no transaction may have been recorded for the year of the survey**. The inclusion of these medical practitioners (224 in 2002) has increased the population count and the number of respondents and they are shown in Table 1.1 as "Technical renewals". This process has occurred for 2002.

For compatibility with other profiles prepared for health workforce groups registered in NSW, the definition of response is those respondents who completed the question on workforce status. In addition, it has been identified that a number of respondents have not completed the question on workforce status, but have completed the majority of the remainder of the survey form including the provision of a New South Wales postcode for work location, as well as other data such as hours worked. It was therefore

decided for data completeness, to include both of those categories in the definition of respondents, as a workforce status could be derived and it was known that they were working in New South Wales

The labour force characteristics of new registrants and restorations may vary from those registrants who are part of the survey target group. Any extrapolation of their demography or work patterns from the survey data should be made with care. Table A1.3 in the Appendices provides data on the age and sex profile of all new registrations and restorations, and Table A1.4 on the age and sex profile of non respondent new registrations and restorations. This is further explained in Section (d) below.

**Table 1.1: Persons Registered as Medical Practitioners in NSW, 2002**

Category of registration	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
	Female		Male		Total	
New registrants with a survey form <sup>4</sup>	188.0	43.7%	242	56.3%	430	100.0%
New registrants with no survey form <sup>3</sup>	179	32.8%	366	67.2%	545	100.0%
Total Restorations:	93	27.0%	252	73.0%	345	100.0%
"True" restorations	37	27.0%	100	73.0%	137	100.0%
"Technical" restorations <sup>4</sup>	56	26.9%	152	73.1%	208	100.0%
Renewals <sup>4</sup>	7,006	29.7%	16,572	70.3%	23,578	100.0%
Technical renewals <sup>4</sup>	u/k		u/k		224	100.0%
Deletions	854	31.1%	1889	68.9%	2,743	100.0%

**Notes:**

- 1 The table includes information on medical practitioners who were financial with the Board during 2002.
- 2 Some medical practitioners may be included in more than one category during the twelve month period.
- 3 There were three new registrations and one renewal with no sex reported who are not shown above
- 4 New registrations with a survey form, technical restorations (restorations with a survey form), renewals and technical renewals with a survey form are classified as respondents

**(d) The working renewal cohort**

In 2002, 78.2 per cent of the 17,836 respondents to the survey indicated that they were working only or mainly in NSW, or currently working, but on leave for three months or longer. This group of 13,948 survey respondents comprises the "working renewal cohort" and is referred to throughout the publication as medical practitioners working in NSW. The longitudinal data also refer to the working renewal cohort.

**Table 1.2: Work status of working renewal cohort and other respondents, NSW, 2002**

Work Status	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
	Sex unknown		Female		Male		Total		Female
<b>Working in medicine</b>									
Only in NSW	35	15.6%	4,224	79.0%	9,127	74.4%	13,386	75.1%	31.6%
Mainly in NSW	0	0.0%	91	1.7%	336	2.7%	427	2.4%	21.3%
On extended leave	0	0.0%	88	1.6%	47	0.4%	135	0.8%	65.2%
<b>Sub total, working in medicine in NSW</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>4,403</b>	<b>82.3%</b>	<b>9,510</b>	<b>77.6%</b>	<b>13,948</b>	<b>78.2%</b>	<b>31.6%</b>
<b>Other renewal respondents</b>									
Not working in medicine in NSW	14	6.3%	787	14.7%	2191	17.9%	2992	16.8%	25.7%
Retired	175	78.1%	160	3.0%	561	4.6%	896	5.0%	21.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>5,350</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12,262</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>17,836</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>30.4%</b>

Note: unadjusted for non response

**(e) Sample size, response rate, participation rate and estimate of total workforce size**

The tables below shows the trends in categories of registration, survey respondents, response rate, participation rate and estimates of total medical practitioner workforce size in NSW between 1992 and 2002, Table 1.3a shows the trend if the definition of the survey population for 1992 to 2000 is applied to 2001 and 2002 (Method 1), while Table 1.3b adjusts the survey population definition as discussed in the previous Section (Method 2).

