

# Main features

This publication presents health and community services workers' data from the ABS 1996 Census of Population and Housing. In addition, in order to present a more complete picture of these workers, university course completions information is drawn from the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA), and data on migration into and out of Australia is drawn from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA).

The data in this publication have generally been presented in the order that occupations are shown in the ABS *Australian Standard Classification of Occupations second edition* (ASCO). The ASCO classification lists occupations by skill levels. Related occupations that may be separated by skill level in the classification are grouped under headings to facilitate analysis, for example director of nursing, registered nurse, enrolled nurse and nursing assistant.

The analysis of each occupation that follows has concentrated on the sex distribution, geographic distribution, Indigenous representation and hours worked.

## Overview

- The total employment in the health and community services occupations shown in this publication was 7.8% of all persons employed at the time of the 1996 census (5.1% or 386,024 were in health occupations and 2.7% or 207,610 were in community services occupations).
- Indigenous Australians were 2.1% of the total population at the time of the 1996 census and of the employed Indigenous population, 3.4% were in health occupations and 5.8% were in community services occupations.
- The employment in these occupations is predominantly female with females comprising 73.7% of those in health occupations and 84.8% of those in community services occupations.
  - Males continue to dominate in the occupations of medical practitioner (68.2% of the workers), dentist (78.7%), dental technician (81.5%), chiropractor (78.2%), orthotist (79.6%), ambulance officer and paramedic (85.3%) and primary product and safety inspector (88.7%) (Table 2).
  - The community service occupations with a significant male presence were welfare centre manager (40.5%), drug and alcohol counsellor (44.9%), parole or probation officer (45.9%) and youth worker (48.2%) (Table 24).
- 44.0% of people in health occupations worked less than 35 hours per week and 11.0% worked 49 or more hours per week. Of those working more than 49 hours per week, 57.3% were medical workers (46.8% of the medical workers worked 49 or more hours per week) (Table 10).
- 50.5% of people in community services occupations worked less than 35 hours per week and 6.5% worked 49 or more hours per week (Table 28).
- In general, health workers were highly qualified, with 42.6% of workers holding a bachelor degree or higher qualification, and a further 33.3% holding an undergraduate diploma or associate diploma (Table 19). The number of persons with a highest qualification in a health field increased by 9.2% between 1991 and 1996 (Table 12). The

number of higher education course completions per year in health fields also rose rapidly over the same period, from 13,516 in 1991 up to 22,752 in 1996 (Table 20).

- The available data regarding the qualifications of community services workers is less comprehensive than for workers in the health industry, with data missing in some areas. The proportion of persons employed in community services occupations with a bachelor degree or higher was 38.0%, somewhat less than the 43.2% in health occupations. There were also fewer people with an undergraduate or associate diploma (29.4% compared to 33.7% for health) (Table 35). There was a 15.6% rise in higher education course completions in community services fields from 4,384 in 1992 to 5,066 in 1996 (Table 36), a less dramatic rise than the 38.4% increase for health courses (Table 20).

## Health occupations

### Medical workers

- At the 1996 census, there were 45,923 Australian medical workers of whom 44,003 (95.8%) were medical practitioners and 1,920 (4.2%) were medical administrators (Table 4).

### Medical administrators

- The relative number of medical administrators varied widely among the States and Territories, from 8.9 per 100,000 population in Queensland to 25.8 per 100,000 population in the Australian Capital Territory. The national rate was 10.8 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- 64.7% of medical administrators were female (Table 2) and 74.7% were Australian-born (Table 14).
- Indigenous persons represented 1.1% of medical administration workers (Table 9), better than in many health occupations but still below the 2.1% of Indigenous people in the total population.

### Medical practitioners

- Of the 44,003 medical practitioners, 60.0% were generalist medical practitioners, 6.0% were medical practitioners-in-training and 34.0% specialist medical practitioners (Table 4).
- 32.3% of generalist medical practitioners were female, as were 43.4% of medical practitioners-in-training and 24.5% of specialist medical practitioners (Table 2).
- In August 1996 there was a 22.5% difference between the States and Territories with the lowest and highest rate of medical practitioners. The national rate was 247.7 medical practitioners per 100,000 population. The Northern Territory, Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia were between 8.0% and 9.3% below the national rate. Victoria was close to the national rate with New South Wales 4.6%, the Australian Capital Territory 8.8% and South Australia 11.1 % above the national rate (Table 3). It should be noted that the Australian Capital Territory provides significant specialist medical services to south-eastern New South Wales.

## **Medical imaging workers**

- There was an increase of 41.8% in the number of medical imaging professionals between 1991 and 1996, growing from 4,760 persons to 6,748 persons (Table 6).
- Female representation at 68.0% is high (Table 4).
- The highest concentrations of medical imagists were in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, with 42.0 and 40.8 qualified medical imagists per 100,000 population respectively. The Northern Territory had the lowest rate, at 30.2 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- 40.7% of medical imaging professionals were employed in hospitals, 27.7% in specialist medical services and 19.3% in other health industries (Table 15).

