

Labour Market Research - Health Professionals

Queensland

June 2018

ANZSCO Code	Occupations in cluster	Rating
234611	Medical Laboratory Scientist*	No Shortage
251211	Medical Diagnostic Radiographer	No Shortage
251214	Sonographer	Shortage
251411	Optometrist*	Shortage
251511/13	Hospital/Retail Pharmacist	No Shortage
252411	Occupational Therapist	No Shortage
252511	Physiotherapist	Shortage
2526-11	Podiatrist*	No shortage
252712	Speech Pathologist*	No shortage

* Occupations assessed at the national level, separate rating not available for Queensland

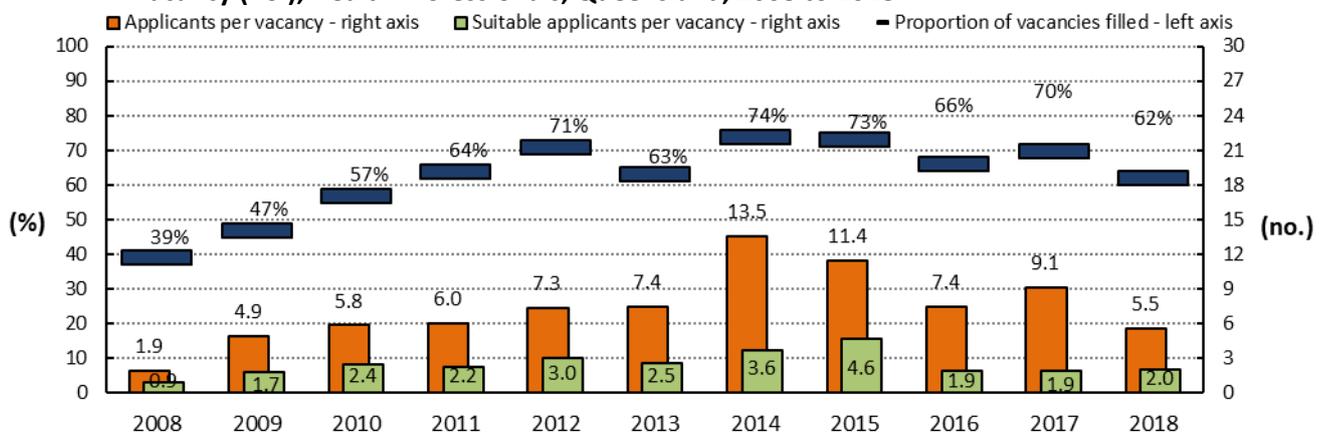
Key issues

- In 2018, surveyed health professional employers in Queensland filled a lower proportion of advertised vacancies.
- The average number of suitable applicants and suitable applicants per advertised vacancy declined from last year's survey.
- While demand is expected to increase for these occupations, driven by population growth and an ageing population, the decline in suitable applicants across the cluster made it difficult for some employers to fill vacancies.

Survey results

- In this year's Survey of Employers who had Recently Advertised (SERA) for health professionals, 62 per cent of positions were filled within six weeks of advertising, down from the 70 per cent of positions filled in 2017.
- Vacancies attracted an average of 5.5 applicants per vacancy, down from 9.1 in last year's survey.
- The average number of suitable applicants per vacancy remained fairly consistent at 2.0.

