

# Primary care workforce

2022-2024 Needs Assessment  
**2023 Annual Review**

In this document we have used the terms Aboriginal, Aboriginal person and Aboriginal people/s when referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We chose Aboriginal because it is inclusive of different language groups and areas within the CESP HN region where this Needs Assessment will be used. There will be some instances where the terminology will be different to our preferred terms, as we use the terminology of the data set being used.

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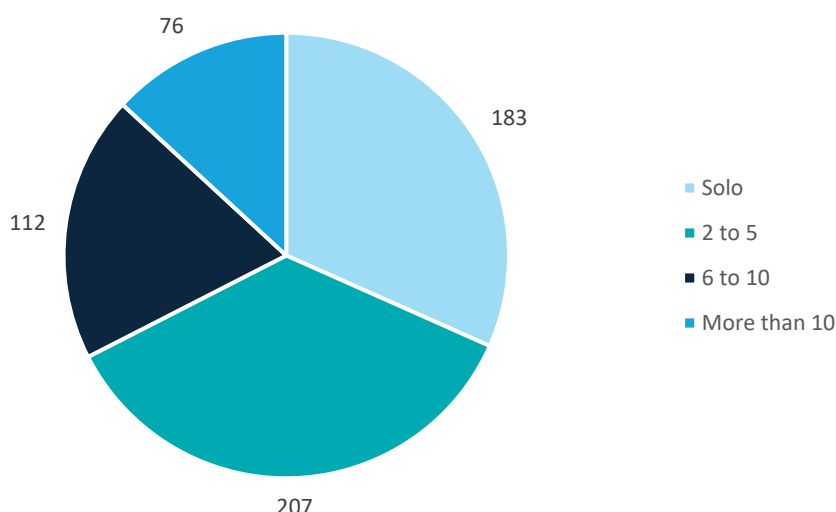
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## General Practice

As of September 2023, there were 578 general practices operating within the CESPHN region. This includes one Aboriginal Medical Service in Redfern.(1)

Figure 1: General practice size in CESPHN region, September 2023



Source: CESPHN CRM, 2023

Approximately two-thirds (68.2%) of general practices within the CESPHN region were accredited or registered for accreditation in September 2023.(1) Eight-four percent (84.6%) of GPs in the CESPHN region have an accredited (or registered for accreditation) practice as their primary organisation.(1)

Table 1: Accreditation status of general practices by SA3, CESPHN region, September 2023

SA3	Accredited	Registered for Accreditation	Not accredited	Total
Botany	9	0	7	16
Canada Bay	23	0	2	25
Canterbury	40	0	11	52
Cronulla - Miranda - Caringbah	26	0	4	30
Eastern Suburbs - North	29	1	19	49
Eastern Suburbs - South	24	2	11	37
Hurstville	32	1	12	45
Kogarah - Rockdale	31	3	26	60
Leichhardt	16	0	7	23
Marrickville - Sydenham - Petersham	10	0	12	22
Strathfield - Burwood - Ashfield	43	0	26	70
Sutherland - Menai - Heathcote	30	1	6	37
Sydney Inner City	70	1	38	111
Lord Howe Island	10	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>578</b>

Source: CESPHN CRM, 2023

## General practitioners

In 2021 there were 2,133 general practitioners (GPs) working in the CESP HN region (1,869.2 FTE) giving a rate of 137.1 per 100,000 population (120.1 FTE per 100,000 population), higher than the state and national rates.(2)

Table 2: GPs by region, 2021

Measure	CESPHN	NSW	Australia
Number of practitioners	2,133.0	9,766.0	31,842.0
Number of practitioners (rate per 100,000 population)	137.1	120.7	124.0
FTE total	1,869.2	9,067.2	29,264.7
FTE total (rate per 100,000 population)	120.1	112.0	113.9
FTE clinical	1,748.5	8,512.1	27,421.7
FTE clinical (rate per 100,000 population)	112.4	105.2	106.8

Source: HWA, 2023

Across the CESP HN region in 2021, Sydney Inner City SA3, Leichhardt SA3, Eastern Suburbs-North SA3 and Canada Bay SA3 all had rates of general practitioners per 100,000 population higher than state and national rates for number of practitioners, FTE total and FTE clinical. Conversely Botany SA3, Marrickville-Sydenham-Petersham SA3 and Kogarah-Rockdale SA3 consistently had the lowest rates across our region; significantly lower than state and national.(2)

