

NATIONAL HEALTH LABOUR FORCE SERIES

Number 31

Nursing and midwifery labour force 2003

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Canberra

AIHW cat. no. HWL 31

© Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2005

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the *Copyright Act 1968*, no part may be reproduced without prior written permission from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Requests and enquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be directed to the Head, Business Promotion and Media Unit, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, GPO Box 570, Canberra ACT 2601.

This publication is part of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's National Health Labour Force Series. A complete list of the Institute's publications is available from the Business Promotion and Media Unit, Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, GPO Box 570, Canberra ACT 2601, or via the Institute's web site (<http://www.aihw.gov.au>).

More comprehensive statistics from the 2003 Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey and earlier surveys are also available from the Institute's web site.

ISSN 1327-4309

ISBN 1 74024 476 1

Suggested citation

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2005. Nursing and midwifery labour force 2003. AIHW cat. no. HWL 31. Canberra: AIHW (Health Labour Force Series no. 31).

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Board Chair

Hon. Peter Collins, AM, QC

Director

Dr Richard Madden

Any enquiries about or comments on this publication should be directed to:

Labour Force and Rural Health Unit
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
GPO Box 570
Canberra ACT 2601

Phone: (02) 6244 1156

Email: labourforce@aihw.gov.au

Published by Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Printed by Pirion Printing

Contents

List of tables	iv
List of figures	v
Acknowledgments	vi
Symbols and other usages	vi
Main findings	1
National overview	2
Introduction.....	2
Composition	2
Nursing supply	5
Hours worked	5
Full-time equivalent nurses per 100,000 population	6
Regional distribution	7
State and territory profiles	8
New South Wales.....	8
Victoria	10
Queensland.....	12
Western Australia	14
South Australia	16
Tasmania	18
Australian Capital Territory.....	20
Northern Territory.....	22
Additional tables	24
Explanatory notes	30
Glossary	33
References	34

List of tables

Table 1:	Nurse registrations and enrolments, 1997 to 2003	2
Table 2:	Employed registered and enrolled nurses, 1997 to 2003	4
Table 3:	Proportion of nurses working part-time and average hours worked per week, 1997 to 2003	5
Table 4:	Nurses employed in the clinical area of midwifery, rate and FTE rate, 1997 to 2003	6
Table 5:	Employed registered and enrolled nurses: geographic location of main job, 1997 and 2003	7
Table 6:	Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, New South Wales, 2003.....	8
Table 7:	Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, New South Wales, 2003	9
Table 8:	Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Victoria, 2003.....	10
Table 9:	Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Victoria, 2003.....	11
Table 10:	Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Queensland, 2003	12
Table 11:	Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Queensland, 2003.....	13
Table 12:	Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Western Australia, 2003.....	14
Table 13:	Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Western Australia, 2003	15
Table 14:	Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, South Australia, 2003.....	16
Table 15:	Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, South Australia, 2003	17
Table 16:	Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Tasmania, 2003	18
Table 17:	Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Tasmania, 2003.....	19
Table 18:	Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Australian Capital Territory, 2003	20
Table 19:	Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Australian Capital Territory, 2003.....	21
Table 20:	Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Northern Territory, 2003	22
Table 21:	Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Northern Territory, 2003	23
Table A1:	All nurses: professional employment status, nursing role, 1997 to 2003	24
Table A2:	All employed nurses: average hours worked and proportion working part-time by age group, 1997 to 2003	24
Table A3:	Employed registered and enrolled nurses: weekly hours worked and total number of nurses by age, 2003	25

Table A4: All employed nurses by work setting of their main job: selected characteristics, 2003	25
Table A5: All employed nurses: work setting and geographic distribution of their main job, 2003.....	26
Table A6: All employed nurses: average hours worked and sector of employment, 1997 to 2003	26
Table A7: Registered and enrolled nurses not employed in nursing, 1997.....	26
Table A8: All employed nurses, average age, states and territories, 1997.....	26
Table A9: All employed nurses: nursing role, states and territories, 1997.....	27
Table A10: Employed registered and enrolled nurses: average hours worked and proportion working part-time, states and territories, 1997 to 2003	27
Table A11: All employed nurses per 100,000 population, states and territories, 1997 to 2003.....	27
Table A12: Employed registered and enrolled nurses, states and territories, 1997 to 2003.....	28
Table A13: All registered and enrolled nurses: proportion with post-registration/enrolment qualifications by labour force status and geographic region of residence, 2003	28
Table A14: All employed nurses: selected characteristics, 1997 to 2003.....	29
Table A15: Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey: estimated response rate, states and territories, 2003.....	30
Table A16: Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey: collection period, states and territories, 2003.....	31

List of figures

Figure 1: Registered and enrolled nurses, Australia, 2003.....	3
Figure 2: Age distribution of employed nurses, 1997 and 2003	4
Figure 3: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, 1997 to 2003	6
Figure 4: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, New South Wales, 1997 to 2003.....	9
Figure 5: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, Victoria, 1997 to 2003	11
Figure 6: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, Queensland, 1997 to 2003	13
Figure 7: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, Western Australia, 1997 to 2003	15
Figure 8: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, South Australia, 1997 to 2003.....	17
Figure 9: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, Tasmania, 1997 to 2003	19
Figure 10: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, Australian Capital Territory, 1997 to 2003	21
Figure 11: Employed registered and enrolled nurses and full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population, Northern Territory, 1997 to 2003	23

Acknowledgments

This publication was prepared by Pam Lee, Serge Chrisopoulos and Sergei Mitnik with guidance from Glenice Taylor of the Labour Force Rural Health Unit and support from Kathy Southgate of the Data Management Unit of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

We thank each state and territory nursing board and health authority that provided data used in this publication and the Australian Bureau of Statistics for population data.

Most importantly, we also thank the nurses who took the time to complete the survey. Without their cooperation, it would not be possible to maintain this collection, which is used to inform the community about the nursing profession, and which forms the basis of planning and policy decisions for this crucial part of the health labour force.

Symbols and other usages

Throughout this publication, data may not add to the totals shown due to the estimation process for non-response. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding. Where tables contain a 'not stated' category, percentage calculations exclude these figures.

Italics within a table denote a subtotal.

- Nil or rounded to zero.
- .. Not applicable.
- n.a. Not available.
- n.p. Not publishable.

Main findings

- Excluding multiple registrations, the total number of nurses identified in 2003 by the Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey was 273,378, comprising 218,615 registered nurses and 54,762 enrolled nurses. This represents a 5.1% increase in the number of nurses between 2001 and 2003.
- The number of nurses actually employed in nursing increased by 3.7% over the period, from 228,230 to 236,645.
- The number of employed registered nurses increased by 3.2%, from 183,224 to 189,071, and the number of employed enrolled nurses increased by 5.7%, from 45,006 to 47,574.
- Nursing remained a predominantly female occupation, and the number and proportion of male nurses increased only slightly. Between 2001 and 2003, the number of male nurses increased from 19,085 to 20,343, and their proportion from 8.4% to 8.6%.
- The ageing of the employed nursing labour force continued, with the average age increasing from 42.2 years in 2001 to 43.1 years in 2003.
- The proportion of nurses working part-time decreased between 2001 (53.3%) and 2003 (50.0%) after steadily increasing between 1997 (52.0%) and 2001. Average weekly hours worked increased between 2001 (30.7 hours) and 2003 (32.5 hours) after being steady over the 1997–2001 period.
- The overall increase in average hours worked in 2003 was associated with an increase in the level of nursing supply, following a steady decline over the 1997–2001 period. Overall, supply increased from 1,031 full-time equivalent (FTE) nurses per 100,000 population in 2001 to 1,106 FTE nurses per 100,000 population in 2003.
- Nationally, the supply of nurses working in the area of midwifery increased between 2001 (224 FTE) and 2003 (255 FTE), after a large decline between 1999 (245 FTE) and 2001.
- There were increases in FTE nurses per 100,000 population between 2001 and 2003 in all jurisdictions.
- Across geographic regions in 2003, the level of supply ranged from 1,169 FTE nurses per 100,000 population in Very remote areas to 1,029 in Outer regional areas.

National overview

Introduction

The data in this report have been compiled from the surveys of nurses and midwives conducted by each state and territory between 1997 and 2003. From 2003, the survey design has undergone a series of methodological improvements affecting the questionnaires and data processing (see 'Changes to the survey' in the Explanatory Notes). In 2003, the first major revision to the questionnaire was implemented in all jurisdictions except New South Wales, resulting in some data items in the New South Wales survey being different from those used elsewhere. For the purposes of this publication, data items which do concord nationally are presented in the national overview below, whereas items with limited concordance are in the profiles forming the latter part of the report, where data are shown separately for each state and territory and the salient features of the respective nursing profiles are discussed.

For ease of discussion, throughout this report the term 'nurse' includes midwives.

Composition

Size of the nursing labour force

The renewal of nurse registration and enrolments, conducted by state/territory registration boards, identified a total of 282,546 nurses in 2003 (up from 264,086 in 1997). This comprised 226,592 registered nurses and 55,954 enrolled nurses. While there was an overall increase in the total number of registrations and enrolments between 1997 and 2003, the composition has varied. The number of nurse registrations increased from 209,498 in 1997 to 226,592 in 2003, and the number of enrolled nurses initially decreased from 54,588 in 1997 to 51,972 in 2001 and then increased to 53,198 in 2002 and to 55,954 in 2003 (Tables 1 and A1).

Table 1: Nurse registrations and enrolments, 1997 to 2003

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Registered nurses	209,498	210,702	212,110	213,669	215,605	222,123	226,592
Enrolled nurses	54,588	54,136	53,054	52,266	51,972	53,198	55,954
Total registrations/ enrolments	264,086	264,838	265,164	265,935	267,577	275,321	282,546

Source: State and territory nurse registration boards.

Excluding multiple registrations (nurses who were registered or enrolled in more than one jurisdiction), the total number of nurses identified in 2003 by the Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey was 273,378, comprising 218,615 registered nurses and 54,762 enrolled nurses (Figure 1).

The majority of nurses (89.8% or 245,531) were in the nursing labour force. The remaining 10.2% (27,846) were either employed elsewhere and not looking for work in nursing (12,010), not employed and not looking for work in nursing (11,361), or overseas (4,476) (Table A1).

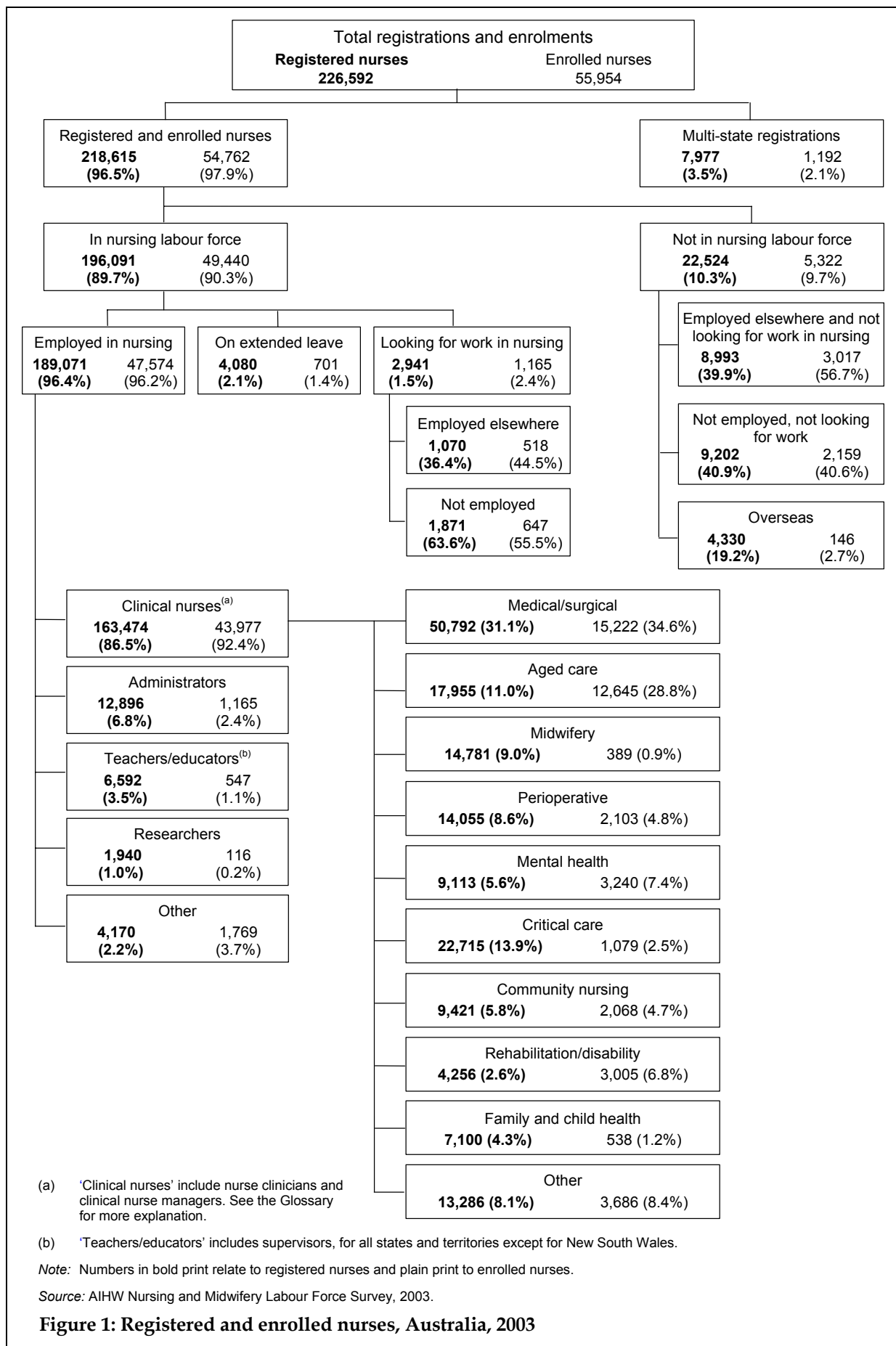


Figure 1: Registered and enrolled nurses, Australia, 2003

Of those in the nursing labour force, 236,645 (96.4%) were employed in nursing, a rise of 6.3% between 1997 (222,528) and 2003 (Table 2). In 2003, of employed nurses, 87.7% (207,451) were clinicians, 5.9% (14,060) were administrators, 3.0% (7,138) were teachers/educators and (0.9% 2,056) were researchers (Figure 1). The majority of employed registered nurses (86.5%) were clinical nurses (including nurse clinicians and clinical nurse managers), of whom the largest proportions were medical/surgical nurses (31.1%) followed by critical care nurses (13.9%). The majority of employed enrolled nurses were also clinical nurses (92.4%), and the largest proportions were medical/surgical nurses (34.6%) followed by aged care nurses (28.8%).