**Table 1.3a Method 1: Trends in sample size, response rate, participation rate and workforce size 1992-2002**

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
New registrants	894	1,679	1,242	1,256	1,360	846	938	687	974	894	978
Renewals	18,770	18,584	19,745	20,307	20,823	21,820	22,676	23,350	22,908	23,409	24,011
Restorations/other	504	617	540	539	587	178	240	370	261	133	137
Temporary registrants									592		
<b>Total Registrants</b>	<b>20,168</b>	<b>20,880</b>	<b>21,527</b>	<b>22,102</b>	<b>22,770</b>	<b>22,844</b>	<b>23,854</b>	<b>24,407</b>	<b>24,735</b>	<b>24,436</b>	<b>25,126</b>
Survey respondents	17,425	16,541	18,376	18,748	19,154	19,399	20,041	19,923	20,616	5,838	17,161
Working respondents	13,748	13,114	14,620	14,925	15,315	15,626	15,903	15,611	16,046	4,589	13,564
Survey response	92.8%	89.0%	93.1%	92.3%	92.0%	88.9%	88.4%	85.3%	90.0%	24.9%	71.5%
Estimated medical practitioner workforce <sup>1</sup>	16,017	16,738	17,259	17,728	18,343	18,480	19,030	19,211	18,915	19,312	19,968
Workforce participation rate	79.4%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.6%	80.9%	79.8%	78.7%	78.3%	79.0%	79.5%

**Notes**

- 1 The estimate has been calculated by assuming: the proportion of survey respondents working in NSW represents the proportion of all renewals working in NSW; and that 90% of new registrants are working in NSW and 80% of other registrants are working in NSW.
- 2 Estimate of the proportion of medical practitioners registered in NSW (excluding temporary registrants) who are working in NSW.

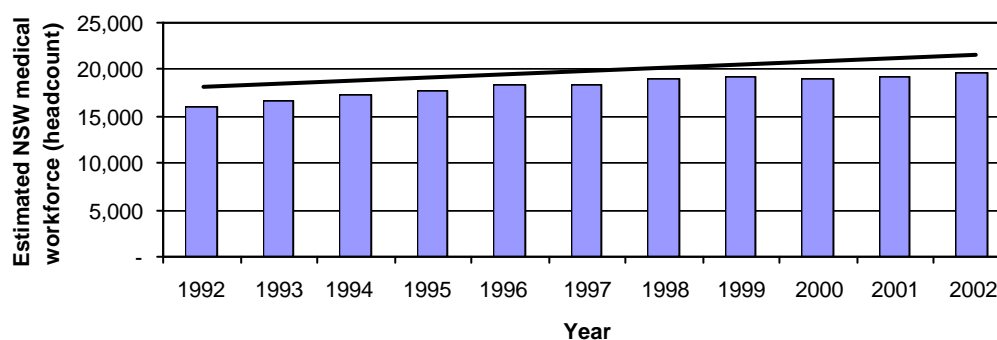
A comparison of the two tables shows that the estimates of workforce size are lower with Method 2 than Method 1, as a smaller proportion of new registrants have had the high proportion of workforce participation applied of 90%, and the number of restorations reduces because 60.3% of restorations are in fact technical restorations. In addition, the age and sex profile and participation rate of the workforce is more accurate for Method 2. Therefore the estimates of workforce size and participation rate from Method 2 are the preferred estimates.

