

Table 7.5: Medicare-funded full-time-equivalent private psychiatrists^(a), by Remoteness Area, states and territories, 2004–05

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	Tas	ACT	SA and NT ^(b)	Total
Remoteness Area	Number							
Major cities	292.0	330.1	140.3	55.2	..	11.7	102.7	932.0
Inner regional	21.3	12.4	20.0	1.6	20.8	..	0.9	76.9
Outer regional	1.2	1.2	6.0	n.a.	n.a.	..	2.4	10.9
Remote	0.0	0.0	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	..	0.4	0.5
Very remote	0.0	..	0.2	n.a.	n.a.	..	0.1	0.3
<i>Total all regions</i>	316.8	344.1	167.3	56.9	20.8	12.1	106.7	1,024.7
	Per 100,000 population^(c)							
Major cities	6.1	9.2	7.0	4.0	..	3.6	9.4	7.1
Inner regional	1.5	1.2	2.0	0.7	12.8	..	0.4	1.9
Outer regional	0.3	0.5	0.9	n.a.	n.a.	..	0.8	0.5
Remote	0.0	0.3	0.0	n.a.	n.a.	..	0.5	0.2
Very remote	0.0	..	0.4	n.a.	n.a.	..	0.2	0.2
<i>Total all regions</i>	4.7	7.0	4.4	2.9	4.4	3.7	6.2	5.2

(a) Includes trainee psychiatrists.

(b) Figures for South Australia and the Northern Territory have been combined for confidentiality reasons.

(c) The rate per 100,000 population is a crude rate based on the estimated resident population at 30 June 2003. Figures for 2004 were not available at time of publication.

.. Not applicable.

Source: Medicare data from DHA.

Mental health nurses

The following information is based on the AIHW national nursing labour force biennial collections for the period 1999 to 2003, the latest years for which there are data. Additional information on this collection is presented in Appendix 1 and further details on the national nursing labour force are available in the *Nursing and Midwifery Labour force 2003* report (AIHW 2005g).

Mental health nurses are defined as nurses who indicate that their main area of nursing is in the psychiatric or mental health field. To enable meaningful comparisons of the size of the nursing labour force, a measure that takes into account the effect of movements between part-time and full-time hours of work, the full-time-equivalent measure, is used. This measure is based on the total hours worked by all nurses, divided by 35 hours (35 hours being consistent with the Australian Bureau of Statistics cut-off for part-time work). This provides an indication of how many 35-hour-week workloads are being worked by nurses, regardless of the numbers working full time or part time.

In 2003 there were 12,354 mental health nurses and 12,883 FTE mental health nurses, representing a rate of 64.8 FTE nurses per 100,000 population (Table 7.6).

Between 1999 and 2003 the number of mental health nurses declined from 13,416 to 12,354, with an average annual decrease of 2.0%. The number of FTE mental health nurses for this period showed a smaller decrease (from 12,995 FTEs to 12,883 FTEs, or a 0.2% decrease each year on average). This reflected an increase in average working hours – from 33.9 hours in 1999 to 36.5 hours in 2003. FTEs per 100,000 population also declined, from 68.7 in 1999 to 64.8 in 2003, reflecting both the decrease in FTE and the grown in population. This represented an average annual decrease of 1.4%.

The main place of work for the majority of mental health nurses was in a major city (8,663 FTE), followed by inner regional areas (2,867 FTE).

The decline in FTE rates per 100,000 population was not consistent across all geographic areas. While the FTE rate in major cities remained relatively stable (66.0 in 1999 and 65.7 in 2003), the FTE rates for most other areas declined during this time – for example, from 38.6 in