

**Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation**

# **An overview of the nursing and midwifery workforce in Australia**

**December 2025**



**Australian  
Nursing &  
Midwifery  
Federation**



Copyright © 2025

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, Federal Office

All rights reserved. No material may be reproduced, translated for reproduction or otherwise used without permission from the publisher.

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation  
Level 1, 365 Queen Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
Email: [anmffederal@anmf.org.au](mailto:anmffederal@anmf.org.au)



## Introduction

Below is key information about the nursing and midwifery workforce in Australia including employment and demographic data.

Information is also provided on the total number of nurses and midwives registered or enrolled by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA). Under the National Law<sup>1</sup> all nurses and midwives must be registered to practice.

### 1. Workforce data and demographics

- The number of nurses and midwives in the nursing workforce nationally and by state/territory from 2015 to 2024
- The number of employed nurses and midwives from 2015 to 2024
- The number of employed nurses and midwives including full time equivalent (FTE) numbers, average age and average hours worked, both nationally and by state/territory, 2024
- Location of nurses and midwives across metropolitan, regional, rural, remote or very remote regions, 2024
- The work settings of employed nurses and midwives, 2024
- Demographic data of employed nurses and midwives 2024

### 2. Registration

- Total number of nurses and midwives registered in Australia nationally and by state/territory
- Total number of nurses and midwives registered in Australia, by registration type, nationally and by state/territory

For information concerning students and wages data please refer to the '[Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Overview](#)' page on the ANMF website.

---

<sup>1</sup> The National Scheme is governed by a nationally consistent law passed by each state and territory parliament – the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law. See the [Ahpra website](#) for more information.



## 1. Workforce data and demographics

Not all nurses and midwives registered with the NMBA are in the workforce. Nurses and midwives may be temporarily out of the workforce for a range of reasons but can still be registered or enrolled if mandatory registration requirements are met.

The workforce data provides information specific to nurses and midwives in the workforce and employed in their profession. It is collected at the point of registration through a workforce survey and published by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care.<sup>2</sup>

### How many nurses and midwives are in the workforce?

Workforce numbers include registered nurses and midwives who are:

- Employed
- On extended leave
- Looking for work in nursing/midwifery

Table 1 provides the total number of nurses and midwives, and enrolled nurses registered and in the workforce for the years 2015 to 2024.<sup>3</sup>

Table 1: Number of registered nurses/midwives and enrolled nurses in the workforce 2015-2024

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
RN/Midwife <sup>4</sup>	274,996	283,703	292,318	302,606	314,473	324,980	337,996	349,157	365,946
EN only	55,533	56,549	56,838	58,683	59,041	59,796	61,429	60,506	61,425
Total	330,529	340,252	349,156	361,289	373,514	384,776	399,425	409,663	427,371
	<b>2024</b>								
RN/Midwife	384,521								
EN only	60,930								
Total	445,451								

<sup>2</sup> Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, Health Workforce Data (HWD): <https://hwd.health.gov.au>

<sup>3</sup> The number is a combined total for RNs and Midwives. **Links in this document accessed 3 December 2025.**

<sup>4</sup> Includes 'registered nurse only', 'registered and enrolled nurse', 'midwife only', 'registered nurse and midwife', 'enrolled nurse and midwife', 'non-practising only', 'registered and enrolled nurse and midwife'.



Chart 1: Number of registered nurses/midwives and enrolled nurses in the workforce 2015-2024

