



ANZSCO 2515-11, 13 Hospital / Retail Pharmacist

Tasmania
May 2018

Current labour market rating:

No Shortage

Previous labour market rating (June 2017):

Regional recruitment difficulty

Comments

Recent research indicates the majority of employers across Tasmania are able to fill positions for both hospital and retail pharmacists.

Survey results¹

- The Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised for hospital and retail pharmacists found 85 per cent of vacancies were filled within the survey period, similar to the 2017 survey results.
- Employers received an average of 4.8 applicants per vacancy, with 1.4 applicants considered suitable.
 - This is an increase from last year's survey where employers received an average of 1.4 applicants per vacancy, with an average of 1.0 applicant considered suitable.
- Employers stated positions for senior pharmacist requiring higher levels of workplace knowledge and experience were more difficult to fill.
 - Half of all employers surveyed who advertised specifically for senior positions received no applicants for their advertised positions.
 - Both metropolitan and regional areas had unfilled vacancies for senior hospital and retail pharmacists.
- On average 89.0 per cent of hospital pharmacist vacancies were filled and employers received an average of 5.6 applicants per vacancy, with 1.3 applicant considered suitable.
 - All entry-level vacancies for hospital pharmacists across the state were filled.
- Employers looking for retail pharmacists filled on average 75 per cent of their vacancies. Employers received an average of 3.3 applicants per vacancy, with 1.5 applicant considered suitable.
 - Retail pharmacies reported it is difficult to attract suitable pharmacists and stressed the importance of finding applicants who were the right fit for the business.
 - A small number of employers stated that wages and location are an issue when trying to attract suitable candidates compared to the hospital system.
 - A small number of employers in regional Tasmania seeking retail pharmacists advised having to re-advertise to fill vacancies.

¹ The methodology underpinning this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business - Document library, Australian Government](#) and can also be accessed by the QR code.



Unsuitable applicants

- While all applicants were qualified, employers considered 58 per cent unsuitable due to their lack of experience and knowledge.
 - Other reasons applicants were considered unsuitable were due to other soft skills such as culture fit and the ability to show insight and enthusiasm for the role.

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for pharmacists is driven by factors such as the general health and ageing of the population. Underlying demand for pharmacists continues to grow steadily.
 - Data from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) indicates as at 30 June 2017 there were 738 pharmacists whose principal place of practice was Tasmania. This represents an increase of 5.3 per cent on the number recorded as at 30 June 2016 and 17.5 per cent increase on 30 June 2012.²
 - The number of prescriptions dispensed under the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme in Tasmania increased by 5.3 per cent per cent for the period June 2011 to June 2017.³
 - The number of approved pharmacies for dispensing in Tasmania has increased by 3.5 per cent for the period June 2012 to June 2017, whilst the number of approved dispensing doctors has remained stable over the same period.⁴
 - Retail turnover in the Tasmanian pharmaceutical, cosmetic and toiletry goods retail sector decreased by 12.9 per cent over the April 2017 to April 2018 period, but increased over the April 2013 to April 2018 period by 23.1 per cent.⁵
 - The number of patient separations (episodes of care) from public hospitals in Tasmania grew by 1.5 per cent from June 2016 to June 2017. In the five years to June 2017, separations from public hospitals increased by 17.0 per cent.⁶
 - Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data shows during the five years to June 2016, the number of people aged 65 years and over in Tasmania increased by 13.2 per cent.⁷ Additionally, as at June 2016, Tasmania had the highest proportion of people aged 65 years and over at 18.7 per cent, compared to 15.2 per cent nationally. Tasmania also has the oldest median age, which is 42.0 years, and the largest increase in median age between 2006 and 2016, (increasing by 3.1 years).⁸

² Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, Annual Reports, 2011/12 to 2016/17

³ Australian Government Department of Health, PBS Expenditure and Prescriptions twelve months to 30 June 2011 and 2017, downloaded from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme website

⁴ Australian Government Department of Health, PBS Expenditure and Prescriptions twelve months to 30 June 2012 and 2017, downloaded from the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme website. Number of approved Community Pharmacies and Dispensing Doctors

⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics, cat no 8501.0, Retail Trade, Australia Apr 2018. Table 13. Retail Turnover, State by Industry Subgroup, Trend

⁶ Australian Government Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Admitted Patient Care 2012-13 to 2016-17, Australian Hospital Statistics

⁷ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Data by Region, Tasmania, Estimated Resident Population – Persons 65 years and over, Tasmania, 2012 to 2016, accessed 20 June, 2018

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2015, Tasmania Cat. No. 3235.0