Table 3: GPs by SA3, CESP HN region, 2021

SA3	No. of practitioners (rate per 100,000)	FTE total (rate per 100,000 population)	FTE clinical (rate per 100,000 population)
Botany	76.0	70.8	76.5
Canada Bay	153.7	121.8	112.3
Canterbury	117.9	113.0	103.5
Cronulla-Miranda-Caringbah	109.1	98.8	92.6
Eastern Suburbs – North	176.8	152.9	142.8
Eastern Suburbs – South	136.0	114.4	107.3
Hurstville	105.1	96.5	89.5
Kogarah-Rockdale	97.6	86.7	84.4
Leichhardt	181.8	167.2	155.9
Marrickville-Sydenham-Petersham	85.3	79.5	86.4
Strathfield-Burwood-Ashfield	116.9	101.9	95.1
Sutherland-Menai-Heathcote	116.9	107.9	101.2
Sydney Inner City	222.0	184.7	170.2
<b>CESPHN</b>	<b>137.1</b>	<b>120.1</b>	<b>112.4</b>
<b>NSW</b>	<b>120.7</b>	<b>112.0</b>	<b>105.2</b>
<b>Australia</b>	<b>124.0</b>	<b>113.9</b>	<b>106.8</b>

Source: HWA, 2023

\*Lord Howe Island figures have been excluded due to data suppression rules

Our 2021 stakeholder survey highlighted the need for a local GP located in Kurnell (part of Cronulla-Miranda-Caringbah SA3) due to there being no current local GPs and access to GPs in Cronulla is limited due to transport issues, waitlists or closed books.(3) Our community and stakeholders have also advocated for a GP to be based in the La Perouse community to address specific community needs.

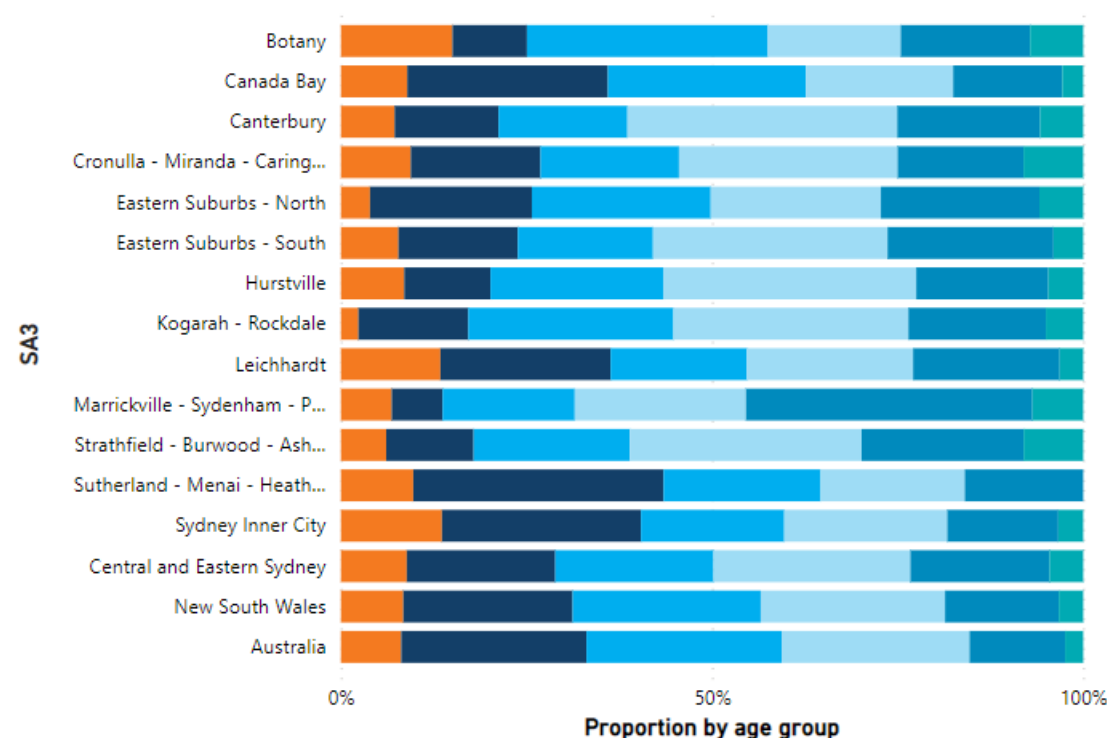
## Demographics

Fifty per cent (50.2%) of GPs working across the CESPHE region in 2021 were female. Botany SA3 had the highest proportion of male GPs with 73.0% of the FTE workforce, followed by Marrickville-Sydenham-Petersham SA3 (68.5%) and Kogarah-Rockdale SA3 (67.5%).(2)

