

... provide nursing care to patients in hospitals, aged care and other health care facilities, and in the community.

Indicative Skill Level

Occupations in this unit group have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification. In some instances relevant experience and/or on-the-job training may be required in addition to the formal qualification (ANZSCO Skill Level 1).

Skilled Occupation Criteria

High use

Registered Nurses meet the criteria for high use, showing that the skills which people have acquired through education and training are actually being deployed for the uses intended.

- ▶ Based on advice from Universities Australia, university courses for Registered Nurses have a strong degree of match with eventual employment in nursing occupations.
- ▶ Of new graduates employed as Registered Nurses, 95% were found to have studied in nursing or a related field (*Australian Graduate Survey, 2009*).
- ▶ As professionals, Registered Nurses are expected to have a level of skill commensurate with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification. Of those employed as Registered Nurses, 65% per cent were found to possess this level of skill (*ABS Education and Work, 2010*).

High risk

Registered Nurses also meet the criteria for high risk/high disruption. This indicates that the occupation is important for the effective operation of an enterprise and/or the broader economy.

- ▶ Registered Nurses are required to be registered with their state or territory Nursing and Midwifery Regulatory Authority (NMRA).
- ▶ Registered Nurses are important to meet government policy priorities at both the Commonwealth and state level. These include responding to increasing pressure on the health care system due to the ageing population, meeting the recommendations of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission, the Clinical Training Funding Initiative and the Clinical Supervision Support Program.

Occupation trends

ANZSCO: 2544

Registered Nurses

Employment level	215,500 More than half of workers (54.8%) are employed full-time.
6 digit employment (2006 Census)	254411 Nurse Practitioner 340 254412 Registered Nurse (Aged Care) 25,070 254413 Registered Nurse (Child and Family Health) 3620 254414 Registered Nurse (Community Health) 8770 254415 Registered Nurse (Critical Care and Emergency) 9910 254416 Registered Nurse (Developmental Disability) 290 254417 Registered Nurse (Disability and Rehabilitation) 1930 254418 Registered Nurse (Medical) 5040 254421 Registered Nurse (Medical Practice) 3710 254422 Registered Nurse (Mental Health) 7710 254423 Registered Nurse (Perioperative) 10,010 254424 Registered Nurse (Surgical) 3220 254499 Registered Nurses nec 47,830
Employment growth	Over the five years to August 2010, employment increased by 20.1% (compared with growth of 12.1% for all occupations). Employment is expected to rise by 17.6% over the next five years (compared with projected growth of 9.5% for all occupations).
Unemployment rate	Low (around 0.7%) compared with all occupations.
Educational profile	Around 65.0% have a Bachelor degree or higher qualification.
Vacancies	The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) rose by 36.4% over the 12 months to September 2010 to 157.8 (March 2006=100). Vacancies for all occupations increased by 19.4%.
Gender	Around 89.7% of workers are female (compared with 45.4% for all occupations).
Labour turnover	Around 6.3% of workers leave this occupation in a year compared with 13.1% for all occupations.
Age profile	The median age is 43.2 years and 47.0% are aged 45 years and over (compared with 38.5% for all occupations).
Earnings	Median full-time weekly earnings (before tax) are above average (\$1150).
Graduate outcomes	Graduate Careers Australia data show 98% of nursing (initial) Bachelor degree graduates seeking full-time work were working four months after graduation, 94% of whom were employed as Health Professionals.
Skill shortages	Persistent shortages of Registered Nurses have been evident over the past three decades.

Labour market

Registered Nurses have been in persistent shortage over much of the past three decades. Although research in 2009 suggested the labour market had eased in some states and shortages were no longer evident in these locations at that time, research undertaken in 2010 shows shortages have become more widespread and are now apparent in every state and territory.

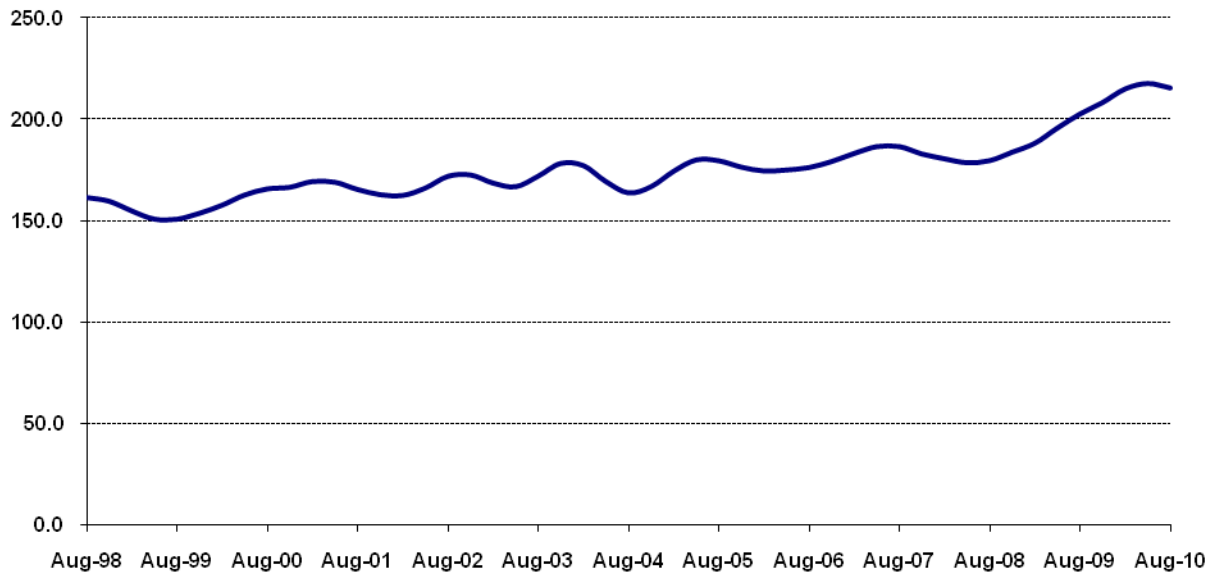
Employers experienced significant difficulty recruiting across most nursing specialisations. Particular specialisations in shortage varied across the states but mental health and aged care were consistently mentioned as being areas of notable shortage, and many employers in regional areas in all states and the Northern Territory found it particularly difficult to attract suitable applicants for registered nursing vacancies.

In 2010, slightly more than half the surveyed vacancies were filled, a very similar rate to that recorded in late 2009 but almost double the proportion recorded as filled in 2007. There were, on average, 1.1 suitable applicants per vacancy in 2010 although a number of employers, particularly those in regional locations, did not attract any interest in their positions.

Summary

Shortages in this occupation have been persistent, employment growth has been strong over the past five years and similar growth in employment is expected over the next five. Unemployment is low and vacancy levels are increasing. A relatively high proportion of the workforce is aged 45 years or over indicating there is likely to be strong ongoing demand to meet higher demand from new jobs and to replace Registered Nurses who retire over the next decade.

Registered Nurses
Employed Persons ('000s) Aug 1998 to Aug 2010



Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) - 3 Monthly Average - Nov 2006 - Sept 2010
Registered Nurses (March 2006 = 100)

