ANZSCO 2541-11    Northern Territory
Midwife        June 2017

Current labour market rating                  No Shortage
Previous labour market rating (June 2016)    No shortage

Comments
There were sufficient numbers of suitably qualified applicants to fill surveyed vacancies in the Northern Territory.

Survey results
- The Department of Employment surveyed employers who had recently advertised across public hospitals and community clinics. The survey was supplemented by cold canvassing of employers in the health field.
- The survey shows 100 per cent of vacancies were filled across the Northern Territory. This is an increase on the 92 per cent of vacancies filled across the Northern Territory in 2016.
- Overall, on average there were 2.1 applicants per vacancy compared with 1.3 applicants per vacancy in 2016.
- The majority of vacancies were in the regional areas, attracting on average 2.2 applicants per vacancy compared to metropolitan vacancies which attracted on average 1.5 applicants per vacancy.
- Despite the difference between the numbers of applicants per vacancy in regional and metropolitan areas, there was little difference in the numbers of suitable applicants per vacancy. Overall there was an average of 1.1 suitable applicants per vacancy.
- Remote employers advised that retaining employees is an issue due to the working condition in remote communities, which often requires work to be undertaken three months on and one week off, with any personal leave requested to take at that time to ensure a refreshing break.

Unsuitable applicants
- While all applicants were qualified midwives, employers considered 12 per cent unsuitable.
- Qualified applicants were considered unsuitable due to lack of practical post-graduate experience, lack of experience working in remote locations or with Aboriginal people. Employers commented that cultural interpersonal skills were essential and they were reluctant to take on fresh graduates.

Demand and supply trends
- Demand for midwives is dependent on birth rates. In 2017 the Northern Territory recorded 4,004 registered births, compared to 4026 in 2016. Northern Territory has the highest Total Fertility Rate of any State or Territory (2.11 babies per woman). ¹

- The majority of Midwives are employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry, which is projected to be the fastest growing industry (12.8 per cent) in the Northern Territory between 2015 and 2020 however nationally the expected growth rate for midwives over the same period is six percent, which is below the national average growth rate.  
  
- Formal entry to this occupation is through the completion of a three year Bachelor of Midwifery or for registered nurses, completion of a postgraduate qualification in midwifery approved by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council.  
  
- Since the introduction of a Bachelor of Midwifery at Charles Darwin University in 2012, figures from the Department of Education and Training show a steady increase in commencements at the undergraduate level between 2012 and 2015, with small numbers of student completions in 2015.  
  
- All midwives must be registered with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and meet the Board's registration standards in order to practice in Australia.  
  
- Data from the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia show that at the end of March 2017 there were 80 midwives and 505 registered nurses with dual registrations as midwives in the Northern Territory.  
  
- The number of midwifery vacancies advertised for the Northern Territory in the 12 months to June 2017 remains at broadly similar levels to the previous 12 months.

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3 Charles Darwin University offers Bachelor of Midwifery and Bachelor of Science (Honours).

4 Department of Education and Training, Higher Education, Student Data Collection, 2001 to 2014, customised tables, commencements and completions


6 Department of Employment, Internet Vacancy Index, May 2016