

## 2 Primary care practitioners

Primary care practitioners engage in general medical practice or in other fields of the primary care of patients. They include vocationally registered general practitioners (VRGPs), VRGP trainees and other medical practitioners (OMPs) who are not recognised general practitioners but whose Medicare patient billing is mainly for unreferral attendances.

The data in this chapter are presented for various sub-groups of primary care practitioners. The data for VRGPs, VRGP trainees and OMPs are mutually exclusive and sum to the total for primary care practitioners. This is not the case for special interest, locum and deputising service primary care practitioners, who are not mutually exclusive of each other or of the other primary care groups presented.

Monitoring of the primary care workforce is particularly important because:

- growth of the general practice workforce has slowed as a result of the training intake being held constant at 400 per year and other factors such as earlier retirement;
- each year, the proportion of VRGPs has been increasing, and proportion of OMPs declining, reflecting government financial incentives for formal qualifications in general practice, continuing education of primary care practitioners, and restrictions since 1996 on new graduates and temporary resident overseas-trained doctors gaining access to Medicare provider numbers which would enable them to render Medicare services as OMPs;
- the majority of new entrants to the primary care workforce are women, and continuation of this trend is expected to significantly change the work characteristics of the labour force;
- shortages of general practitioners in many rural and remote areas are considered a serious problem and numerous Commonwealth, State and local government incentive schemes have been introduced to attract and retain more rural doctors;
- locum and deputising service practitioners provide essential support to rural and urban practices, and the numbers of these may be affected by broader workforce change in general practice;
- increasing sub-specialisation is a feature of the total medical workforce and of primary care as a result of advances in research, technology and medical knowledge and trends towards specialising in care of sub-groups of the population.

Features of primary care practitioners in 1997 included the following:

- There were 20,557 primary care practitioners, of whom 17,435 were VRGPs (84.8%), 1,081 were RACGP trainees (5.3%) and 2,042 were OMPs (9.9%).
- 6,776 or 33.0% of primary care practitioners were female, compared with 29.9% in 1993.
- 53.2% of primary care practitioners younger than 35 years were female, compared with 46.1% in 1993.
- 60.4% of general practice trainees were female.
- 41.6% of male and 68.2% of female primary care practitioners were younger than 45 years of age.

- 12.9% of male and 51.6% of female primary care practitioners worked fewer than 35 hours per week.
- 4.0% of male and 1.2% of female primary care practitioners respectively worked 80 or more hours per week. These proportions almost doubled in small rural centres, other rural and remote areas (7.2% for males and 2.2% for females).
- 8.6% of primary care practitioners reported practising mainly in a special interest area of care, and the proportion was much higher for OMPs (28.4%).
- Special interest fields of practice were diverse, with the most popular being women's health (7.2% of special interest practitioners), counselling and psychotherapy (7.0%), sports medicine (6.8%) and occupational medicine (5.6%).
- 1.3% of primary care practitioners practised in an Aboriginal health service.
- 1,698 primary care practitioners, representing 8.3% of the primary care workforce, reported employment as locums or in a deputising service – 1,383 as locums, 198 in a deputising service and 117 as both locums and in a deputising service.
- 75.7% of male and 80.6% of female primary care practitioners practised in metropolitan centres.
- 74.7% of male and 79.6% of female primary care practitioners gained their initial qualification in Australia.
- 36.8% of those primary care practitioners who had gained their initial qualification in the United Kingdom or Ireland practised in rural and remote areas, as did 23.5% of those who had qualified in Australia, 25.0% of those who had qualified in New Zealand, 8.5% of those who had qualified in Asia and 14.2% of those who had qualified in other countries.
- The annual growth in the number of Medicare primary care providers peaked at 7.2% in 1986–87. This growth rate declined to 2.6% in 1994–95, 0.7% in 1995–96, 0.6% in 1996–97 and in 1997–98 was negative at -1.2%, mainly because new graduates working in hospitals have been unable since 1996–97 to render Medicare services as OMPs. Between 1996–97 and 1997–98, the Department of Health and Aged Care has calculated that the number of Medicare full-time equivalent primary care providers increased by 0.9%, from 16,200 to 16,353.

