**General surgery**

2016 Factsheet

General Surgery is the basic core specialty within the discipline of surgery and is the broadest of the surgical specialties. The General Surgeon is a surgical specialist engaged in the comprehensive care of surgical patients and in some situations the General Surgeon may require knowledge of the whole field of surgery. It takes five years full-time training through the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons to specialise in general surgery.

# Workforce

In 2016, there were 1,814 general surgeons employed in Australia, of whom 57.1% worked in the private sector. Over 94% of general surgeons who completed the 2016 National Health Workforce Survey indicated they were clinicians.

# Demographics of clinicians

Males represented 85.6% of clinicians in 2016 and had an average age of 54.7 years and average hours of 40.8 per week. Females represented 14.4% of clinicians and were on average 9.0 years younger and worked 1.5 hour per week more than male clinicians. The total average hours for the general surgery clinician workforce were 41 hours per week.

# Distribution of clinicians

In 2016, the majority (78.4%) of clinicians were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model classification system. Further information on the Modified Monash model is available at docotrconnect.gov.au.

The largest number of clinicians was in New South Wales with over one-third of clinicians indicating their principle place of practice was in this state.

There was an average of 7.1 clinicians per 100,000 population across Australia in 2016. South Australia had the highest ratio of clinicians with 8.3 per 100,000 population and Australian Capital Territory had the lowest ratio of clinicians with 5.3 per 100,000 population.

# New fellows

There were 70 new fellows in 2015. The number of general surgery new fellows increased steadily between 2013 and 2015 from 60 to 70 respectively. During this period, the number of female new fellows increased by 33.3% and males increased by 11.1%.

# Vocational training

There were 425 vocational trainees in 2016. The total number of trainees in 2016 was 18.4% higher than the number in 2013 (359).

# Vocational intentions

In 2016, there were 430 Hospital Non-Specialists (HNS) who indicated their intention to undertake vocational training in general surgery. 60% of the HNS intending to train were aged 20-29 years. A HNS is a medical practitioner employed in a salaried position mainly in a hospital. They do not hold a specialist qualification and are not training to obtain one. They include career medical officers, hospital medical officers, interns, principal house officers, resident medical officers and registrars.

# References

1. National Health Workforce Dataset (NHWDS): Medical Practitioners 2016.
2. Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.
3. Medical Education and Training Report 1st edition (Unpublished).
4. ABS 3101.0 – Australian Demographics Statistics. Released 22/09/16.
5. Australian Medical Association (AMA) Career Pathways Guide.
6. National Medical Training Advisory Network (NMTAN) – Prevocational Doctor Factsheet Methodology Paper.

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