In 2021, approximately 50% of FTE GPs across the CESPHE region were aged 55 years or older (49.8%), this is higher than both the state and national rates of 43.4% and 40.6% respectively; a further 41.3% were aged 35-54 years old. Marrickville-Sydenham-Petersham SA3 (68.5%), Canterbury SA3 (61.4%) and Strathfield-Burwood-Ashfield SA3 (61.1%) had the highest rates of GPs aged 55 years and over across the CESPHE region.(2)

Figure 2: Proportion of GP workforce by age group, SA3, CESPHE region, 2021

Age 20-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75-99



Source: HWA, 2023

## Years intend to work

Almost half of GPs (46.8%) in the CESPHE region in 2021 intended to only work up to another 10 years.(2) Marrickville-Sydenham-Petersham SA3 (72.5%) and Strathfield-Burwood-Ashfield SA3 (55.4%) had the highest rates of GPs who intended to only work up to another 10 years.(2)

Table 4: GP years intended to work by SA3, CESP HN region, 2021

SA3	0-5 years (%)	6-10 years (%)	11-15 years (%)	16-20 years (%)	21-30 years (%)	31-40 years (%)	41+ years (%)
Botany	20.0	26.7	15.6	11.1	13.3	13.3	-
Canada Bay	23.4	16.4	14.1	13.3	23.4	6.3	3.1
Canterbury	24.1	25.9	13.0	17.9	14.8	4.3	-
Cronulla-Miranda-Caringbah	31.3	14.8	11.7	16.4	20.3	5.5	-
Eastern Suburbs – North	25.9	21.4	13.2	13.6	17.7	6.4	1.8
Eastern Suburbs – South	33.7	19.7	12.9	15.2	11.8	6.7	
Hurstville	26.3	21.9	12.4	16.1	16.8	4.4	2.2
Kogarah-Rockdale	22.1	27.9	15.4	15.4	15.4	3.7	
Leichhardt	20.8	24.5	12.3	13.2	15.1	11.3	2.8
Marrickville-Sydenham-Petersham	35.0	37.5	7.5	7.5	12.5	-	-
Strathfield-Burwood-Ashfield	28.8	26.6	12.0	13.6	14.1	4.9	-
Sutherland-Menai-Heathcote	28.5	15.4	5.4	19.2	23.8	3.8	3.8
Sydney Inner City	21.8	18.0	8.9	18.9	21.6	8.9	1.9
<b>CESPHN</b>	<b>25.6</b>	<b>21.2</b>	<b>11.5</b>	<b>15.8</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>1.6</b>

Source: HWA, 2023

## Hours worked per week

### Total hours

Total hours are the total hours worked per week in the profession, including paid and unpaid work.(4) In 2021, on average GPs in Australia worked 35.0 total hours per week, slightly lower than NSW (35.6 total hours per week). In the CESP HN region, GPs worked 34.3 total hours per week. Average weekly working hours ranged from 37.6 hours per week in Cronulla-Miranda-Caringbah SA3 to 29.0 hours per week in Canada Bay SA3.(2)

### Clinical hours

Clinical hours are the total clinical hours worked per week in the profession, including paid and unpaid work. The average weekly clinical hours is the average of the clinical hours reported by all employed professionals, not only those who define their principal area of work as clinician.(4)

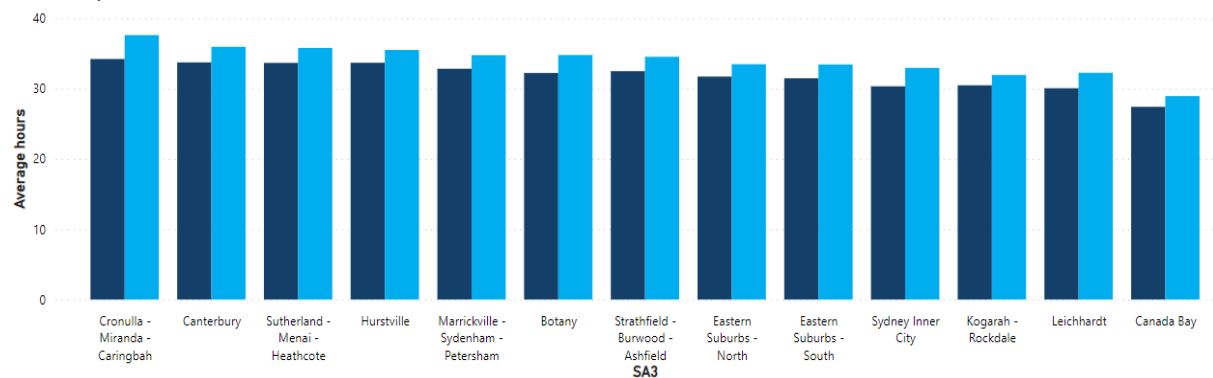
In 2021, on average GPs in Australia worked 32.8 clinical hours per week, slightly lower than NSW where GPs worked on average 33.4 clinical hours per week. GPs in the CESP HN region worked, on average, 32.0 clinical hours per week.(2) Average weekly clinical hours ranged from 34.2 hours in Cronulla-Miranda-Caringbah SA3 to 27.4 hours per week in Canada Bay SA3.(2)