The difference between the 20,557 primary care practitioners enumerated in 1997 in the AIHW labour force survey and the 24,230 Medicare providers of general practice services in 1997–98 is explained by about 4,000 salaried hospital non-specialists, medical educators, researchers and others who rendered private practice Medicare services as mainly unREFERRED attendances in 1997–98. The Health Insurance Commission classifies as OMPs nearly all of these Medicare providers and their level of Medicare activity is low.

This means that the Medicare primary care workforce in 1997–98 of 24,230 comprised:

- 16,912 VRGPs;
- 1,441 VRGP trainees; (Department of Health and Aged Care 1998)
- 2,042 OMPs whose main job was primary care; and
- 3,835 OMPs whose main job was not in primary care.

## **Vocationally registered general practitioners**

The AIHW labour force survey defines VRGPs as primary care practitioners who self-report being either vocationally registered or Fellows of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).

Features of VRGPs in 1997 included the following.

- The 17,435 VRGPs in 1997 represented 84.8% of all primary care practitioners.
- 12,037 were male (69.0%) and 5,397 were female (31.0%).
- The average age was 49.5 years for males and 42.8 years for females.
- 55.4% of VRGPs younger than 35 years were female.
- 39.0% of males and 65.5% of females were younger than 45 years of age.
- Male VRGPs worked an average of 51.3 hours per week and female VRGPs worked an average of 33.9 hours per week.
- 11.5% of males and 52.6% of females worked fewer than 35 hours per week.
- Average hours per week worked by males increased relatively uniformly across all geographic regions, ranging from around 51 hours in metropolitan centres to 55.6 hours in other rural areas and 54.4 hours in remote areas. Female VRGPs worked an average of around 33 hours per week in metropolitan and large and small rural centres, 37.6 hours in other rural areas and 43.6 hours in remote areas.
- 75.4% of males and 81.7% of females had gained their initial qualification in Australia.
- 74.9% of the primary care practitioners in remote areas were VRGPs, compared with 84.2% in capital cities and around 87% in all other areas.

## **General practitioner (RACGP) trainees**

General practitioner trainees practise under the supervision of an RACGP Fellow. The Commonwealth Government's Medical Training Review Panel collects data from the medical colleges on the numbers of training positions and trainees. The RACGP reported that there were 1,441 general practice trainees in advanced training positions in 1998 (Department of Health and Aged Care 1998).

The AIHW medical labour force survey identified the following characteristics of GP trainees:

- 60.4% were female.
- 40.4% of female trainees worked fewer than 35 hours per week, compared with 11.5% of males.
- Male trainees worked an average of 46.4 hours per week and female trainees averaged 35.6 hours per week. Average hours worked by males ranged from a high of 49.5 in South Australia to a low of 40.0 in the Northern Territory. Females averaged the longest hours in Western Australia (37.1) and the shortest in the Australian Capital Territory (25.6).
- The average age of RACGP trainees was 32.8 years for males and 31.6 years for females.
- 68.9% of male trainees were located in metropolitan centres, 28.7% in rural areas and 2.4% in remote areas. Females were less likely to work in rural areas—74.4% were located in metropolitan centres, 23.1% in rural areas and 2.5% in remote areas.

- The main job of 76.0% of RACGP trainees was in private rooms, compared with 89.3% of all primary care practitioners. A further 16.4% had their main job in acute care hospitals and 2.9% worked mainly in non-residential facilities.
- 75.7% of male trainees and 79.8% of female trainees had gained their initial qualification in Australia.

### **Other medical practitioners**

The AIHW labour force survey defines OMPs as primary care practitioners who do not self-report as being either vocationally registered or training to become vocationally registered. There were 2,042 primary care practitioners in this category in the 1997 survey. The Health Insurance Commission in 1997–98 classified a further 3,835 medical practitioners as OMPs – these were mainly hospital non-specialists with low levels of Medicare billing activity.

