**Radiation oncology**

2016 Factsheet

Radiation oncology is a specialty dealing with rapidly changing technological advances directed largely at improving the accuracy and effectiveness of radiotherapy outcomes, including better control and cure of tumours, as well as reduction of side effects. Increasing use of high quality imaging to direct radiotherapy, and newer types of radiation (such as protons) and evolving delivery techniques, such as intensity modulated radiotherapy (IMRT), are quickly becoming standard treatment methods.

A minimum of five years full-time advanced training through the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists is required to specialise in this area.

# Workforce

In 2016, there were 345 radiation oncologists employed in Australia, of whom 25.8% worked in the private sector. Over 95% of radiation oncologists who completed the 2016 National Health Workforce Survey indicated they were clinicians.

# Demographics of clinicians

Males represented 59.1% of clinicians in 2016 and had an average age of 48.9 years. Females represented 40.9% of clinicians and were on average 4.2 years younger than male clinicians.

40% of clinicians were aged 40-49 years and 25.8% were aged 50-59 years.

# Distribution of clinicians

In 2016, most clinicians (83.3%) were located in a major city or a location considered as MMM1 under the Modified Monash Model classification system.

Over 35% of clinicians indicated their principal place of practice was in New South Wales and over 26% indicated it was in Victoria.

The Australian Capital Territory had the highest ratio of clinicians in 2016 with 2.3 per 100,000 population. By contrast, the Northern Territory and Western Australia had the lowest ratio, both with 0.8 per 100,000 population.

# New fellows

The overall number of radiation oncology new fellows increased slightly by 4.3% between 2013 and 2015 from 23 to 24. Overseas trained new fellows who obtained their specialist qualification outside of Australia remained steady during this period with 3 new fellows each year between 2013 and 2015.

Between 2013 and 2015, the number of female new fellows decreased 53.3%. By contrast, male new fellows increased 112.5%.

# Vocational training

The number of vocational trainees decreased by 22.1% between 2013 and 2016 from 122 to 95.

# Vocational intentions

In 2016, there were 28 Hospital Non-Specialists (HNS) who indicated their intention to undertake vocational training in radiation oncology. 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

# Copyright

© 2017 Commonwealth of Australia as represented by the Department of Health

This work is copyright. You may copy, print, download, display and reproduce the whole or part of this work in unaltered form for your own personal use or, if you are part of an organisation, for internal use within your organisation, but only if you or your organisation:

1. do not use the copy or reproduction for any commercial purpose; and
2. retain this copyright notice and all disclaimer notices as part of that copy or reproduction.

Apart from rights as permitted by the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth) or allowed by this copyright notice, all other rights are reserved, including (but not limited to) all commercial rights.

Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and other rights to use are to be sent to the Communication Branch, Department of Health, GPO Box 9848, Canberra ACT 2601, or via e-mail to corporatecomms@health.gov.au.