**Table 1.3b Method 2: Trends in sample size, response rate, participation rate and workforce size, 1992 – 2002**

	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
New registrants	894	1,679	1,242	1,256	1,360	846	938	687	974	881	548
Renewals	18,770	18,584	19,745	20,307	20,823	21,820	22,676	23,350	22,908	23,452	24,441
Restorations/other	504	617	540	539	587	178	240	370	261	103	137
Temporary registrants									592		
<b>Total Registrants</b>	<b>20,168</b>	<b>20,880</b>	<b>21,527</b>	<b>22,102</b>	<b>22,770</b>	<b>22,844</b>	<b>23,854</b>	<b>24,407</b>	<b>24,735</b>	<b>24,436</b>	<b>25,126</b>
Survey respondents	17,425	16,541	18,376	18,748	19,154	19,399	20,041	19,923	20,616	5,881	17,836
Working respondents	13,748	13,114	14,620	14,925	15,315	15,626	15,903	15,611	16,046	4,619	13,948
Survey response	92.8%	89.0%	93.1%	92.3%	92.0%	88.9%	88.4%	85.3%	90.0%	25.1%	73.0%
Estimated medical practitioner workforce <sup>1</sup>	16,017	16,738	17,259	17,728	18,343	18,480	19,030	19,211	18,915	19,295	19,716
Workforce participation rate <sup>2</sup>	79.4%	80.2%	80.2%	80.2%	80.6%	80.9%	79.8%	78.7%	78.3%	79.0%	78.5%

**Notes**

- 1 The estimate has been calculated by assuming: the proportion of survey respondents working in NSW represents the proportion of all renewals working in NSW; and that 90% of new registrants are working in NSW and 80% of other registrants are working in NSW.
- 2 Estimate of the proportion of medical practitioners registered in NSW (excluding temporary registrants) who are working in NSW.

**Figure 1.1: Estimated size and growth of the NSW medical practitioner workforce**

The graph and table above show that the estimated medical practitioner workforce has grown between 1992 and 2002, with a total growth of 23.1%, or an average growth per annum of 2.3%. The estimated growth between 2000 and 2001 was 2.0%, while the estimated growth between 2001 and 2002 was 2.2%, close to the average growth over the decade. However, these figures should be interpreted with care as they are based on the assumption that non respondents have the same participation rate as respondents.

## (e) Type of work sought in medicine

Table 1.4: Survey respondents not currently working in medicine, type of work sought by sex, 2002

Table 1.4a: Medical Practitioners seeking work in medicine in NSW, 2002

Type of work sought	No.		%		No.		%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	
<b>Not looking for work in medicine</b>	174	171	77.7%	77.7%	345	50.4%	77.7%	
<b>Looking for work in medicine:</b>								
- full time	5	21	2.2%	9.5%	26	19.2%	5.9%	
- part time	45	28	20.1%	12.7%	73	61.6%	16.4%	
- type unknown	0	0	0.0%	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>50.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
<i>non response/unknown</i>	1	1	0.4%	0.5%	2	0.4%	0.5%	
<i>sex unknown</i>					6			

**Note:** Table includes only those survey respondents in Table A1.5 who indicated that they were not currently working or currently working but not in medicine

There were only some 99 medical practitioners who were looking for work at the time of the survey. This group were 22.3% of those not currently working or currently not working in medicine.

## (f) Average years intending to remain in the workforce

Table 1.5: Average intended years remaining in the workforce, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002

Table 1.4a: Average years remaining in workforce by age

Age	No.		%	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
19-24	33.2	36.4		
25-29	31.0	32.8		
30-34	27.1	28.2		
35-39	22.5	23.8		
40-44	18.7	20.3		
45-49	15.3	16.1		
50-54	11.8	12.8		
55-59	8.7	9.3		
60-64	6.3	6.7		
65-69	4.9	5.4		
70-74	4.5	4.8		
75+	5.0	4.4		
All including missing ages	20.3	17.1		
0 years left/non response	247	621		

*The file does not enable missing data to be distinguished from persons reporting 0 years left.*

The above table shows that there is an inverse relationship between age and years intending to remain in the workforce. Female medical practitioners on average have 20.3 years remaining, while male medical practitioners have on average 17.1 years remaining in the workforce.

**(g) Total of employment settings for the medical workforce**

Data on employment setting has been estimated from Question 8 of the survey form, "How many hours over the last four weeks did you work in each of the following settings?," with responses allowed for three settings. This data does not distinguish number of jobs or positions, as medical practitioners may work in two different organisations (eg two public hospitals) but would have to report total hours for both as one count. Therefore the data only distinguishes where medical practitioners work in different settings. The hours worked allows for the calculation of FTE as well as frequency counts.