The survey data identified the following characteristics of OMPs whose main job was in primary care:

- 1,316 (64.4%) were male and 726 (35.6%) were female. This proportion varied significantly among States and Territories, from a high of 67.7% males in Victoria to a low of 53.0% males in the Australian Capital Territory.
- The average age was 43.4 years for males and 40.0 years for females. Some 33.9% of males and 36.1% of females were younger than 35 years of age.
- 26.6% of males worked fewer than 35 hours per week, compared with 54.2% of females.
- Males worked an average of 44.7 hours per week and females averaged 32.6 hours.
- 84.3% of males and 81.6% of females practised in metropolitan centres.
- 71.5% of OMPs practised from private rooms in their main job, 12.8% in acute care hospitals and 6.0% in non-residential facilities.
- 67.7% of males and 64.3% of females had gained their initial qualification in Australia. Of the remainder, 6.9% gained their initial qualification in New Zealand, 21.6% in the United Kingdom or Ireland, 32.2% in Asia and 39.3% in other countries.

### **Special interest primary care practitioners**

There were 1,778 primary care practitioners practising mainly in a special interest area of primary care in 1997. These represented 8.6% of primary care practitioners – 6.5% of VRGPs and RACGP trainees and 27.8% of OMPs.

Features of special interest primary care practitioners included the following:

- 7.9% of male and 10.2% of female primary care practitioners were practising mainly in a special interest area. This proportion varied among States and Territories: 5.0% of male and 3.7% of female primary care practitioners in Tasmania, compared with 15.8% of males in the Northern Territory and 15.6% of females in Western Australia.
- 48.0% worked in recognised clinical specialties – 53.5% of males and 39.5% of females.
- The largest special interest areas for male practitioners were sports medicine (9.1%) and occupational medicine (8.1%).
- The largest special interest areas for female practitioners were women’s health (17.2%), counselling and psychotherapy (7.7%), obstetrics and gynaecology (4.3%) and sexual health (4.3%).

- 26.6% of all special interest primary care practitioners worked in the four largest special interest areas – women’s health (7.2%), sports medicine (6.8%), counselling and psychotherapy (7.0%) and occupational medicine (5.6%).

### **Primary care locum tenens**

There were 1,383 primary care practitioners who reported current employment as a locum tenens in 1997 and a further 117 practitioners who reported employment as both locum tenens and in a deputising service. Features of the medical practitioners who reported as locum tenens only included the following:

- 470 were female (34.0%), of whom 73.7% were younger than 45 years of age (compared with 42.9% of males).
- 31.6% of males and 4.6% of females were aged 65 years or more.
- 68.9% of female locums were VRGPs, 8.6% were RACGP trainees, and 22.6% were OMPs (compared with 66.4%, 5.1% and 28.5% respectively of males).
- 62.1% of female and 33.3% of male locums worked fewer than 35 hours per week.
- Male locums (22.2%) were more likely to work in a rural or remote area in their main job than female locums (16.0%).
- 66.8% of males and 74.2% of females had gained their initial qualification in Australia. Of those who had gained their initial qualification overseas, 38.6% of males had initially qualified in the United Kingdom or Ireland and 35.6% of females had initially qualified in Asia.
- 83.4% of primary care locums practised in private rooms in their main job and a further 10.5% practised in acute care hospitals.

### **Primary care deputising service practitioners**

There were 198 primary care practitioners who reported current employment as deputising service practitioners in 1997. Features of these medical practitioners included the following:

- 75 were female (37.8%), of whom 79.3% were younger than 45 years of age (compared with 65.6% of males).
- 50.0% of those younger than 35 years were female.
- 42.9% of female deputising service practitioners were VRGPs, 42.5% were RACGP trainees and 14.6% were OMPs (compared with 55.0%, 12.9% and 31.0% respectively of males).
- 40.3% of female and 12.1% of male deputising service practitioners worked less than 35 hours per week.
- 72.1% of males and 61.6% of females had gained their initial qualification in Australia. Of those who had gained their initial qualification overseas, 47.1% of males and 43.4% of females had initially qualified in Asia.
- 74.4% of deputising service practitioners practised in private rooms in their main jobs. A further 13.3% practised in acute care hospitals and 5.7% practised in non-residential facilities.

