**Ophthalmology**

2016 Factsheet

An ophthalmologist is a medical doctor who has undertaken additional specialist training in the diagnosis and management of disorders of the eye and visual system. Ophthalmology training equips eye specialists to provide the full spectrum of eye care, including the prescription of glasses and contact lenses, medical treatment and complex microsurgery. A minimum of six years full-time advanced training through the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists is required to specialise in this area.

# Workforce

In 2016, there were 919 ophthalmologists employed in Australia, of whom 89.5% worked in the private sector. Over 97% of ophthalmologists who completed the 2016 National Health Workforce Survey indicated they were clinicians.

# Demographics of clinicians

Males represented 79.5% of clinicians in 2016 and had an average age of 54.3 years. Females represented 20.5% of clinicians and were on average 6.2 years younger than male clinicians.

Over 32% of clinicians were aged 40-49 years and 29.0% were aged 50-59 years.

# Distribution of clinicians

In 2016, the majority (83.6%) of clinicians were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model classification system.

Over 37% of clinicians reported their principal place of practice was located in New South Wales and over 25% indicated that their principle place of practice was in Victoria.

New South Wales had the highest number and ratio of clinicians for 2016. South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria also had ratios equal to, or higher than the national average of 3.7 clinicians per 100,000 population.

# New fellows

The number of new fellows from the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists increased 13.9% between 2013 and 2015 from 36 to 41. During this period overseas trained new fellows who obtained their specialist qualification outside of Australia represented around one-third of all new fellows.

# Vocational training

There were 146 vocational trainees in 2016. The total number of trainees for every year between 2013 and 2016 were similar. There were 2.1% more trainees in 2016 than in 2013.

# Vocational intentions

In 2016, there were 135 Hospital Non-Specialists (HNS) who indicated their intention to undertake vocational training in ophthalmology. The majority 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. 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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