## **Dental workers**

### **Dentists and dental specialists**

- There were 7,597 dentists and dental specialists in 1996 of which 78.7% were male (Table 2).
- There are 42.8 dentists and dental specialists per 100,000 population on a national basis. Tasmania and the Northern Territory have the fewest dentists and dental specialists with 26.7 and 31.9 per 100,000 population respectively. The Australian Capital Territory has the most with 56.2 per 100,000 population (Table 3). The remaining five States were relatively close to the national rate.
- Indigenous representation amongst dental professionals is low, with only 0.2% of dentists and no dental specialists identifying as Indigenous (Table 9).

### **Dental technicians**

- This occupation exhibits relatively uniform distribution amongst the States, with a national rate of 16.4 dental technicians per 100,000 population. The Northern Territory differed significantly from the other States and the Australian Capital Territory, with only 7.4 technicians per 100,000 (Table 3).
- Dental technicians are predominantly male (81.5%) and are relatively young, with only 28.7% of persons aged 45 years or more (Table 4).
- Only 0.3% of persons in this occupation identified as Indigenous (Table 9).

### **Dental assistants**

- The most gender-biased of all health occupations: 98.9% of all dental assistants are female (compared with 98.7% of midwives) (Table 4).
- 43.0% of dental assistants are aged less than 25 years with a further 30.4% aged 25–34 years.

## **Nursing workers**

- Nursing workers comprise 55.8% of the 386,024 health occupation workers shown in this publication (Table 2).
- A significant restructuring of nursing workers occurred between 1991 and 1996. The number of registered nurses increased by 11.5% from 139,380 to 155,408. However, this growth was offset by a 38.1% fall in the number of enrolled nurses from 39,670 to 24,559.

The total number of registered and enrolled nurses increased only 0.5% between 1991 and 1996 (Table 6).

#### **Directors of nursing and nurse managers**

- There were 3,132 directors of nursing and 6,179 nurse managers in 1996 (Table 2).

#### **Nurse educators and researchers**

- There were 2,065 nurse educators and researchers in Australia in 1996. Of these, 1,846 (89.4%) were female (Table 2).

#### **Registered nurses (excluding the specialist registered nurses below)**

- There were 133,931 registered nurses in Australia at the time of the 1996 census (not including the various specialist registered nurses dealt with below), representing 34.7% of all health occupation workers (Table 2).
- Nursing remains a heavily gender-biased profession: 92.9% of nurses are female.
- Nationally, there were 754.5 registered nurses per 100,000 population. The Australian Capital Territory had the lowest rate, with 659.4 per 100,000 population. South Australia had the most, at 852.1 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- Only 0.5% of registered nurses were of Indigenous origin at the time of the 1996 census, well below the level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in the wider community (Table 9).

#### **Registered midwives**

- 98.7% of midwives are female (Table 2).
- Nationally, there was a rate of 61.4 midwives per 100,000 population, ranging from 100.9 midwives per 100,000 population in the Northern Territory to 52.3 per 100,000 population in New South Wales (Table 3).
- Indigenous representation in midwifery is low, at 0.2% (Table 9).

#### **Registered mental health nurses**

- There were 6,039 mental health nurses at the time of the 1996 census. South Australia and Western Australia had the highest rate of persons employed in this field, with 47.1 and 47.0 per 100,000 population, respectively. The Northern Territory had the lowest number per 100,000 population, at 22.8. The national rate was 34.0 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- The proportion of males, at 38.0%, was much higher than the 7.1% for most registered nurses (Table 2).
- Indigenous representation in this field was 0.4% (Table 9).

#### **Registered developmental disability nurses**

- There were 1,089 developmental disability nurses working in Australia in 1996. Most of these (81.5%) were working in either New South Wales or Victoria (Table 2).
- The male participation rate was 24.3%, higher than the 7.1% for registered nurses (Table 4).

#### **Enrolled nurses**

- The number of enrolled nurses fell by 38.1% between 1991 and 1996 (Table 6).

- The national rate was 138.4 enrolled nurses per 100,000 population. South Australia had 207.2 per 100,000 while the Australian Capital Territory had 110.4 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- The female participation rate for this profession was 91.7% (Table 2).
- The Indigenous participation rate, at 2.3%, exceeded levels of Indigenous representation in the general population. Indigenous health workers were the only occupational category with a higher level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation (Table 9).
- Many enrolled nurses were employed on a part-time basis: 55.0% worked 34 hours or less per week. However, more worked 40 or more hours per week (25.9%) than worked 35–39 hours per week (18.2%) (Table 10).

### **Personal care assistants**

- The number of personal care assistants working nationally was 16,706 with 10,529 (63.0%) being female (Table 2).
- The number of personal care assistants in the workforce ranged from 62.9 per 100,000 population in the Australian Capital Territory to 108.0 per 100,000 population in Victoria; the national average was 94.1 per 100,000 population (Table 3).