### **Primary care practice size**

In most States and Territories, the 1997 labour force survey included a question, for the first time, on the number of primary care practitioners in each practice. Unfortunately, this

question was not included in the questionnaires used in New South Wales and Victoria. The following analysis refers to the 8,203 primary care practitioners for whom data were available in Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania, Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. These States and Territories had 39.9% of the primary care practitioners in Australia in 1997.

- 43.3% of primary care practitioners worked in practices with five or more practitioners. These practices were 16.7% of all primary care practices.
- 15.5% of primary care practitioners were in solo practice. Solo practices were 41.9% of all primary care practices.
- There are State differences in the types of practice. Queensland had 13.7% of practitioners in solo practice and 48.2% in practices with five or more practitioners. This contrasted with the Northern Territory with 24.0% of practitioners in solo practice and 31.3% in practices with five or more practitioners.
- 34.5% of primary care practitioners in these States and Territories were female. However, only 18.9% of practitioners in solo practices were female.
- Of those who gained their initial qualification in Asia, 35.0% were in solo practice and 24.8% were in practices with five or more practitioners. This contrasted with those who gained their initial qualification in Australia or New Zealand where 13.9% were in solo practice and 44.2% and 42.8% respectively were in practices with five or more practitioners.
- 51.9% of solo practitioners and 42.9% of practitioners in two practitioner practices worked more than 50 hours per week. Around 36% of practitioners in all other size practices worked more than 50 hours per week.
- 75.3% of male solo practitioners and 59.7% of those in two practitioner practices were 45 years of age or more. In contrast, 54.9% of all male practitioners were aged 45 years or more.
- 51.7% of female solo practitioners and 36.4% of those in two practitioner practices were 45 years of age or more. In contrast, 30.0% of all female practitioners were aged 45 years or more.
- 8.6% of those in practices with five or more practitioners were in 24-hour clinics.