Table 2: Employed registered and enrolled nurses, 1997 to 2003

	1997	1999	2001	2003	% change (1997–2003)
Registered nurses	176,217	179,389	183,224	189,071	7.3
Enrolled nurses	46,311	45,432	45,006	47,574	2.7
All employed nurses	222,528	224,822	228,230	236,645	6.3

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Excluding multiple registrations, there were 218,615 registered nurses and 54,762 enrolled nurses in 2003, of whom 196,091 (89.7%) and 49,440 (90.3%), respectively, were in the nursing labour force. Of the 22,524 (10.3%) registered nurses not in the nursing labour force, 8,993 were employed elsewhere and not looking for work in nursing and 9,202 were not employed and not looking for work in nursing. Of the 5,322 (9.7%) enrolled nurses not in the nursing labour force, 3,017 were employed elsewhere and not looking for work in nursing and 2,159 were not employed and not looking for work in nursing (Figure 1).

Age and sex

Overall, the nursing labour force was older in 2003 than in 1997, with employed nurses averaging 43.1 years in 2003, compared with 40.3 years in 1997. The proportion of nurses aged less than 35 years decreased from 29.3% in 1997 to 23.4% in 2003, and the proportion of those aged 45 years or more increased from 33.2% to 46.5% over the same period (Figure 2). This latter group is relevant to workforce planning because of their closeness to retirement.

Nursing remained a predominantly female occupation, although male nurses increased slightly in number and proportion. Between 1997 and 2003, the number of male nurses increased from 17,022 to 20,434, and their proportion from 7.6% to 8.6% (Table A13).

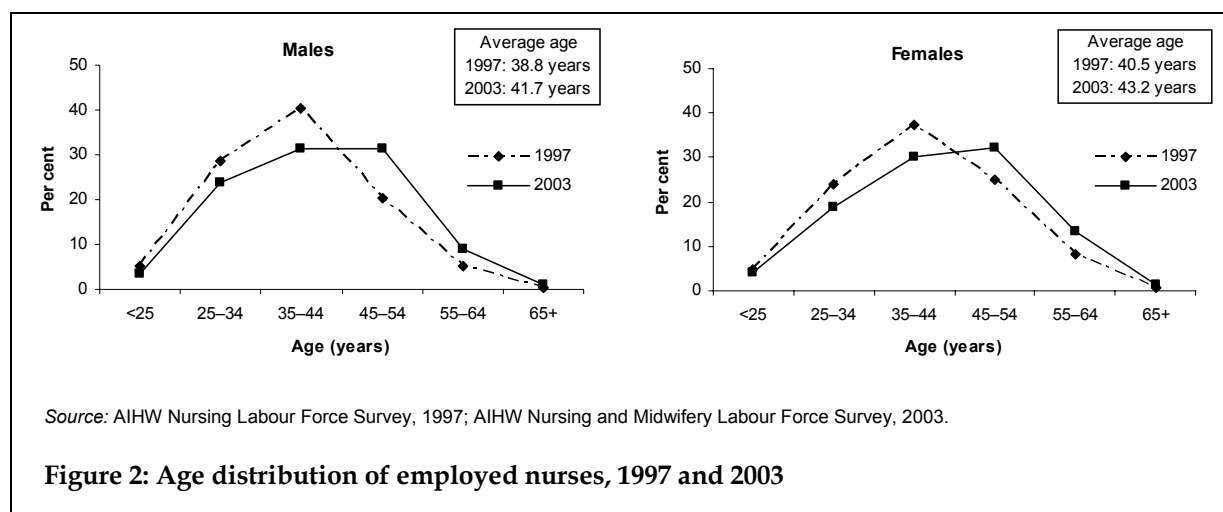


Figure 2: Age distribution of employed nurses, 1997 and 2003

Nursing supply

For the purposes of workforce planning, nursing supply is a function of the number of nurses and the number of hours they work. Several indicators are used to assess supply. These include a population-standardised headcount, average hours worked, proportion working part-time, and population-standardised full-time equivalents. This section provides a national comparison of these indicators for the period 1997 to 2003.

When comparing the supply of nurses across time, the usefulness of raw counts of the number of people employed in nursing is limited because changes in population numbers are not taken into account. For example, between 1997 and 2003, there was a 6.3% increase in the number of employed nurses (Table A1), but there was also a 7.3% increase in the Australian population (Table A11). A population-standardised headcount, such as the number of nurses per 100,000 population ('the nursing rate'), may, therefore, be more valid than a raw count. This measure shows that although there was an increase in the number of nurses, taking into account the population growth there was an overall decrease in the rate of nurses from 1,202 nurses per 100,000 population in 1997 to 1,191 in 2003 (Table A11).

Hours worked

Over the period, the estimated average weekly hours worked by all nurses was initially stable at 30.7 hours in 1997, 30.6 in 1999 and 30.7 hours in 2001, but then increased to 32.5 in 2003. For registered nurses, average weekly hours increased from 31.0 in 1997 to 32.8 in 2003, and for enrolled nurses, from 29.2 to 31.2 hours (Table 3). It should be noted that part of this rise may be attributable to survey changes implemented in 2003, one of which was a change to the question on hours worked (see Explanatory notes). However, a rise was also evident in New South Wales where the revised questionnaire was not implemented in 2003.

The overall rise in average weekly hours was associated with a decrease in the proportion of nurses working part-time, from 52.0% in 1997 to 50.0% in 2003. Over this period, the proportion of registered nurses working part-time decreased from 49.9% in 1997 to 48.6% in 2003 and the proportion of part-time enrolled nurses decreased from 60.2% to 56.1%, respectively (Table 3). Nurses in the private sector worked fewer hours on average (30.7 hours) than their colleagues in the public sector (33.4 hours) (Table A6).

Table 3: Proportion of nurses working part-time^(a) and average weekly hours worked, 1997 to 2003

	1997	1999	2001	2003
Registered nurses				
% working part-time	49.9	50.6	51.6	48.6
Average hours worked per week	31.0	31.0	31.0	32.8
Enrolled nurses				
% working part-time	60.2	61.2	60.4	56.1
Average hours worked per week	29.2	29.1	29.6	31.2
All employed nurses				
% working part-time	52.0	52.7	53.3	50.0
Average hours worked per week	30.7	30.6	30.7	32.5

(a) Working less than 35 hours per week.

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Full-time equivalent nurses per 100,000 population

Overall, nursing supply increased from 1997 to 2003 (Figure 3). Initially there was a steady fall in nursing supply from 1997 (1,054 FTE nurses per 100,000 population) through 1999 (1,039 FTE) to 2001 (1,031 FTE), and this was followed by the increase in 2003 (1,106 FTE) (Table A11).

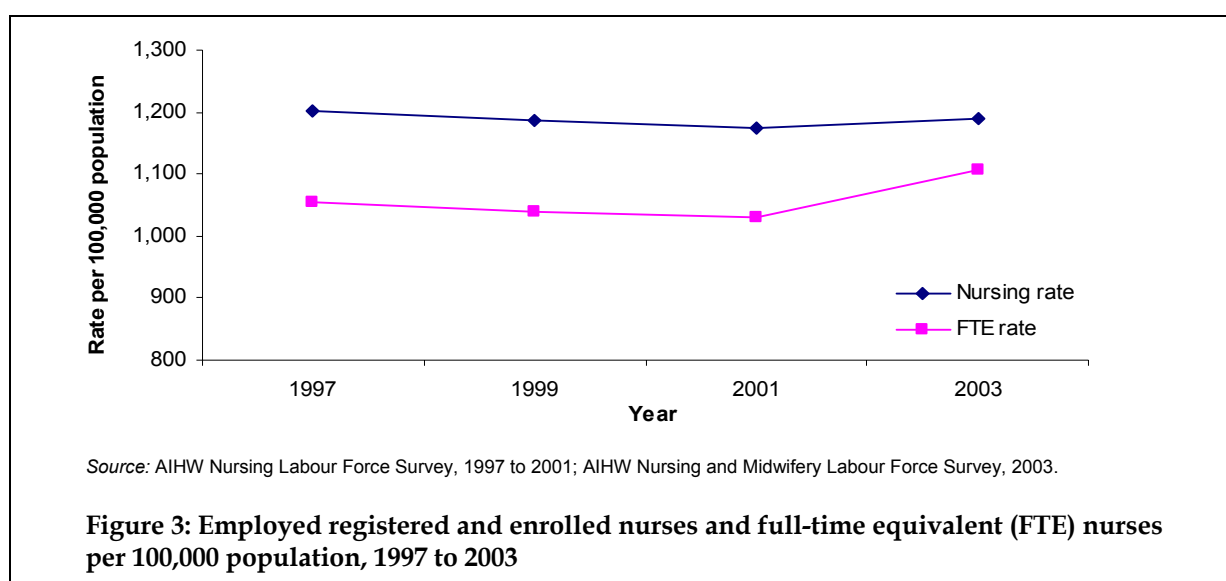
A comparison between the number of nurses per 100,000 population and the FTE nurses per 100,000 population highlights the effect of the increase in average weekly hours worked in 2003. The lower proportion of nurses working part-time in 2003 brought a reversal of the previous downward trend in nursing supply.

Full-time equivalent

The full-time equivalent (FTE) measure of supply is based on the total hours worked by all nurses, divided by 35 hours (the standard of 35 hours being consistent with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) cut-off for part-time work).

That is, FTE measures how many 35-hour week workloads are being worked by nurses. This provides a measure of the supply of nursing because it takes into account both nurses working full-time and those working part-time.

By defining supply in terms of FTE per 100,000 population (or the FTE rate), meaningful comparisons across geographic regions, jurisdictions, and time can be made.



Supply of nurses in the clinical area of midwifery

Overall, supply of nurses working in midwifery increased between 1997 (234 FTE) and 2003 (255 FTE). This was due to nurse numbers in the area of midwifery increasing (by 9.8%) more than the population of women having children (those aged 15 to 49 years) (up by 3.7%) and stable average weekly hours over the period (range 28.5 to 29.3). Over this time, the number of births per year reduced slightly, with 251,842 births registered in 1977 and 251,200 in 2003, and this is reflected in the fairly stable overall fertility rate (1.75 babies per woman in 2003, and varying between 1.73 and 1.76 from 1998 to 2002) (Tables 4, A14; ABS 1997 to 2003).

Table 4: Nurses employed in the clinical area of midwifery, rate and FTE rate, 1997 to 2003

	1997	1999	2001	2003
Number of nurses in midwifery (per 100,000 female population aged 15–49 years)	287	301	282	304
FTE nurses in midwifery (per 100,000 female population aged 15–49 years)	234	245	224	255
Average weekly hours worked	28.5	28.5	27.9	29.3
Female population aged 15–49 years	4,811,898	4,859,158	4,928,710	4,988,796

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003; ABS 1997 to 2003.

Regional distribution

There were an estimated 19.9 million resident Australians in 2003 (ABS 1997 to 2003) and 236,645 nurses provided services to this population. It is important for planning equitable access to health care to monitor the geographic distribution of these nurses and the services they provide. This section presents the characteristics of employed nurses by geographic location of their main work setting using the Remoteness Area Structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) (see 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary).

Across geographic regions, the distribution of nurses closely matched that of the general population in 2003. For example, of all employed nurses in Australia in 2003, two-thirds (65.7%) were located in Major cities in their main job, and this aligns with the general population living in Major cities (66.3%) (Table 5).

Between 1997 and 2003, there was a slight movement in the geographic distribution of nurses, with the proportion of nurses in Inner regional areas decreasing slightly (from 22.3% to 21.6%) and a corresponding increase in the proportion of nurses in Major cities (from 64.8% to 65.7%). This movement towards Major cities is partly reflected in an increased rate of nurses per 100,000 population in this region (from 1,042 in 1997 to 1,120 in 2003). The nursing rate (which allows population changes to be taken into account) shows increases in all the geographical regions between 1997 and 2003 (Table 5).

In FTE terms, in 2003 nursing supply ranged from 1,169 FTE nurses per 100,000 population in Very remote areas to 1,029 in Outer regional areas. Supply increased in all areas between 1997 and 2003.

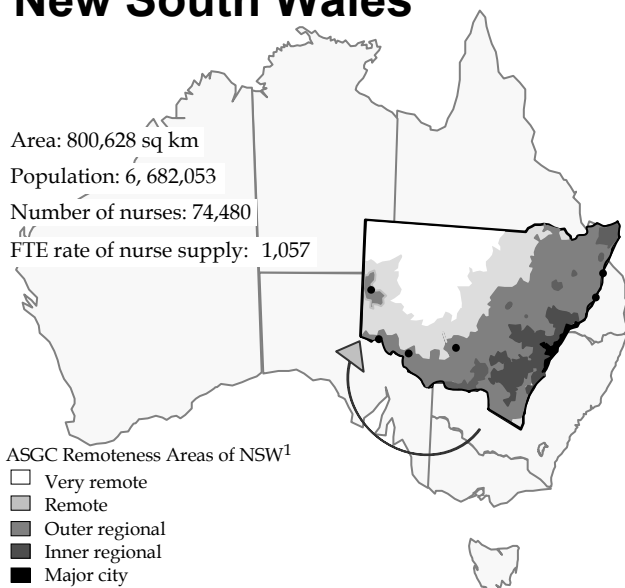
Table 5: Employed registered and enrolled nurses: geographic location of main job^(a), 1997 and 2003

	Major city	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote	Australia
1997						
Distribution (per cent)						
Registered nurses	67.7	20.9	9.1	1.5	0.9	100.0
Enrolled nurses	54.0	27.9	14.7	2.5	0.9	100.0
Total	64.8	22.3	10.2	1.7	0.9	100.0
Nursing rate (number per 100,000 population)						
Total nurses	1,042	1,153	1,019	1,063	994	1,202
Nursing FTE rate (FTE number per 100,000 population)						
Total nurses	926	975	879	939	971	1,054
Population	12,240,023	3,810,053	1,971,626	321,571	174,291	18,517,564
2003						
Distribution (per cent)						
Registered nurses	68.3	20.2	9.0	1.6	0.9	100.0
Enrolled nurses	55.2	27.1	14.5	2.3	0.9	100.0
Total	65.7	21.6	10.1	1.7	0.9	100.0
Nursing rate (number per 100,000 population)						
Total nurses	1,120	1,166	1,115	1,193	1,082	1,191
Nursing FTE rate (FTE number per 100,000 population)						
Total nurses	1,050	1,056	1,029	1,163	1,169	1,106
Population	13,179,532	4,152,984	2,036,941	324,300	178,889	19,872,646

(a) Regional figures exclude 12,009 nurses in 2003 and 25,799 nurses in 1997 who did not provide information on the location of their main job.
Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

State and territory profiles

New South Wales



In 2003 employed nurses in New South Wales were, on average, 42.6 years of age and worked 33.2 hours per week. Clinical nurses were more likely to work in the area of Medical nursing (10,795), followed by Coronary/critical care (9,161) (Table 6).