### **Nursing assistants**

- There was 25,941 nursing assistants nationally, comprising 22,534 (86.9%) females (Table 2).
- Indigenous participation in this occupation was 1.3% of the total workers (Table 9).
- 46.0% of nursing assistants worked less than 35 hours per week whereas 30.1% worked 40 or more hours per week (Table 10).

### **Pharmacists**

- There were 12,306 pharmacists working in Australia at the time of the 1996 census. The majority of pharmacists were employed as retail pharmacists (80.2%) or hospital pharmacists (14.1%). The remainder worked as industrial pharmacists (Table 2).
- Females constitute 47.6% of pharmacists.
- Nationally, there were 69.3 pharmacists per 100,000 population. There was little variation amongst the States and Territories, with the exception of the Northern Territory, which had only 31.4 pharmacists per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- The number of pharmacists increased only 2.3% between 1986 and 1991, but increased 13.1% between 1991 and 1996 (Table 6).
- Part-time pharmacists comprised 28.8% of the workers, with 56.7% working 40 or more hours per week (Table 10).

### **Allied health workers**

#### **Occupational therapists**

- There were 4,363 occupational therapists in Australia at the time of the 1996 census, with 24.6 per 100,000 population. There was only minor variation in rate amongst the States, with 19.9 per 100,000 population in Queensland and 34.4 per 100,000 population in Western Australia (Table 3).

- The occupation had a high proportion of females, at 93.7% (Table 2). Indigenous representation was very low, at 0.1% (Table 9).
- 36.0% of occupational therapists worked 40 or more hours per week (51.8% of men, 35.0% of women) and 42.6% worked less than 35 hours per week (44.2% of women, 17.5% of men).

### **Optometrists**

- There were 2,255 optometrists in Australia at the time of the 1996 census, with a national rate of 12.7 per 100,000 population. Numbers varied from 7.0 per 100,000 in the Australian Capital Territory up to 14.1 per 100,000 in New South Wales (Table 3).
- The majority of optometrists were male (63.9%) (Table 2).

### **Physiotherapists**

- There were 8,896 physiotherapists working in Australia in 1996, with a national rate of 50.1 per 100,000 population. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest concentration of physiotherapists, with 60.5 per 100,000 population and the Northern Territory had 29.7 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- The majority of physiotherapists were female (77.0%) (Table 2).
- 43.7% of physiotherapists worked less than 35 hours week (51.9% of women and 16.3% of men) and 10.5% worked 49 or more hours per week (26.4% of men and 5.8% of women) (Table 10).

### **Speech pathologists**

- There were 2,340 speech pathologists in Australia in 1996. Only 3.8% of workers in this occupation were male (Table 2). Practitioners were distributed evenly amongst the States and Territories, with a national rate of 13.2 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- The number of speech pathology workers has been growing quickly, increasing by 32.6% between 1986 and 1991 and a further 33.5% between 1991 and 1996 (Table 6).
- Part-time work was popular with speech pathologists: 43.0% worked less than 35 hours per week. Another 36.5% worked 40 or more hours per week (Table 10).

### **Podiatrists**

- There were 1,459 podiatrists in Australia at the time of the 1996 census, a national rate of 8.2 per 100,000 population. Variation between the States and Territories was significant: South Australia had 12.0 per 100,000 population but the Northern Territory had no resident podiatrists (Table 3).
- The number of podiatry workers grew by 16.3% between 1986 and 1991, and 28.2% between 1991 and 1996 (Table 6).
- Females were 64.5% of podiatrists (Table 2). Indigenous representation, at 0.4%, was better than for most health occupations but well below the 2.1% in the population (Table 9).

### **Dietitians**

- There were 1,718 dietitians in Australia in 1996. Tasmania had the fewest dietitians, with only 5.2 per 100,000 population, whereas the Australian Capital Territory had 20.4 per 100,000 population. The national rate was 9.7 per 100,000 population (Table 3).

- Most dietitians were female (91.1%) (Table 2) and Australian-born (75.2%) (Table 14). Just 0.2% were of Indigenous origin (Table 9).
- 41.6% of dietitians worked part-time (Table 10).

### **Audiologists**

- This profession had 689 members in Australia in 1996. There were 192 males and 497 females (Table 2). Numbers in the States and Territories were similar, with a range between 3.6 and 5.7 audiologists per 100,000 population (Table 3).

### **Clinical psychologists**

- There were 5,255 clinical psychologists in Australia in 1996 (Table 2).
- The Australian Capital Territory had the most clinical psychologists, with 49.2 per 100,000 population. Queensland had the fewest with 21.5 per 100,000 population. The national rate was 29.6 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- 67.2% of clinical psychologists were female (Table 2).
- Indigenous persons comprised only 0.2% of clinical psychology workers (Table 9).
- 36.8% of clinical psychologists worked 34 hours or less per week and 42.8% worked 40 or more hours per week. Only 19.5% worked 35–39 hours per week (Table 10).

