

**Summary of the
Podiatry Workforce in
NSW, 2004**

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SHPN (WDL) 080087
ISBN 978 1 74187 295 8

Further copies of this document can be downloaded from the NSW Health website www.health.nsw.gov.au

April 2008

2004 podiatrist labour force survey

Introduction

Each year, as part of the annual registration process for podiatrists in NSW, an Annual Labour Force Survey is sent to each podiatrist currently registered with the Podiatrists Registration Board of New South Wales. This report provides an overview of information from the 2003 workforce survey.

The response rate to the survey was similar at 81.8% in 2003 and 81.7% in 2004, indicating a slight increase in the response rate from 77.9% in 2002, although a decrease overall from 87.5% in 2001. The continued support of the Podiatry Registration Board of New South Wales, professional organisations and podiatrists participating in the survey is appreciated.

Availability of survey information

The most recent summary of the Annual Survey data was produced in 2005, entitled "Profile of the Podiatrist Labour force in NSW, 2003". This profile reproduces the same data as for the 2001 profile as there have been no coding or design changes to the survey form in that time.

Strict procedures are followed to ensure the privacy of individual podiatrists who respond to the Survey. There is no access to identifying data, as individual names and addresses are not included by the Board on the data file. Survey information will not be made available in any format that enables the identification of individual respondents.

Category of Podiatrist Registration

In 2004, there were 766 podiatrists financially registered with the Podiatrists Registration Board of NSW, a major increase from the 676 financially registered in 2003. Of these, 466 (60.8%) were female and 300 (39.2%) were male. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the number of podiatrists in each category of registration.

Table 1. Persons registered as Podiatrists in NSW, 2004

Category of registration	No. Row %		No. Row %		No. Row %	
	Female		Male		Total	
New registrants ²	7	63.6%	4	36.4%	11	100.0%
Renewals	423	60.2%	280	39.8%	703	100.0%
Technical restorations	3	0.0%	2	0.0%	5	0.0%
True restorations ³	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
Technical renewals	31	67.4%	15	32.6%	46	100.0%
Deletions	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total new registrations	33		21		54	

- Notes:**
- 1 The table includes information on podiatrists who were financial with the Board during 2004. Some podiatrists are included in more than one category during the twelve month period.
 - 2 The Board data indicated that there were 54 financial and 0 unfinancial new registrations. A large number of these had multiple transactions, and 43 financial new registrations were reclassified as renewals where they renewed their registration within the same year.
 - 3 The Board data indicated that there were 14 financial restorations and 0 who were unfinancial. A large number of these had multiple transactions, and therefore 8 financial restorations were reclassified as renewals where they renewed their registration within the same year.

Response rate to Labour Force Annual Survey

The response rate to the 2004 Podiatrist Labour Force Annual Survey was 81.7%, similar to the 2003 response rate of 81.8%, although higher than the 2002 response rate of 77.9%. All three years have lower response rates than 2001, of 87.5%.

Table 1.2: Response Rate to Podiatrist Annual Labour Force Survey, 2001 - 2004

	No. Rate		No. Rate		No. Rate		No. Rate	
	2001		2002		2003		2004	
Formal response rate								
<i>Survey respondents</i> ¹ who were <i>renewals</i> ²	590		505		545		616	
Total <i>renewals</i> ²	674	87.5%	648	77.9%	666	81.8%	754	81.7%

- Notes:**
1. A "survey respondent" is defined as a renewal or technical registration who provides information to the question on work status, or whose work status can be derived from other data. In 2004, there were 115 podiatrists who did not return a survey form, and 23 survey forms with work status question unanswered, and no capacity to derive the work status from a NSW postcode for place of work.
 2. A renewal is defined to include a person who paid their registration fee on time, who was a renewal but was late in paying the renewal fee, and was therefore de-registered and then restored (ie technical restoration), or who was sent a survey form and returned a form or was still financial at the end of the relevant year while having no financial status (technical renewal).

Determining the response rate to the survey is complicated by the relationship between the survey and the renewal process. While new registrants and restorations do not generally receive the survey, some may if they also receive a renewal notice within the twelve-month survey period. Additionally, some persons sent renewal notices do not renew their registration and therefore do not return surveys.