**Table 1.6a: Total employment settings, medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002**

Employment setting	No.		%		No.		%	
	Female	Male	Total	Per cent female				
<b>Public sector</b>								
Ambulatory centre, day surgery, community health centre, outpatient clinic	387	6.7%	762	5.1%	1,149	5.6%	33.7%	
Aboriginal health service	49	0.8%	50	0.3%	99	0.5%	49.5%	
Hospital, including psychiatric hospital	1823	31.5%	4284	28.8%	6,107	29.6%	29.9%	
Other residential health facility	72	1.2%	145	1.0%	217	1.1%	33.2%	
Tertiary education institution	136	2.3%	387	2.6%	523	2.5%	26.0%	
Defence forces	23	0.4%	91	0.6%	114	0.6%	20.2%	
Government department/agency	92	1.6%	148	1.0%	240	1.2%	38.3%	
Other	85	1.5%	17	0.1%	102	0.5%	83.3%	
<b>Total public sector</b>	<b>2,667</b>	<b>46.1%</b>	<b>5,884</b>	<b>39.6%</b>	<b>8,551</b>	<b>41.4%</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	
<b>Private sector</b>								
Private rooms/surgery	2153	37.2%	5413	36.4%	7,566	36.6%	28.5%	
Ambulatory centre, day surgery, community health centre, outpatient clinic	134	2.3%	503	3.4%	637	3.1%	21.0%	
24 hour/other medical centre	90	1.6%	279	1.9%	369	1.8%	24.4%	
Aboriginal health service	17	0.3%	32	0.2%	49	0.2%	0.0%	
Hospital, including psychiatric hospital	406	7.0%	1887	12.7%	2,293	11.1%	17.7%	
Other residential health facility	132	2.3%	375	2.5%	507	2.5%	26.0%	
Tertiary education institution	35	0.6%	74	0.5%	109	0.5%	32.1%	
Other	154	2.7%	419	2.8%	573	2.8%	26.9%	
<b>Total private sector</b>	<b>3,121</b>	<b>53.9%</b>	<b>8,982</b>	<b>60.4%</b>	<b>12,103</b>	<b>58.6%</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,788</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>14866</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>20654</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>28.0%</b>	
Non-response:	240		450		690			
	<b>No.</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>% of total</b>		
<b>Total no. of respondents</b>	<b>4163</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>9060</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>13223</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>31.5%</b>	
<b>Total respondents public sector</b>	<b>2261</b>	<b>54.3%</b>	<b>4938</b>	<b>54.5%</b>	<b>7199</b>	<b>54.4%</b>	<b>31.4%</b>	
<b>Total respondents private sector</b>	<b>2540</b>	<b>61.0%</b>	<b>6468</b>	<b>71.4%</b>	<b>9008</b>	<b>68.1%</b>	<b>28.2%</b>	

**Notes**

- 1 Data has been estimated from Question 8 of the survey form, "How many hours over the last 4 weeks did you work in each of the following settings?". Responses have been added for up to three settings, and therefore are multiple responses. The responses do not equate to jobs or positions, as a respondent may work in more than one location in a setting, but will only show total hours in that setting.
- 2 Percentages by setting relate to total settings reported, not respondents
- 3 Respondents may report both public and private settings