### **Therapy aides**

- There was a total of 1,418 therapy aides employed in 1996 of which 1,253 were female (88.4%) (Table 2).
- The employment rate was quite low in comparison to other occupations and varied between 2.0 per 100,000 population in the Australian Capital Territory to 20.0 per 100,000 population in Western Australia; the national rate was 8.0 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- Only 29.2% of therapy aides worked in the public sector.

### **Chiropractors and osteopaths**

- There were 1,969 chiropractors and/or osteopaths in Australia in 1996. The national rate was 11.1 per 100,000 population, ranging from 12.9 per 100,000 in South Australia to 5.7 per 100,000 in the Northern Territory (Table 3).
- The number of chiropractic and osteopathic workers grew by 12.4% in the five years to 1991 and 29.1% in the five years to 1996 (Table 6).
- Unlike most health occupations, only 23.7% of the workers were female (Table 2).
- 37.0% of chiropractors and osteopaths worked less than 35 hours per week—32.1% of men and 53.0% of women (Table 10).

### **Natural therapy professionals**

- Persons working in this field include naturopaths and acupuncturists. There were 1,909 naturopaths and 464 acupuncturists in Australia in 1996, as well as 430 other natural therapy professionals (Table 2).
- The national rate of natural therapy professionals was 15.4 per 100,000 population, ranging from 5.7 per 100,000 population in the Northern Territory up to 19.6 per 100,000 population in Queensland (Table 3).
- 56.6% of persons in this occupational group worked part-time (Table 10).

- Women were prominent in these occupations, comprising 61.4% of all workers (Table 2).
- Only 0.3% of the natural therapy workers were of Indigenous origin (Table 9).

## **Other health workers**

### **Medical scientists**

- There were 9,514 medical scientists in Australia at the time of the 1996 census (Table 2).
- Female representation in this field was 60.9%.
- Numbers varied considerably between the States and Territories, with the Northern Territory having the fewest (38.2 per 100,000 population) and the Australian Capital Territory having the most (71.2 per 100,000 population) (Table 3).

### **Medical laboratory technical officers**

- At the 1996 census, there were 8,215 people in Australia employed as medical technical officers (including both medical laboratory technical officers and medical technical officers not elsewhere classified) (Table 2).
- Female representation was 67.9% in this occupation.

### **Ambulance officers and intensive care paramedics**

- The total number of ambulance officers in Australia in 1996 was 5,959. Queensland had the highest supply in this occupation, at 45.2 per 100,000 population, while Western Australia had the lowest, at 18.3 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- This occupation had the highest proportion of males of any health occupation, at 85.3% (Table 2).
- The number of ambulance officers and paramedics increased by 8.8% between 1986 and 1991, and by 7.6% between 1991 and 1996 (Table 6).
- Indigenous representation for these occupations was relatively high, at 0.8%. However, this is still well below the 2.1% of Indigenous representation in the general population (Table 9).
- Part-time work was the exception for this occupation, with 14.6% working less than 35 hours per week (12.8% of men and 25.1% of women) (Table 10).

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers**

- There were 705 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers in Australia in 1996 (Table 2).
- The Northern Territory had by far the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers, at 107.2 per 100,000 population. The next closest was Western Australia, at 7.7 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- The vast majority (94.5%) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers was of Indigenous descent (Table 9).

### **Massage therapists**

- There were 2,262 massage therapists in 1996 (Table 2).
- 71.4% were female.

### **Admissions clerks**

- The 3,221 admissions clerks in 1996 were predominantly female (93.5%) (Table 2).
- There was considerable variation in the distribution of this occupation among States and Territories with Queensland having 7.4 per 100,000 population and Western Australia 27.6 per 100,000 population, with a national rate of 18.1 per 100,000 population (Table 3).

### **Primary products inspectors**

- The 2,902 primary products inspectors in 1996 were predominantly male (89.5%) (Table 2).
- Queensland with 24.9 per 100,000 population and the Northern Territory with 24.5 per 100,000 population were well above the national rate of 16.3 per 100,000 population. Victoria with 11.1 per 100,000 population had the lowest rate (Table 3).

### **Safety inspectors**

- There were 3,659 safety inspectors in 1996 and 88.1% were males (Table 2).
- Western Australia and the Northern Territory with 30.7 and 29.1 per 100,000 population respectively were well above the national rate of 20.6 per 100,000 population (Table 3).

### **Natural remedy consultants**

- There were 1,819 natural remedy consultants in 1996 of whom 70.4% were females (Table 2).
- Nationally, there were 10.2 natural remedy consultants per 100,000 population. There was minor variation in the rate among the States and Territories, with the exception of Western Australia with 17.2 per 100,000 population and the Northern Territory with 5.1 per 100,000 population (Table 3).

### **Weight loss consultants**

- There were 788 weight loss consultants in 1996 and they were relatively uniformly distributed among the States and Territories with a national rate of 4.4 per 100,000 population (Table 3).
- 95.8% were female (Table 2).