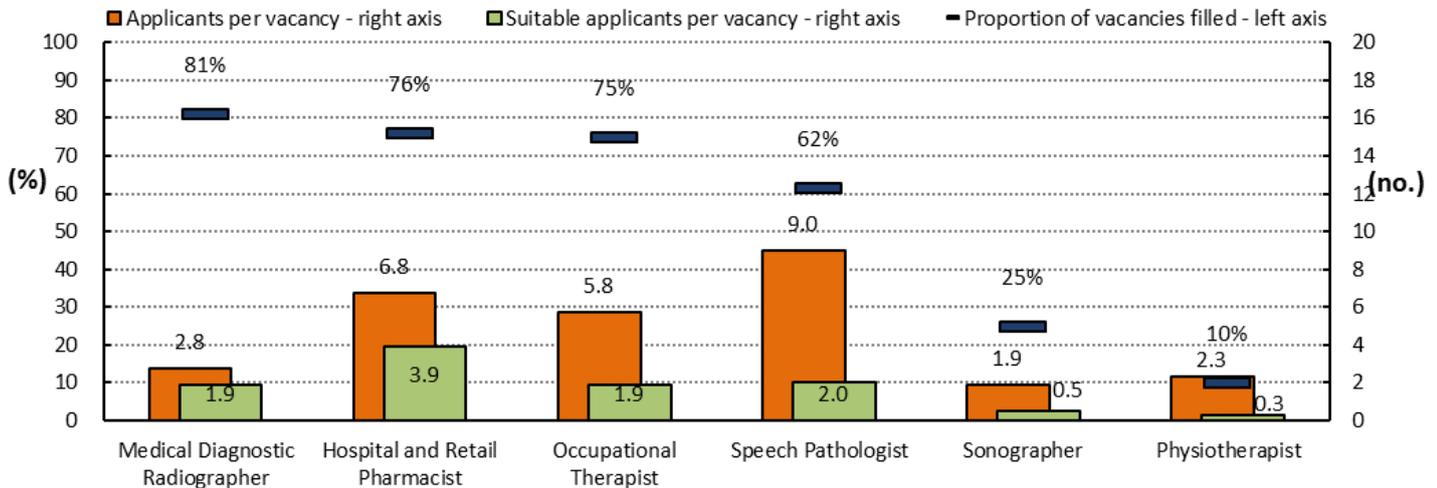
Figure 1: Proportion of vacancies filled (%), average number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy (no.), Health Professionals, Queensland, 2008 to 2018



Source: Department of Jobs and Small Business, Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised

- The proportion of metropolitan vacancies filled this year (71 per cent) was higher than that for regional vacancies (54 per cent).
- All health professions in 2018 recorded a decrease in the proportion of vacancies filled compared to the previous year's survey, with physiotherapists recording the most substantial decline to 10 per cent from 75 per cent in 2017.
- The average number of applicants per surveyed vacancy in Queensland was relatively small, with less than 10 applicants per vacancy, ranging from 9.0 (speech pathologist) to 1.9 (sonographer).
- The average number of suitable applicants per surveyed vacancy was also low, with the lowest averages for sonographer (0.5) and physiotherapist (0.3).

Figure 2: Proportion of vacancies filled as a percentage and the average number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy by occupation, Queensland 2018.



Source: Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised

Unsuitable applicants

- This year, approximately 45 per cent of qualified applicants for health professional vacancies in Queensland were considered by employers to be unsuitable.
- Some employers found applicants unsuitable due to incomplete qualifications, incomplete practice hours or lack of qualification to register in Queensland.
- Reasons employers found qualified applicants unsuitable included:
 - Lack of or narrow range of experience with specific procedures or role requirements, for example mammography or combined sonographer/radiographer experience.
 - Inexperience in working independently or at a supervisory level.
 - Insufficient clinical problem solving experience.
 - Unwillingness to work the part-time work hours offered.
 - Inexperience with particular work and client sector such as aged/community care or specific caseloads such as in mental health.

Demand and supply trends

- The range of factors that influence supply and demand in the health professionals cluster include an ageing population and associated increased need for medical or health related services. Scientific and technological development impacts on diagnosis and treatment programs. Public health policy and budgets influence availability and access for health professional services.
- Medicare reports indicate a 5.3 per cent total increase from 2016 to 2017 in the following services: Diagnostic Imaging, Radiotherapy and Nuclear Medicine, Optometry and Other Allied Health.¹

¹ Department of Human Services, Medicare Australia Statistics, Broad Type of Service and various periods – Appendix 1.1

- The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Authority (AHPRA) is the regulatory body for a range of health professions. AHPRA data indicate an increase in Queensland registrations from 2016 to 2017 in the following occupations:
 - Dentist (3.5 per cent)
 - Medical Radiation Practitioner (3.5 per cent)
 - Occupational Therapist (6.7 per cent)
 - Optometrist (2.9 per cent)
 - Pharmacist (2.7 per cent)
 - Physiotherapist (6.5 per cent)²
- Sonographers in Australia are registered with the Australian Sonographer Accreditation Registry (ASAR). ASAR data indicates a small annual percentage growth of around 1.0 per cent in active qualified practitioners in Queensland between 2017 and 2018.³
- The Department of Jobs and Small Business Internet Vacancy Index data shows that Queensland job vacancies for the Health Professionals cluster of occupations increased by approximately 14 per cent between July 2017 and June 2018.⁴

² [AHPRA Annual Report Summary 2016/2017 \(Table 1\)](#)

³ Department of Jobs and Small Business, Source Australian Sonographer Accreditation Registry.

⁴ [Labour Market Information Portal](#), Vacancy Report, IVI Detailed Occupation Data