# Primary care workforce

**Figure 3: General practitioner mean hours worked per week by SA3, CESP HN region, 2021**

Summation Options ● Mean of Hours Clinical ● Mean of Hours Total



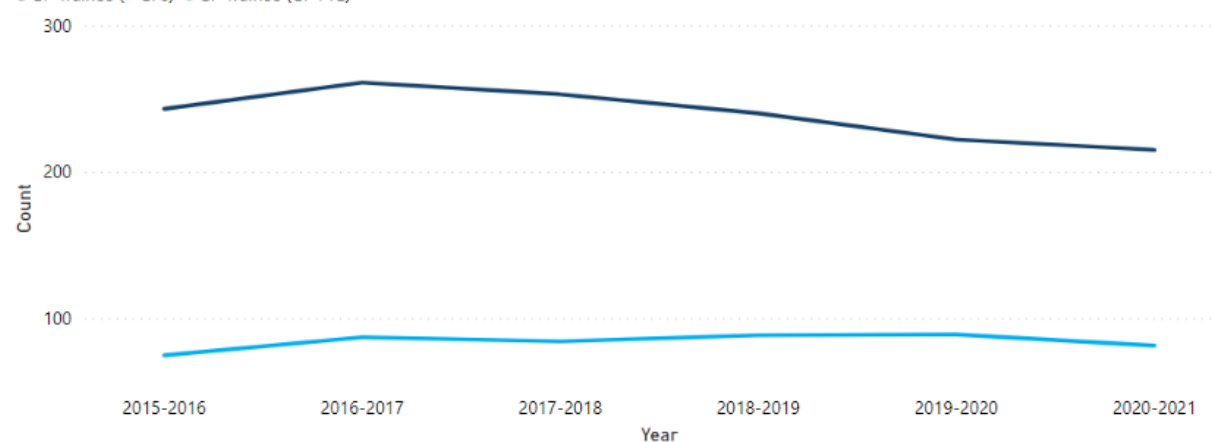
Source: HWA, 2023

## Trainees

In the 2021-22 financial year, there were 238 GP trainees (GP Registrars) working across the CESP HN region, totalling an FTE of 87. The highest number of GP trainees across the CESP HN region were in Sutherland-Menai-Heathcote SA3 (n=55), with an FTE of 19.6. Sydney Inner City SA3 had the second highest number of GP trainees in the CESP HN region (n=51, with an FTE of 18.3).(2) We have seen a small decline in both the number and FTE of GP trainees in the CESP HN region over the past 5 years.

**Figure 4: Number and FTE of GP trainees, CESP HN region, 2020-21**

● GP Trainee (# GPs) ● GP Trainee (GP FTE)



Source: Department of Health, 2021

*\*GP trainees includes participants on the Australian General Practice Training Program, the Remote Vocational Training Scheme or the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine's Independent Training Program.*

Data also shows that at October 2023, approximately 1 in 3 practices across the CESP HN region was accredited to deliver training to GP Registrars; with approximately 1 in 4 practices across the CESP HN region actively training.(2)

## Primary care nurses

Primary care nursing refers to nurses whose main area of work was in a primary care setting. In 2021, there was a reported 440 primary care nurses working in the CESP HN region (385.8 FTE) giving a rate of 28.3 per 100,000 population (24.8 FTE per 100,000 population), lower than the state and national rates for number of primary care nurses (37.8 and 44.2 per 100,000 population) and FTE (31.4 and 37.3 per 100,000 population respectively). (2) Low rates of primary care nurses in our region could be linked to a high proportion of solo GP practices, lower pay rates in practice nursing compared to hospital settings and the underutilisation of skills.

