

# Orthoptist

## Workforce modelling factsheet

Orthoptists specialise in the assessment and management of ocular motility, visual development, and visual system dysfunctions. These include disorders arising from strabismus (squint), amblyopia (lazy eye) and medical conditions such as stroke and neurological disease. Orthoptists also have expertise in the rehabilitation and treatment of patients with vision loss and vision disorders following stroke and surgical procedures. In partnership with the multidisciplinary eye team, Orthoptists specialise in the investigation and review of eye disorders including age-related macular degeneration, glaucoma, cataract, diabetic eye disease and low vision. Orthoptics is essential to promoting better quality of life for both children and adults with vision problems.



### Workforce characteristics for NSW Health orthoptist workforce in 2040



125

Headcount



26.6

Work hours per week



39.7

Years average age



3.4%

Aboriginal workforce target



Demand is expected to grow **2.4%** (low demand scenario) to **3.4%** (high demand scenario).

Workforce modelling indicates the need to grow the NSW orthoptist workforce by around **4 to 6** new professionals per annum to meet community need in 2040 across both demand scenarios.

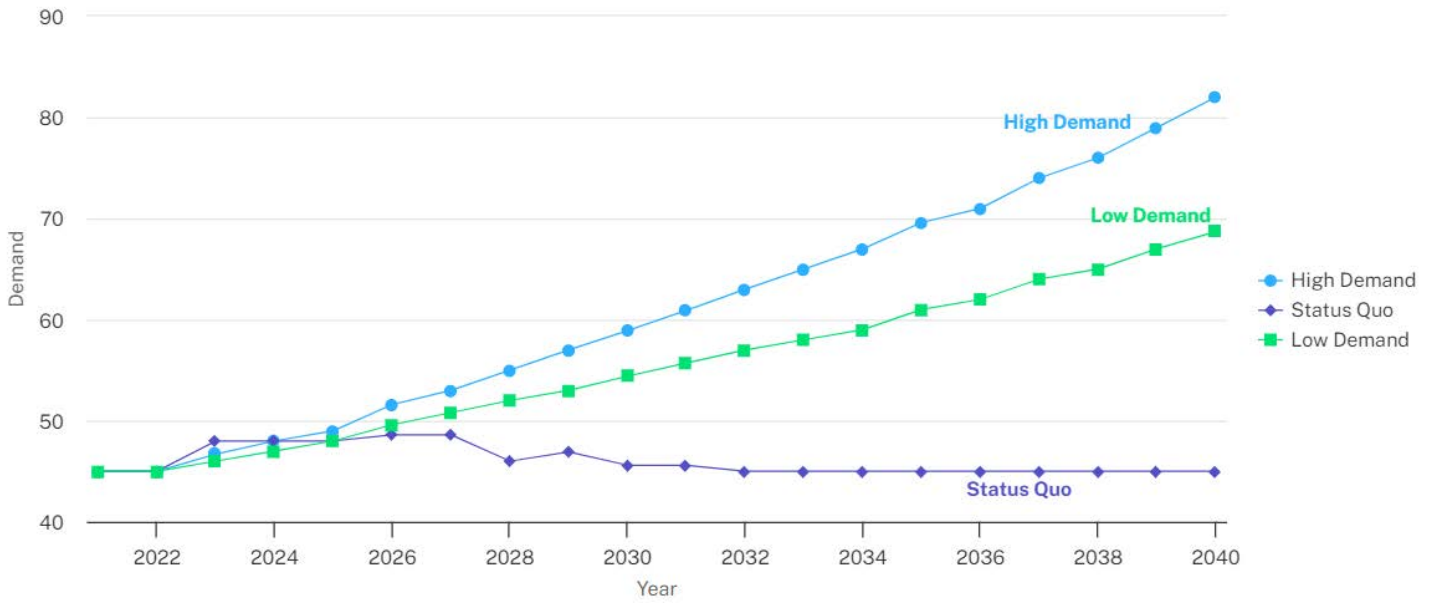
**SIGNIFICANT**

**CAREER  
OPPORTUNITIES**

### Notes

- 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 orthoptist workforce to 2040



