

Counsellors are tertiary qualified professionals originating from a variety of backgrounds and have specific training in various therapeutic models. Counselling focuses on facilitating the processing of personal and interpersonal functioning and may involve issues of mental health, emotional distress, substance misuse and systematic problems within families. It is a counsellor's role to establish a therapeutic relationship with individuals, couples or families who seek assistance on a range of issues impacting their lives.



Workforce characteristics for NSW Health counsellor workforce in 2040



241
Headcount



66.8%
Female



30.4
Work hours per
week



48.3
Years average age



21.5%
Future 60+



17.7%
Aboriginal
workforce target



Demand is expected to grow **1.6%** (low demand scenario) to **1.8%** (high demand scenario).

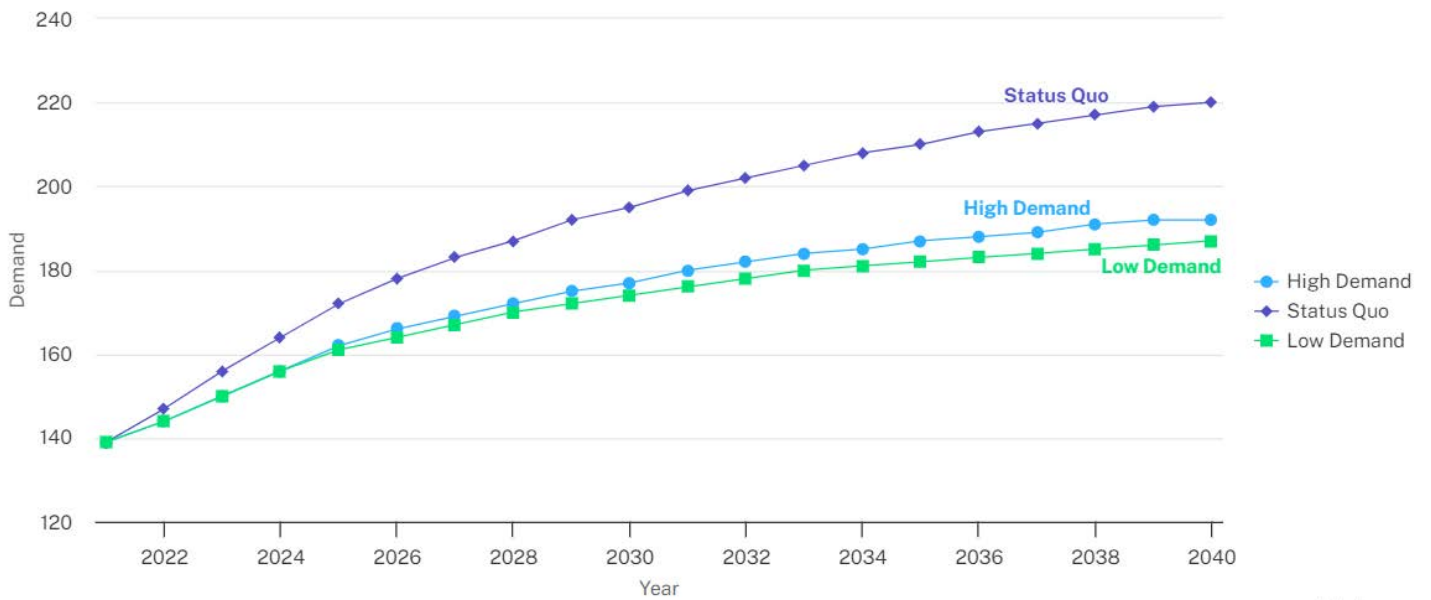
Workforce modelling indicates the need to grow the NSW counsellor workforce by around **0.5 to 1** new professionals per annum to meet community need in 2040 across both demand scenarios.

REASONABLE
CAREER
OPPORTUNITIES

Notes

- Data source: NSW Health. Vacancy data is excluded from the workforce model. Data included is limited to the workforce employed under the relevant health professional award. NSW Health may engage therapists on a sessional basis.
- 2040 workforce characteristics reflect the high demand scenario.
- Aboriginal Workforce target based on state target of 3.4% added to 2021 level.
- Data included is limited to the workforce employed under the relevant health professional award.
- Specialty health networks are not displayed geographically in the workforce distribution maps.
- LHD/SHN may engage in sessional arrangements in selected circumstances.
- Workforce that cannot be aligned to a physical location have been attributed to a pre-determined facility within each LHD/N. This may impact on Headcount shown at these facilities within the distribution map.
- NSW Health does not make any representations or warranties whether expressed or implied with respect to the accuracy and completeness of the information contained in the fact sheet.