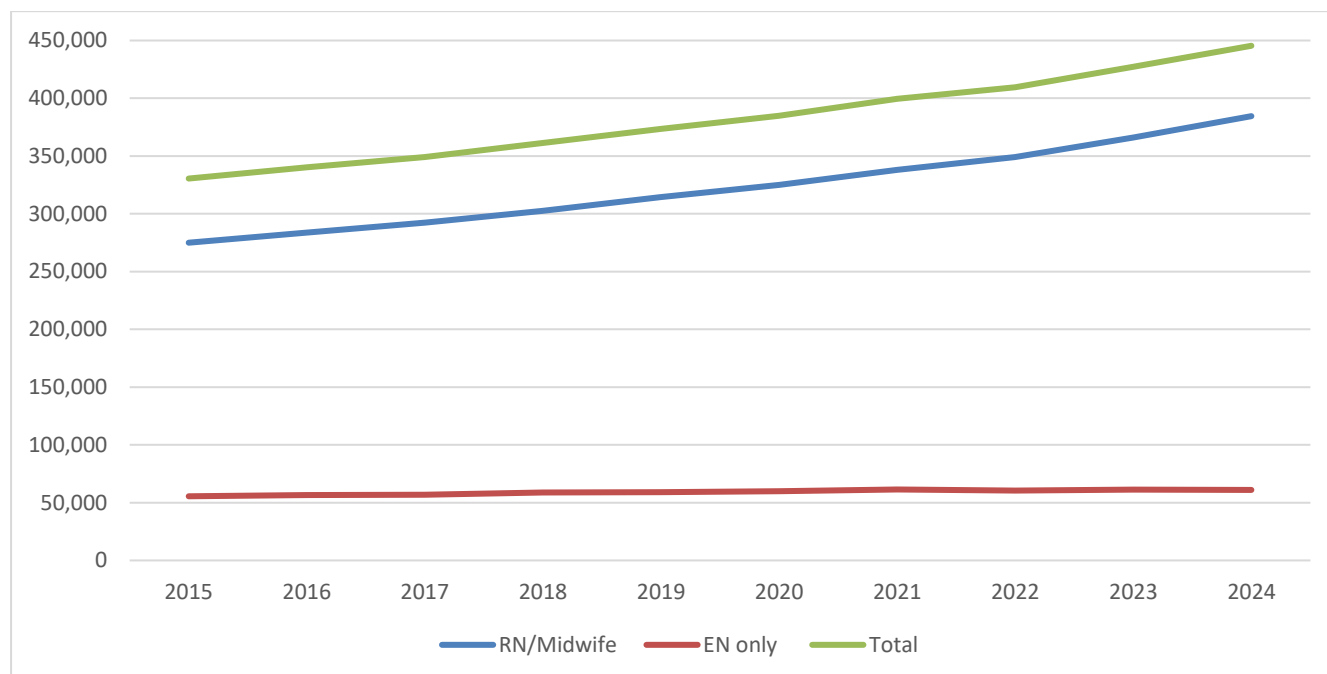


Table 2: No. of registered nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses in the workforce 2015-2024 by state/territory

State/ territory	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
NSW	92,591	95,262	97,490	99,949	103,079	105,585	109,233	110,857	115,089	119,116
Vic	89,891	92,205	94,889	98,794	102,106	105,649	109,090	111,021	116,389	121,937
Qld	65,763	68,978	71,780	75,093	78,220	81,175	84,838	88,144	91,828	96,267
SA	30,454	30,605	30,670	31,358	32,180	32,765	33,866	35,012	36,399	37,286
WA	34,057	34,857	35,388	36,395	37,406	38,402	40,095	41,744	44,077	46,280
Tas	7,985	8,131	8,375	8,782	9,130	9,438	9,906	10,372	10,727	10,980
NT	4,143	4,306	4,423	4,610	4,685	4,754	4,947	4,745	4,655	4,645
ACT	5,422	5,680	5,896	6,034	6,360	6,678	7,096	7,314	7,519	7,832
Other territories	223	228	245	274	348	330	354	454	688	1,108
<b>Total</b>	<b>330,529</b>	<b>340,252</b>	<b>349,156</b>	<b>361,289</b>	<b>373,514</b>	<b>384,776</b>	<b>399,425</b>	<b>409,663</b>	<b>427,371</b>	<b>445,451</b>

Since 2022, Victoria has had the most registered nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses in the workforce, overtaking New South Wales.



## How many nurses and midwives are employed?

Tables 3-6, provide employment and demographic data for nurses and midwives. The data is taken directly from the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing summary statistics.<sup>5</sup>

Table 3: Numbers of registered and employed nurses and midwives in Australia 2015-2024

Profession/Division	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Registered nurse <sup>6</sup>	228,558	236,931	245,269	254,650	265,335	271,009	286,149	293,584	310,771
Enrolled nurse only	50,801	51,454	51,478	52,944	53,219	52,342	54,193	53,612	54,417
RN/midwife <sup>7</sup>	24,076	23,377	22,568	22,135	21,656	21,256	20,990	20,003	19,925
Midwife only	3,052	3,402	3,807	4,241	4,731	4,982	5,364	5,560	6,128
Total	306,487	315,164	323,122	333,970	344,941	349,589	366,696	372,759	391,241
	<b>2024</b>								
Registered nurse	329,192								
Enrolled nurse only	54,006								
RN/midwife	19,934								
Midwife only	6,662								
Total	409,794								