## Workforce characteristics for NSW Health orthoptist workforce in 2021



**62**  
Headcount



**23.9**  
Work hours per week



**42.4**  
Years average age



**90.3%**  
Female



**7.6%**  
Aged 60+



**1.6%**  
Aboriginal

### Metropolitan Sydney



**62**  
Headcount



**24**  
Work hours per week



**41.7**  
Years average age



**6.1%**  
Aged 60+

### Non-Metropolitan Sydney



**3**  
Headcount



**21.7**  
Work hours per week



**60.1**  
Years average age



**1.5%**  
Aged 60+

## Orthoptist junior entrant positions into NSW Health



2017  
7

2018  
4

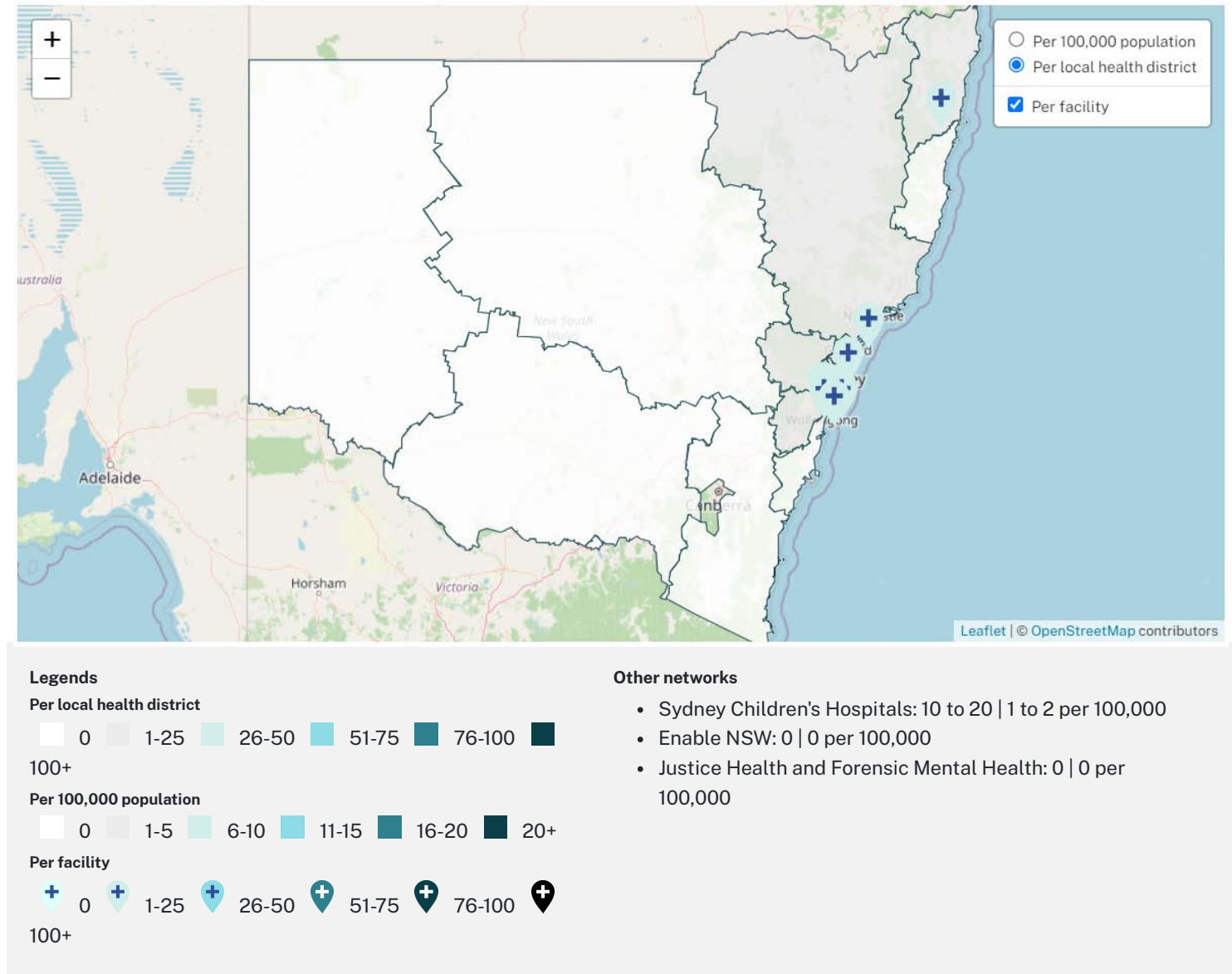
2019  
8

2020  
3

2021  
2

## Workforce distribution for NSW Health orthoptist 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 incidence of complex and chronic disease (i.e. diabetes, glaucoma, macular degeneration, cataract) will increase demand for orthoptics services.
- Consideration needs to be given for the physical infrastructure, environmental set-up and equipment to deliver orthoptics services.
- Advancements in ophthalmic technology and increased use of technology for investigative, diagnostic and therapeutic purposes is placing greater demand on the orthoptist workforce.
- Future models of care that orthoptists will valuably contribute to and aid in reducing system pressure include:
  - Statewide Eyesight Preschooler Screening (StEPS)
  - orthoptists working to top of scope of practice in orthoptic-led clinics and multi-disciplinary clinics to reduce wait times and improve patient experience and outcomes. Service development roles and educator positions may advocate the value of the profession and consequently grow and retain the orthoptist workforce.
- SESLHD providing outreach orthoptic services (Outback Eye Services) to WNSWLHD.