This was a change from 1997 when, on average, employed nurses were younger (40.4 years) and had shorter working weeks (31.4 hours). From 1997 to 2003, numbers of clinical nurses grew by 9.2% while non-clinical nurses decreased by 12.0% (Tables 6, A8, A9 and A10).

The supply of nurses in 2003 (1,057 FTE) was up from 1997 (1,006 FTE), fewer nurses were looking for work (2,136 in 2003 compared with 2,526), and the proportion working part-time was slightly less (45.2% and 46.3% respectively) (Tables 7, A7, A10 and A11).

Nursing role and clinical area of nursing

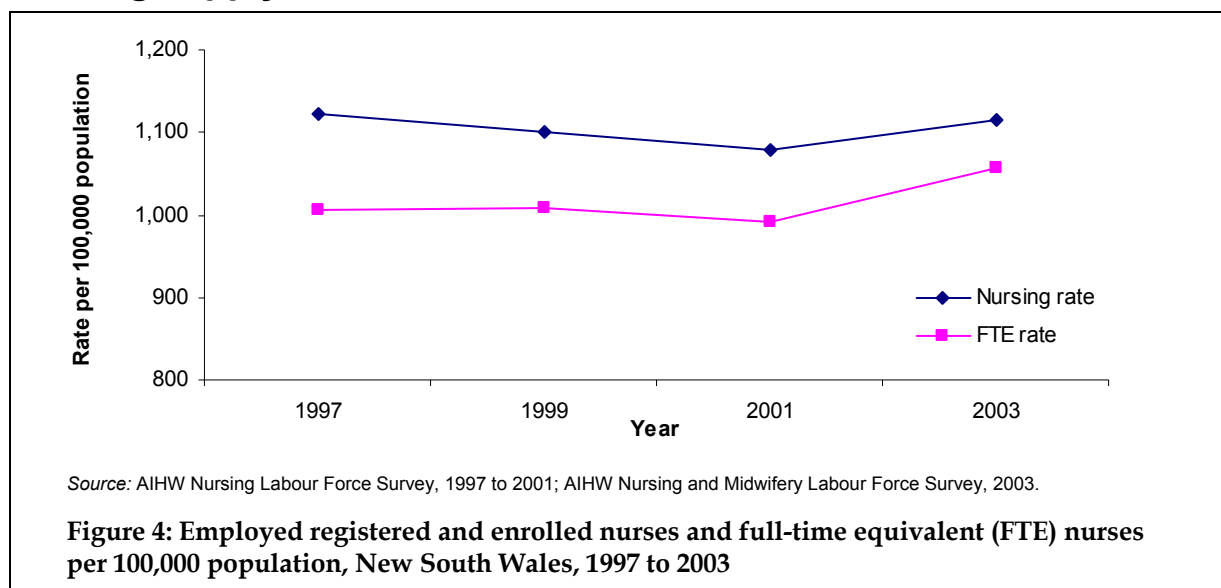
Table 6: Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, New South Wales, 2003

Nursing role/clinical area of nursing	Number	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	% Part-time
<i>Clinical nurses</i>	64,496	42.1	9.1	81.5	32.5	48.0
Mixed medical/surgical	3,602	41.0	5.7	68.4	31.2	54.0
Medical	10,795	42.6	6.7	74.9	32.2	48.3
Surgical	5,927	40.2	6.5	81.7	32.5	48.5
Coronary/critical care	9,161	37.3	13.5	95.2	34.1	39.3
Geriatric/gerontology	8,753	47.7	5.2	70.5	30.4	60.9
Oncology	1,267	38.8	7.5	89.4	34.5	39.3
Perioperative	5,600	40.3	9.0	84.3	33.0	45.1
Rehabilitation/disability	3,271	44.5	15.8	62.8	33.4	43.1
Midwifery	4,282	41.8	1.0	98.5	30.5	59.2
Mental health/psychiatric	4,437	44.3	28.8	85.8	36.0	30.6
Community nursing	2,185	44.2	5.5	85.2	31.5	46.9
Paediatric	1,114	37.5	2.8	90.6	31.1	51.8
Family and child health	1,048	45.7	0.6	97.6	30.6	54.5
School children's health	239	47.2	20.1	88.3	34.3	36.3
No one principal area	743	41.2	8.4	77.7	30.6	54.3
Other	2,071	43.8	7.6	80.5	32.1	49.8
<i>Non-clinical nurses</i>	9,984	45.9	11.6	93.1	38.0	27.2
Total	74,480	42.6	9.4	83.0	33.2	45.2

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force survey, 2003.

1. See 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary.

Nursing supply



Overall, nurse numbers increased by 5.8% (Tables 6 and A9). The rise in the average weekly hours worked by nurses (from 31.4 hours in 1997 to 33.2 in 2003) led to an increase in nursing supply (from 1,006 FTE in 1997 to FTE 1,057 in 2003) (Figure 4). However, the state's population growth (6.5%) was greater than the growth in numbers of employed nurses, and this limited the growth in supply (Tables A10 and A11).

Employment status

Registered nurses were more concentrated in metropolitan areas (92.3%) than were enrolled nurses (83.7%). Registered nurses were more likely to have post-registration qualifications (46.0% of metropolitan and 43.1% of non-metropolitan nurses) than were enrolled nurses (22.5% and 21.4%, respectively) (Table 7).

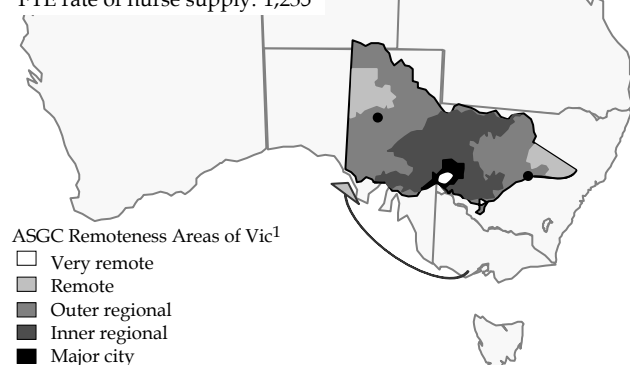
Table 7: Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, New South Wales, 2003

	Registered nurses		Enrolled nurses		Total		
	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Not stated
Employed in nursing, only or mainly in this state	37,310	2,746	7,107	1,323	44,417	4,069	25,994
On extended leave	483	25	53	11	536	36	276
Looking for work in nursing	955	97	305	52	1,260	150	726
Overseas	276	36	9	2	285	37	1,973
Not looking for work in nursing	5,841	589	1,227	286	7,068	876	4,405
Employed only or mainly interstate	1,917	399	292	71	2,208	471	1,330
Total nurse registrations	46,782	3,893	8,991	1,745	55,773	5,638	34,703
Proportion with post-registration qualifications (%)	46.0	43.1	22.5	21.4	42.2	36.3	39.3

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force survey, 2003.

Victoria

Area: 227,010 sq km
 Population: 4,911,425
 Number of nurses: 66,534
 FTE rate of nurse supply: 1,235



In 2003 the average age of employed nurses in Victoria was 42.1 years, they worked an average of 31.9 hours per week, and around one in five clinical nurses worked in the area of Aged care nursing (19.1% or 11,126) (Table 8).

This was a change from 1997 when, on average, employed nurses were younger (40.1 years) and had shorter working weeks (29.6 hours). From 1997 to 2003 the number of clinical nurses rose by 4.4% and non-clinical nurse numbers rose by 46.1% (Tables 8, A8, A9, and A10).

The supply of nurses in 2003 (1,235 FTE) was up from 1997 (1,131 FTE), fewer were looking for work (681 compared with 1,702), and the proportion working part-time was lower (53.8% and 59.3%, respectively) (Tables 9, A7, A10 and A11).

Nursing role and clinical area of nursing

The clinical area of Mental health had the highest proportion of male nurses (35.7%) in 2003. Nurses in this area also had the longest average working week (37.1 hours) and were least likely to work part-time (30.0%). Nurses working in Family and child health tended to be younger (average age 38.8 years) than those in most other nursing areas, and around half (53.0%) worked part-time (Table 8).

Table 8: Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Victoria, 2003

Nursing role/clinical area of nursing	Number	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	% Part-time
<i>Clinical nurses</i>	58,403	41.8	8.4	73.0	31.4	55.8
Medical, Surgical and Mixed clinical areas ^(a)	17,137	38.9	6.6	80.2	31.5	53.8
Perioperative	3,952	41.1	6.6	91.6	32.6	49.1
Midwifery	4,556	44.1	0.9	95.7	28.3	69.1
Critical care	6,158	37.0	11.7	95.8	32.2	54.5
Family and child health	1,519	38.8	2.5	89.0	31.0	53.0
Community health	3,188	43.7	4.5	82.2	28.6	64.9
Aged care	11,126	45.7	5.7	41.2	29.8	65.1
Mental health	3,438	42.7	35.7	46.1	37.1	30.0
Rehabilitation/disability	2,216	43.3	10.4	51.0	31.6	56.4
Other	5,113	45.3	8.8	73.2	33.1	48.4
<i>Non-clinical nurses</i>	8,132	44.8	9.6	79.5	35.4	39.8
Total	66,534	42.1	8.5	73.8	31.9	53.8

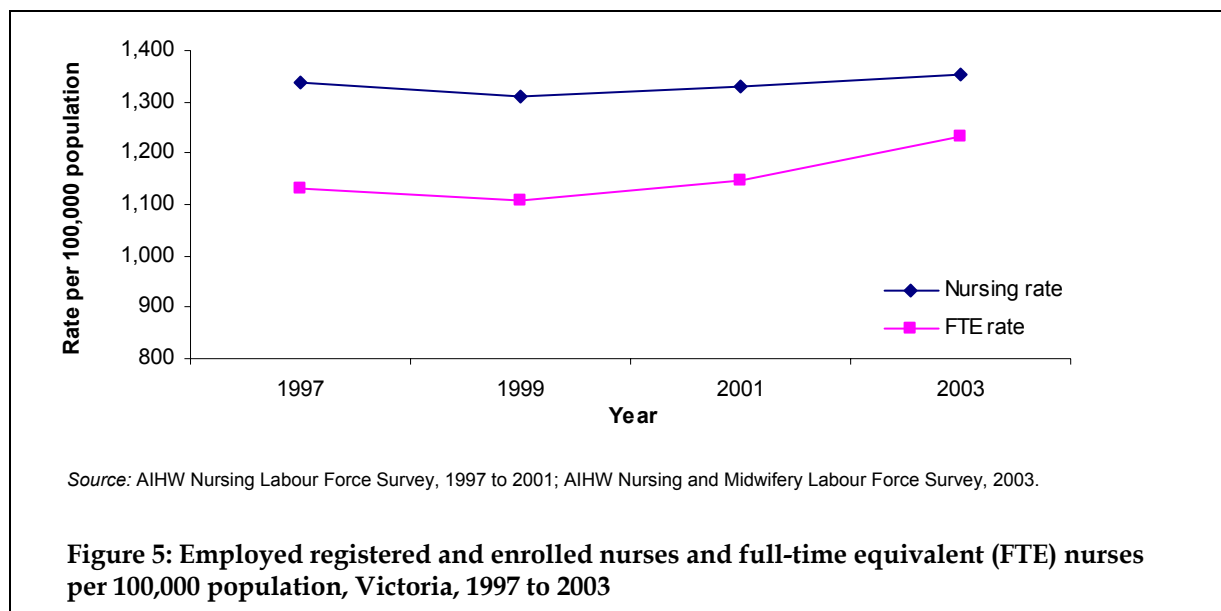
(a) Comprises Medical nursing, Surgical nursing, Mixed medical/surgical nursing and nursing in 'no one principal area'. These categories have been combined to enable some comparison over time. Changes to these categories prevent comparisons at a finer level.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

1. See 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary.

Nursing supply

The increase in nursing supply (from 1,131 FTE in 1997 to 1,235 FTE in 2003) can be attributed to an increase in the average weekly hours worked by nurses (from 29.6 hours in 1997 to 31.9 in 2003) and a growth in employed nurse numbers (8.2%) that was greater than growth in the state's population (6.8%) (Figure 5, Tables 8, A10 and A11).



Employment status

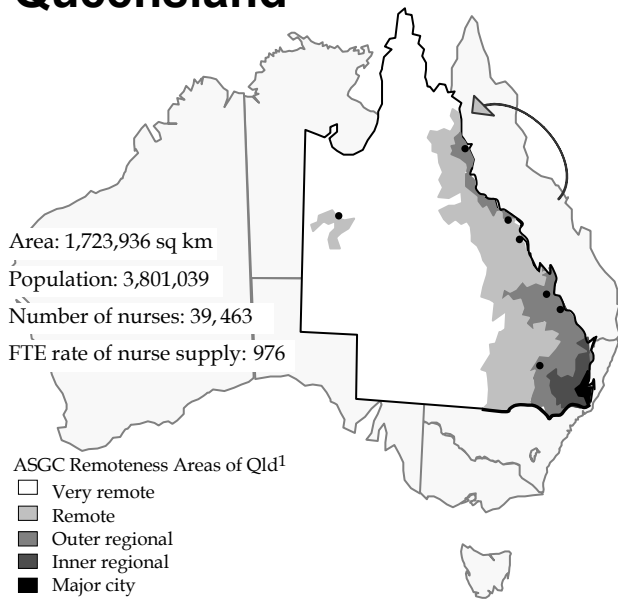
Registered nurses were more concentrated in metropolitan areas (94.0%) than were enrolled nurses (90.6%). Registered nurses were also more likely to have post-registration qualifications (45.3% of metropolitan and 43.8% of non-metropolitan nurses) than were enrolled nurses (17.1% and 17.5%, respectively) (Table 9).

Table 9: Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Victoria, 2003

	Registered nurses		Enrolled nurses		Total		
	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Not stated
Employed in nursing, only or mainly in this state	46,122	2,663	15,717	1,578	61,840	4,241	454
On extended leave	1,322	60	256	31	1,578	91	16
Looking for work in nursing	370	22	233	38	603	61	17
Overseas	404	28	37	2	440	30	521
Not looking for work in nursing	2,684	213	1,224	108	3,908	321	103
Employed only or mainly interstate	996	327	209	69	1,205	396	31
Total nurse registrations	51,899	3,313	17,675	1,826	69,574	5,139	1,143
Proportion with post-registration qualifications (%)	45.3	43.8	17.1	17.5	38.1	34.5	38.5

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Queensland



In 2003 the average age of employed nurses in Queensland was 44.1 years, they worked an average week of 32.9 hours, and one in ten clinical nurses worked in the area of Critical care nursing (10.4% or 3,663) (Table 10).

