

1 Highlights

- In 1999 there were over 14,000 pharmacists working in Australia, and four out of every five (80.0%) worked as community (retail) pharmacists. Most of the remainder (2,093 or 14.2%) were hospital or clinic pharmacists.
- Since 1994, the pharmacy labour force has grown by 12.5%.
- More pharmacists than ever before are female – 46.9% of employed pharmacists in 1999 – and female pharmacists are more likely to work part-time than male pharmacists. Consequently, the increase in the number of employed pharmacists has been accompanied by a rise in the number of pharmacists working part-time hours. Pharmacists worked an average of 37.8 hours per week in 1999 compared with 38.4 in 1996.
- The growth of the pharmacy labour force and the increased tendency to work part-time resulted in a rise of 3.6% in the actual level of supply of full-time equivalent (FTE) pharmacists per 100,000 population between 1996 and 1999.
- Female pharmacists are younger (41.7 years) than males (50.0 years). The average age of pharmacists has therefore increased only slightly, from 45.1 years in 1994 to 45.5 years in 1996 and 46.1 years in 1999.
- By 2000, the proportion of the student population who are female had risen to 65.9%, indicating that the trend towards more females in the pharmacy labour force will continue.
- In 1999 there were 77.7 pharmacists per 100,000 people in Australia. Capital cities were better served, with 86.7 per 100,000 population, than remote centres and other remote areas (33.7). Pharmacists in remote centres were younger than those elsewhere, with an average age of 42.8. The average number of hours that pharmacists worked tended to rise with increasing remoteness.
- Community pharmacists worked more hours than hospital and clinic pharmacists (38.2 and 36.0 hours per week, respectively).
- It has been established that there is currently a shortage of community and hospital and clinic pharmacists, and it is expected that the shortage will continue beyond 2010 since the demand for pharmacy services is likely to increase in the future. However, the number of students commencing undergraduate pharmacy courses has increased by 57% since 1992.