According to the 2020 Australian Practice Nurses Association (APNA) annual workforce survey, approximately 45% of nurses in the CESP HN region say they are not practising to the full extent of their capabilities often or most of the time. This is slightly higher than the national average of 40%. Interestingly 49% of nurses were never using telehealth items.(5)

**Table 5: Primary care nurses by region, 2021**

Measure	CESP HN	NSW	Australia
Number of Practitioners	440	3,063	11,343
Number of Practitioners (rate per 100,000 population)	28.3	37.8	44.2
FTE Total	385.8	2,540.2	9,569.3
FTE Total (rate per 100,000 population)	24.8	31.4	37.3
FTE Clinical	358.4	2,408.4	9,045.7
FTE Clinical (rate per 100,000 population)	23.0	29.8	35.2

Source: HWA, 2023

## Demographics

The majority (87.8%) of FTE primary care nurses working in the CESP HN region in 2021 were female, slightly lower than the national proportion of 92.4%.(2)

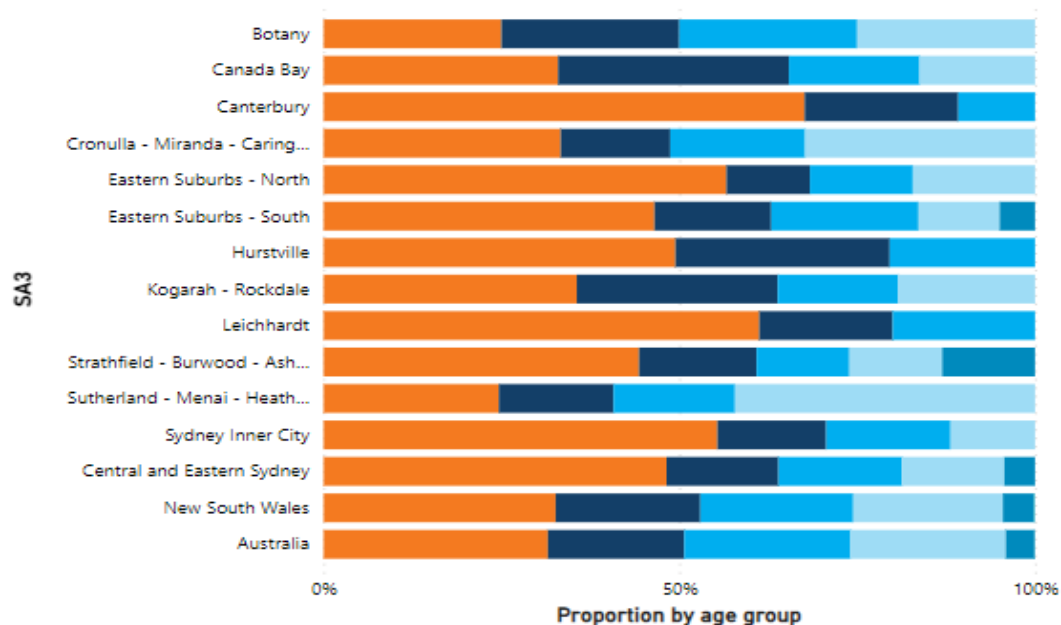
In 2021, approximately one in five (18.7%) FTE primary care nurses across the CESP HN region were aged 55 years or older. Almost two-thirds (63.9%) were aged under 45 years of age, this is higher than both the state and national rates of 52.9% and 50.7% respectively.(2)

There was a higher proportion of FTE primary care nurses aged 20-34 years in the CESP HN region (48.2%) compared to NSW (32.6%) and Australia (31.5%) highlighting a younger workforce in our region. Over two-thirds (67.6%) of FTE primary care nurses in Canterbury SA3 were aged 20-34 years in 2021.(2)

# Primary care workforce

Figure 5: Proportion of FTE primary care nurse workforce by age group, SA3, CESP HN region, 2021

Age 20-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65-74 75-99



Source: HWA, 2023

## Years intend to work

In 2021, 50% of primary care nurses in the CESP HN region intended to only work up to another 10 years.(2)

Table 6: Primary care nurses years intended to work by SA3, CESP HN region, 2021

SA3	0-5 years (%)	6-10 years (%)	11-15 years (%)	16-20 years (%)	21-30 years (%)	31-40 years (%)	41+ years (%)
Botany	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.0	30.0	0.0
Canada Bay	41.2	23.5	0.0	35.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Canterbury	43.5	13.0	0.0	17.4	26.1	0.0	0.0
Cronulla-Miranda-Caringbah	32.0	32.0	0.0	20.0	16.0	0.0	0.0
Eastern Suburbs – North	27.6	44.8	10.3	0.0	17.2	0.0	0.0
Eastern Suburbs – South	20.0	16.9	10.8	23.1	16.9	12.3	0.0
Hurstville	18.2	18.2	0.0	13.6	27.3	22.7	0.0
Kogarah-Rockdale	38.9	22.2	0.0	22.2	16.7	0.0	0.0
Leichhardt	26.3	15.8	0.0	21.1	21.1	15.8	0.0
Marrickville-Sydenham-Petersham	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Strathfield-Burwood-Ashfield	22.7	36.4	13.6	0.0	27.3	0.0	0.0
Sutherland-Menai-Heathcote	37.0	29.6	0.0	14.8	18.5	0.0	0.0
Sydney Inner City	22.7	26.6	8.6	11.7	20.3	3.9	6.3
<b>CESP HN</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>3.3</b>