**Table 10: Primary care practitioners: selected characteristics, States and Territories, 1997**

Characteristic	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Total	%
Age group:										
Males										
<35	502	396	274	179	165	27	27	19	1,590	11.5
35-44	1,286	1,128	740	369	379	129	37	79	4,146	30.1
45-54	1,459	1,036	621	371	330	115	26	70	4,029	29.2
55-64	856	473	343	154	179	62	18	32	2,116	15.4
65+	783	487	302	115	138	42	6	27	1,900	13.8
Females										
<35	509	490	332	179	179	51	34	33	1,807	26.7
35-44	908	733	490	243	253	84	35	67	2,814	41.5
45-54	547	319	244	131	127	49	7	54	1,479	21.8
55-64	168	101	54	32	47	8	4	10	423	6.2
65+	108	66	40	18	14	2	3	4	254	3.8
Total hours worked per week:										
Males										
1-19	232	138	82	43	59	13	6	13	586	4.3
20-34	419	350	159	74	129	42	9	20	1,200	8.7
35-49	1,421	1,047	774	359	450	115	42	85	4,293	31.2
50-64	1,876	1,425	1,031	562	412	159	52	96	5,612	40.7
65-79	680	413	177	110	111	35	3	9	1,537	11.2
80+	259	147	56	41	29	13	2	4	552	4.0
Mean	51.2	50.7	48.9	50.5	46.7	49.2	47.3	46.2	50.1	
Median	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	47.0	50.0	50.0	48.0	50.0	
Mode	60.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	40.0	60.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	
Females										
1-19	367	383	242	110	131	33	11	23	1,301	19.2
20-34	709	523	371	222	198	81	34	60	2,196	32.4
35-49	702	479	367	189	207	61	23	64	2,091	30.9
50-64	348	242	146	64	71	15	12	18	916	13.5
65-79	72	59	27	12	9	3	3	3	188	2.8
80+	41	25	7	6	4	1	0	0	84	1.2
Mean	35.9	32.8	32.8	32.5	31.4	31.1	35.3	34.5	33.9	
Median	35.0	32.0	32.0	30.0	32.0	30.0	33.0	35.0	33.0	
Mode	40.0	20.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	25.0	30.0	40.0	
Region of main job:										
Males										
Capital city	3,324	2,600	1,089	937	907	192	52	227	9,327	67.7
Other metro centre	560	133	417	0	0	0	0	0	1,110	8.1
Large rural centre	218	168	342	13	0	73	0	0	814	5.9
Small rural centre	302	224	134	62	94	33	0	0	848	6.2
Other rural area	456	390	225	165	93	77	3	0	1,410	10.2
Remote zone	25	5	73	11	97	1	60	0	272	2.0
Females										
Capital city	1,657	1,339	701	511	516	126	42	168	5,059	74.7
Other metro centre	228	58	116	0	0	0	0	0	402	5.9
Large rural centre	116	89	156	1	0	31	0	0	393	5.8
Small rural centre	105	73	61	21	27	16	0	0	303	4.5
Other rural area	126	148	97	62	31	21	1	0	488	7.2
Remote zone	8	2	30	6	45	0	41	0	132	1.9
Work setting of main job:										
Private rooms	6,203	4,653	3,209	1,650	1,654	517	116	332	18,333	89.2
Non-residential facility	173	123	44	27	20	13	13	14	426	2.1
Aboriginal health service	25	14	18	12	30	1	43	0	143	0.7
Acute care hospital	544	292	62	39	21	14	3	5	980	4.8
Other residential facility	12	3	3	7	9	1	0	0	35	0.2
Educational institution	40	73	25	10	17	7	3	8	183	0.9
Defence forces	46	14	30	8	6	3	11	20	139	0.7
Other	82	57	49	36	54	15	9	17	318	1.5
Males	4,886	3,519	2,280	1,188	1,191	376	114	227	13,781	67.0
Females	2,240	1,709	1,160	602	620	194	84	168	6,776	33.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,125</b>	<b>5,229</b>	<b>3,440</b>	<b>1,790</b>	<b>1,810</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>20,557</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 11: Primary care practitioners: selected characteristics, region of main job, Australia, 1997**

