**Occupational & environmental medicine**

2016 Factsheet

Occupational medicine takes a preventative approach to health and safety in the workplace by looking at how a work environment can affect a person’s health, and how a person’s health can affect their work.

Environmental medicine is primarily concerned with the health impacts of industrial practices on the environment outside of the industrial site.

A minimum of four years full-time advanced training through the Royal Australasian College of Physicians is required to specialise in this area.

# Workforce

There were 274 occupational and environmental medicine specialists employed in Australia, of whom 78.8% worked in the private sector. Over 83% of specialists in this field who completed the 2016 National Health Workforce Survey indicated they were clinicians.

# Demographics of clinicians

Males represented 81.6% of clinicians in 2016 and had an average age of 58.6 years. Females represented 18.4% of clinicians and were on average 2.6 years younger than male clinicians.

Over 42% of clinicians were aged 60-69 years and over 23% were aged between 50-59 years.

# Distribution of clinicians

In 2016, most clinicians (88.2%) were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model classification system.

The largest concentration of clinicians was in New South Wales with 29.4% of clinicians indicating their principle place of practice was in this state.

There was an average of 0.9 clinicians per 100,000 population in 2016. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest ratio of clinicians in 2016 with 2.0 per 100,000 population. By contrast, Queensland had the lowest ratio with 0.6 per 100,000 population.

# New fellows

Between 2013 and 2015, the number of occupational and environmental medicine new fellows increased from 8 to 9.

In 2013 and 2014 there were no female new fellows in occupational and environmental medicine.

# Vocational training

The total number of trainees in 2016 (84) was 17.6% less than in 2013 (102). The proportion of female trainees increased by 44% during this period from 25 to 36.

# Vocational intentions

In 2016, there were 26 Hospital Non-Specialists (HNS) who indicated their intention to undertake vocational training in occupational and environmental medicine. 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. Australian Medical Association (AMA) Career Pathways Guide.
3. Medical Education and Training Report 1st edition (Unpublished).
4. ABS 3101.0 – Australian Demographics Statistics. Released 22/09/16.
5. National Medical Training Advisory Network (NMTAN) – Prevocational Doctor Factsheet Methodology Paper.

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