This was a change from 1997 when, on average, employed nurses were younger (40.0 years) and had shorter working weeks (31.7 hours). From 1997 to 2003, clinical nurse numbers grew by 1.7% and non-clinical nurse numbers nearly doubled (up 91.5%) (Tables 10, A8, A9 and A10).

The supply of nurses in 2003 (976 FTE) was down from 1997 (982 FTE), fewer were looking for work (548 compared with 972), and a higher proportion worked part-time (49.6% and 47.1%, respectively) (Tables 11, A7, A10 and A11).

Nursing role and clinical area of nursing

The clinical area of Midwifery had the lowest proportion of male nurses (1.0%) in 2003. Also, nurses in this area had the shortest average working week (29.2 hours), and two-thirds (67.6%) worked part-time. Aged care nurses were older on average (50.6 years) but worked a similar average week (31.9 hours) to that worked by all clinical nurses (32.9 hours) (Table 10).

Table 10: Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Queensland, 2003

Nursing role/clinical area of nursing	Number	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	% Part-time
<i>Clinical nurses</i>	<i>35,085</i>	<i>43.8</i>	<i>8.6</i>	<i>83.5</i>	<i>32.4</i>	<i>51.8</i>
Medical, Surgical and Mixed clinical areas ^(a)	11,194	41.5	7.4	77.5	31.8	53.8
Perioperative	2,906	42.1	7.1	87.1	32.9	48.2
Midwifery	2,436	43.6	1.0	98.0	29.2	67.6
Critical care	3,663	39.2	13.6	96.8	32.7	52.8
Family and child health	1,401	42.3	2.4	95.2	31.8	53.4
Community health	2,229	45.4	3.4	88.6	30.7	55.8
Aged care	4,757	50.6	3.9	75.5	31.9	57.6
Mental health	2,179	45.6	34.6	86.2	36.5	29.2
Rehabilitation/disability	648	46.8	10.5	60.4	33.5	49.8
Other	3,673	46.5	9.0	81.4	35.0	39.3
<i>Non-clinical nurses</i>	<i>4,378</i>	<i>46.2</i>	<i>9.8</i>	<i>89.7</i>	<i>36.8</i>	<i>31.9</i>
Total	39,463	44.1	8.7	84.2	32.9	49.6

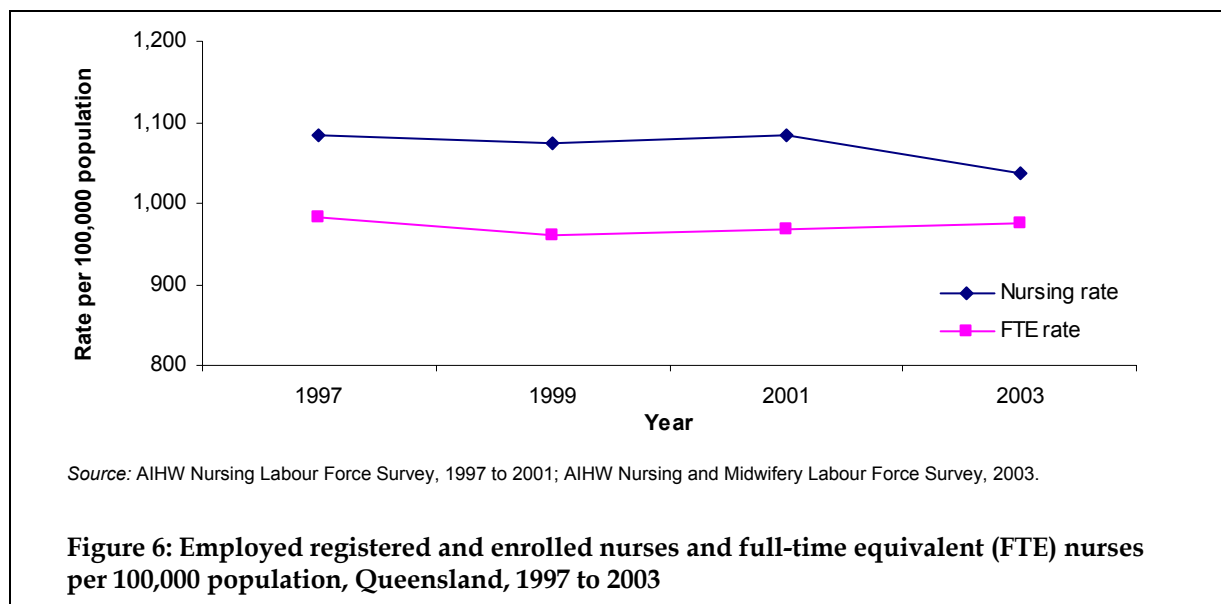
(a) Comprises Medical nursing, Surgical nursing, Mixed medical/surgical nursing and nursing in 'no one principal area'. These categories have been combined to enable some comparison over time. Changes to these categories prevent comparisons at a finer level.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

1. See 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary.

Nursing supply

The increase in nurses' average working week (from 31.7 hours in 1997 to 32.9 in 2003) did not lead to a rise in nursing supply (from 982 FTE in 1997 down to 976 FTE in 2003). The state's population growth (12.0%) was greater than the growth in numbers of employed nurses (7.2%) and this limited the growth in supply associated with the increased hours (Figure 6, Tables 10 and A11).



Employment status

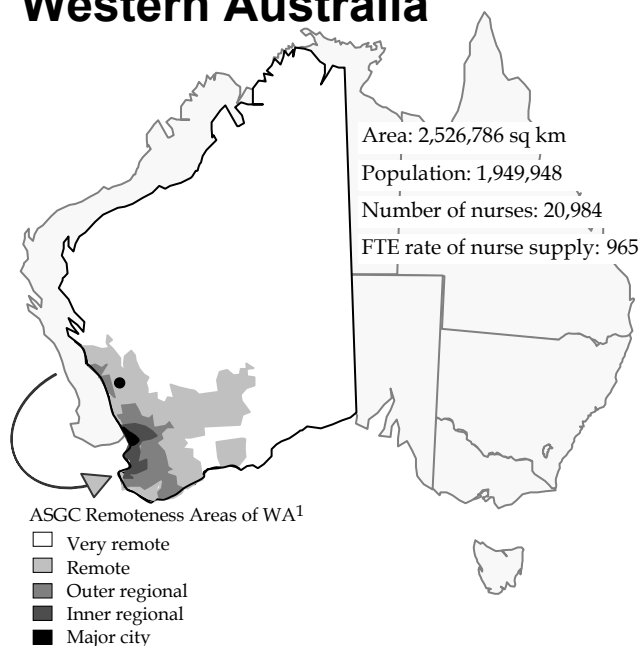
Registered nurses were more concentrated in metropolitan areas (80.3%) than were enrolled nurses (71.7%) and, overall, just 1.2% of registered and enrolled nurses were looking for work in nursing. Registered nurses were also more likely to have post-registration qualifications (43.1% of metropolitan and 45.2% of non-metropolitan nurses) than were enrolled nurses (24.2% and 22.1%, respectively) (Table 11).

Table 11: Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Queensland, 2003

	Registered nurses		Enrolled nurses		Total		
	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Not stated
Employed in nursing, only or mainly in this state	26,470	6,358	4,414	1,741	30,884	8,099	480
On extended leave	555	198	52	13	607	211	10
Looking for work in nursing	328	82	83	38	411	119	18
Overseas	272	54	17	—	289	54	411
Not looking for work in nursing	1,720	471	334	147	2,054	618	63
Employed only or mainly interstate	1,042	274	114	38	1,156	311	59
Total nurse registrations	30,388	7,437	5,013	1,977	35,401	9,413	1,040
Proportion with post-registration qualifications (%)	43.1	45.2	24.2	22.1	40.5	40.3	36.3

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Western Australia



In 2003 the average age of employed nurses in Western Australia was 45.2 years, they worked an average week of 31.4 hours, and 6.3% (or 1,154) of clinical nurses worked in the area of Community health nursing (Table 12).

This was a change from 1997 when, on average, employed nurses were younger (41.0 years) and had shorter working weeks (30.5 hours). From 1997 to 2003, clinical nurse numbers decreased by 7.0% and non-clinical nurse numbers grew by a third (up 31.5%) (Tables 12, A8, A9 and A10).

The supply of nurses in 2003 (965 FTE) was down from 1997 (1,056 FTE), and although fewer were looking for work (315 compared with 406), a higher proportion worked part-time (53.1% and 51.3%, respectively) (Tables 13, A7, A10 and A11).

Nursing role and clinical area of nursing

Nurses in the clinical area of Mental health reported the longest average working week (36.5 hours) and were least likely to work part-time (32.7%) – and one in four (24.3%) was male. Western Australia was the only jurisdiction to experience an overall decline (down 3.6%) in the number of employed nurses between 1997 and 2003 (Tables 12 and A9).

Table 12: Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Western Australia, 2003

Nursing role/clinical area of nursing	Number	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	% Part-time
<i>Clinical nurses</i>	18,399	45.1	5.1	78.9	30.9	55.3
Medical, Surgical and Mixed clinical areas ^(a)	5,891	43.8	4.2	72.7	30.7	55.8
Perioperative	1,363	44.1	7.1	86.3	31.9	52.9
Midwifery	1,719	44.1	—	96.9	28.8	64.6
Critical care	1,644	39.8	6.4	95.5	31.0	55.6
Family and child health	707	42.9	2.1	93.4	30.4	56.8
Community health	1,154	46.8	1.3	79.8	29.3	61.4
Aged care	2,190	50.9	3.5	60.1	28.4	68.4
Mental health	866	46.5	24.3	81.5	36.5	32.7
Rehabilitation/disability	399	48.7	3.8	61.5	32.4	44.9
Other	2,467	46.4	6.6	79.7	33.2	42.3
<i>Non-clinical nurses</i>	2,585	46.4	7.0	88.6	35.3	38.1
Total	20,984	45.2	5.4	80.1	31.4	53.1

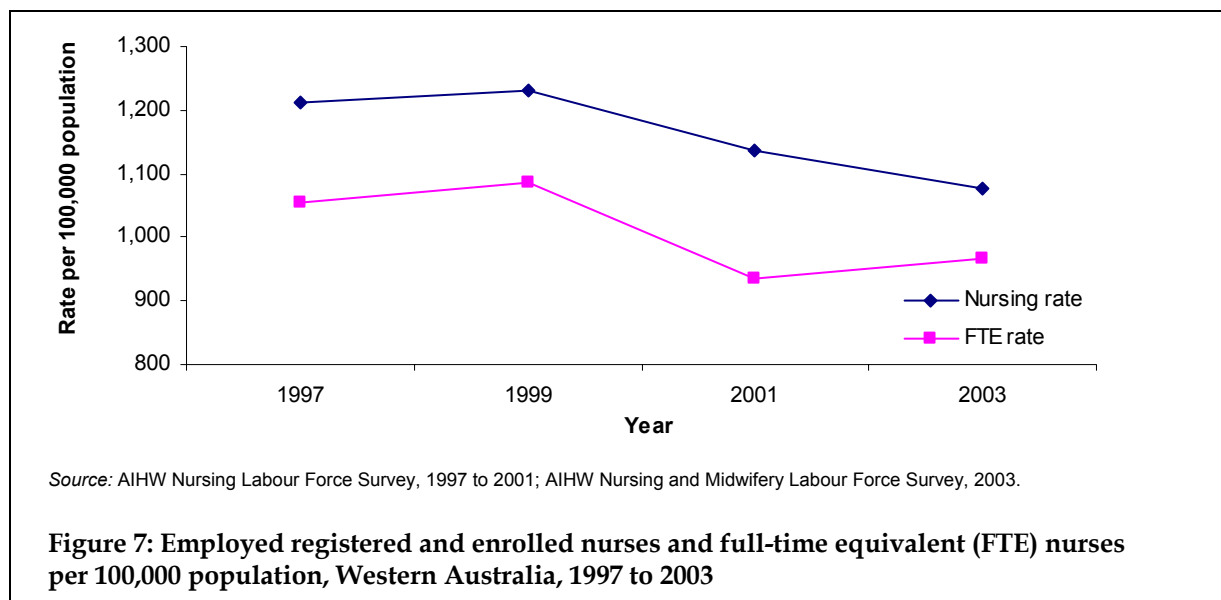
(a) Comprises Medical nursing, Surgical nursing, Mixed medical/surgical nursing and nursing in 'no one principal area'. These categories have been combined to enable some comparison over time. Changes to these categories prevent comparisons at a finer level.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

1. See 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary.

Nursing supply

The decrease in the nursing supply (from 1,056 FTE in 1997 to 965 FTE in 2003) was mainly due to population growth (8.6%) at a time when employed nurse numbers declined (down 3.6%). The increase in average weekly hours worked by nurses after 2001 was not sufficient to fully recover the previous decline in supply (Figure 7, Tables 12, A10 and A11).



Employment status

Registered nurses were more concentrated in metropolitan areas (84.1%) than were enrolled nurses (72.2%). Overall, of all nurses registered or enrolled, 6.5% of those in metropolitan locations and 9.7% of those in non-metropolitan locations were not looking for work in nursing. Registered nurses were more likely to have post-registration qualifications (45.9% of metropolitan and 47.3% of non-metropolitan) than were enrolled nurses (21.4% and 17.8%, respectively) (Table 13).

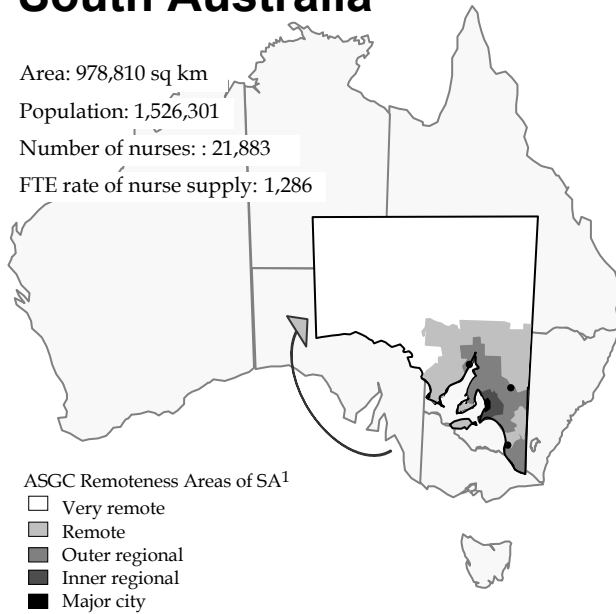
Table 13: Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Western Australia, 2003

	Registered nurses		Enrolled nurses		Total		
	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Not stated
Employed in nursing, only or mainly in this state	14,129	2,477	3,056	1,088	17,185	3,564	235
On extended leave	360	85	73	40	434	125	—
Looking for work in nursing	195	35	60	20	255	55	5
Overseas	30	5	7	7	37	12	90
Not looking for work in nursing	996	255	274	167	1,269	422	42
Employed only or mainly interstate	280	155	27	27	307	182	38
Total nurse registrations	15,990	3,012	3,496	1,348	19,486	4,360	410
Proportion with post-registration qualifications (%)	45.9	47.3	21.4	17.8	41.5	38.2	33.3

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

South Australia

Area: 978,810 sq km
 Population: 1,526,301
 Number of nurses: : 21,883
 FTE rate of nurse supply: 1,286



In 2003 the average age of employed nurses in South Australia was 42.7 years, they worked an average week of 31.4 hours, and the areas of Family and child health and Rehabilitation/disability nursing had the lowest number of clinical nurses (2.8% for both areas) (Table 14).