Characteristic	Region of main job						Total	%
	Capital city	Other metro centre	Large rural centre	Small rural centre	Other rural area	Remote zone		
Average age:								
Males	49.2	50.0	47.4	47.2	47.6	44.0	48.8	..
Females	42.1	41.9	41.4	41.8	41.4	37.6	41.8	..
Total hours worked:								
Males								
1-19	429	48	28	20	41	10	575	4.2
20-34	868	101	54	48	91	10	1,172	8.5
35-49	3,073	354	222	224	322	73	4,267	31.0
50-64	3,685	432	391	377	619	118	5,622	40.8
65-79	953	126	100	116	240	40	1,574	11.4
80+	320	48	19	64	97	21	570	4.1
Mean	49.2	49.9	50.9	54.3	54.5	53.3	50.1	..
Females								
1-19	982	73	89	53	87	20	1,304	19.2
20-34	1,697	149	114	90	141	19	2,210	32.6
35-49	1,597	124	113	89	125	45	2,094	30.9
50-64	614	41	66	55	91	38	905	13.3
65-79	114	8	11	11	33	6	181	2.7
80+	56	6	0	5	11	4	83	1.2
Mean	33.3	32.9	33.1	36.1	37.6	40.9	33.9	..
Work setting of main job:								
Private rooms	12,821	1,350	1,083	1,047	1,778	286	18,366	89.3
Non-residential facility	313	33	23	6	30	10	416	2.0
Aboriginal health service	61	7	8	11	7	56	149	0.7
Acute care hospital	677	77	70	63	62	23	972	4.7
Other residential facility	23	7	2	2	1	0	34	0.2
Educational institution	157	9	5	3	4	1	179	0.9
Defence forces	99	17	6	5	6	1	135	0.7
Other	235	12	10	14	10	27	307	1.5
Country of initial qualification:								
Males								
Australia	6,895	796	641	653	1,105	202	10,291	74.7
New Zealand	125	26	11	18	15	9	204	1.5
United Kingdom/Ireland	577	117	110	106	169	35	1,115	8.1
Asia	1,056	112	22	33	65	6	1,294	9.4
Other countries	674	59	30	38	56	20	877	6.4
Females								
Australia	3,978	334	328	245	414	97	5,395	79.6
New Zealand	62	2	3	5	4	6	83	1.2
United Kingdom/Ireland	275	24	49	37	46	25	456	6.7
Asia	422	28	5	7	11	0	474	7.0
Other countries	323	14	8	9	12	3	369	5.4
Australian residency status:								
Males								
Australian citizen	8,697	1,033	746	782	1,313	225	12,796	92.9
Permanent resident	607	72	58	60	91	30	919	6.7
Not permanent resident	23	4	9	6	6	17	66	0.5
Females								
Australian citizen	4,668	371	353	270	449	106	6,217	91.7
Permanent resident	382	28	37	29	39	7	521	7.7
Not permanent resident	10	3	3	1	0	3	19	0.3
Males	9,327	1,110	814	848	1,410	272	13,781	67.0
Females	5,059	402	393	303	488	132	6,776	33.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,387</b>	<b>1,511</b>	<b>1,206</b>	<b>1,152</b>	<b>1,898</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>20,557</b>	<b>100.0</b>



**Table 12: Primary care practitioners: sex, qualification and main field of practice, States and Territories, 1997**

Qualification/ main field of practice	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Total
<b>Males</b>									
VRGP									
General practice	4,071	2,787	1,927	1,018	906	336	79	193	11,315
Special interest area	159	282	91	39	119	8	9	14	722
Total	4,231	3,069	2,018	1,057	1,025	344	88	207	12,037
RACGP trainee									
General practice	145	93	71	28	39	10	5	6	397
Special interest area	9	6	1	2	6	3	2	0	31
Total	154	99	73	30	45	13	7	6	428
OMP									
General practice	376	241	157	76	102	11	13	7	982
Special interest area	125	110	32	25	19	8	6	7	333
Total	501	351	189	101	121	19	19	14	1,316
Total									
General practice	4,592	3,120	2,155	1,121	1,047	358	96	206	12,695
Special interest area	294	399	124	67	144	19	18	21	1,086
Total	4,886	3,519	2,280	1,188	1,191	376	114	227	13,781
<b>Females</b>									
VRGP									
General practice	1,618	1,227	916	455	425	153	53	129	4,977
Special interest area	119	150	48	22	61	4	6	9	420
Total	1,737	1,377	964	477	487	158	59	139	5,397
RACGP trainee									
General practice	222	157	92	59	40	27	14	17	627
Special interest area	10	8	2	2	3	0	0	0	26
Total	232	164	95	61	43	27	14	17	653
OMP									
General practice	196	91	68	48	58	6	9	5	480
Special interest area	74	77	34	16	32	3	2	8	246
Total	270	167	102	64	90	9	11	13	726
Total									
General practice	2,036	1,474	1,076	562	523	187	75	151	6,085
Special interest area	204	235	84	40	97	7	8	17	692
Total	2,240	1,709	1,160	602	620	194	84	168	6,776
<b>Persons</b>									
VRGP									
General practice	5,689	4,014	2,842	1,472	1,331	489	131	322	16,292
Special interest area	279	433	139	61	181	12	15	23	1,142
Total	5,968	4,446	2,982	1,533	1,512	501	147	346	17,435
RACGP trainee									
General practice	367	249	164	87	79	38	19	22	1,025
Special interest area	20	14	4	5	9	3	2	0	57
Total	387	263	167	92	88	41	21	22	1,081
OMP									
General practice	572	332	225	124	160	18	21	11	1,463
Special interest area	199	187	66	41	51	11	8	15	579
Total	771	519	291	165	211	29	30	27	2,042
Total									
General practice	6,628	4,595	3,231	1,683	1,570	545	171	356	18,780
Special interest area	498	634	208	107	241	26	26	38	1,778
Total	7,125	5,229	3,440	1,790	1,810	571	198	395	20,557

