

Information note—*Pharmacy Industry Award 2020*: data discrepancy

17 December 2024

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On 30 August 2024, the Fair Work Commission published [Data profile](#) – Pharmacists and the *Pharmacy Industry Award 2020* (Data profile). This contained data on the characteristics of retail pharmacists and all pharmacists using data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) Census conducted in August 2021. The note stated that 68.4 per cent of retail pharmacists were female based on data from the Census.

The Pharmacy Guild of Australia submitted Attachments A and B which provide information on the number of pharmacists by gender. Two data sources are used—the ABS Census for August 2021 and the National Health Workforce Dataset (NHWDS), which is maintained by the Department of Health and Aged Care.

Based on the 2 different data sources presented in Attachments A and B, the calculation of the proportion of females who are pharmacists differs to the proportion calculated in the data profile.

Comparing the findings in Attachments A and B with the data profile finds that:

- The data profile considered *employees* only.
- The data in Attachment A covers *all* retail pharmacists, which includes non-employees, such as owner managers of incorporated and unincorporated enterprises or contributing family workers.
- The data in Attachment B are sourced from the NHWDS, which was not included in the data profile. These data may also include non-employees.

Tables 1 and 2 present the data and calculated proportions used in the data profile (employees only) with analysis of all retail pharmacists.

Table 1 shows that, when adding the number of retail pharmacists who are employees with non-employees, the results are similar to those submitted by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia. The small difference is due likely to the perturbation of Census data.¹

Table 1: Number of Retail Pharmacists, 2021

	Commission staff calculations			Pharmacy Guild data
	Retail pharmacist employees	All non-employees	All retail pharmacists	All retail pharmacists
	(No.)	(No.)	(No.)	(No.)
Male	5325	3081	8407	8404
Female	11 525	1733	13 253	13 251
Total	16 850	4814	21 667	21 656

Source: ABS, TableBuilder: 2021 Census – counting persons, 15 years and over, 2021; Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

Table 2: Proportion of Retail Pharmacists, 2021

	Commission staff calculations			Pharmacy Guild data
	Retail pharmacist employees	All non-employees	All retail pharmacists	All retail pharmacists
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Male	31.6	64.0	38.8	38.8
Female	68.4	36.0	61.2	61.2
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: ABS, TableBuilder: 2021 Census – counting persons, 15 years and over, 2021; Pharmacy Guild of Australia.

The data profile did not provide data from the NHWDS which is maintained by the Department of Health and Aged Care.

¹ To minimise the risk of identifying individuals in aggregate statistics, a technique has been developed to randomly adjust values, known as random error or perturbation and is considered to be the best technique for avoiding the release of identifiable data while maximising the range of information that can be released. See [How the data is processed | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)

The NHWDS is a combination of registration and survey data collected through the renewal process for registered health practitioners.² Some of these data were used in the [Information note - Gender undervaluation: ACTU data request - ATSIHW Award](#) prepared by staff of the Commission.

Unlike the Census, the survey undertaken for the NHWDS is voluntary (completed at the time of registration) potentially producing a smaller sample than the one obtained from the Census. Further, the sample taken from the NHWDS may also include non-employees, resulting in a smaller proportion of females. These data were also analysed by Commission staff and the proportion of retail pharmacists who were female was calculated to be 57.5 per cent in 2023, which is the same figure reported in Attachment B.

² See [National Health Workforce Dataset](#).