This was a change from 1997 when, on average, employed nurses were younger (40.2 years) and had shorter working weeks (29.6 hours). From 1997 to 2003, clinical nurse numbers increased by 9.1% while non-clinical nurse numbers decreased by 6.9% (Tables 14, A8, A9 and A10).

The supply of nurses in 2003 (1,286 FTE) was up from 1997 (1,168 FTE), fewer were looking for work (248 compared with 362), and a lower proportion worked part-time (55.9% and 58.8%, respectively) (Tables 15, A7, A10 and A11).

Nursing role and clinical area of nursing

In 2003, around one in three (34.1%) nurses working in Mental health nursing were male, compared with 9.0% for all nurses. Lowest numbers of clinical nurses worked in Rehabilitation/disability (534) and Family and child health (550). There were 2,973 (15.4%) nurses working in Aged care and these nurses were older on average (46.5 years) and averaged shorter working weeks (30.4 hours) (Table 14).

Table 14: Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, South Australia, 2003

Nursing role/clinical area of nursing	Number	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	% Part-time
<i>Clinical nurses</i>	19,339	42.3	8.7	75.3	30.9	58.1
Medical, Surgical and Mixed clinical areas ^(a)	6,254	40.0	6.9	69.9	30.3	61.6
Perioperative	1,450	41.1	7.0	83.8	31.0	56.9
Midwifery	1,223	42.8	1.2	98.3	28.0	73.3
Critical care	1,970	37.8	14.0	93.3	32.1	52.9
Family and child health	550	43.0	3.2	91.9	30.7	57.3
Community health	1,195	44.5	5.0	80.0	29.0	62.2
Aged care	2,973	46.5	4.6	57.5	30.4	63.4
Mental health	1,091	46.6	34.1	80.4	35.9	27.9
Rehabilitation/disability	534	44.8	19.6	53.0	32.0	51.7
Other	2,098	43.9	8.2	76.3	32.3	51.5
<i>Non-clinical nurses</i>	2,544	45.1	10.9	84.2	35.3	39.2
Total	21,883	42.7	9.0	76.3	31.4	55.9

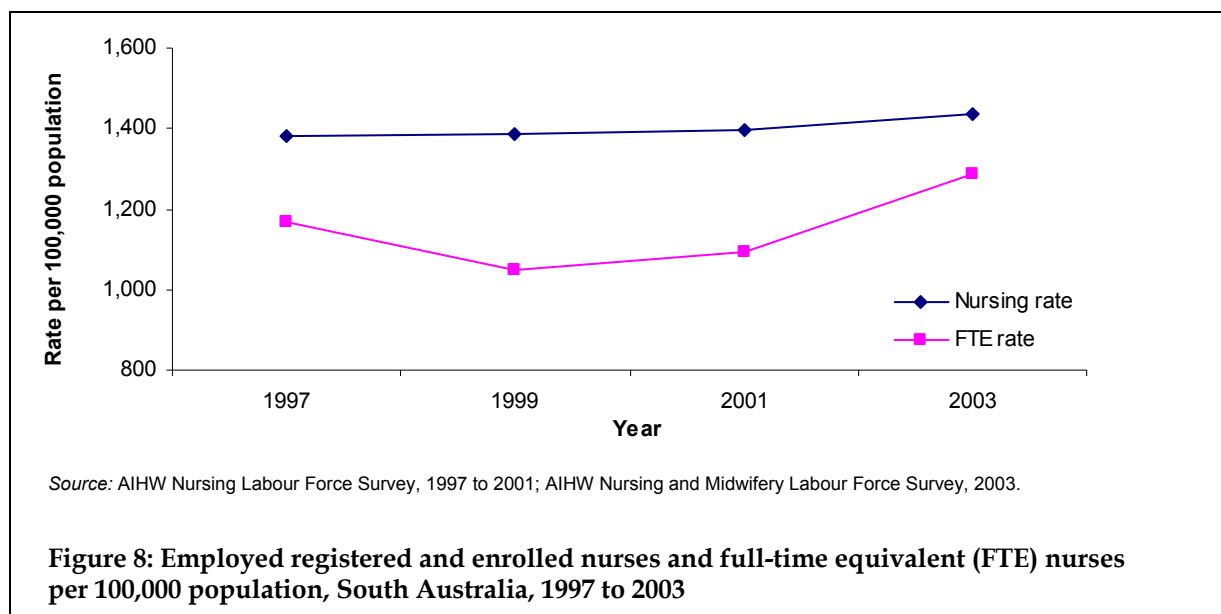
(a) Comprises Medical nursing, Surgical nursing, Mixed medical/surgical nursing and nursing in 'no one principal area'. These categories have been combined to enable some comparison over time. Changes to these categories prevent comparisons at a finer level.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

1. See 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary.

Nursing supply

The increase in nursing supply (from 1,168 FTE in 1997 to 1,286 FTE in 2003) was partly due to a rise in the average weekly hours worked by nurses (from 29.6 hours in 1997 to 31.4 in 2003). Also, the population growth (3.0%) was less than growth in the number of employed nurses (6.9%) which strengthened the growth in supply (Figure 8, Tables 14, A9, A10 and A11).



Employment status

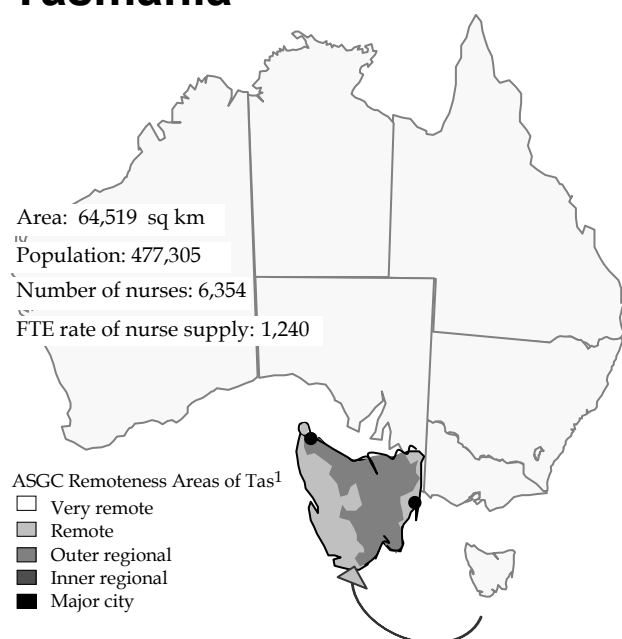
Nurses in metropolitan areas were more likely to be working in nursing than were nurses in non-metropolitan areas (90.3% and 86.2%, respectively). Registered nurses were more likely to have post-registration qualifications (48.6% of metropolitan and 47.8% of non-metropolitan) than were enrolled nurses (18.0% and 18.5%, respectively) (Table 15).

Table 15: Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, South Australia, 2003

	Registered nurses		Enrolled nurses		Total		
	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Not stated
Employed in nursing, only or mainly in this state	14,593	1,978	3,924	1,200	18,517	3,178	188
On extended leave	369	83	75	20	444	104	8
Looking for work in nursing	151	17	58	19	209	36	3
Overseas	54	6	—	n.p.	54	7	114
Not looking for work in nursing	752	129	293	108	1,045	237	21
Employed only or mainly interstate	205	110	28	16	233	125	7
Total nurse registrations	16,124	2,322	4,379	1,365	20,502	3,687	341
Proportion with post-registration qualifications (%)	48.6	47.8	18.0	18.5	42.1	37.0	27.7

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Tasmania



In 2003 the average age of employed nurses in Tasmania was 45.5 years, they worked an average week of 32.6 hours, and almost one in five (17.9%) clinical nurses worked in the area of Community health nursing (Table 16).

This was a change from 1997 when, on average, employed nurses were younger (41.5 years) and had shorter working weeks (29.2 hours). From 1997 to 2003, clinical nurse numbers increased by 2.6% and non-clinical nurse numbers rose by 50.2% (Tables 16, A8, A9 and A10).

The supply of nurses in 2003 (1,240 FTE) was down from 1997 (1,057 FTE), fewer were looking for work (39 compared with 105), and a lower proportion worked part-time (53.2% and 60.8%, respectively) (Tables 17, A7, A10 and A11).

Nursing role and clinical area of nursing

In 2003 one in three nurses (34.5%) working in Mental health and one in four nurses (24.9%) working in Aged care were male, which was high compared with the overall figure for male nurses (9.8%). The lowest numbers of clinical nurses worked in Rehabilitation/disability (115 or 2.0%) and Mental health (140 or 2.4%). The proportion of clinical nurses working in Community health (17.9%) was high compared with the national figure (5.5%) (Tables 16 and A14).

Table 16: Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Tasmania, 2003

Nursing role/clinical area of nursing	Number	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	% Part-time
<i>Clinical nurses</i>	5,734	45.3	9.6	84.7	32.2	54.9
Medical, Surgical and Mixed clinical areas ^(a)	1,608	42.3	8.2	87.0	32.2	54.8
Perioperative	416	43.2	10.3	94.8	33.0	47.1
Midwifery	404	44.8	2.4	99.0	29.9	73.8
Critical care	490	40.5	16.4	97.7	33.5	53.8
Family and child health	547	47.1	4.2	93.5	31.0	53.7
Community health	1,027	48.8	4.7	64.0	29.9	66.6
Aged care	385	47.3	24.9	80.9	34.7	42.1
Mental health	140	49.2	34.5	68.3	38.2	26.3
Rehabilitation/disability	115	48.7	11.5	81.0	33.1	54.9
Other	604	48.3	9.4	85.2	34.6	43.3
<i>Non-clinical nurses</i>	620	47.4	12.1	92.0	36.2	37.7
Total	6,354	45.5	9.8	85.4	32.6	53.2

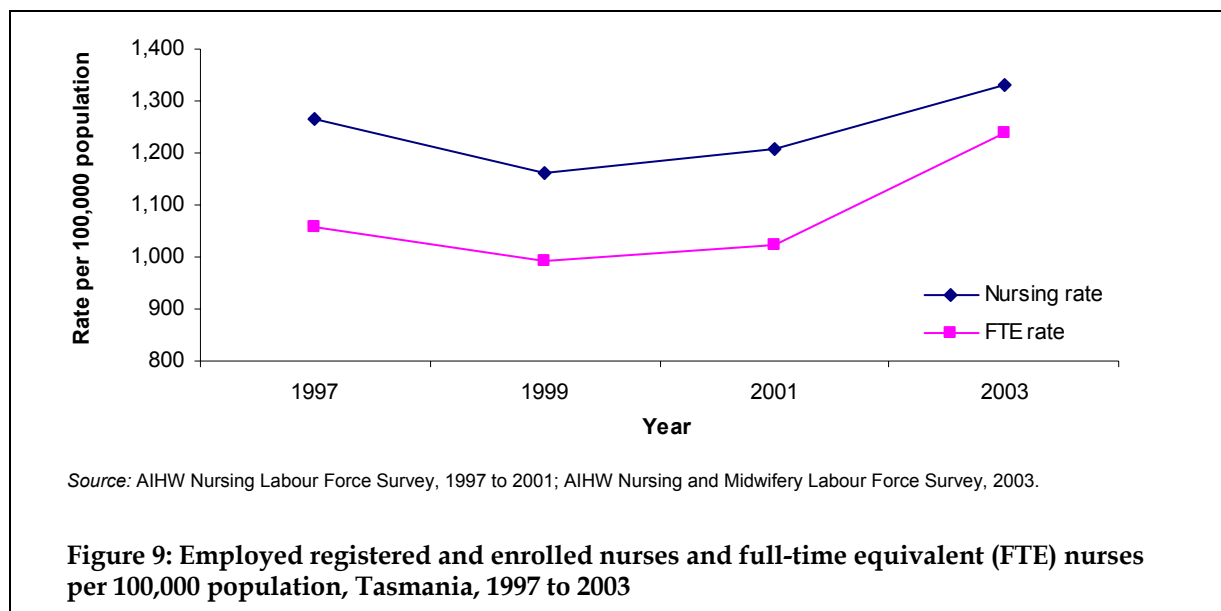
(a) Comprises Medical nursing, Surgical nursing, Mixed medical/surgical nursing and nursing in 'no one principal area'. These categories have been combined to enable some comparison over time. Changes to these categories prevent comparisons at a finer level.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

1. See 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary.

Nursing supply

Overall, between 1997 and 2003, nursing supply rose (from 1,057 FTE to 1,240 FTE, respectively). This was after a dip in 1999 (Figure 9). FTE rises in 2001 and 2003 slightly exceeded rises in the nurse rate (Figure 9). From 1997 to 2003, population growth (0.8%) was less than the growth in numbers of employed nurses (5.9%) and this contributed to the growth in supply (Tables 16, A10 and A11).



Employment status

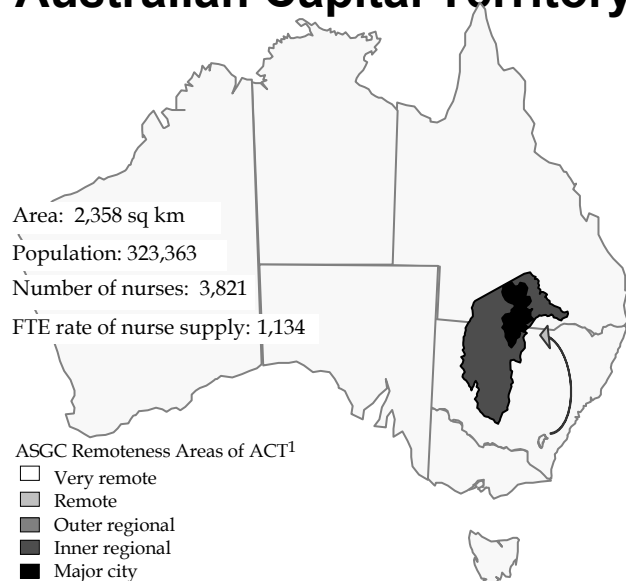
Registered nurses were more concentrated in metropolitan areas (71.9%) than were enrolled nurses (53.6%). Registered nurses were also more likely to have post-registration qualifications (41.4% of metropolitan and 39.1% of non-metropolitan) than were enrolled nurses (13.3% and 10.2%, respectively) (Table 17).

