



# ANZSCO 2525-11 Physiotherapist

## Northern Territory June 2018

**Current labour market rating:**

**Shortage**

Previous labour market rating (June 2017):

Recruitment Difficulty

### Comments

Employers in the Northern Territory have reported difficulties in attracting experienced and qualified applicants. This year the number of applicants and vacancies filled decreased significantly and the number of suitable applicants continuing to remain low, decreasing slightly between the 2017 and 2016 surveys.

### Survey results<sup>1</sup>

- The Department of Jobs and Small Business survey of employers who had recently advertised for physiotherapists shows 12 per cent of vacancies were filled, a significant decrease from the 60 per cent reported in 2017.
- There was on average less than one applicant per vacancy, down from 3.3 applicants per vacancy and 2.7 applicants per vacancy reported in the 2017 and 2016 surveys respectively.
- Similarly, the number of suitable applicant per vacancy was lower in comparison to the 1.1 applicants considered suitable in 2017 and 2016.
- The survey shows 90 per cent of applicants were qualified, down from the 100 per cent of applicants reported in 2017.
- Employers were seeking fully qualified applicants with APHRA certification, clinical skills and experience relevant to the position and a commitment to relocate to the Northern Territory.
- Almost all Employers stated that location was a factor in not filling vacancies, with a majority of applicants from interstate or overseas.
- Employers noted the lack of applicants applying and the pool of applicants being minimal and feeling like they did not have much choice.

### Unsuitable applicants

- Employers considered applicants unsuitable due to a lack of:
  - specific field experience, or specific experience, such as Sports therapy, Aged care rehabilitation or general hospital rehabilitation.
  - general level of experience, with some employers advising that they do not take on graduates as they require a minimum of 2 years' experience and as an Employer, they are not large enough to support training.

<sup>1</sup> 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.



## Demand and supply trends

- Physiotherapists work in a range of services from hospitals, community health centers, and centers for physically disabled people, rehabilitation centers, and sport's clinics to fitness centers.
- The Department of Jobs and Small Business Internet Vacancy Index (IVI), advertised vacancies for physiotherapist professionals in the 12 months to June 2018 was 141, down 10 per cent from the number of vacancies advertised in the previous 12 month period.<sup>2</sup>
- The Physiotherapy Board of Australia registrant data for June 2018 shows there is 182 physiotherapists with their principal place of practice in the Northern Territory, an increase of 7 per cent over the 12 months. The majority of physiotherapists are female (68.7 per cent).<sup>3</sup>
- The pathway to becoming a physiotherapist is through completion of an accredited program of study either a four year program at Bachelor or Honour's level, or a two year graduate entry Masters level and registration with the Physiotherapy Board of Australia.
- Currently Charles Darwin University (CDU) offers a Bachelor of Exercise and Sport Science which offers a specialist stream in physiotherapy designed to provide a pathway into the Master of Physiotherapy offered by Flinders University.<sup>4</sup>

## Other indicators and issues

- Among other environmental factors, the ageing population, the reform of the health care and private insurance industry and the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme is expected to increase the demand for physiotherapists.
- The lack of local education options impacts on supply in the Northern Territory due to the reliance on physiotherapists relocating from interstate or attracting locals back to the Northern Territory after studying and training interstate.

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<sup>2</sup> Department of Jobs and Small Business Internet Vacancy Index data, June 2018, 12 month moving average.

<sup>3</sup> Physiotherapy Board of Australia registrant data, June 2017 and 2018, includes non-practising practitioners.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Darwin University, Course Catalogue 2016 and 2017