**Table 1.6b: Total employment settings, FTE medical practitioners working in NSW, 2002**

Employment setting	No.		%		No.		%	
	Female	Male	Total	Per cent female	Female	Male	Total	Per cent female
<b>Public sector</b>								
Ambulatory centre, day surgery, community health centre, outpatient clinic	152.7	3.8%	259.7	2.4%	412.4	2.8%	37.0%	
Aboriginal health service	22.9	0.6%	28.7	0.3%	51.6	0.4%	44.3%	
Hospital, including psychiatric hospital	1680.2	42.2%	3589.3	33.4%	5,269.5	35.8%	31.9%	
Other residential health facility	15.1	0.4%	25.6	0.2%	40.7	0.3%	37.2%	
Tertiary education institution	82.3	2.1%	184.4	1.7%	266.8	1.8%	30.9%	
Defence forces	14.9	0.4%	41.9	0.4%	56.8	0.4%	26.3%	
Government department/agency	64.0	1.6%	117.0	1.1%	181.0	1.2%	35.4%	
Other	40.2	1.0%	93.0	0.9%	133.2	0.9%	30.1%	
<b>Total public sector</b>	<b>2072.3</b>	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>4339.5</b>	<b>40.3%</b>	<b>6,411.9</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	
<b>Private sector</b>								
Private rooms/surgery	1537.8	38.6%	5031.6	46.8%	6,569.4	44.6%	23.4%	
Ambulatory centre, day surgery, community health centre, outpatient clinic	49.9	1.3%	153.2	1.4%	203.1	1.4%	24.6%	
24 hour/other medical centre	63.1	1.6%	209.1	1.9%	272.2	1.8%	23.2%	
Aboriginal health service	8.2	0.2%	12.4	0.1%	20.7	0.1%	0.0%	
Hospital, including psychiatric hospital	147.0	3.7%	753.4	7.0%	900.5	6.1%	16.3%	
Other residential health facility	19.7	0.5%	43.0	0.4%	62.7	0.4%	31.4%	
Tertiary education institution	9.9	0.2%	16.7	0.2%	26.5	0.2%	37.2%	
Other	74.7	1.9%	198.2	1.8%	272.9	1.9%	27.4%	
<b>Total private sector</b>	<b>1910.2</b>	<b>48.0%</b>	<b>6417.6</b>	<b>59.7%</b>	<b>8,327.8</b>	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>22.9%</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3982.5</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>10757.2</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>14,739.6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>27.0%</b>	
Non-response:	240		450		690			
	<b>No.</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>% of total</b>		
<b>Total no. of respondents</b>	<b>4163</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>9060</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>13223</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>31.5%</b>	
<b>Total respondents public sector</b>	<b>2261</b>	<b>54.3%</b>	<b>4938</b>	<b>54.5%</b>	<b>7199</b>	<b>54.4%</b>	<b>31.4%</b>	
<b>Total respondents private sector</b>	<b>2540</b>	<b>61.0%</b>	<b>6468</b>	<b>71.4%</b>	<b>9008</b>	<b>68.1%</b>	<b>28.2%</b>	
<b>FTE ratio all respondents</b>	<b>0.95664</b>		<b>1.18732</b>		<b>1.114696</b>			
<b>FTE ratio respondents public sector</b>	<b>0.91655</b>		<b>0.8788</b>		<b>0.890658</b>			
<b>FTE ratio respondents private sector</b>	<b>0.75203</b>		<b>0.99221</b>		<b>0.92449</b>			

**Notes**

- <sup>1</sup> Data has been estimated from Question 8 of the survey form, "How many hours over the last 4 weeks did you work in each of the following settings?". Responses have been added for up to three settings, and therefore are multiple responses. The responses do not equate to jobs or positions, as a respondent may work in more than one location in a setting, but will only show total hours in that setting.
- <sup>2</sup> Percentages by setting relate to total settings reported, not respondents
- <sup>3</sup> Respondents may report both public and private settings
- <sup>4</sup> FTE calculated by dividing hours worked by 40 hours per week

The two tables show that for the 13,223 respondents who reported hours worked by setting that the equivalent FTE was 14,739.6, with an FTE ratio of 1.1147. Therefore in total medical practitioners work eleven and a half percent more than a forty hour week average, despite 26.3% of the workforce reporting working less than forty hours per week (see Table 3.24).

Section Three on the total medical workforce reports frequency counts for main, second and third setting in Tables 3.6, 3.8, 3.9. Appendix A reports FTE data for each of the medical categories for total settings.

# 2

## MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS WORKING IN NSW

This chapter summarises the characteristics of medical practitioners working in NSW, together with the characteristics of each of the four sub groups of primary care practitioners, specialists and consultants, special lists in training, and non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners.