Work Status

There were 544 working renewal survey respondents in 2004. Working renewals are those respondents who:

- Were financially registered and renewed their registration in 2003 or were technical restorations or technical renewals
- Returned a labour force survey indicating their work status or provided sufficient data for a status of working in NSW to be derived; and
- Indicated that their work status was one of the following two categories:
 - Working in podiatry only in NSW
 - Working in podiatry mainly in NSW, but also in other states (see Table 1.3)

Table 1.3: Work status of Podiatrist Labourforce Survey respondents¹, NSW, in 2004

Work Status	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	%
	Unmatched sex		Female		Male		Total		Female
Working in podiatry									
Only in NSW	17	89.5%	309	84.7%	203	87.5%	529	85.9%	60.4%
Mainly in NSW, but also in other states	0	0.0%	10	2.7%	5	2.2%	15	2.4%	66.7%
Mainly in other states, but also in NSW	0	0.0%	14	3.8%	8	3.4%	22	3.6%	63.6%
Only in states other than NSW	0	0.0%	7	1.9%	2	0.9%	9	1.5%	77.8%
Overseas	2	10.5%	2	0.5%	3	1.3%	7	1.1%	40.0%
Not Working in podiatry									
Not working, not looking for work, retired	0	0.0%	13	3.6%	5	2.2%	18	2.9%	72.2%
Not in paid work, but looking for work	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	100.0%
In paid work, but not in podiatry	0	0.0%	9	2.5%	6	2.6%	15	2.4%	60.0%
Total	19	100.0%	365	100.0%	232	100.0%	616	100.0%	61.1%
Total, working in NSW	17		319		208		544		60.5%

Notes:

1. There were 639 forms from podiatrists renewing their registration, of whom 23 did not reply to the question on working status, and did not provide a NSW postcode for place of work (see Note 1 to Table 1.2).

Podiatrists seeking work

There were only four podiatrists seeking work as indicated in the survey responses. One indicated that they were seeking full time work, and three did not specify the type of work sought.

Table 1.4: Seeking work in Podiatry in NSW, 2004

Nature of work sought	No.	%
	Total	
Not looking for work in podiatry	12	75.0%
Looking for work in podiatry		
- either full time or part time	0	0.0%
- full time	1	6.3%
- part time	0	0.0%
- type unknown	3	18.8%
Total	16	100.0%

Note: Table includes only those survey respondents in Table 1.3 who were not in paid work but looking for work, or in paid work but not in podiatry (n = 16)

Estimating Workforce Size

The method of estimating workforce size has been changed from the previous method as the earlier method was based on assumptions developed for estimating the size of the medical workforce. The analysis of flows data, allowing for the calculation of the entry and wastage rates by category of registration allows for a more detailed analysis of participation rates and therefore workforce estimates. The table below shows the revised method of estimation.

NOTE: The figures in Table 1.5 vary from estimates of workforce size documented in previous podiatrist workforce profiles due to a new method of calculating workforce size. The method is described in detail in the Appendix, Section on Estimating Workforce Size. The estimates have been modified in this 2004 profile after analysis of response rates, flow matrix data including work status of new registrations and restorations, and the 2004 estimate may be modified after inclusion of 2005 data.

A comparison has been undertaken with ABS Census data to benchmark the workforce estimate for 2001 in Table 1.5. The ABS data indicates that there were 486 working podiatrists in NSW¹, a variation of 8% compared to the estimate of workforce size above of 529. Using the former method of estimating workforce size (unknown equals known), the estimate would have been 596. Therefore the revised method provides a more accurate estimate.

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2003) Health and community services labour force 2001. AIHW Cat. No. HWL 27 & ABD Cat. No 8936.0. Canberra: AIHW. P. 60.

Table 1.5: Estimating the Size of the Podiatrist Workforce, 2001-2004

	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>
Size of Workforce (excludes any new registrations) ₁	479	417	451	518
Adjustment for varying non response	0	95	86	72
Estimated working renewals	479	512	537	590
Adjusted respondents (excludes any new registrations) ₂	540	541	584	634
Estimated % respondents working	88.7%	94.6%	92.0%	93.1%
Estimated new registrations working ₃	41	40	42	41
Estimated restorations working ₄	9	8	11	8
Total Estimated Workforce	529	560	590	639
Total number of new registrations	u/k	59	47	54
Estimated % new registrations working	0.0%	67.8%	89.4%	75.9%
No. of renewals(excluding new registrations)	600	608	631	711
Estimated working renewals as % of renewals excluding new registrations	79.8%	84.2%	85.1%	83.0%