Projected FTE growth for NSW Health counsellor workforce to 2040



Workforce characteristics for NSW Health counsellor workforce in 2021



175
Headcount



30.7
Work hours per week



46.9
Years average age



70.9%
Female



12.6%
Aged 60+



14.3%
Aboriginal

Metropolitan Sydney



78
Headcount



30.1
Work hours per week



47.0
Years average age



5.7%
Aged 60+

Non-Metropolitan Sydney



97
Headcount



30.4
Work hours per week



46.7
Years average age



6.9%
Aged 60+

Counsellor junior entrant positions into NSW Health



2017
14

2018
11

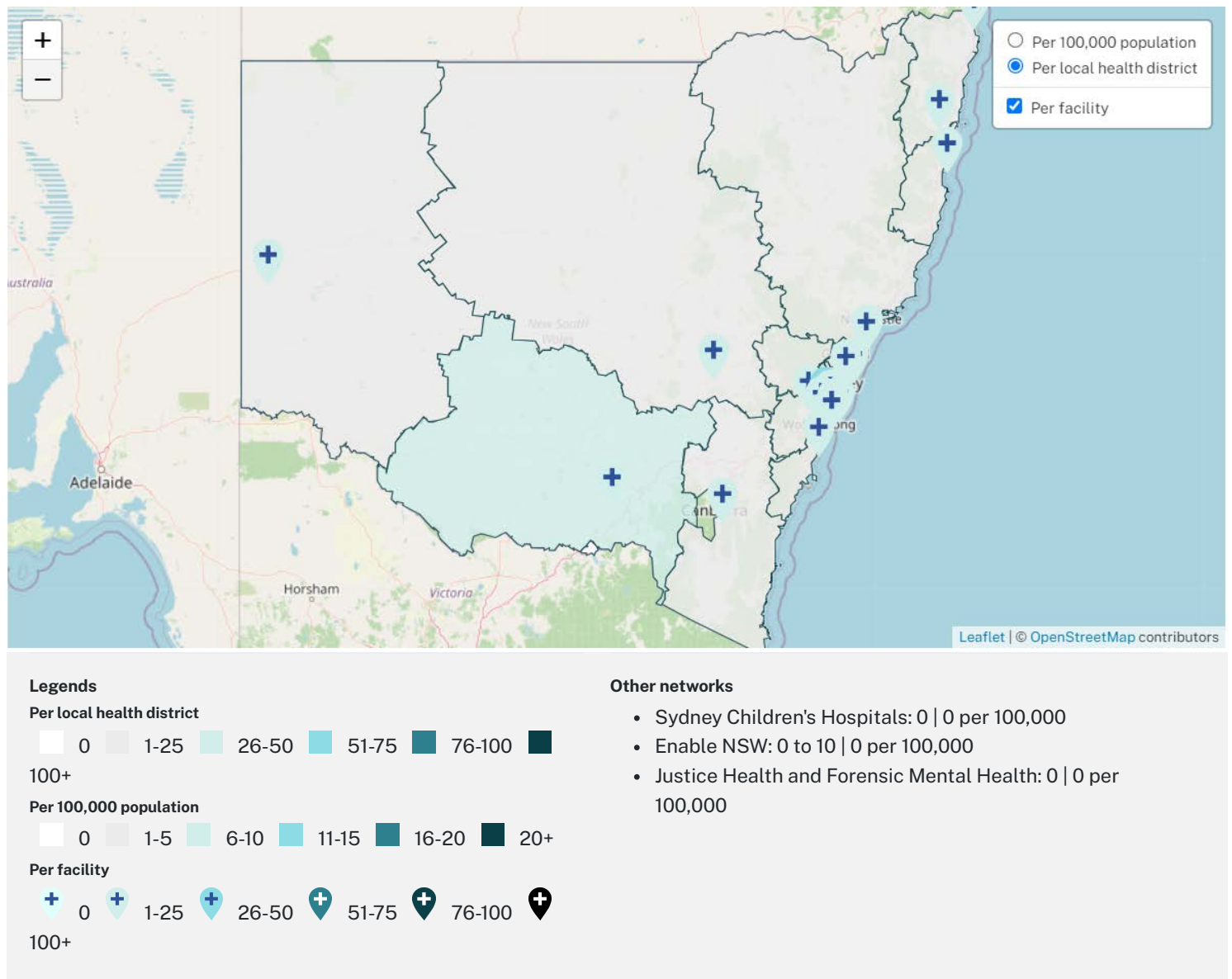
2019
22

2020
16

2021
24

Workforce distribution for NSW Health counsellor workforce in 2021

The geographic distribution of the public workforce by local health district/network, by facility and per 100,000 population.



Workforce considerations

- Population demographics and increasing complex health and social needs which includes our older Australians; people with histories of psycho-social distress or trauma; people with disability and people at risk of violence and harm may increase demand for counsellor workforce.
- Natural disasters and pandemics increase psychosocial issues in the community and demand on the counsellor workforce. This may also impact workforce wellbeing and turnover.
- Headcount may not accurately represent counsellor workforce due to many counsellor roles across NSW public health being multi-classified and filled by social workers and/or psychologists.
- Counsellors can valuably contribute to reducing system pressure and chronic vacancies in mental health care as well as roles in rural and remote locations.
- Physical infrastructure and counsellor space/room needs to be considered in service planning to optimise counselling practice and service delivery.
- Growing the Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) workforce is seen as an ongoing priority for workforce pipeline.