### Characteristics of all medical practitioners working in NSW

- From 1992 to 2002, the NSW medical practitioner workforce is estimated to have grown from a headcount of 16,017 to 19,716 (after adjusting for non response, see Table 1.3b). This represents a total increase of 23.1% over the period. Estimated annual average growth was 2.3% between 1992 and 2002, and 2.2% from 2001 to 2002, indicating a similar growth rate to the average for the decade. There was actually an estimated decline of 296 medical practitioners between 1999 and 2000 however, and the growth between 1998 and 2001 was 1.4%, or 0.5% per annum average .
- Workforce participation rates for medical practitioners in NSW have decreased slightly between 1992 and 2002 (from 79.4% to 78.5%), although the 2002 rate has dropped from a peak of 80.9% in 1997. Between 1993 and 1998 participations rates were between 80% and 81%, but since then have stayed between 78% and 79%.
- The proportion of women in the medical workforce has increased from 23.8% in 1992 to 31.6% in 2002. Women made up 34.7% of the workforce aged under 40 in 1992 and 43.8% in 2002.
- The average age of the workforce was 45.8 years, with the average age of female medical practitioners 41.1 years, and 47.9 years for males. In 1992, 62.2% of the workforce was forty and older compared with 65.2% in 2002. Those aged 65 years and over were 9.5% of the workforce in 1992, decreasing to 8.4% in 2002.
- Some 54.4% of all medical practitioners indicated that they worked in one or more public sector settings, and 68.1% indicated that they worked in one or more private settings. The public sector accounted for 40.1% of medical practitioners in 2002 in their main role (defined as most hours worked in any of three settings. This is a major increase from 34.7% working in the public sector in their main role in 1992.
- The largest proportion (32.6%) of these worked in hospitals, including psychiatric hospitals. The private sector accounted for 59.9% of medical practitioners in 2002. The largest proportion of private sector medical practitioners worked in private medical rooms/surgeries and other private 24 hour centres (50.5% of total workforce). Female medical practitioners were more likely to work in the public sector (45.6% of all females) than males (37.6% of all males). The employment setting for a second position was more likely to be the public sector than for main setting (45.0% of the total with hours in a second setting) while 35.6% were in the public sector in a third setting.

- In 2002, the main job for 13.3% of medical practitioners was located in Rural Area Health Services. This proportion has increased from 1992 levels of 12.8%, and numbers are estimated to have increased from 2,050 in 1992 to 2,623 in 2002, a growth of 573 practitioners, 28%, or an average annual growth of 2.8%.
- Overall, 88.7% of females and 90.6% of men were in clinical roles. Some 19.2% of females were in administrative roles, and 26.5% of males.
- Some 26.3% of medical practitioners reported working part time in terms of total hours worked per week (hours worked less than 40 hours per week). Women were more likely to work part time than men (43.9% compared with 18.2%).
- Of the 87.5% (see Table 3.25) who reported working in scheduled patient sessions, the largest group were likely to spend 47 to 48 weeks with scheduled patient sessions (35.1% of respondents) while 82.4% of respondents reported working 45 weeks or more per year with scheduled patient sessions.
- Some 8.4% of medical practitioners working in NSW were also registered as a medical practitioner in other states of Australia (9.2% of men and 6.9% of women). These medical practitioners were most likely to be registered in Queensland (35.8%), Victoria (26.2%) or the ACT (19.8%).

## Characteristics of primary care practitioners working in NSW

Primary care practitioners engage in general practice or in the primary care of patients. This includes those persons who are vocationally registered general practitioners, Fellows of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP), RACGP trainees and other primary care medical practitioners.