## Community services workers

In this publication, community services workers are:

- pre-primary and special education teachers and aides (excludes primary and secondary school teachers);
- welfare, social, and community workers (including welfare centre managers);
- counsellors (family, rehabilitation, and drug and alcohol counsellors);
- welfare associate professionals (parole/probation officer, youth worker, residential care officer, disabilities services officer, family support worker);
- children's care workers (including childcare coordinators and workers, family day care workers, nannies); and
- special care workers (hostel parent, refuge worker, aged or disabled person carer).

### Overview

- There were a total of 187,189 persons working in the above community services occupations in Australia in 1996. Females dominated most occupations, comprising 87.0% of the total community services workers (Table 24).
- The national average of people working in community care occupations was 1,054.6 per 100,000 population. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of persons working in community services occupations, with 1,453.6 persons per 100,000 population, principally because it was well above the national average of childcare workers, family day care workers and child/youth residential care assistants. New South Wales had the fewest, with 931.9 per 100,000 population (Table 25).

### Pre-primary and special education teachers and aides

- As with all community services occupations, the pre-primary and special education workers were predominantly female (91.7%) (Table 24).
- The Northern Territory had the highest proportion of persons employed in these occupations, at 228.1 per 100,000 population compared with the national average of 166.9 per 100,000 population. Western Australia had the fewest persons employed in these occupations, at 130.3 per 100,000 persons (Table 25).

### Pre-primary school teacher

- There were 12,584 pre-primary school teachers in Australia in 1996, of whom 12,299 were female (97.7%) (Table 24).
- Nationally, there was an average 70.9 pre-primary school teachers per 100,000 population. The Australian Capital Territory had the most, with 83.3 per 100,000 population, while the Northern Territory had the fewest with 54.8 per 100,000 population (Table 25).
- Persons in this occupation were generally younger than for other community services occupations, with 22.8% of the workers aged 45 years or older (Table 26).
- Indigenous representation was 1.0%, about half the 2.1% Indigenous representation in the wider community (Table 27).

- 39.7% of pre-primary school teachers worked less than 35 hours per week, 21.1% worked 35–39 hours per week and 39.2% of the workers worked 40 or more hours per week (Table 28).

### **Special education teacher**

- Occupations in this category include special needs teachers, teachers of the hearing or sight impaired, and other special education teachers.
- In 1996 there were 11,083 persons employed in these occupations, of which 1,770 were males (16.0%) (Table 24). The Northern Territory had the highest proportion of special needs teachers, at 164.2 per 100,000 population. Western Australia had the fewest, at 48.3 per 100,000 population (Table 25).
- Indigenous representation in this field was 1.7%, close to the level of Indigenous representation in the population (Table 27).
- Part-time work was also frequent for this occupation—41.2% worked 34 hours or less per week, 23.1% worked 35–39 hours per week and 34.7% worked 40 or more hours per week (Table 28).

### **Preschool aides and integration aide**

- There were 5,953 preschool and integration aides working in Australia at the time of the 1996 census, of which 5,841 (98.1%) were female (Table 24).
- There was wide variation in numbers across the States and Territories: Tasmania had 6.5 preschool aides per 100,000 population, and no integration aides, whereas Victoria had 39.2 preschool aides and 56.7 integration aides per 100,000 population. This variation is due to differences in the way services are delivered to the respective target groups (Table 25).
- 2.0% of preschool aides, but only 0.6% of integration aides, were of Indigenous descent (Table 27).
- Most people employed in these occupations worked less than 35 hours per week (83.7%), with just 5.7% working 40 hours or more in the week before the census (Table 28).

### **Welfare, social and community workers**

Grouped under this heading are the occupations of welfare centre manager, social worker, welfare worker and community worker.

- There were 30,197 persons employed as welfare, social, or community workers in 1996, of whom 76.0% were female (Table 24).
- The Northern Territory had the highest proportion of persons in these occupations, with 283.5 per 100,000 population. The national average was 170.1 per 100,000 population. Queensland had the least with 124.3 per 100,000 population (Table 25).
- Indigenous representation in these occupations was high, with 4.1% of the workers being of Indigenous descent (Table 27).
- 37.2% worked less than 35 hours per week (41.8% of women and 22.7% of men) (Table 28).
- People in these occupations found employment in a variety of work settings. The most common were non-residential care services (27.6%), government administration (11.9%), community health centres (9.1%), residential care services (7.9%), and hospitals (7.2%) (Table 32).

## **Counsellors**

Grouped under this heading are rehabilitation counsellors, drug and alcohol counsellors and family counsellors.

- The 1996 census identified 3,358 persons employed as rehabilitation, family, or drug and alcohol counsellors. Most were female (70.6%) (Table 24).
- The national average was 18.9 counsellors per 100,000 population, but there was considerable variation amongst the States. Queensland had the fewest, at 15.2 per 100,000 population, whereas the Northern Territory had 35.4 per 100,000 population, of whom 48.3% were drug and alcohol counsellors (Table 25).
- Indigenous representation was high, with 3.4% of all counsellors of Indigenous descent, including 1.6% of rehabilitation counsellors, 1.1% of family counsellors, and 10.6% of drug and alcohol counsellors (Table 27).
- 50.7% of family counsellors worked less than 35 hours per week, compared to 29.9% of rehabilitation counsellors and 28.6% of drug and alcohol counsellors (Table 28).