Source: HWA, 2023

\*Lord Howe Island figures have been excluded due to data suppression rules

## Hours worked per week

### Total hours

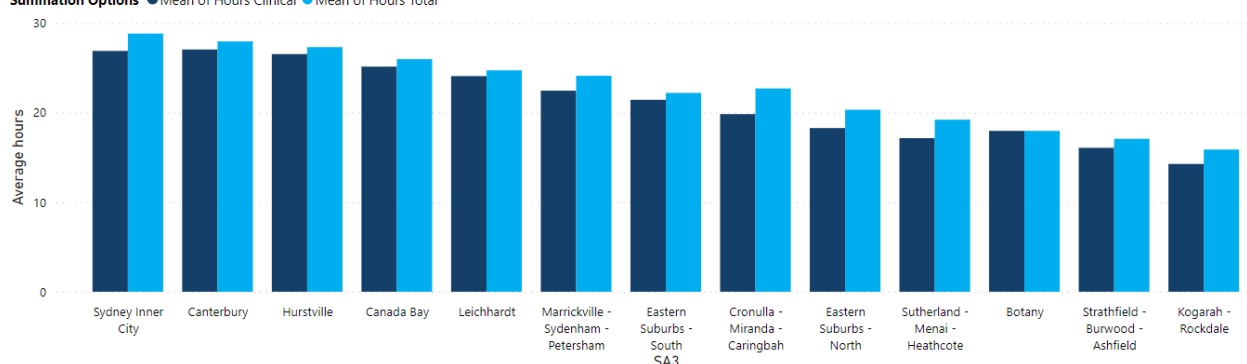
In 2021, on average primary care nurses in Australia worked 32.5 total hours per week, slightly higher than NSW where primary care nurses worked on average 31.8 total hours per week. Across the CESP HN region, primary care nurses worked 33.4 total hours per week.(2) Average weekly working hours ranged from 40.3 hours per week in Canterbury SA3 to 25.8 hours per week in Sutherland-Menai-Heathcote SA3.

### Clinical hours

In 2021, on average primary care nurses in Australia worked 30.4 clinical hours per week, similar to NSW where primary care nurses worked on average 29.3 clinical hours per week. Primary care nurses in the CESP HN region worked, on average, 29.3 clinical hours per week.(2) Average weekly clinical hours ranged from 39.9 hours in Canterbury SA3 to 24.8 hours in Kogarah-Rockdale SA3.

**Figure 6: Primary care nurses mean hours worked per week by SA3, CESP HN region, 2021**

Summation Options ● Mean of Hours Clinical ● Mean of Hours Total



Source: HWA, 2023

## Allied health professionals

In 2021, there were 13,067 Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registered allied health professionals (AHPs) working in the CESP HN region (11,736.0 FTE), giving a rate of 839.8 per 100,000 population (754.2 FTE per 100,000 population).(2) Psychologists had the highest rate of AHPs per 100,000 population (170.9), followed by physiotherapists (144.0) and pharmacists (114.4).

In 2021, psychologists in the CESP HN region had the highest FTE total rate per 100,000 population (144.8), followed by physiotherapists (133.8 per 100,000 population); this differs to NSW and Australia, where physiotherapists had the highest FTE rates followed by psychologists.(2)

Physiotherapists in the CESP HN region had the highest FTE clinical rate per 100,000 population (122.9), followed by psychologists (116.4 per 100,000 population), the same pattern was seen in FTE clinical per 100,000 population in NSW, however differs to Australia, where physiotherapists had the highest FTE clinical rates followed by pharmacists.(2)

