

Demographics

Age

The average age of nurses increased from 39.5 years in 1993 to 41.6 years in 1999. The proportion aged less than 25 years increased slightly from 4.0% to 4.3% and the proportion aged over 45 years increased from 30.0% to 37.3% (Table C.37).

There was a decrease in the proportion of enrolled nurses aged under 25 years (from 4.8% in 1993 to 3.2% in 1999) compared with an increase for registered nurses (from 3.8% in 1993 to 4.5% in 1999). The proportion of nurses aged over 45 years increased (from 21.9% to 34.4% for enrolled nurses and from 32.3% to 38.0% for registered nurses) (Figure 6).

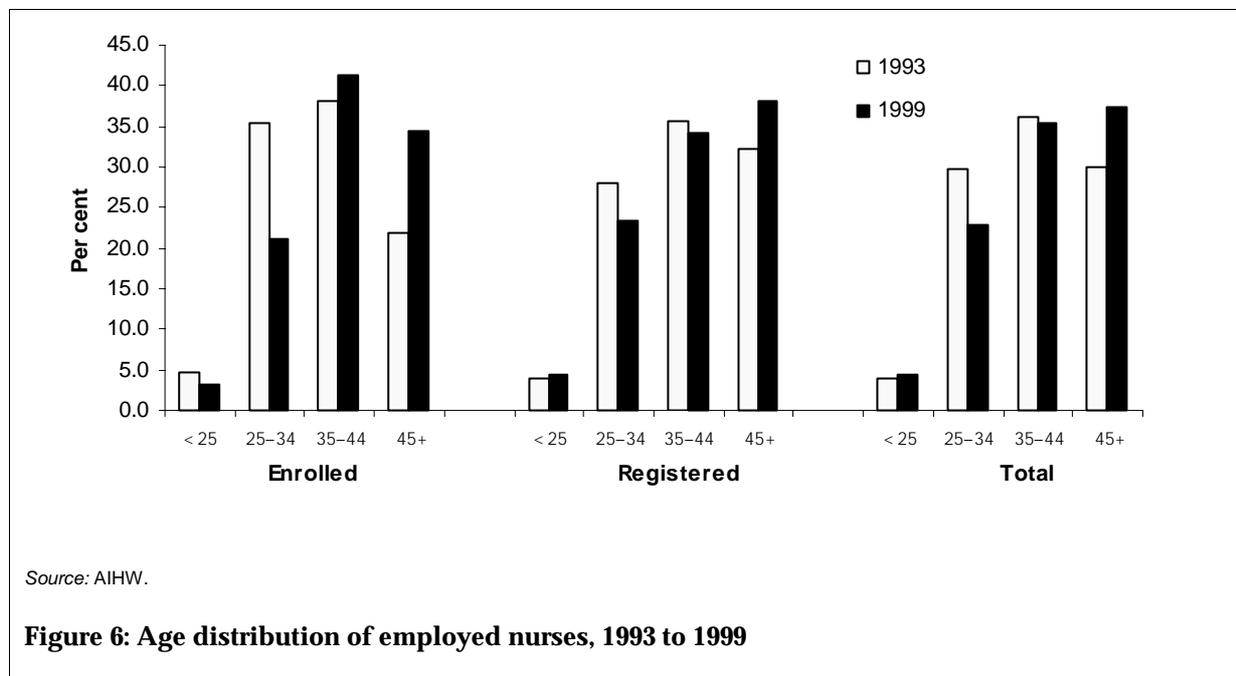


Figure 6: Age distribution of employed nurses, 1993 to 1999

Sex

Nursing is a predominantly female profession, with over 90% of nurses being female. Between 1995 and 1999, the number of employed male nurses increased from 16,096 to 17,835, representing a 10.8% increase.¹ For females, there was a 1.1% increase from 204,570 to 206,759. This resulted in a rise in the proportion of employed males in the nurse labour force from 7.3% to 7.9% (Table C.37).

Between 1995 and 1999 the number of male registered nurses increased by 12.5% (from 13,123 to 14,760). The number of female registered nurses increased by 3.6% (from 158,651 to 164,417). The proportion of registered nurses who were male rose from 7.6% to 8.2%. For employed enrolled nurses, there was a 3.4% increase in the number of males (from 2,973 to

1. Information on sex was not available for the Northern Territory for 1993 and 1994.

3,075) with a 7.8% decrease in the number of females (from 45,919 to 42,342). The proportion of enrolled nurses who were male rose from 6.1% to 6.8% (Tables C.23, C.24).