



ANZSCO 2524-11 Occupational Therapist

Tasmania June 2017

Current labour market rating

No shortage

Previous labour market rating (June 2016)

Shortage

Comments

Recent research indicates there is currently no shortage of occupational therapists in Tasmania with all employers attracting sufficient candidates to fill their current vacancies with suitably qualified applicants.

Survey results¹

- A Department of Employment survey of employers who had recently advertised for occupational therapists found 100 per cent of vacancies were filled. In comparison, 50 per cent of vacancies were filled in 2016 with no vacancies filled in 2015.
 - There was an average of 3.7 qualified applicants per vacancy of which an average of 2.3 per vacancy were considered suitable by employers.
 - In 2016 there was just over one suitable applicant per vacancy and in 2015 less than one suitable applicant per vacancy.
- Advertised vacancies included positions for occupational therapists with at least five years' experience for more senior roles and new graduates who could demonstrate practical experience in areas such as working with returned service people.
- Employers required applicants to have experience in specific areas including; workplace rehabilitation, functional capacity assessments, psychological and developmental capability assessments, case management, acute care and aged care.

Unsuitable applicants

- Employers considered applicants unsuitable if they lacked sufficient post graduate experience, particularly in case management.

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for occupational therapists is influenced by the growth and ageing of the population, increased expenditure on health, disability and aged care, and the increasing role of the profession in in-patient care and rehabilitation.

¹ The methodology underpinning this research is outlined at Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Employment - Document library, Australian Government and can also be accessed by the QR code.



- Data from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) indicates as at 30 June 2016 there were 285 occupational therapists whose principal place of practice was Tasmania. This represents an increase of 12.7 per cent on the number recorded as at 30 June 2013.²
- The Department's 12 month average count of vacancies advertised online for occupational therapists show vacancy numbers have been consistent over the previous five years. There were 4.0 vacancies in March 2017 compared with a monthly average of 3.8 over the previous five years.³
- Data obtained from the Australian Government Department of Health shows there were 222,271 eligible allied health services under the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) processed for Tasmania in the 2015-16 financial year. This represents an increase of 21.6 per cent on the average of around 182,795 per annum processed in the previous five years from 2010-11 to 2014-15.⁴
- A number of employers reported an overrepresentation of female occupational therapists in the industry and advised staff preference for part time working arrangements.
 - According to AHPRA registration data, 91.6 per cent of occupational therapists in Tasmania are female.⁵
- There is no undergraduate training available in Tasmania for occupational therapists; however, a three year Bachelor of Health Science is available through the University of Tasmania, which may satisfy entry requirements for post-graduate occupational therapy courses interstate.

Other indicators and issues

- There were 2,377 registered providers in the National Disability Investment Scheme (NDIS) at 31 March 2016 and by early June this had reached over 3,500, representing a growing range of supplier business types and service models. The NDIS has also triggered growth for sole traders and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs).⁶

² Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, *Annual Report Summary 2015-16 Tasmania*, and *Regulating health practitioners in the public interest – Annual Report 2012-13*

³ Department of Employment, *Internet Vacancy Index*, March 2017, 12 month moving average

⁴ Australian Government Department of Health, *Annual Medicare Statistics – Financial Year 1984-85 to 2015-16*, Broad Type of Service: Allied Health

⁵ Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, *Annual Report Summary 2015-16 Tasmania*

⁶ National Disability Investment Scheme, *Market Position Statement, Tasmania*, July 2016