## **Welfare associate professionals**

### **Parole or probation officer**

- Nationally, there was an average of 4.7 parole and probation officers per 100,000 population, ranging from 2.4 per 100,000 population in Western Australia up to 9.7 per 100,000 population in the Northern Territory (Table 25).
- 3.1% of parole or probation officers were of Indigenous descent (Table 27).

### **Youth worker**

- There were 5,391 youth workers in Australia in 1996, or 30.4 per 100,000 population. The Australian Capital Territory had the most, at 40.1 per 100,000 population. Western Australia had the fewest, at 21.5 per 100,000 population (Table 25).
- There was equitable gender representation in this occupation, with females comprising 51.8% of workers (Table 24).
- 6.3% of all youth workers were of Indigenous descent, well above their levels of representation in the population (Table 27).
- Part-time work was common, with 36.4% working less than 35 hours per week. However, 36.9% reported working in excess of 40 hours per week (Table 28).

### **Residential care officer**

- There was a total of 1,024 residential care officers comprising 662 females (64.6%) (Table 24).
- There was a large variation in the rates per 100,000 population, the lowest being 0.9 per 100,000 population for both New South Wales and Western Australia up to 26.4 per 100,000 population in Queensland—the national average was 5.8 per 100,000 population (Table 25).
- 27.2% of residential care workers worked less than 35 hours per week whereas 68.5% worked in excess of 40 hours per week (Table 28).

### **Disabilities services officer**

- There were 4,930 disabilities services officers in Australia comprising 3,519 female workers (71.4%) (Table 24).
- Western Australia had 70.5 per 100,000 population and Victoria had 51.5 per 100,000 population. In contrast, the Australian Capital Territory had 5.7 per 100,000 population, the Northern Territory had 6.8 per 100,000 population, and Queensland had 7.3 per 100,000 population (Table 25).
- Indigenous representation in this occupation was low, at 0.8% (Table 27).
- 36.5% of disabilities services officers worked less than 35 hours per week and 32.7% worked 40 or more hours per week (Table 28).

### **Family support worker**

- There were 1,001 family support workers in Australia in 1996, of whom 86.9% were female. Nationally, there were 5.6 per 100,000 population, ranging from 4.4 per 100,000 population in New South Wales up to 9.1 per 100,000 population in the Northern Territory (Table 25).
- 8.5% of family support workers were of Indigenous origin, several times the actual level of Indigenous representation in the community (Table 27).
- A high proportion worked less than 35 hours per week (58.2%) (Table 28).

### **Children's care workers**

#### **Childcare coordinator**

- There were 7,135 childcare coordinators of which 6,542 were female (91.7%) (Table 24).
- There were 60.7 and 57.9 childcare coordinators per 100,000 population in Queensland and the Australian Capital Territory, respectively. They were relatively uniformly distributed around the national average of 40.2 per 100,000 population in the other States and Territory (Table 25).

#### **Childcare worker**

- There were 31,201 childcare workers of which 29,883 were female (95.8%) (Table 24).
- There were 88.3 and 88.4 childcare workers per 100,000 in Tasmania and South Australia with 241.7 per 100,000 in Queensland (Table 25).
- 38.5% of workers were less than 25 years of age and 83% were less than 45 years of age (Table 26).
- Indigenous representation in this occupation was 1.9% (Table 27).

#### **Family day care worker**

- There were 16,577 workers in this category, with females comprising 16,292 (98.3%) (Table 24).
- The national average was 93.4 family day care workers per 100,000 population with the lowest being 83.8 per 100,000 population in New South Wales ranging to 195.0 per 100,000 population in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 25).
- 37.0% of workers worked less than 35 hours per week whereas 46.2% worked in excess of 40 hours per week (Table 28).

## **Nanny**

- There were 6,574 workers in this occupation with 98.0% being female (Table 24).
- There were 28.4 nannies per 100,000 population in Tasmania with the highest being 63.2 per 100,000 population in the Australian Capital Territory (Table 25).
- 4,839 nannies (73.6%) were less than 34 years of age (Table 26).
- Part-time work was frequent for this occupation—60.5% worked less than 35 hours per week, 8.2% worked 35–39 hours per week and 27.5% worked in excess of 40 hours per week (Table 28).

## **Special care workers**

- There were 41,703 special care workers in Australia in 1996 and aged or disabled person carers comprised 86.2% of this total (Table 24).
- 85.3% of special care workers were female.
- Tasmania had the most residential care workers relative to population, with 490.4 per 100,000 population, primarily due to a high proportion of aged or disabled person carers (453.6 per 100,000 population, compared with the national average of 202.5 per 100,000 population). New South Wales had the fewest, at 173.9 per 100,000 population and this was due to the low relative number of aged or disabled person carers (146.7 per 100,000 population) (Table 25).
- 1.9% were of Indigenous origin (Table 27).