Table 17: Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Tasmania, 2003

	Registered nurses		Enrolled nurses		Total		
	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Not stated
Employed in nursing, only or mainly in this state	3,865	1,491	493	416	4,358	1,907	89
On extended leave	61	36	n.p.	5	63	42	2
Looking for work in nursing	14	13	6	6	20	19	—
Overseas	6	3	—	—	6	3	8
Not looking for work in nursing	137	57	6	12	143	68	2
Employed only or mainly interstate	57	23	10	8	67	30	3
Total nurse registrations	4,142	1,622	516	447	4,657	2,069	103
Proportion with post-registration qualifications (%)	41.4	39.1	13.3	10.2	38.3	32.9	34.3

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Australian Capital Territory



In 2003 the average age of employed nurses in the Australian Capital Territory was 44.5 years, they worked an average week of 33.6 hours, and some 12.0% of clinical nurses worked in the area of Critical care nursing (Table 18).

This was a change from 1997 when, on average, employed nurses were younger (42.0 years) and had shorter working weeks (31.3 hours). From 1997 to 2003 clinical nurse numbers increased by 10.2% and non-clinical nurse numbers increased by 38.0% (Tables 18, A8 A9 and A10).

The supply of nurses in 2003 (1,134 FTE) was up from 1997 (980 FTE), fewer were looking for work (61 in 2003 compared with 70 in 1997), and a lower proportion worked part-time (47.4% and 54.9%, respectively) (Tables 19, A7, A10 and A11).

Nursing role and clinical area of nursing

Nurses in the clinical areas of Rehabilitation/ disability nursing and Midwifery were more likely than other clinical nurses to work part-time in 2003 (68.7% and 66.3%, respectively, compared with 47.4% overall) and their corresponding weekly hours were fewer (29.9 on average for both, compared with 33.6 hours overall). The proportion of clinical nurses working in Community health (5.5%) was low compared with the national figure (11.5%).

Table 18: Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Australian Capital Territory, 2003

Nursing role/clinical area of nursing	Number	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	% Part-time
<i>Clinical nurses</i>	3,389	44.2	6.7	82.0	33.1	49.4
Medical, Surgical and Mixed clinical areas ^(a)	933	42.2	5.7	76.7	33.7	47.6
Perioperative	309	42.6	6.2	81.5	33.8	45.5
Midwifery	295	45.0	0.5	98.9	29.9	66.3
Critical care	406	39.8	11.4	98.8	33.1	49.3
Family and child health	153	46.3	4.4	97.8	31.3	57.0
Community health	186	46.2	5.3	82.8	32.1	46.9
Aged care	311	48.3	2.8	58.9	33.4	52.3
Mental health	163	46.8	26.8	82.5	36.1	32.9
Rehabilitation/disability	55	47.2	2.5	66.3	29.9	68.7
Other	577	46.5	6.0	79.9	33.6	45.7
<i>Non-clinical nurses</i>	432	47.3	6.7	94.9	37.6	31.5
Total	3,821	44.5	6.7	83.5	33.6	47.4

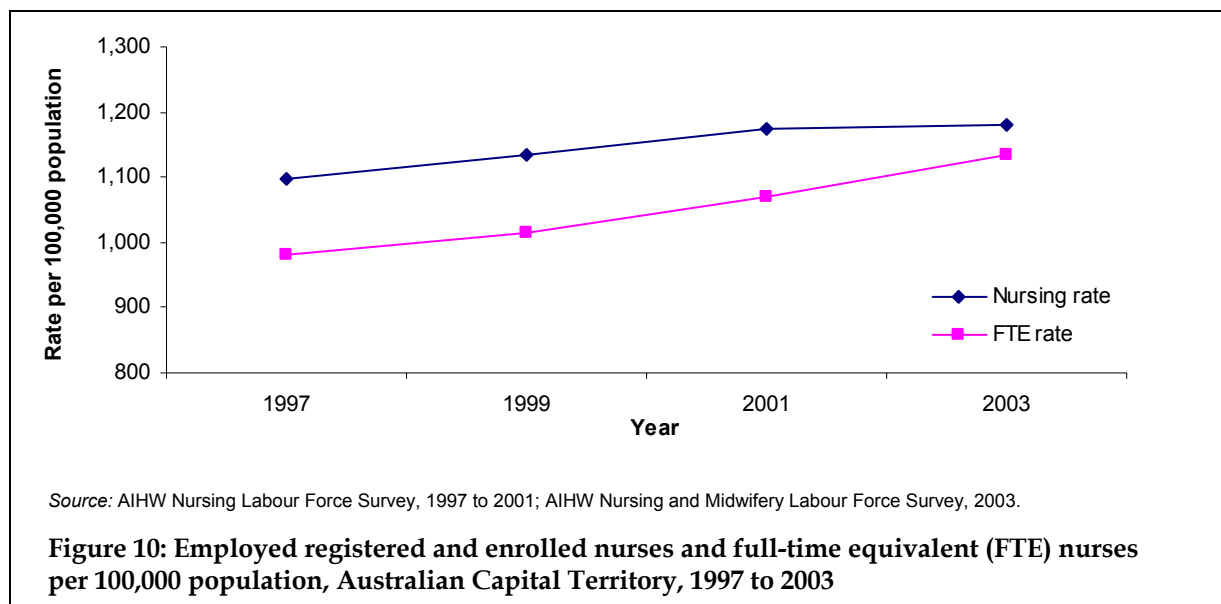
(a) Comprises Medical nursing, Surgical nursing, Mixed medical/surgical nursing and nursing in 'no one principal area'. These categories have been combined to enable some comparison over time. Changes to these categories prevent comparisons at a finer level.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

1. See 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary.

Nursing supply

The rise in nursing supply (from 980 FTE in 1997 to 1,134 FTE in 2003) was mainly due to a rise in the average weekly hours worked by nurses (from 31.3 in 1997 to 33.6 in 2003). Also, population growth (4.6%) was less than the growth in numbers of employed nurses (12.8%) and this added to the growth in supply (Tables 18, A9, A10 and A11). The effect of increased hours between 2001 and 2003 was evident in the larger increase in the FTE rate than in the nurse rate (Figure 10).



Employment status

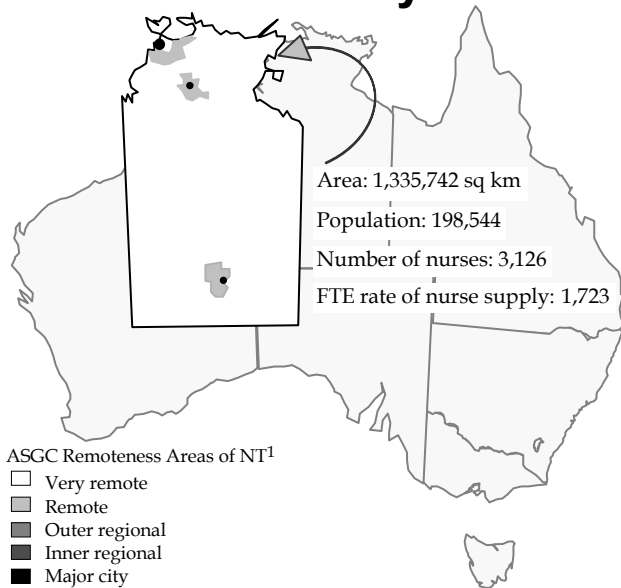
Registered nurses were more likely to have post-registration qualifications (47.6% of metropolitan and 43.3% of non-metropolitan) than were enrolled nurses (19.7% and 33.3%, respectively) (Table 19).

Table 19: Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Australian Capital Territory, 2003

	Registered nurses		Enrolled nurses		Total		
	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Not stated
Employed in nursing, only or mainly in this territory	3,115	19	615	—	3,730	19	72
On extended leave	70	—	10	—	80	—	n.p.
Looking for work in nursing	46	n.p.	12	—	58	n.p.	n.p.
Overseas	11	—	n.p.	—	12	—	30
Not looking for work in nursing	280	5	62	—	343	5	6
Employed only or mainly interstate	210	24	25	5	236	29	8
Total nurse registrations	3,733	50	726	5	4,458	55	119
Proportion with post-registration qualifications (%)	47.6	43.3	19.7	33.3	43.1	42.3	23.9

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Northern Territory



In 2003 the average age of employed nurses in the Northern Territory was 43.6 years, they worked an average week of 38.3 hours, and one in four clinical nurses worked in the combined clinical areas of Medical, Surgical and Mixed clinical (Table 20).

This was a change from 1997 when, on average, employed nurses were younger (39.3 years) and had shorter working weeks (36.0 hours). From 1997 to 2003 clinical nurse numbers rose by a third (up 33.0%) and non-clinical nurse numbers almost doubled (up 92.5%) (Tables 20, A8, A9 and A10).

The supply of nurses in 2003 (1,723 FTE) was up from 1997 (1,227 FTE) and, although fewer were looking for work (78 in 2003 compared with 116 in 1997), a lower proportion worked part-time (25.8% and 26.6%, respectively) (Tables 21, A7, A10 and A11).

Nursing role and clinical area of nursing

Compared with other jurisdictions, there was a high proportion of male nurses overall, and this was particularly marked in several areas – males made up 53.7% of nurses in Mental health, 19.9% of nurses in Community health and 18.8% of nurses in Rehabilitation/disability. Nurses in Aged care and Mental health were more likely to be older than nurses overall (46.8 and 46.2 years on average, respectively, compared with 43.6 years overall) (Table 20).

Table 20: Employed nurses by role and clinical area: selected characteristics, Northern Territory, 2003

Nursing role/clinical area of nursing	Number	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	% Part-time
<i>Clinical Nurses</i>	2,607	43.4	11.3	88.0	38.0	27.6
Medical, Surgical and Mixed clinical areas ^(a)	663	40.9	8.5	78.3	36.6	32.7
Perioperative	162	41.5	13.4	90.4	37.1	32.7
Midwifery	256	45.2	5.1	100.0	36.0	37.6
Critical care	303	39.4	8.6	87.9	40.3	20.6
Family and child health	359	44.2	7.2	95.7	35.2	33.1
Community health	326	45.5	19.9	85.5	38.7	23.4
Aged care	104	46.8	16.6	85.1	37.7	24.0
Mental health	40	46.2	53.7	81.6	43.8	—
Rehabilitation/disability	23	38.4	18.8	86.5	36.1	40.6
Other	370	46.7	11.7	92.4	42.6	14.8
<i>Non-clinical nurses</i>	519	44.8	10.0	95.8	40.1	17.3
Total	3,126	43.6	11.1	89.3	38.3	25.8

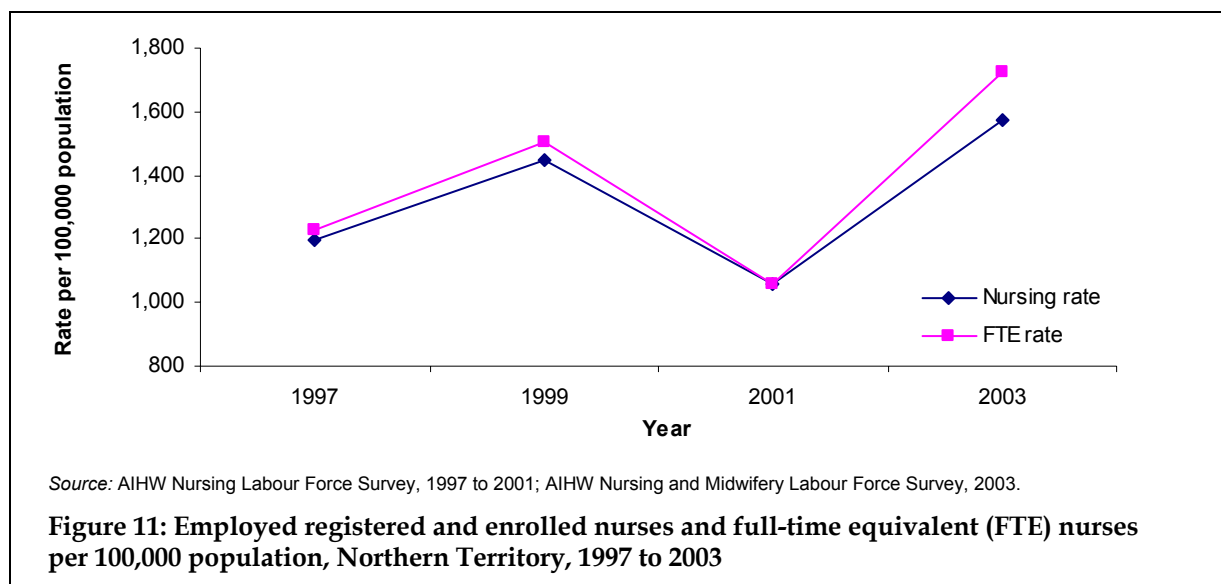
(a) Comprises Medical nursing, Surgical nursing, Mixed medical/surgical nursing and nursing in 'no one principal area'. These categories have been combined to enable some comparison over time. Changes to these categories prevent comparisons at a finer level.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

1. See 'Geographic classification' in the Glossary.

Nursing supply

The increase in nursing supply (from 1,227 FTE in 1997 to 1,723 FTE in 2003) was partly due to an increase in the average weekly hours worked by nurses (from 36.0 in 1997 to 38.3 in 2003). Also, population growth (6.2%) was much less than the growth in numbers of employed nurses (40.2%) and this added to the growth in supply (Tables 20, A10 and A11). The 2003 supply increase followed a decline from 1999 to 2001 (Figure 11).



Employment status

In contrast to the other jurisdictions, and consistent with the relatively large population living in Remote and Very remote areas, there were far more nurses in non-metropolitan areas of the Northern Territory than in metropolitan areas (3,573 and 756, respectively) (Table 21).

