Physiotherapist

ANZSCO 2525-11

Tasmania

May 2017

Current labour market rating

Recruitment Difficulty

Previous labour market rating (June 2016)

Regional Shortage

Comments

Recent research indicates employers delivering physiotherapy services outside of hospitals and the State Government are experiencing difficulties recruiting for physiotherapists. In comparison, employers based in both private and public hospitals as well as State Government health services filled the majority of their vacancies.

Survey results1

- A Department of Employment survey of employers who had recently advertised for physiotherapists in businesses such as private practices and aged care service providers found 25 per cent of vacancies were filled.
  - These vacancies attracted less than one qualified applicant per vacancy of which less than one applicant was considered suitable by employers.
  - The advertised vacancies in this sector were within private allied health care practices, aged care facilities and workplace rehabilitation providers.
  - The positions advertised were for physiotherapists with sufficient experience working in allied health services with the ability to work independently and undertake complex case management.
  - The main reason employers attributed to the recruitment difficulty was lack of undergraduate training for physiotherapists in Tasmania. Employers stated candidates are unwilling to relocate to Tasmania once they graduate, gain sufficient experience in the industry and become settled in other states.

- Employers who had recently advertised for physiotherapists in both public and private hospitals and State Government health services found 89 per cent of vacancies were filled.
  - Overall there were 2.6 qualified applicants per vacancy of with 1.6 applicants per vacancy considered suitable by employers.
  - The advertised vacancies in this sector were both public and private hospitals and State Government health services.
  - The positions advertised were for physiotherapists with experience working in hospital environments and outpatient clinics with case management experience.

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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.
Unsuitable applicants

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

Demand and supply trends

- Demand for physiotherapists 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-patient care and rehabilitation.
  
  - Data from the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) indicates as at 30 June 2016 there were 450 physiotherapists whose principal place of practice was Tasmania. This represents an increase of 14.2 per cent on the number recorded as at 30 June 2012.  
  - The Department’s 12 month average count of vacancies advertised online for physiotherapists show vacancy numbers have been consistent over the previous five years. There were 11.2 vacancies in March 2017 compared with a monthly average of 12.5 over the previous five years.  
  - 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.  
  - In the five years to June 2015, the number of people aged 65 years and over in Tasmania increased by 14.9 per cent. Additionally, as at June 2015, Tasmania had the highest proportion of people aged 65 years and over at 18.0 per cent, compared to 15.0 per cent nationally. Tasmania also has the oldest median age, which is 41.9 years, and the largest increase in median age between 2010 and 2015, (increasing by 1.9 years).
  - A large number of employers reported an overrepresentation of female physiotherapists in the industry and the impact on workforce planning due to employees temporarily leaving the workforce due to caring responsibilities.

- There is no undergraduate training available in Tasmania for physiotherapists; however, a three year Bachelor of Health Science is available through the University of Tasmania, which may satisfy entry requirements for post-graduate physiotherapy courses interstate.

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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
6 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2015, Tasmania
7 Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, Annual Report Summary 2015-16 Tasmania
Other indicators and issues

- There were 2,377 registered providers in the National Disability Investment Scheme (NDIS) as 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).  

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