## Industries

The previous analysis and most of the tables in this publication have shown persons by their occupation regardless of the place at which they work. The industries tables show the employment of persons in all occupations in health and community services businesses. Each employing location is classified to an industry using the *Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification, 1993 Edition*. For the health and community services industries included in this publication, see the explanatory notes.

### Health industries

- The health industries employed 537,194 persons (Table 18) at the time of the 1996 census and this represented 7.0% of all employed persons.
- A total of 230,832 people were employed in hospitals (222,410) and psychiatric hospitals (8,422) in 1996, which was 43.0% of workers in the health industries (Table 17). The most common occupations in hospitals were health professionals (51.4%), intermediate clerical workers (8.2%), intermediate service workers (6.3%), health and welfare associate professionals (5.3%), labourers (4.1%) and cleaners (3.7%). The remaining 21.0% of the hospital workforce was split across many different occupations.
- Most health industries employed workers in a small range of occupations with the workforce occupation profile reflecting the respective business structures in each industry. Between 45% and 60% of the workforce in most health industries were professionals. These were mostly health professionals but there were significant numbers of science professionals (15.8%) in the pathology industry and social professionals (14.8%) in the community health centres.
- The industries with less than 45% of the workforce classed as professionals were nursing homes (32.3%), dental services (29.4%), optometry and optical dispensing (29.9%) and ambulance services (5.0%). The workforce in nursing homes and dental services included 34.0% and 39.4%, respectively, of intermediate service workers (nursing assistants). The workforce in the optometry and optical dispensing industry included 28.0% of other tradespersons (optical mechanics) and 75.2% of the ambulance services workforce were health associate professionals (ambulance officers and intensive care ambulance paramedics).
- In the general practice industry, workers were concentrated in two of the four occupational areas: health professionals (44.2%); intermediate clerical workers (36.0%); business and administration professionals (6.1%); and secretaries and personal assistants (4.2%). The specialist medical services industry had a similar profile of health professionals (43.5%), business and administration professionals (4.7%), and secretaries and personal assistants (5.2%), but developed a different profile with intermediate clerical workers comprising 27.4% of the workforce and science professionals and associate professionals 7.0% of the workforce.
- The dental services industry workforce comprised 28.4% dental professionals, 39.4% dental assistants, 19.4% administrators and clerical workers and 7.8% dental therapists, hygienists and technicians.
- In addition to significant numbers of science professionals, 8.3% of the pathology services industry workforce were drivers and other transport workers reflecting the need for transport of pathological samples.

- The health industries employed 161,779 people with a highest qualification in nursing and this was by far the largest field of qualification representing 30.1% of all workers in the health industries. The next largest fields of qualification in the health industries were medicine with 42,865 people (8.0%) and health sciences with 33,720 people (6.3%) (Table 18). Some 30.7% of people working in the health industries did not have a recognised tertiary education qualification.
- Pharmacies are in the retail industry sector and are unique in that pharmacists are health professionals where the majority do not work in the health industries.

## **Community services industries**

- The community services industries shown in this publication employed 172,750 persons at the time of the 1996 census and this represented 2.2% of all employed persons (Table 34).
- The childcare services industry and non-residential care services industry accounted for 35.6% and 36.1%, respectively, of all employment in the community services industries.
- The community services industries employed people from a wide range of occupations with the most numerous being intermediate service workers (42.0%) and social, arts, and miscellaneous professionals (10.5%) (Table 33).
- The workers employed in each community services industry reflected the services provided by each industry. For example:
  - in the childcare services industry, 73.3% of the workers were intermediate service workers in children’s care occupations—specialist managers (8.3%) were the only other notable occupation group in this industry;
  - in the accommodation for the aged industry, 39.2% of the workers were mainly special care workers and 14.1% were health professionals, mainly nurses;
  - in residential care services (not elsewhere classified) the 39.2% of staff classed as intermediate service workers were mainly special care workers, 14.4% were welfare associate professionals, 11.5% were social welfare professionals and 8.1% were health professionals; and
  - the industries of non-residential care services and community services undefined had broadly similar workforce profiles with 19.9% and 21.5%, respectively, of social welfare professionals (social workers, welfare and community workers and counsellors) and 16.9% and 20.2%, respectively, of intermediate service workers—the balance of the workforce in each industry was widely dispersed across many occupations.

## Geographical distribution

There is considerable regional variation in Australia in the distribution of health workers. Access to health services for rural populations is a major policy concern, many small townships report being unable to attract a medical practitioner.

Unlike health workers, community services workers are quite evenly distributed between metropolitan and non-metropolitan regions.

### Health workers

There were 2,276.9 health workers per 100,000 population in Australia at the 1996 census (Table 3). The State distribution ranged from South Australia with 14.5% per 100,000 population above the national average to the Northern Territory with 10.3% per 100,000 population below the national average. The other States and the Australian Capital Territory were within the range of  $\pm 5.5\%$  per 100,000 population of the national average.