# Primary care workforce

Table 7: Number, FTE total and FTE clinical AHPs, CESP HN region, 2021

AHP	CESPHN		NSW	Aus	CESPHN		NSW	Aus	CESPHN		NSW	Aus
	No.	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000	FTE	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000	FTE Clinical	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000
Aboriginal health practitioners	3	0.2	1.7	2.1	-	-	1.8	2.3	-	-	1.6	2.1
Chinese medicine practitioners	528	33.9	18.6	14.5	377.7	24.3	13.2	10.6	340.0	21.9	11.6	9.3
Chiropractors	426	27.4	21.3	19.9	372.3	23.9	18.4	16.8	334.6	21.5	16.4	14.9
Dental practitioners	1,659	106.6	78.5	83.0	1,475.0	94.8	70.6	74.3	1,329.7	85.5	64.2	67.7
Medical radiation practitioners	1,018	65.4	61.5	58.7	916.4	58.9	54.6	54.4	893.2	57.4	53.2	52.9
Occupational therapists	1,116	71.7	72.0	81.8	1,000.7	64.3	63.1	72.1	929.8	59.8	59.0	67.4
Optometrists	470	30.2	21.5	20.9	394.8	25.4	18.5	18.3	374.4	24.1	17.6	17.5
Osteopaths	117	7.5	6.9	10.2	100.0	6.4	5.8	8.6	87.6	5.6	5.2	7.7
Paramedicine practitioners	724	46.5	56.9	66.0	831.7	53.4	67.0	78.7	803.1	51.6	65.5	76.5
Pharmacists	1,776	114.4	87.1	93.6	1,610.7	103.5	80.3	87.2	1,502.7	96.6	75.3	82.2
Physiotherapists	2,240	144.0	109.9	114.8	2,082.3	133.8	100.0	104.6	1,912.5	122.9	92.0	96.1
Podiatrists	330	21.2	17.7	19.4	321.1	20.6	16.6	18.1	287.1	18.5	14.9	16.4
Psychologists	2,660	170.9	113.3	109.8	2,253.3	144.8	95.8	93.2	1,811.2	116.4	78.3	75.8
Total AHPRA registered AHPs	13,067	839.8	666.8	694.6	11,736.0	754.2	605.7	639.1	10,605.9	681.6	554.9	586.5

Source: HWA, 2023

## Primary care workforce

In addition to AHPRA registered AHPs, there were approximately:

- 788 social workers
- 722 exercise physiologists
- 705 speech pathologists
- 452 dietitians
- 24 orthotic prosthetists in the CESPHN region.<sup>1</sup>

### Demographics

Almost two in three (59.6%) of AHPRA registered FTE AHPs working across the CESPHN catchment in 2021 were female. This reflects national proportions, where 61.1% of AHPRA registered FTE AHPs were female.(2)

**Table 8: Proportion of FTE AHP workforce by gender and location, 2021**

AHP	CESPHN		Australia	
	Females	Males	Females	Males
Aboriginal health practitioners	-	-	77.5	22.5
Chinese medicine practitioners	52.0	48.0	52.5	47.5
Chiropractors	28.9	71.1	35.1	64.9
Dental practitioners	43.3	56.7	48.6	51.4
Medical radiation practitioners	67.4	32.6	64.7	35.3
Occupational therapists	89.6	10.4	88.3	11.6
Optometrists	54.1	45.9	52.9	47.1
Osteopaths	39.2	60.8	47.6	52.4
Paramedicine practitioners	41.7	58.3	43.2	56.8
Pharmacists	58.2	41.8	58.6	41.4
Physiotherapists	52.0	48.0	57.9	42.1
Podiatrists	45.1	54.9	53.4	46.6
Psychologists	78.9	21.1	78.8	21.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>59.6</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>38.9</b>

Source: HWA, 2023

In 2021, 65.4% FTE AHPs across the CESPHN region were aged 20-44 years old; this is slightly lower than both the state and national rates of 65.6 and 68.3% respectively.(2)

<sup>1</sup> The number of non-AHPRA registered AHPs has been sourced from Peak Bodies (Australian Association of Social Workers, Exercise and Sports Science Australia, Speech Pathology Australia, Dietitians Australia and Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association).

Table 9: Proportion of FTE AHP workforce by age groups, CESP HN, 2021

AHP	20-34 years (%)	35-44 Years (%)	45-54 Years (%)	55-64 Years (%)	65-74 Years (%)	75-99 Years (%)
Chinese medicine practitioners	8.1	18.2	26.2	34.0	12.0	1.5
Chiropractors	37.2	25.5	21.9	12.5	2.9	0.0
Dental practitioners	27.2	28.5	19.1	17.9	6.5	0.8
Medical radiation practitioners	52.0	23.0	11.6	10.0	3.4	0.0
Occupational therapists	58.8	23.2	11.7	5.9	0.4	0.0
Optometrists	39.2	19.6	18.6	17.8	4.7	0.0
Osteopaths	15.6	20.1	29.0	21.5	10.9	2.9
Paramedicine practitioners	48.2	22.8	22.1	6.2	0.7	0.0
Pharmacists	45.9	26.2	14.0	10.1	3.1	0.8
Physiotherapists	56.9	19.2	14.0	7.8	1.9	0.2
Podiatrists	47.4	18.4	21.7	7.7	3.8	1.0
Psychologists	21.2	28.8	24.5	15.5	8.7	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>41.2</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>