- Between 1996 and 2002 the primary care practitioner workforce in NSW has declined from an estimated 8,047 to 7,985 persons, or by 0.1% per annum on average. The proportion of female primary care practitioners increased from 31.1% to 35.4% over that period. Women made up 47.0% of workforce aged under 40 years in 1996 and 53.3% in 2002.
- In 1992, medical practitioners under the age of 40 made up 31.3% of the primary care practitioner workforce, declining to 26.2% in 1996 and 21.8% in 2002. The proportion of practitioners aged 65 years and over increased from 11.0% in 1992 to 12.1% in 1996 although it declined to 10.6% in 2002. The average age in total is 49.0 years, with 44.6 years for women and 51.5 years for men.
- Some 34.2% of primary care practitioners in 2002 had two or more employment locations, with men slightly more likely to be working in multiple locations (34.3% compared with 33.8% of women).
- The proportion of the workforce with a main location in a rural area increased between 1992 (17.1%) and 2002 (18.0%); with an increase in real terms after adjusting for non response (1,182 to 1,437).
- In 2002, primary care practitioners were less likely to work in second and third locations in a Rural Health Service area—18.0% of main locations were in rural areas with 14.8% of second locations and 11.0% of third locations.
- Some 36.4% of primary care practitioners worked less than forty hours per week; and males generally worked longer hours than females—62.1% of women reported less than 40 hours worked per week on average in total compared with 22.3% of men.
- Most primary care practitioners (84.1%) were working in private medical rooms, surgeries or private 24 hour centres, based on total settings worked.
- Some 79.3% of primary care practitioners were vocationally registered general practitioners, 27.3% were Fellows of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, 4.7% were RACGP trainees and 8.9% were other medical practitioners (question allowed for multiple responses).
- Some 10.3% of primary care practitioners reported working in a special interest area. Female practitioners were more likely to work in a special interest area (11.7% of women compared with 9.5% of men).

## Characteristics of specialists and consultants working in NSW

A specialist is a medical practitioner with a qualification awarded by or recognised by the relevant specialist professional college in Australia.

- Between 1996 and 2002 the estimated specialist workforce grew from 6,238 to 7,100, a growth of 13.8% or 2.3% per annum on average. The proportion of female specialists increased from 12.5% in 1992 to 16.1% in 1996 and then to 19.7% in 2002. Women made up 20.8% of the specialist workforce aged under 40 years in 1992, 24.3% in 1996 and 33.5% in 2002.
- In 1992, specialists under the age of 40 made up 20.7% of the specialist workforce, declining to 19.0% in 2002. The proportion of specialists 65 years and older increased from 10.1% to 10.6% during the same period. The average age of specialists is 50.0 years (45.4 years for women and 51.2 years for men).
- Some 60.6% of specialists in 2002 had two or more employment locations, with men slightly more likely to be working in multiple locations (61.8% compared with 56.0% of women).
- The proportion of the workforce with a main location in a rural area decreased between 1992 (11.7%) and 2002 (10.5%); although there was an increase in real terms after adjusting for non response (623 to 745). There was a similar proportion of specialists with a second location in rural areas (10.5%) although the proportion for a third location increased (13.1%).
- Some 20.7% of specialists worked less than forty hours per week; and males generally worked longer hours than females—39.1% of women reported less than 40 hours worked per week on average in total compared with 17.2% of men.
- The most commonly held specialty qualifications in terms of total qualifications in 2002 were anaesthesia (11.6%), psychiatry (11.1%), other (9.3%), general surgery (6.7%), diagnostic radiology (6.4%), paediatric medicine (6.1%) general medicine (6.0%) and obstetrics and gynaecology (5.5%). For women, the most commonly held areas of specialty qualifications were psychiatry (15.5%), anaesthesia (12.3%) paediatric medicine (10.0%) and other qualifications (7.5%). For men, the most commonly held areas of specialty qualifications were anaesthesia (11.5%), psychiatry (10.0%), other qualifications (9.7%), and general surgery (7.7%).
- Some 4,919 specialists in 2002 reported a total of 6,141 specialty qualifications.
- The major areas of specialty practice for all areas of practice in 2002 were anaesthesia (11.5%), psychiatry (10.5%), other areas of practice (10.1%), diagnostic radiology (6.4%), paediatric medicine (5.7%), general medicine (5.5%), obstetrics and gynaecology (5.3%), and cardiology (4.7%). However the non response to this question was high at 19.3%, limiting interpretation of this variable.

## Characteristics of specialists in training working in NSW

Specialists in training are medical practitioners who are generally working as a registrar and employed in a training position that is accredited and supervised by the relevant specialist professional college.