Attachment A

EX PA 4

occupation	State	MMM	MALE				FEMALE				TOTAL			
			15-44 years	45-69 years	70 years and over	15 years and over	15-44 years	45-69 years	70 years and over	15 years and over	15-44 years	45-69 years	70 years and over	15 years and over
251513 Retail Pharmacist	New South Wales	MM1	1501	588	87	2054	2512	735	38	3103	5670	1343	122	5133
251513 Retail Pharmacist	New South Wales	MM2	34	16	0	51	55	17	0	75	90	32	4	128
251513 Retail Pharmacist	New South Wales	MM4	55	38	6	109	114	11	0	166	171	84	9	267
251513 Retail Pharmacist	New South Wales	MM5	48	40	8	98	123	56	3	193	174	105	17	287
251513 Retail Pharmacist	New South Wales	MM6	0	3	0	0	5	3	0	8	10	8	0	15
251513 Retail Pharmacist	New South Wales	MM7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	New South Wales	Total	1668	764	117	2547	2845	999	45	3882	4517	1748	160	6428
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Victoria	MM1	1245	564	65	1872	2214	622	24	2893	3458	1212	90	4762
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Victoria	MM2	85	48	0	139	155	52	0	209	243	100	0	349
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Victoria	MM4	52	25	3	81	85	21	4	93	119	43	3	167
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Victoria	MM5	27	26	0	56	61	37	0	99	89	65	4	161
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Victoria	MM6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Victoria	MM7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Victoria	Total	1481	699	75	2257	2522	738	33	3442	4104	1484	106	5693
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Queensland	MM1	911	325	32	1265	1510	413	9	2026	2522	737	36	3195
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Queensland	MM2	163	86	4	252	325	130	6	425	496	179	13	682
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Queensland	MM4	24	14	0	38	66	17	0	80	88	27	0	121
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Queensland	MM5	37	21	6	64	74	35	3	108	107	59	4	168
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Queensland	MM6	7	4	0	13	19	3	0	25	25	10	0	33
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Queensland	MM7	5	6	0	12	6	4	1	17	11	7	0	19
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Queensland	Total	1172	465	38	1673	2138	538	15	2728	3311	1032	56	4398
251513 Retail Pharmacist	South Australia	MM1	370	152	15	529	641	133	10	822	1007	327	21	1160
251513 Retail Pharmacist	South Australia	MM2	0	0	0	3	5	3	0	13	12	6	0	21
251513 Retail Pharmacist	South Australia	MM4	8	3	0	12	18	5	0	20	25	7	0	37
251513 Retail Pharmacist	South Australia	MM5	17	8	0	25	21	16	0	48	51	24	0	70
251513 Retail Pharmacist	South Australia	MM6	4	3	0	8	12	3	0	15	17	8	0	20
251513 Retail Pharmacist	South Australia	MM7	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	3	5	4	0	6
251513 Retail Pharmacist	South Australia	Total	422	174	15	613	739	213	10	965	1163	392	19	1572
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Western Australia	MM1	502	257	28	790	1106	235	3	1373	1613	519	31	2161
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Western Australia	MM2	13	8	0	22	22	15	0	42	41	26	0	65
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Western Australia	MM4	3	4	0	3	7	0	0	7	9	4	0	12
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Western Australia	MM5	16	6	0	30	23	4	0	32	42	15	0	60
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Western Australia	MM6	20	5	0	20	27	5	0	38	44	10	0	56
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Western Australia	MM7	3	5	0	7	16	0	0	19	22	5	0	29
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Western Australia	Total	580	294	28	909	1152	313	3	1571	1839	606	34	2479
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Tasmania	MM1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Tasmania	MM2	106	53	4	158	194	38	0	240	294	94	4	404
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Tasmania	MM4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Tasmania	MM5	3	13	0	19	14	10	0	22	18	23	6	43
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Tasmania	MM6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Tasmania	MM7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Tasmania	Total	112	74	7	115	138	39	0	215	274	118	8	325
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Northern Territory	MM1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Northern Territory	MM2	38	4	0	44	59	14	0	78	94	22	0	114
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Northern Territory	MM4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Northern Territory	MM5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Northern Territory	MM6	5	0	0	5	20	4	0	25	24	4	0	27

251513 Retail Pharmacist	Northern Territory	MM7	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	3	0	0	6
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Northern Territory	Total	41	10	0	47	86	18	0	104	130	20	0	148
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australian Capital Territory	MM1	103	45	0	145	201	55	0	255	304	96	0	404
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australian Capital Territory	MM2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australian Capital Territory	MM4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australian Capital Territory	MM5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australian Capital Territory	MM6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australian Capital Territory	MM7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australian Capital Territory	Total	103	45	0	145	201	55	0	255	304	96	0	404
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australia(c)	MM1	4488	1930	217	6639	8082	2304	83	10471	12575	4235	300	17108
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australia(c)	MM2	448	216	7	665	826	252	10	1082	1271	464	15	1753
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australia(c)	MM4	147	87	13	247	274	83	7	358	419	168	17	609
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australia(c)	MM5	149	116	22	292	331	155	8	498	486	282	27	796
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australia(c)	MM6	37	14	0	50	82	21	4	112	120	40	4	158
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australia(c)	MM7	13	12	0	24	30	10	0	39	41	18	0	64
251513 Retail Pharmacist	Australia(c)	Total	5609	2519	276	8404	10123	3018	111	13251	15732	5539	389	21655

total male + total female =

$$13251 + 8404 = 21655$$

take total female as a percentag
0.61

Attachment B

Health Workforce Data



EX PHS

Professions, Sex and Job Setting by Year

Filters:

Default Summation : Number of Practitioners

Wafers:

Cell count: 264 (11 x 24 x 1) total, 66 (11 x 6 x 1) displayed

			Year	2013	2015	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2022	2021	2023	
Pharmacists	Female	Hospital		3,187	3,682	3,434	3,945	4,202	4,440	4,730	4,967	0	0	0	
		Community pharmacy		8,175	8,743	8,423	8,897	9,254	9,461	9,465	9,873	10,445	9,997	10,603	
		Wholesale pharmacy		20	21	21	21	25	21	18	22	32	29	34	
	Male	Hospital		1,014	1,156	1,113	1,205	1,292	1,344	1,442	1,491	0	0	0	
		Community pharmacy		6,897	7,046	7,010	7,064	7,159	7,219	7,340	7,527	7,655	7,597	7,832	
		Wholesale pharmacy		26	26	33	18	22	18	25	18	35	28	27	
<i>Female %</i>				<i>54.2%</i>								<i>56.7%</i>	<i>57.7%</i>	<i>56.8%</i>	<i>57.5%</i>