Source: HWA, 2023

## Years intend to work

In 2021, 38.1% of AHPs in the CESP HN region intended to only work up to another 10 years; this ranges from 46.9% of Chinese medicine practitioners to 28.5% of occupational therapists.(2)

Table 10: AHP years intended to work by profession, CESP HN region, 2021

AHP	0-5 years (%)	6-10 years (%)	11-15 years (%)	16-20 years (%)	21-30 years (%)	31-40 years (%)	41+ years (%)
Chinese medicine practitioners	16.1	30.8	10.5	20.3	14.5	4.4	3.4
Chiropractors	13.4	15.8	11.0	22.0	24.9	9.8	3.1
Dental practitioners	16.5	20.4	13.0	19.0	21.4	7.6	2.1
Medical radiation practitioners	18.5	17.0	9.0	18.5	22.3	11.1	3.5
Occupational therapists	13.0	15.5	8.8	19.9	25.1	13.4	4.3
Optometrists	17.8	23.8	11.9	16.0	19.8	8.5	2.2
Osteopaths	20.4	19.5	19.5	23.0	15.0	2.7	0.0
Paramedicine practitioners	16.7	26.7	12.5	21.1	16.1	5.5	1.3
Pharmacists	22.4	21.9	8.1	18.4	18.8	7.2	3.1
Physiotherapists	19.9	23.0	9.2	18.4	18.1	8.8	2.6
Podiatrists	20.0	24.7	10.0	13.8	16.6	10.6	4.4
Psychologists	15.2	17.3	12.1	20.2	24.6	8.4	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>19.2</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>2.7</b>

Source: HWA, 2023

## Hours worked per week

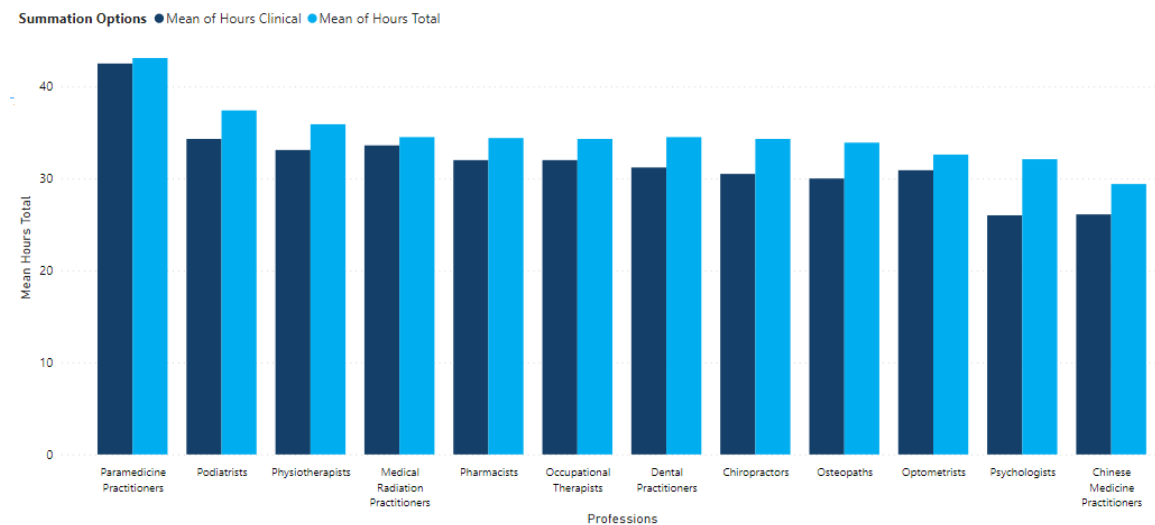
### Total hours

In 2021, on average AHPs in Australia worked 32.9 total hours per week, in line with NSW where AHPs worked on average 32.1 total hours per week. Within the CESPHE region, AHPs worked, on average, 34.2 total hours per week.(2) Average weekly working hours ranged from 43.1 hours per week for paramedicine practitioners to 29.4 hours per week for Chinese medicine practitioners.

### Clinical hours

In 2021, on average AHPs in Australia worked 29.9 clinical hours per week, slightly lower than NSW where AHPs worked on average 31.7 clinical hours per week. AHPs in the CESPHE region worked, on average, 31.9 clinical hours per week.(2) Average weekly clinical hours ranged from 42.5 hours for Paramedicine practitioners to 26 hours for psychologists.

**Figure 7: Allied health professionals mean hours total by profession, CESPHE region, 2021**



Source: HWA, 2023



## References

1. Central and Eastern Sydney PHN. Salesforce CRM. 2021.
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