Table 21: Nurse registrations: labour force status, qualifications, location of residential address, Northern Territory, 2003

	Registered nurses		Enrolled nurses		Total		
	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Metropolitan area	Non-metropolitan area	Not stated
Employed in nursing, only or mainly in this territory	159	2,574	20	309	179	2,882	65
On extended leave	9	90	—	19	9	109	—
Looking for work in nursing	12	40	4	19	17	58	3
Overseas	9	3	—	—	9	3	50
Not looking for work in nursing	40	231	4	56	45	287	19
Employed only or mainly interstate	448	217	48	16	496	233	6
Total nurse registrations	679	3,156	77	418	756	3,573	143
Proportion with post-registration qualifications (%)	57.0	57.4	17.7	36.2	53.0	54.9	46.5

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Additional tables

Table A1: All nurses: professional employment status, nursing role, 1997 to 2003

Employment status/nursing role	1997	1999	2001	2003	% change 1997–2003
Nursing labour force					
<i>Employed in nursing</i>	222,528	224,822	228,230	236,645	6.3
Clinical nurse	197,634	200,219	201,754	207,451	5.0
Administrator	12,711	12,497	13,718	14,060	10.6
Teacher/educator ^(a)	5,816	5,949	6,352	7,138	22.7
Researcher	1,379	1,763	1,839	2,056	49.0
Other	4,988	4,394	4,567	5,939	19.1
On extended leave	3,123	3,435	3,457	4,781	53.1
<i>Looking for work in nursing</i>	6,258	5,481	4,875	4,106	-34.4
Employed elsewhere	2,071	1,841	1,997	1,588	-23.3
Not employed	4,187	3,640	2,878	2,518	-39.9
Not in nursing labour force					
Overseas	3,930	4,071	4,336	4,476	13.9
<i>Not looking for work in nursing</i>	19,689	19,100	19,177	23,371	18.7
Employed elsewhere	8,747	8,980	10,194	12,010	37.3
Not employed	10,942	10,120	8,983	11,361	3.8
Total registered and enrolled nurses	255,529	256,909	260,075	273,378	7.0
Multiple registrations and enrolments	8,557	8,255	7,502	9,168	7.1
Total registrations and enrolments	264,086	265,164	267,577	282,546	7.0

(a) In 2003, includes supervision/support for students or new nurses/midwives for all state/territory data except NSW. Not separately collected in any jurisdiction prior to 2003.

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A2: All employed nurses: average hours worked and proportion working part-time by age group, 1997 to 2003

	Age (years)						Total
	<25	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+	
1997							
Average hours	35.5	30.9	29.3	31.7	30.4	26.1	30.7
% part-time	24.9	48.2	58.7	50.0	54.0	66.4	52.0
1999							
Average hours	35.9	31.4	28.9	31.7	30.4	26.3	30.6
% part-time	24.4	46.3	60.5	51.1	55.1	65.7	52.7
2001							
Average hours	36.1	31.5	28.9	31.7	30.4	26.3	30.7
% part-time	24.5	47.1	61.0	51.3	55.9	67.7	53.3
2003							
Average hours	37.6	33.3	30.3	33.7	32.4	27.9	32.5
% part-time	22.3	43.7	58.9	47.6	52.4	64.6	50.0

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A3: Employed registered and enrolled nurses: weekly hours worked and total number of nurses by age, 2003

Age	Hours worked per week					Hours not stated	Total number of nurses
	<19	20–34	35–49	50+			
Registered nurses							
<25	156	1,106	6,107	339	242	7,950	
25–34	5,362	10,569	20,052	1,984	1,093	39,061	
35–44	10,357	20,252	19,623	2,739	1,449	54,420	
45–54	5,556	21,054	26,788	4,033	1,783	59,214	
55+	3,905	10,558	10,975	1,536	1,451	28,426	
Total	25,337	63,540	83,545	10,631	6,019	189,071	
Enrolled nurses							
<25	292	523	725	76	124	1,740	
25–34	1,104	2,268	2,543	255	363	6,534	
35–44	3,025	6,992	5,429	596	813	16,855	
45–54	1,763	6,557	6,999	687	921	16,928	
55+	646	2,050	2,190	210	421	5,517	
Total	6,831	18,390	17,886	1,826	2,642	47,574	
All employed nurses							
<25	448	1,629	6,832	415	366	9,689	
25–34	6,467	12,837	22,595	2,239	1,457	45,595	
35–44	13,382	27,244	25,053	3,335	2,262	71,275	
45–54	7,320	27,611	33,787	4,721	2,704	76,142	
55+	4,551	12,608	13,165	1,747	1,872	33,943	
Total	32,168	81,929	101,431	12,457	8,660	236,645	

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A4: All employed nurses by work setting of their main job: selected characteristics, 2003

Work setting	Number	% change from 1997 to 2003	Average age (years)	% Male	% Registered	Average weekly hours worked	
						% Part-time	
Hospital (incl. psychiatric hospital)	138,084	2.9	40.9	9.0	84.2	32.7	49.0
Residential aged care service	33,773	-7.5	48.1	5.2	61.2	31.5	58.8
Community health centre	17,345	41.5	46.0	7.9	90.6	32.7	46.1
Rural hospital and health service/ multipurpose service	12,270	n.a ^(a)	43.9	6.7	72.6	32.6	51.5
Doctors rooms/medical practice	7,845	19.0	45.8	1.4	77.2	27.2	68.9
Day procedure centre	4,978	91.5	43.8	3.2	81.9	30.4	58.0
Mental health facility ^(b)	4,506	n.a.	44.5	33.6	67.8	36.9	28.2
Tertiary education institution	2,831	30.4	46.1	9.6	95.1	36.7	32.9
Development disability service	2,561	-21.5	45.7	28.3	62.4	35.8	29.4
School	1,209	63.5	46.2	5.2	91.3	32.2	46.9
Hospice	1,083	7.3	46.5	6.0	72.5	31.5	60.4
Other	10,161	-53.8	44.9	10.9	80.2	34.4	40.4
Total	236,645	6.3	43.1	8.6	79.9	32.5	50.0

(a) Category not collected separately in 1997.

(b) Category not collected separately in NSW in 2003 and collected in only 3 jurisdictions in 1997.

Source: Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A5: All employed nurses: work setting and geographic distribution of their main job, 2003

Work setting of main job	Geographic region of main job						Total ^(a) (number)
	Major city	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote	Australia	
	(per cent) ^(b)						
Hospital (incl. psychiatric hospital)	73.6	18.2	7.0	0.9	0.3	58.4	138,084
Residential aged care service	59.3	28.2	11.2	1.0	0.2	14.3	33,773
Community health centre	54.7	25.2	14.5	3.0	2.5	7.3	17,345
Rural hospital and health service/ multipurpose service	6.7	35.8	38.9	11.5	7.1	5.2	12,270
Doctors rooms/medical practice	60.7	25.5	12.2	1.2	0.4	3.3	7,845
Day procedure centre	74.0	18.7	6.4	0.8	0.1	2.1	4,978
Mental health facility ^(c)	67.4	23.2	8.0	1.2	0.2	1.9	4,506
Tertiary education institution	72.0	18.5	8.2	1.1	0.3	1.2	2,831
Development disability service	71.0	25.6	3.2	0.1	0.1	1.1	2,561
School	60.7	19.9	14.9	2.9	1.7	0.5	1,209
Hospice	81.7	14.3	4.1	—	—	0.5	1,083
Other	66.7	20.0	9.3	2.4	1.6	4.3	10,161
Total	65.7	21.6	10.1	1.7	0.9	100.0	236,645

(a) All employed nurses (including those who did not provide information on the geographic location of their main job).

(b) Excludes 12,009 nurses who did not provide information on the geographic location of their main job.

(c) Category not collected separately in NSW in 2003.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A6: All employed nurses: average hours worked and sector of employment, 1997 to 2003

Characteristics	1997	1999	2001 ^(a)	2003
Public sector				
Proportion registered	79.4	79.8	80.0	80.6
Average hours worked (per week)	31.6	31.6	31.3	33.4
Private sector				
Proportion registered	78.7	79.7	81.2	78.4
Average hours worked (per week)	28.7	28.5	28.7	30.7

(a) Figures exclude Victoria because the public/private sector split was not collected in that state in 2001.

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A7: Registered and enrolled nurses not employed in nursing, 1997

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Looking for work in nursing	2,526	1,702	972	406	362	105	70	116	6,258
Not looking for work in nursing	12,130	2,857	1,836	1,181	618	205	505	357	19,689
Total	14,657	4,559	2,808	1,587	980	310	574	472	25,947

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997.

Table A8: All employed nurses, average age, states and territories, 1997

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Average age (years)	40.4	40.1	40.0	41.0	40.2	41.5	42.0	39.3	40.3

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997.

Table A9: All employed nurses: nursing role, states and territories, 1997

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
Clinical nurses	59,048	55,922	34,514	19,792	17,734	5,588	3,075	1,961	197,634
Non-clinical nurses	11,349	5,566	2,286	1,965	2,732	413	313	270	24,894
Total	70,397	61,488	36,800	21,757	20,466	6,002	3,388	2,230	222,528

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997.

Table A10: Employed registered and enrolled nurses: average hours worked and proportion working part-time, states and territories, 1997 to 2003

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1997									
<i>Average hours</i>	31.4	29.6	31.7	30.5	29.6	29.2	31.3	36.0	30.7
Registered nurses	31.5	30.1	32.0	30.9	30.2	29.5	31.4	36.6	31.0
Enrolled nurses	30.9	27.9	30.3	29.1	27.4	27.6	30.6	32.7	29.2
% part-time	46.3	59.3	47.1	51.3	58.8	60.8	54.9	26.6	52.0
1999									
<i>Average hours</i>	32.1	29.6	31.3	30.9	26.5	29.9	31.3	36.3	30.6
Registered nurses	32.2	30.1	31.6	31.2	27.1	30.1	31.3	36.9	31.0
Enrolled nurses	31.4	28.0	29.8	29.6	24.7	28.4	31.3	32.7	29.1
% part-time	44.5	60.2	49.4	51.5	67.8	59.6	54.8	24.8	52.7
2001									
<i>Average hours</i>	32.2	30.2	31.3	28.8	27.5	29.6	31.9	35.1	30.7
Registered nurses	32.3	30.6	31.5	29.0	27.8	29.8	31.5	35.4	30.9
Enrolled nurses	31.5	28.9	30.3	28.0	26.5	28.5	33.4	33.4	29.6
% part-time	45.4	57.9	51.2	56.6	66.2	65.8	51.1	31.0	53.3
2003									
<i>Average hours</i>	33.2	31.9	32.9	31.4	31.4	32.6	33.6	38.3	32.5
Registered nurses	33.4	32.3	33.0	31.6	31.9	32.8	33.5	38.5	32.8
Enrolled nurses	31.9	30.7	32.2	30.6	29.7	31.8	34.2	36.7	31.2
% part-time	45.2	53.8	49.6	53.1	55.9	53.2	47.4	25.8	50.0

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A11: All employed nurses per 100,000 population, states and territories, 1997 to 2003

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1997									
Nurses per 100,000	1,122	1,338	1,084	1,212	1,382	1,267	1,096	1,193	1,202
FTE nurses per 100,000	1,006	1,131	982	1,056	1,168	1,057	980	1,227	1,054
Population ('000s)	6,277.0	4,597.2	3,394.7	1,795.0	1,481.4	473.6	309.0	186.9	18,517.6
1999									
Nurses per 100,000	1,101	1,309	1,073	1,231	1,386	1,162	1,135	1,450	1,188
FTE nurses per 100,000	1,009	1,107	960	1,086	1,049	993	1,015	1,504	1,039
Population ('000s)	6,411.4	4,686.4	3,501.4	1,849.7	1,497.8	471.4	312.3	192.7	18,925.9
2001									
Nurses per 100,000	1,078	1,328	1,083	1,137	1,394	1,208	1,175	1,055	1,176
FTE nurses per 100,000	992	1,146	968	935	1,095	1,022	1,071	1,058	1,031
Population ('000s)	6,575.2	4,804.7	3,628.9	1,901.2	1,511.7	471.8	319.3	197.8	19,413.2
2003									
Nurses per 100,000	1,115	1,355	1,038	1,076	1,434	1,331	1,182	1,575	1,191
FTE nurses per 100,000	1,057	1,235	976	965	1,286	1,240	1,134	1,723	1,106
Population ('000s)	6,682.1	4,911.4	3,801.0	1,949.9	1,526.3	477.3	323.4	198.5	19,872.6

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003; ABS 1997 to 2003.

Table A12: Employed registered and enrolled nurses, states and territories, 1997 to 2003

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Australia
1997									
Registered nurses	57,508	45,913	30,312	17,177	15,636	4,934	2,853	1,883	176,217
Enrolled nurses	12,888	15,575	6,488	4,580	4,830	1,068	535	347	46,311
Total	70,397	61,488	36,800	21,757	20,466	6,002	3,388	2,230	222,528
1999									
Registered nurses	58,001	46,237	31,196	18,029	15,984	4,667	2,857	2,420	179,389
Enrolled nurses	12,561	15,105	6,380	4,735	4,776	812	689	375	45,432
Total	70,561	61,342	37,576	22,763	20,760	5,479	3,546	2,795	224,822
2001									
Registered nurses	58,537	48,623	32,805	17,364	16,174	4,889	3,055	1,776	183,224
Enrolled nurses	12,368	15,184	6,491	4,249	4,897	810	696	311	45,006
Total	70,905	63,807	39,297	21,613	21,071	5,700	3,751	2,087	228,230
2003									
Registered nurses	61,855	49,089	33,218	16,800	16,703	5,425	3,189	2,792	189,071
Enrolled nurses	12,625	17,446	6,245	4,183	5,180	929	631	335	47,574
Total	74,480	66,534	39,463	20,984	21,883	6,354	3,821	3,126	236,645
Percentage change between 1997 and 2003									
Registered nurses	7.6	6.9	9.6	-2.2	6.8	10.0	11.8	48.2	7.3
Enrolled nurses	-2.0	12.0	-3.7	-8.7	7.2	-13.0	18.0	-3.5	2.7
Total	5.8	8.2	7.2	-3.6	6.9	5.9	12.8	40.2	6.3

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A13: All registered and enrolled nurses: proportion with post-registration/enrolment qualifications by labour force status and geographic region of residence, 2003

	Major city	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote	Not stated	Australia
(per cent)							
Registered nurses							
Employed	48.5	47.3	48.0	49.4	59.9	54.6	49.1
On extended leave	50.3	51.0	49.0	74.7	48.7	45.3	50.6
Looking for work in nursing	23.6	21.4	24.2	13.9	41.2	2.7	19.2
Overseas	29.0	33.0	32.1	n.p.	38.0	16.2	20.1
Not looking for work in nursing	20.7	18.7	23.3	21.6	30.7	2.1	16.8
Employed only or mainly interstate	36.0	40.1	41.6	46.0	54.5	16.4	35.3
Enrolled nurses							
Employed	20.6	21.5	21.3	21.1	27.2	27.7	21.7
On extended leave	16.3	19.6	22.5	n.p.	15.0	33.3	19.5
Looking for work in nursing	7.2	8.3	8.6	5.5	—	—	6.3
Overseas	26.0	18.8	n.p.	—	n.p.	9.3	17.2
Not looking for work in nursing	9.3	8.5	6.0	19.5	10.1	0.5	7.5
Employed only or mainly interstate	19.2	22.0	17.1	34.7	16.1	12.2	18.9
Total							
Employed	43.7	40.8	40.6	41.8	52.5	50.2	43.6
On extended leave	46.2	45.3	43.3	71.4	42.4	43.7	46.0
Looking for work in nursing	20.0	16.7	18.0	10.4	33.6	2.0	15.6
Overseas	28.9	31.4	32.6	n.p.	32.1	16.1	20.0
Not looking for work in nursing	18.6	15.8	18.0	20.9	24.3	1.8	14.7
Employed only or mainly interstate	34.1	37.5	37.9	44.6	51.0	15.8	33.2

Note: Some cells have been suppressed because the populations are too small to provide reliable data.