- Between 1996 and 2002 the estimated specialist workforce grew from 1,682 to 2,194, a growth of 30.5% or 5.1% per annum on average. The proportion of female specialists in training increased from 29.6% in 1992 to 33.3% in 1996 and then to 41.8% in 2002.
- Nearly half of specialists in training are in the 30 to 34 age group (47.6% of the total). Over the past decade, a greater proportion of medical practitioners have tended to undertake specialist training at a later age, with the proportion of specialists in training 40 years and over rising from 5.9% in 1992 to 11.2% in 2002 (NOTE: non response rates have changed over this period). The average age of female specialists in training is 32.7 years, 32.6 years for males and 32.6 years overall.
- Some 19.4% of female and 18.8% of male specialists in training were also working at second and third locations. The proportion of all specialists in training working in additional locations was 19.1%, although the non response was high at 13.5%.

- Most specialists in training (92.8%) in 2002 were employed in metropolitan areas, although there were 94 specialists in training in rural locations and 14 primarily working interstate.
- Few specialists in training were undertaking part-time work, with only 9.5% of total, 14.7% of females and 5.9% of males reporting less than 40 hours per week on average for total hours actually worked. Some 61.0% of female and 75.6% of male specialists in training reported working 45 hours or more per week on average for total hours actually worked.
- Specialists in training were most likely to be training for the specialties of psychiatry (11.2%), anaesthesia (10.2%), emergency medicine (8.4%), paediatric medicine (7.8%), general surgery (6.6%) and obstetrics and gynaecology (4.8%).
- Some 41.8% of medical practitioners training for surgical specialties were female (see Table 6.2). Female specialists in training comprised 69.2% of medical practitioners training for medical administration, 68.4% for radiation oncology, 63.6% for geriatrics, 60.0% for medical oncology, 57.1% for obstetrics and gynaecology, 56.7% for paediatric medicine and 50% for clinical haematology (excluding small numbers). Numbers were small in individual specialty areas of pathology, but overall 60.3% of specialists in training in this area were females. Some 8.9% of specialists in training were expecting to complete their training in 2002, with 18.7% due to complete in 2003. Some 39.4% of specialists in training were expecting to complete their training between 2004 and 2005, with another 33.0% not completing their training before 2005 or afterwards.

## Characteristics of non-specialist hospital salaried medical practitioners working in NSW

Hospital non-specialists are those medical practitioners mainly employed in a salaried position in a hospital who do not have a recognised specialist qualification and who are not undertaking training to gain recognised specialist qualifications. They include interns, resident medical officers, and career medical officers.

- Between 1996 and 2002 the estimated hospital non-specialist workforce grew from 2,156 to 2,347 after adjusting for non response, a growth of 8.9% or 1.5% per annum on average. The proportion of female hospital non-specialists increased from 40.1% in 1992 to 43.1% in 1996 and then to 43.5% in 2002. In 1990, women made up 39.7% of the hospital non-specialist workforce under the age of 40. In 2002 the proportion was 44.9%.
- In 1992, hospital non-specialists under the age of 40 made up 87.2% of the workforce, declining to 75.9% of the workforce in 2002. In 1992, medical practitioners 65 years and over were only 1.1% of the hospital non-specialist workforce; and in 2002 this age group accounted for 1.3% of the workforce.
- Some 22.6% of hospital non-specialists in 2002 worked at two or more locations, with men more likely than women to be working in multiple locations (24.3% compared to 20.1% for women).
- The proportion of hospital non-specialists working in rural areas has increased from 7.3% in 1992 to 12.9% in 2002. Some 10.4% of hospital non-specialists were working in a rural location in a second location, and for a third location this figure was 21.5%. In 2002, men were more likely than women to be working in rural areas in their main job (14.9% of men compared with 10.3% of women).
- Most hospital non-specialists were working full-time in their main job, with 80.0% reporting working more than 40 hours per week in total (84.2% of men and 74.0% of women).
- Some 85.8% of hospital non-specialist settings were in the public sector, with public hospitals being the major setting overall at 74.1% of the total settings.
- Some 8.4% were Royal Australian College of General Practitioner trainees, and another 6.2% were vocationally registered primary care practitioners.
- Some 45.1% were awaiting entry into a specialist course (similar proportions of males and females), and 19.2% had rights of private practice (21.5% of males, 16.2% of females).