In comparison with other regions, capital cities have almost twice as many medical workers (Table 1), 64.0% more dental workers, 52.7% more pharmacists and 59.8% more allied health workers per 100,000 population. There were only slightly more nurses per 100,000 population in capital cities compared to other regions.

The 'other health' workers, however, reversed the capital city pattern by having 36.3% per 100,000 population more workers in other regions compared to capital cities. This is due to some of the occupations in other health groups that are more evident in a non-city environment, for example, Indigenous health worker and primary products inspector. This pattern is evident in all States and Territories but is particularly noticeable in the Northern Territory and Queensland.

On a relative population basis, Adelaide had more medical, dental, and nursing workers than any other part of Australia (Table 8), with 337.6, 72.6 and 1,326.6 per 100,000 population, respectively. The total health workers for Adelaide numbered 2,124.5 per 100,000 population. In contrast, the lowest number of workers on a population basis was non-metropolitan Western Australia, which had 1,201.8 health workers, 99.3 medical workers, 38.8 dentists, and 808.5 nurses per 100,000 population. Capital cities in every State and Territory had more medical staff per 100,000 population than did the other regions in the corresponding State or Territory.

### Community services workers

There were 1,054.6 community services workers per 100,000 population in Australia (Table 25). New South Wales with 931.9 community service workers per 100,000 population was 11.6% below the national average. Western Australia and Queensland with 1,022.6 and 1,036.9 per 100,000 population, respectively, were also below the national average and all other States and Territories were above the average. The Australian Capital Territory had the greatest numbers with 1,453.6 per 100,000 population and had above average supply in all occupation groups, particularly children's care workers, special care workers and pre-primary and special education teachers.

The disparity between capital cities and regional areas in the distribution of health workers was not so evident among the community services workers. Tasmania had the greatest regional disparity with the capital city having 60.4% per 100,000 population more than the other regions of the State, followed by Western Australia, South Australia, Queensland and Northern Territory with the capital cities having 24.0%, 21.2%, 18.1% and 7.8% per 100,000

population, respectively, more than the rest of the State. In New South Wales and Victoria the capital cities had 9.5% and 8.6% per 100,000 population, respectively, less community services workers than the rest of the State.

The occupational distribution of community services workers reflects differences in the demographic characteristics and socioeconomic status in the population. Regional Northern Territory had the highest relative number of welfare, social, and community workers, with 316.2 per 100,000 population and regional Queensland had the fewest, with 109.3 per 100,000 population (only marginally less than Brisbane with 133.8 per 100,000 population).

Nationally, there were 280.5 persons per 100,000 population employed as children's care workers in capital cities, compared to 250.8 per 100,000 population in regional areas. Workforce participation rates and the age distribution of the population are crucial determinants of community childcare requirements. The Australian Capital Territory with a relatively young population and a high workforce participation rate had 433.2 children's care workers per 100,000 population, whereas Brisbane had 361.5 per 100,000 population. Regional South Australia had the fewest, with 181.4 per 100,000 population.

Counsellors were more prevalent in capital cities (20.6 per 100,000 population, compared with 16.3 per 100,000 population in other regional areas). Darwin had the most (44.7 per 100,000 population) and regional Queensland had the least (13.0 per 100,000 population).

The numbers of welfare associate professionals ranged from 30.5 per 100,000 population in Perth up to 57.4 per 100,000 population in metropolitan Darwin.

There were marginally more special care workers in regional areas (328.1 per 100,000 population) than in capital cities (318.2 per 100,000 population).

**Table 1: Distribution of health and community services workers: capital city and other regions, Australia, 1996**

	Persons employed (no.)		Persons per 100,000 pop.	
	Capital city	Other region	Capital city	Other region
<b>Health workers</b>				
Medical workers	33,336	10,670	303.6	157.6
Dental workers	6,640	2,498	60.5	36.9
Nursing workers	117,804	70,252	1072.9	1037.8
Pharmacist workers	8,265	3,335	75.3	49.3
Allied health workers	24,916	9,610	226.9	142.0
Other health workers	8,703	7,315	79.3	108.1
<i>Total health workers</i>	<i>199,664</i>	<i>103,680</i>	<i>1818.4</i>	<i>1531.6</i>
<b>Community services workers</b>				
Pre-primary and special education teachers and aides	14,567	9,111	132.7	134.6
Welfare, social, and community workers	18,927	10,385	172.4	153.4
Counsellors	2,258	1,101	20.6	16.3
Welfare associate professionals	4,685	2,723	42.7	40.2
Children's care worker	30,799	16,975	280.5	250.8
Special care workers	34,939	22,208	318.2	330.4
<i>Total community services workers</i>	<i>106,175</i>	<i>62,660</i>	<i>967.0</i>	<i>925.6</i>
<b>Total all workers</b>	<b>305,839</b>	<b>166,340</b>	<b>2785.3</b>	<b>2457.2</b>

Source: AIHW from ABS data.