Note: A further dissection of VRGPs, RACGP trainees and OMPs is available in Tables 50–61 on the Internet (<http://www.aihw.gov.au>).

**Table 13: Primary care practitioners: number of practitioners in practice, sex, States and Territories, 1997**

No. of practitioners	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Total
<b>Males</b>									
One	n.a.	n.a.	376	224	259	89	40	41	1,029
Two	n.a.	n.a.	284	176	211	64	18	39	792
Three	n.a.	n.a.	278	141	169	43	19	45	695
Four	n.a.	n.a.	212	124	137	50	9	25	557
Five or more	n.a.	n.a.	1,130	523	415	131	28	77	2,303
<b>Total</b>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<b>2,280</b>	<b>1,188</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>5,376</b>
<b>Females</b>									
One	n.a.	n.a.	94	63	40	15	8	21	240
Two	n.a.	n.a.	182	98	101	29	17	28	454
Three	n.a.	n.a.	195	78	89	36	16	30	444
Four	n.a.	n.a.	162	84	127	35	8	28	444
Five or more	n.a.	n.a.	527	280	263	80	34	61	1,245
<b>Total</b>	<i>n.a.</i>	<i>n.a.</i>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>2,828</b>
<b>Persons</b>									
One	n.a.	n.a.	470	287	299	104	48	62	1,269
Two	n.a.	n.a.	465	274	312	93	36	67	1,246
Three	n.a.	n.a.	473	219	258	79	35	75	1,139
Four	n.a.	n.a.	374	208	264	84	18	53	1,001
Five or more	n.a.	n.a.	1,657	803	678	211	62	137	3,548
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>3,440</b>	<b>1,790</b>	<b>1,810</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>8,203</b>
<b>(per cent of persons)</b>									
One	n.a.	n.a.	13.7	16.0	16.5	18.2	24.0	15.7	15.5
Two	n.a.	n.a.	13.5	15.3	17.2	16.3	18.1	17.0	15.2
Three	n.a.	n.a.	13.7	12.2	14.3	13.8	17.7	19.0	13.9
Four	n.a.	n.a.	10.9	11.6	14.6	14.8	8.9	13.5	12.2
Five or more	n.a.	n.a.	48.2	44.9	37.4	37.0	31.3	34.8	43.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 14: Estimated number<sup>(a)</sup> of primary care practices: size of practice, States and Territories, 1997**

No. of practitioners	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Total
One	n.a.	n.a.	470	287	299	104	48	62	1,269
Two	n.a.	n.a.	233	137	156	46	18	34	623
Three	n.a.	n.a.	158	73	86	26	12	25	380
Four	n.a.	n.a.	93	52	66	21	4	13	250
Five or more	n.a.	n.a.	237	115	97	30	9	20	507
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>3,029</b>
<b>(per cent of practices)</b>									
One	n.a.	n.a.	39.5	43.3	42.5	45.6	52.6	40.4	41.9
Two	n.a.	n.a.	19.5	20.6	22.1	20.4	19.8	21.8	20.6
Three	n.a.	n.a.	13.2	11.0	12.2	11.5	12.9	16.3	12.5
Four	n.a.	n.a.	7.9	7.8	9.4	9.3	4.8	8.7	8.3
Five or more	n.a.	n.a.	19.9	17.3	13.8	13.2	9.8	12.8	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Calculated by dividing the number of practitioners by the number of practitioners in each practice. In practices with five or more practitioners seven was chosen as the divisor.