



ANZSCO 4114-11 Enrolled Nurse

Northern Territory June 2018

Current labour market rating:	Shortage
Previous labour market rating (June 2017):	Unable to rate

Comments

Small to medium sized employers noted their difficulties in retaining staff as they are unable to compete with larger organisations, such as Hospitals. Employers are anticipating the impact of the new Palmerston Hospital on the potential supply of qualified, experienced nurses.

Survey results¹

- The Department of Jobs and Small Business surveyed employers who had recently advertised for enrolled nurses. There were very few vacancies advertised and the survey has been supplemented through cold calling employers in the health industry across the Northern Territory.
- Vacancies were surveyed across public and private health care sector.
- Overall, the number of vacancies advertised during the survey period was down from the previous year with the majority of the vacancies in the metropolitan area with very few advertised in regional areas.
- The survey shows 59 per cent of vacancies were filled, averaging 2.7 applicants per vacancy. This is an increase from 1.6 applicants per vacancy in the 2017 survey results.
- The average number of qualified applicants per vacancy increased compared to 1.6 reported in 2017, however; the number of suitable applicants per vacancy remained at similar levels.
- A majority of employers sought specialist skills in the areas of medical, aged care, theatre and general practice experience. Many vacancies remained unfilled if applicants lacked this experience.
- Employers in the metropolitan area advised they have experienced issues in retaining staff as they are unable to compete with larger organisations or government organisations. Candidates are turning down offers due to lower pay in Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) and cannot compete with hospital salaries.

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

- Employers considered applicants unsuitable if they:
 - lacked experience in the occupation or additional qualifications and registrations;
 - had poor references or working history;
 - were unwilling to relocate as they considered the cost of living in the Territory was high and salaries were not competitive or attractive.

Demand and supply trends

- Enrolled nurses are predominately employed in hospitals, aged care facilities and community and other health care settings. The Public Administration and Safety and Health Care and Social Assistance industries are projected to increase by 2000 people in the Northern Territory to May 2022. It is considered to be the fastest growing industry in Australia and is expected to grow by approximately 250,500 over the five years to May 2022.²
- Nurse registrant data for March 2018 recorded 401 enrolled nurses and 66 nurses with dual registration currently practicing with the Northern Territory as the principal place of practice and accounts for one per cent of all practicing enrolled nurses in Australia.³
- The number of domestic students commencing in nursing studies in the Northern Territory has continued to grow, increasing by 25 per cent from 2012 to 2016, and averaging 733 students each year over the same period. Similarly, student completions has increased 22 per cent over the same period, increasing from 216 in 2012 to 264 in 2016.⁴
- There were 50 advertised positions for enrolled and mothercraft nurses in the 12 months to June 2018, a slight increase from 44 positions advertised in 2017.⁵

Other indicators and issues

- Employers have expressed their concerns around the current difficulties in recruiting and the potential impact on supply of nurses on the commencement of the newest hospital in Palmerston in 2018.
- Some employers further commented that location is a barrier to recruitment and consider government should support small business more to increase their competitiveness against larger organisations such as hospitals.

² Australian Government Labour Market Information Portal "Regional Projections – interactive tool"

³ Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, Nurse and Midwife Registrant Data March 2018

⁴ Department of Education and Training, Higher Education Student Statistics Data Cube, 2016, Domestic students

⁵ Department of Jobs and Small Business Internet Vacancy Index data, June 2018, 12 month moving average.