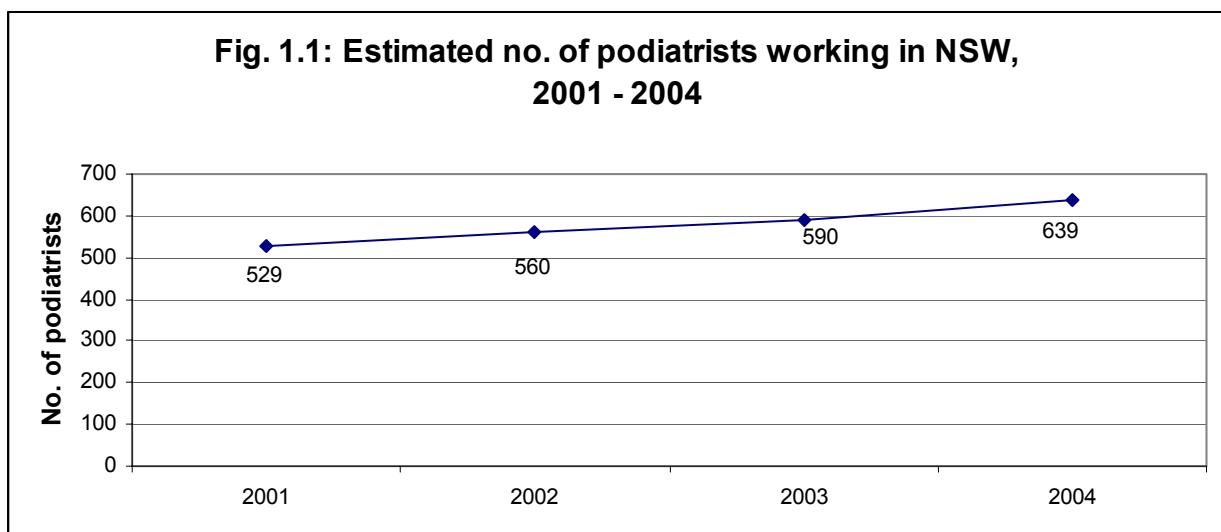
Notes: 1 The unadjusted size of the workforce is based on renewals, technical restorations and technical renewals who answered the work status question as working in NSW. This is the workforce size excluding any new registrations unadjusted for non response.

2 The respondent numbers have been adjusted to allow for changing non response rates (set to 90% for 2002, 2003, 2004) and exclude any new registrations who were also renewals within the year.

3 Based on flow matrix analyses showing work status in two consecutive years

4 Based on flow matrix analyses showing work status in two consecutive years

Table 1.5 and Fig 1.1 show that the estimated podiatrist workforce was 529 in 2001, increasing to 560 in 2002, 590 in 2003 and 639 in 2004. This is an overall growth of 20.8%, with growth of 5.7%, 5.5% and 8.3% between each of the consecutive years.



Estimating Full-Time Equivalent Workforce (FTE)

The numbers of hours worked by podiatrists on average per week for all jobs together can be converted to full-time equivalents (FTEs), which becomes a measure of the productive workforce. Thirty-five hours is used as the measure of full time work based on labour force definitions developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

A ratio of FTEs to the total headcount workforce can then be calculated, to determine the relative productivity of the workforce. The FTE ratio of 1.0543 applied to the estimated workforce size of 639 headcount results in an estimated FTE workforce of 673.7 FTE podiatrists (based on full time being defined as 35 hours worked per week or more). This FTE calculation is based on reported total hours worked, and therefore may include overtime and unpaid hours.

Average Age by Sex

Table 1.6: Average age and average hours worked by sex, podiatrists working in NSW, 2003 & 2004

	Males	Females	Total
Average age 2003	38.5 years	38.7 years	38.6 years
Average hours worked per week 2003	42.5 hours	33.8 hours	37.4 hours
Average age 2004	39.1 years	39.0 years	39.0 years
Average hours worked per week 2004	43.0 hours	34.0 hours	37.5 hours

The average age of the podiatrist workforce was 39.0 years in 2004, with a similar average age for females at 39.0 years and males, at 39.1 years. The average age of the workforce has increased from 38.6 years to 39.0 years. The average hours worked per week has also increased very slightly from 37.4 hours to 37.5 hours.