Source: AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Table A14: All employed nurses: selected characteristics, 1997 to 2003

Characteristics	1997	1999	2001	2003	% Change 1997–2003
Average age	40.3	41.2	42.2	43.1	..
Average hours worked (per week)	30.7	30.6	30.7	32.5	..
Proportion registered	79.2	79.8	80.3	79.9	..
Sex					
Male	17,022	17,826	19,085	20,434	20.0
Female	205,506	206,996	209,145	216,210	5.2
Geographic location of main job					
Major city	127,563	138,247	136,553	147,670	15.8
Inner regional	43,922	42,996	44,627	48,440	10.3
Outer regional	20,093	21,372	21,319	22,719	13.1
Remote	3,419	3,696	3,334	3,870	13.2
Very remote	1,732	1,740	1,709	1,936	11.8
Not stated	25,799	16,769	20,687	12,009	-53.5
Nursing role					
Clinical nurse	197,634	200,219	201,754	207,451	5.0
Administrator	12,711	12,497	13,718	14,060	10.6
Teacher/educator ^(a)	5,816	5,949	6,352	7,138	22.7
Researcher	1,379	1,763	1,839	2,056	49.0
Other	4,988	4,394	4,567	5,939	19.1
Work setting of main job					
Hospital (incl. psychiatric hospital)	134,203	142,109	145,317	138,084	2.9
Residential aged care ^(b)	36,510	35,253	33,180	33,773	-7.5
Community health centre	12,257	14,438	15,023	17,345	41.5
Doctors rooms/medical practice	6,594	6,643	6,446	7,845	19.0
Other	32,965	26,379	28,263	39,598	20.1
Area of clinical nursing (clinicians only)					
Medical/surgical	69,554	69,481	72,424	66,014	-5.1
Perioperative/operating theatre/recovery	14,030	15,235	15,320	16,158	15.2
Midwifery	13,822	14,640	13,879	15,170	9.8
Critical care	18,091	21,877	22,841	23,794	31.5
Family and child health	8,052	8,527	8,587	7,638	-5.1
Community health	8,382	9,235	8,895	11,490	37.1
Aged care	36,207	34,781	32,212	30,600	-15.5
Mental health	12,383	13,416	12,094	12,354	-0.2
Rehabilitation/disability	5,963	7,163	7,383	7,261	21.8
Other	11,150	5,863	8,119	16,972	52.2
<i>Total clinicians</i>	<i>197,634</i>	<i>200,219</i>	<i>201,754</i>	<i>207,451</i>	<i>5.0</i>
Total employed nurses	222,528	224,822	228,230	236,645	6.3
Nurses per 100,000 population	1,202	1,188	1,176	1,191	-0.9

(a) In 2003, includes supervision/support for students or new nurses/midwives for all state/territory data except NSW. Not separately collected in any jurisdiction prior to 2003.

(b) Includes aged care accommodation and nursing homes.

Note: The high percentage changes by region from 1997 to 2003 are attributable mainly to improved coding of respondents to a region.

Source: AIHW Nursing Labour Force Survey, 1997 to 2001; AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

Explanatory notes

Method

The labour force data in this publication were obtained from the annual Nursing (and Midwifery) Labour Force Surveys administered by the nurses and midwives registration board in each state and territory on behalf of the AIHW. Each registration board conducts an annual renewal of registrations, except Western Australia where the Nurses Board moved to a rolling 3-year registration process in 2003. A survey questionnaire was sent to all nurses/midwives as part of the registration renewal process, but in Western Australia, because of the changed renewal process in 2003, the questionnaires were sent out by that state's Department of Health. Each state and territory health authority then forwarded a computer file of the survey data to the AIHW for aggregation into a national data set.

Scope and coverage

The scope of the Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey is all nurses/midwives registered or enrolled with the nurses/midwives board or nursing council in each state and territory, and eligible to practise. The coverage may exclude nurses/midwives who registered for the first time during the current year. These nurses/midwives may not be required to renew their registration at the standard renewal date if the initial registration in that state or territory had occurred during the preceding 12 months.

Response rate

The responses to the AIHW Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey represented 62.7% of the total number of nursing/midwifery registrations and enrolments in all states and territories as at 30 June 2003 (Table A15).

Table A15: Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey: estimated response rate, states and territories, 2003

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA ^(a)	SA	Tas	ACT	NT ^(b)	Total
2003 response rate	74.2	61.2	61.3	19.0	72.9	60.7	71.8	31.1	62.7

(a) The low response is due to the change in the registration renewals by the Nurses Board of WA, from an annual process to a rolling 3-year registration. As a result, the questionnaires can no longer be sent out with the registration renewals.

(b) The low response rate for the Northern Territory is due mainly to the transient nature of the nursing labour force. According to the Nursing Board Annual Report, approximately one-third of all nurses do not re-register each year, primarily because they no longer practise in this jurisdiction.

Source: Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey, 2003.

The overall response rate can only be estimated, not determined with complete accuracy. It is known that at least some nurses who were registered in more than one state or territory completed a questionnaire in just one state or territory. It is not known how often this occurs, because it is not possible to match survey records between states and territories.

Collection timing

The labour force survey has been conducted by the nurses and midwives registration board in each state and territory in conjunction with the annual renewal of licences to practise, until 2003 when the Nurses Board of Western Australia changed its process. The timing of the survey depends on the licence renewal procedure operating in each jurisdiction. As the

renewal of registration in New South Wales is due on the anniversary of initial registration, the survey is conducted throughout the calendar year. In Western Australia, without the use of the renewal process by the Nurses Board, the 2003 survey was administered by that state's Department of Health independent of registration renewals. The remaining jurisdictions have annual renewals due by a fixed date. Each approximate collection period is charted in Table A16.

Table A16: Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey: collection period, states and territories, 2003

State/territory	2003													
	Nov 2002	Dec 2002	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
New South Wales														
Victoria														
Queensland														
Western Australia														
South Australia														
Tasmania														
Australian Capital Territory														
Northern Territory														

Source: State and territory registration boards.

Changes to the survey

Since the release of the previous national report, the survey design has undergone a series of improvements to the questionnaire, data processing and the estimation method. Among the main aims were increased consistency of surveys across jurisdictions, improved data on nurses' employment activity and more timely release of data. These design changes led to some small revisions to estimates already published and these are noted below, as relevant.

More national consistency of the survey questionnaire

The first major revision to the questionnaire was implemented nationally in 2003, except for New South Wales because of administrative processes in place in that state at the time. Main changes were to the employment questions. In 2003, nurses were asked about their work situation 'last week', whereas prior to this, the questions referred to nurses' 'usual' work situation (e.g. hours usually worked, usual clinical area, usual workplace). Also, the data items 'nurse role', 'work setting' and 'clinical area of work' contained more detail in 2003. These changes constitute a break in series and it should be noted that comparisons between 2003 data and earlier years involve two slightly different measures.

Because New South Wales did not use the revised questionnaire in 2003, some data items in the New South Wales survey differ from those used in other jurisdictions' surveys. The items 'nursing role', 'work setting' and 'clinical area of work' were affected and national concordance is possible only at a broad level. Also, comparisons over time can be made only at a broad level. For this reason, this report presents these items with 2003 figures at a detailed level but separately for each jurisdiction, and national time series data at a broad level.

Enhancements to survey processing

A more intensive approach to the coding of written answers to questions was used in 2001. This increased the volume of responses which could be moved from the 'other' category and assigned a label, resulting in some movements between categories when estimates are compared with previous years. Further enhancements to coding followed, as well as improved editing routines used for the production of the 2003 national data set.

These refinements to the coding and editing affected estimates from the 2003 Victoria survey. In December 2004, the AIHW first published data for Victoria separately in a state-specific report on behalf of the Victorian Department of Human Services. However, this was prior to producing the national data set and the implementation of associated changes to editing routines. For consistency in the national data set, new editing routines were applied to the 2003 Victoria data, resulting in some revisions. However, at most, there was a net 3% movement in the number employed between the 'employed in nursing' and the 'not employed in nursing' categories.

Improvements to the estimation method

For 2001 data, a different method of survey estimation was introduced to improve survey processing and, being successful, was then used to produce estimates for the 2003 survey. To enable comparisons over time, estimates for surveys prior to 2001 have been revised using the same method. As a result of the revisions, pre-2001 figures presented in this publication are different from estimates published in the past.

Notes on the AIHW labour force estimates

The figures produced from the Nursing and Midwifery Labour Force Survey are estimates only. Not all nurses/midwives who were sent a questionnaire responded to the survey. Estimates of the whole nursing/midwifery population are based on survey data from renewals that were weighted to match the available registration data. In 2003, complete registration data (that is, total registrations/enrolments by age and sex) were available for five jurisdictions (New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania). For Western Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, weights were based only on the total numbers of registrations/enrolments and respondents' characteristics.

Additional estimation was made for survey respondents for whom age, sex and labour force status were not known, either because some survey questions were incomplete or because nurses' board registration data were incomplete or not provided. Where registration data were not available, it was assumed in the estimation that survey non-respondents in each state/territory had the same characteristics as respondents. This process may overestimate nurse numbers in the labour force in each state and territory if non-respondents are more likely to be those with multiple registration or those not in the nursing labour force. This survey error will be greater in the two territories, which have a higher proportion of nurses registered in other jurisdictions, and lower proportions of nurses practising solely in the territories.

Rounding of estimates may result in numbers not adding up to totals in some tables.

Where tables contain a 'not stated' category, percentage calculations exclude these figures.

Glossary

Employed nurse

A nurse/midwife who worked mainly/only in a particular state/territory. Nurses registered in more than one state/territory are assigned to the jurisdiction in which they mainly worked (i.e. worked the most hours).

Enrolled nurse

A nurse who is on the roll maintained by the state or territory nurses board or nursing council to practise nursing in that state or territory. The minimum educational requirement for an enrolled nurse is a 1-year diploma from a higher education institution or equivalent from a recognised hospital-based program. It is necessary for a nurse to have practised for a specified minimum period in the previous 5 years to maintain enrolment. Enrolled nurses include mothercraft and dental nurses where the educational course requirements may be greater than 1 year but less than a 3-year degree course or equivalent.

Geographic classification

There are several classifications used to differentiate between various regions in Australia. The Remoteness Area Structure of the Australian Standard Geographic Classification (ASGC), produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), was used in this publication to present regional data. The Remoteness Area Structure of the ASGC is based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+), where the remoteness index value of a point is based on the physical road distance to the nearest town or service in each of five population size classes based on the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. These classes are:

- Major cities of Australia
- Inner regional Australia
- Outer regional Australia
- Remote Australia
- Very remote Australia.

For additional information, the ASGC Remoteness Areas for each state/territory are shown on the respective maps which preface the state/territory profiles contained in this report.

Hours worked

The total number of weekly hours worked is self-reported by nurses and relates to the number of hours worked in all nursing-related jobs. In the 2003 survey, hours related to the week prior to the survey, whereas earlier surveys referred to hours 'usually' worked. Hours worked exclude time spent on travel between work locations (except to call-outs) and unpaid professional and/or voluntary activities. In editing survey responses, maximum hours worked were limited to 63 hours per week in any one job. In this publication the Australian Bureau of Statistics definition has been used for the cut-off for full-time and part-time work:

- *full-time work*: 35 hours or more per week
- *part-time work*: less than 35 hours per week.

Metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas

Metropolitan and non-metropolitan can be defined in different ways. For consistency across the jurisdictions, in this report the split is based on the ASGC Remoteness Areas as follows. Note: ASGC is based on 'remoteness', rather than population density (see 'Geographic classification' above).

- Metropolitan areas include Major cities of Australia and Inner regional Australia
- Non-metropolitan areas include Outer regional Australia, Remote Australia and Very remote Australia.

Nursing and midwifery labour force

The nursing and midwifery labour force (registered nurses/midwives and enrolled nurses) in each state and territory includes nurses currently employed in nursing and nurses who are not employed in nursing but are looking for work in nursing.

Registered nurses/midwives and enrolled nurses who, at the time of the survey, were on maternity or other extended leave for more than 3 months are employed, and thus part of the nursing and midwifery labour force. However, in most cross-classified tables for employed nurses/midwives, those on extended leave have not been included.

Nursing role

A description of the job function within the field of nursing of a person with nursing qualifications. The occupations are:

Nurse clinician: A registered or enrolled nurse who is mainly involved in the care and treatment of patients, including nursing diagnosis and preventive action.

Clinician nurse manager: A registered or enrolled nurse who manages a hospital nursing care unit or other sub-unit of a hospital, nursing home or health care facility, or supervises nursing staff for a particular unit or shift.

Clinical nurse: A person who is either a nurse clinician or a clinician nurse manager.

Administrator: A person mainly employed in nursing administration.

Teacher/educator: A person who teaches or trains persons in nursing for their initial qualification or in advanced skills after initial qualification.

Researcher: A person engaged in nursing research.

Other: A job function in nursing which is not one of the above – for example, industrial relations or public health activities in nursing.

Registered nurse

A nurse/midwife who is on the register maintained by the state or territory nurses and midwives board or council to practise nursing in that state or territory. The minimum educational requirement for a registered nurse is a 3-year degree from a tertiary education institution or equivalent from a recognised hospital-based program. To maintain registration, it is necessary for a nurse/midwife to have practised for a specified minimum period in the field of nursing in the preceding 5 years.

References

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 1997 to 2003. Australian demographic statistics Cat. no. 3101.0. Canberra: ABS.

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) 2002. Australian standard geographical classification. Cat. no. 1216.0. Canberra: ABS.

AIHW (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare) 2004. Rural, regional and remote health: a guide to remoteness classifications and their application to 2003 Statistical Local Area boundaries. (AIHW cat. no. 53) Canberra: AIHW.