

Workforce analysis: rural general practitioners in Western Australia



Profile of the GP proceduralist workforce 2014

Reporting general practice trends

Rural Health West conducts an annual survey of general practitioners (GPs) working in an Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Remoteness Area (RA) 2 to 5 location in Western Australia at the annual census date of 30 November.

Overall, 67.1% of the rural and remote general practice workforce responded to the 2014 survey. This high response rate, together with ongoing data collection strategies, means that Rural Health West offers contemporary valid data about trends in the rural general practice workforce to support workforce policy and planning.

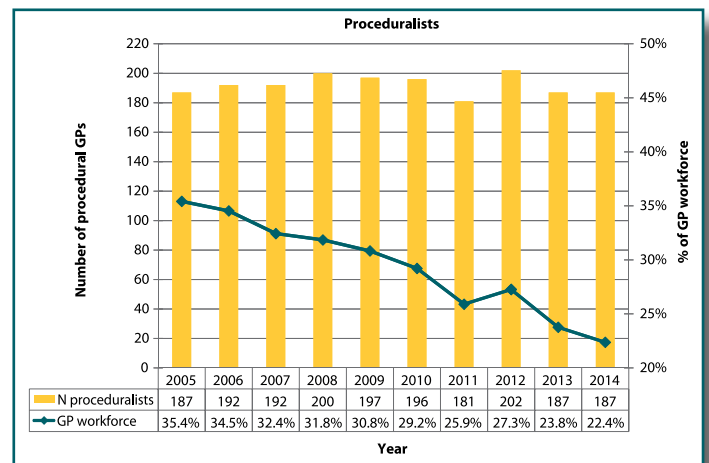
This is the fifth year that Rural Health West has published fact sheets about the general practice workforce in rural and remote Western Australia. This current fact sheet builds on the earlier annual snapshots and reports on the 2014 local and national data¹, where available, for the same period.

The 2014 survey results are set out in the Minimum Data Set Report and Workforce Analysis Update 2014 which is available on the website at www.ruralhealthwest.com.au/workforcedata.

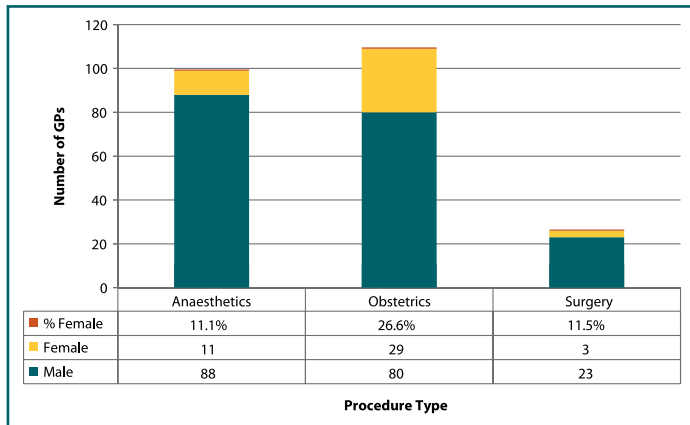
Numbers

In November 2014, there were 836 GPs, including GP registrars, working in rural and remote Western Australia (RA 2 to RA 5). 187 of those GPs were proceduralists practising a mix of obstetrics, anaesthetics and general surgery.

This was the same number of GP proceduralists as recorded in November 2013. The GP proceduralist workforce as a proportion of the rural and remote GP workforce in Western Australia, has declined from 35.4% in 2005 to 22.4% in 2014.



Obstetrics remained the most widely practised procedural area and the most commonly practised by female GP proceduralists (29 of 40 female proceduralists).

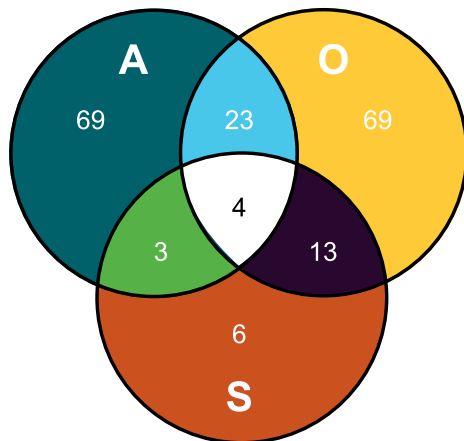


Overseas trained GP proceduralists comprised 34.8% of the procedural general practice workforce in 2014, 0.6% higher than for 2013. This procedural general practice workforce has increased from 8.8% in 2001 when this data was first collected.

Procedural areas

Many of the 187 rural and remote GP proceduralists practised in more than one area.

A = Anaesthetics
O = Obstetrics
S = Surgery



Overall, this chart shows that 4 GPs provided services across all three procedural areas (same as in 2013), 39 worked across two areas (4 less than 2013) and 144 worked within one procedural area only (3 more than 2013).

Age and gender

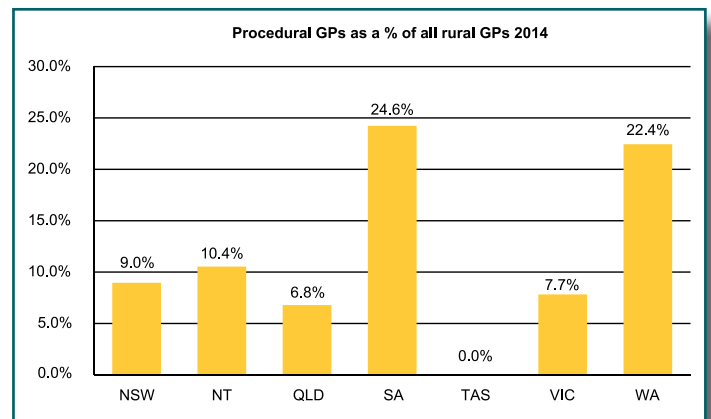
In 2014, the average age of rural and remote GP proceduralists in Western Australia was 48.8 years, an increase of 0.3 years compared to 2013. The average age of the proceduralist workforce has increased by 1.5 years since 2006 and is higher than the non-proceduralist workforce (47.1 years).

There were 40 female GP proceduralists recorded in 2014, 1 more than in 2013. There has been an increase in the overall number of female proceduralists between 2006 and 2014 (from 27 to 40). However, they represented only 21.4% of the GP procedural workforce in 2014 which was much lower than their overall general practice workforce participation rate of 40.1% in 2014.

National comparison

GP proceduralists represented 22.4% of the Western Australian rural and remote general practice workforce in 2014 compared to 23.8% in 2013, 27.3% in 2012 and 25.9% in 2011. These rates remain considerably higher than the recorded national averages of 9.8% in 2014, 10.6% in 2013, 12.6% in 2012 and 12.2% in 2011 for known proceduralists.

National MDS data for 2014 showed that self-reported proceduralists, as a proportion of the total GP workforce, was higher in Western Australia (22.4%) than all other states except South Australia (24.6%). New South Wales recorded the highest actual number of self-reported proceduralists (212 comprising 9% of the total workforce), followed by Western Australian with 187 proceduralists.



Nationally, female proceduralists comprised 38.8% of the reported procedural workforce in 2014 compared to 21.4% in Western Australia.

Other fact sheets

- Growing the future general practice workforce 2014
- General practice workforce in Aboriginal Medical Services 2014
- Profile of the female general practice workforce 2014
- Profile of the general practice workforce 2014

¹ National data sourced from the *Medical Practice in Rural and Remote Australia: National Minimum Data Set (MDS) Report as at November 2014*.