Average hours worked by age and sex

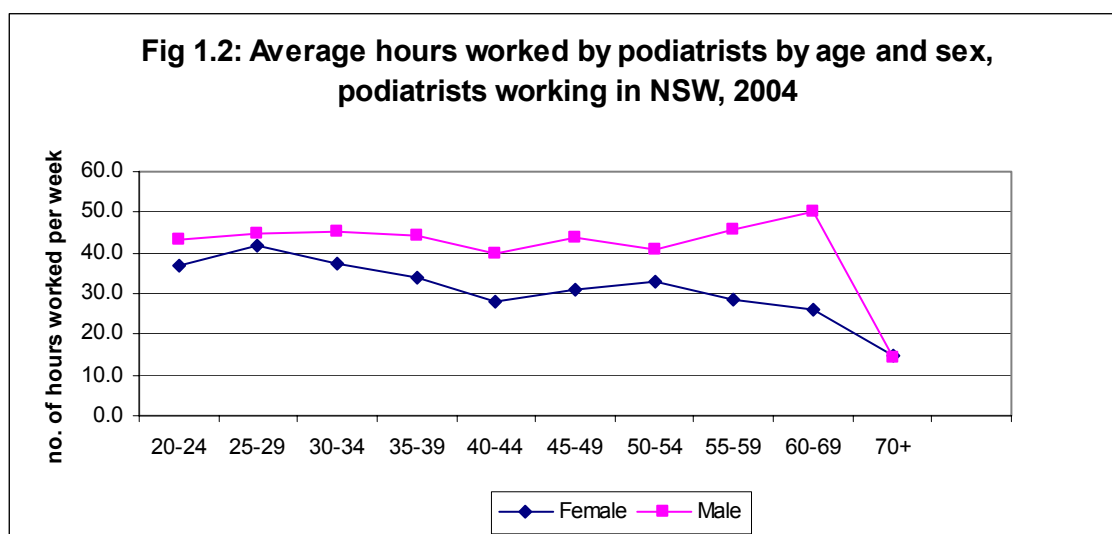


Fig 1.2 indicates the average hours worked per week by age and sex. Age groups for 60 to 69 years and 70 years and over have been aggregated from five-year age groups due to small numbers. Male podiatrists work on average more hours per week than females in every age group except for 70 years and over where females work slightly longer hours (15.0 hours compared to 14.5 hours). Male podiatrists work the greatest number of hours per week on average between 55 and 59 years (45.6 hours) and 60 to 69 years (50.0 hours) although numbers are small. Female podiatrists work on average the greatest number of hours per week at 25 to 29 years (41.6 hours).

The hours are based on self-reporting and therefore should be interpreted taking this factor into account.

Table 1.7: Workforce dynamics for podiatrists, 2004

Professional Podiatrists	Estimated workforce size, 2004	New registrations entering the workforce	Re-entry	Wastage	FTE ratio(Based on 35 hours)
Workforce headcount	639	41	20	24	1.0543
Percentage of workforce		6.5%	3.2%	3.8%	

SOURCE: flow matrix change rates from podiatrist labour force profile data, 2002/03 to 2003/04

NOTE: The actual participation rate of 2004 new registrations can only be calculated by category when the 2004 work status is known.

APPENDIX

Methodology

Timing of the 2004 Survey

Information from the 2004 Annual Labour Force Survey relates to the 2004 registration renewal period. Renewal notices and surveys were forwarded in April 2004 to podiatrists registered with the Podiatrists Registration Board of New South Wales at that time. The renewal fee was due by the end of June in order for the podiatrist to be retained on the register, as non-financial podiatrists had their status altered on the data base by the beginning of July, 2004 and by Board consent in mid-July, 2004. Survey respondents completed the survey with information about their usual working situation at that time. Information regarding the registration status of podiatrists was provided by the Board, which related to the period from July 2003 to end June 2004.

Labour force Survey coverage

Information from the Annual Labour Force Survey does not cover all registered podiatrists in NSW. Only those registrants renewing their registration are forwarded a survey form. This excludes:

- **New registrants:** New registrants include new local graduates, interstate graduates and overseas trained podiatrists registering for the first time with the NSW Board who have had their qualifications recognised in NSW. These persons will normally not receive the labour force survey, but new registrants receive the survey form if they also renew in the same financial year.
- **Restorations:** Restorations are persons who have been restored to the register after a period in which they were not financial. These persons will not normally receive the annual survey, unless they also renew in the same financial year.
- **Technical restorations:** Some podiatrists 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. These podiatrists have usually completed a survey form, and therefore if they have provided survey data they have been included in the data analysis for this profile. Prior to the 2000 profile the definition of respondents was those podiatrists **renewing** their registration who completed or part completed a survey form.
- **Technical renewals:** There are a group of podiatrists who either pay their registration fee early 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 podiatrists 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**. This process has occurred from 2001 onwards.

The definition of response until the 2000 profile was restricted to those respondents who completed the question on workforce status. It has been identified that a number of podiatrists 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.

The adoption of these changes in the approach to survey coverage, and definition of respondents, means that the data will now be compatible with definitions of the workforce used by the Australian Institute of Health & Welfare in preparing national profiles. However, it also means that the raw data on workforce size may show considerable variation from previous years. This is analysed in detail in the Section on "Estimating Workforce Size".

Care should be taken when interpreting this data, as some individual podiatrists may be included in more than one of the categories during the twelve-month period.

Figures have not been adjusted for non-response

Data in this publication have not been adjusted for unknown information (both survey non-response and registration data such as year of birth or sex). When interpreting the tables, consideration should be given to the impact of unknown data:

- The absence of data due to non-response results in an under-representation of the size of the labour force in individual tables.
- The labour force characteristics of non-respondents may differ from the characteristics of survey respondents (for example, respondents may be more likely than non-respondents to be in the labour force). Weighting the survey data according to non-response alone may result in an overestimation or under-estimation in some categories.
- The labour force characteristics of podiatrists who are not part of the survey target group (that is, new registrants and restorations) may differ from the characteristics of the survey population.

Calculating total unknown data for the survey

In determining the total unknown data for a particular question, consideration should be given to:

- **Unknown data for the question or questions comprising the table**, as indicated at the foot of each table. This may also include information that is unknown due to registration data (eg, year of birth) being unavailable from the Board.
- **Non-response to the survey**. Survey response rates are presented in Table 1.2 in Section 1.

It should be noted that limitations in the survey data prevent a distinction between non-response and alternatives such as "no", "other" or "zero". Information regarding this is noted at the foot of the relevant tables.

Conventions used in this publication

Throughout this publication, figures within the tables may not add to the total shown where it has been necessary to round numbers. Percentages printed as 0.0 may denote less than 0.05%.

Italics are used to report unknown data.

Bold is used to indicate a total or subtotal.

— denotes not applicable.

n/a denotes data is not available.

Estimating Workforce Size

Previous profiles have used a standard approach to estimating workforce size which was first documented in the 1999 Profile of the Medical Workforce in NSW (NSW Health Department, 2004) estimated the size of the medical workforce in New South Wales, This approach involved:

- Assume the proportion of survey respondents working in NSW represents the proportion of all renewals working in NSW
- Assume 90% of new registrants are working in NSW
- Assume 80% of other registrants are working in NSW (excluding deletions)

However recent analysis of data reported in the 2001 ABS Census has indicated for nursing and physiotherapy that the workforce estimates calculated in the previous profiles are too high and should be adjusted.

A comparison has been undertaken with ABS Census data to benchmark the workforce estimate for 2001 in Table 1.5. The ABS data indicates that there were 486 working podiatrists in NSW², a variation of 8% compared to the estimate of workforce size above of 529. Using the former method of estimating workforce size (unknown equals known), the estimate would have been 596. Therefore the revised method provides a more accurate estimate.

The revised estimates minimise the adjustment for non-response and improve the estimate of new registrations and restorations working. The variation between the Census data and the profile data would be due to working podiatrists using other titles which would not necessarily be coded to the podiatrist category in the Census data.

The revised method used to estimate workforce size in this profile is based on the following approach:

- Use the 2001 numbers of working podiatrists as a baseline due to the higher response rate (90%)
- Develop flow matrices of workforce dynamics for, 2002/03 and 2003/04, and use the input/output calculation to determine workforce size. This involves calculations of entry (inter-state and overseas migration and local new graduate entry patterns), re-entry (based on restorations and renewals re-entering the workforce), and wastage (including overseas entrants leaving the following year).
- Adjust the 2002, 2003 and 2004 working respondent numbers to account for lower response rates in those years. (Up to 90% in 2002, 2004 and 94% in 2003)

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2003). Health and community services labour force 2001. AIHW Cat. No. HWL 27 & ABD Cat. No 8936.0. Canberra: AIHW. P. 60.