Table 4: Age, and weekly hours of nurses and midwives registered and employed in Australia, 2024

Profession	Headcount	Total FTE	Average age	Average total hours
Registered nurse	349,040	321,418	42.0	35.1
Enrolled nurse	54,006	45,808	43.3	32.2
Midwifery	26,596	23,940	45.1	34.2
<b>Total<sup>8</sup></b>	<b>409,794</b>	<b>372,821</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>34.6</b>

<sup>5</sup> HWD, [Summary Statistics Nursing and Midwifery Professions](#) (last updated 12 August 2025)

<sup>6</sup> Includes 'registered and enrolled nurse'

<sup>7</sup> Includes 'enrolled nurse and midwife' and 'registered and enrolled nurse and midwife'. There are less than 100 of each of these in Australia

<sup>8</sup> Persons with more than one registration have been counted in both 'registered nurse' and 'midwife' category



Table 5: State/territory of nurses and midwives registered and employed in Australia, 2024

State	Headcount	FTE	Average age	Average weekly hours
NSW	110,055	102,774	42.4	35.6
Vic	111,930	99,284	41.5	33.8
Qld	88,560	80,590	42.4	34.7
SA	34,436	30,142	42.8	33.3
WA	42,650	39,113	42.5	34.9
Tas	10,196	9,298	43.1	34.7
ACT	7,225	6,853	40.1	36.2
NT	4,217	4,244	42.1	38.3
Unknown	525	523	37.9	37.3
<b>Australia</b>	<b>409,794</b>	<b>372,821</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>34.6</b>

Table 6 shows the geographic distribution of nurses and midwives using the Modified Monash Model (MMM) which defines whether a location is a city, rural, remote or very remote.<sup>9</sup>

Table 6: Modified Monash Model (MMM), registered and employed in Australia, 2024

Modified Monash Model	Headcount	Total FTE	Average age	Average total hours
1 - Metropolitan	299,956	272,713	41.4	34.6
2 - Regional	41,892	38,266	42.7	34.8
3 - Large rural towns	31,159	28,280	44.1	34.6
4 - Medium rural towns	14,312	12,612	45.6	33.6
5 - Small rural towns	14,971	13,200	46.9	33.5
6 - Remote communities	4,259	4,221	43.3	37.8
7 - Very remote communities	2,751	3,035	45.7	42.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>409,794</b>	<b>372,821</b>	<b>42.2</b>	<b>34.6</b>

<sup>9</sup> Further information on the MMM: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/rural-health-workforce/classifications/mmm>

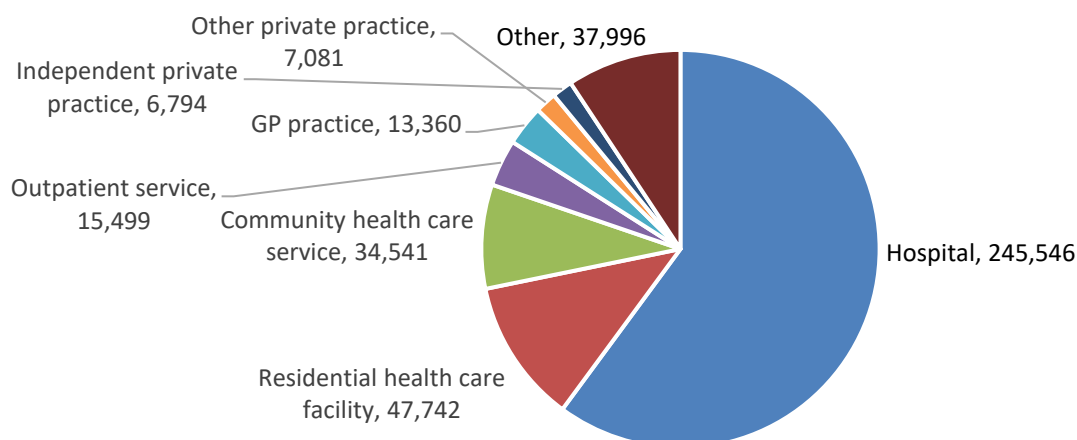


Around 60 percent of employed nurses/midwives work primarily in a hospital setting. Table 7 provides the number employed and average hours worked per week across different work settings for 2024.

Table 7: Employed nurses and midwives by principal work setting - 2024<sup>10</sup>

Principal work setting	Headcount	Avg weekly hours
Hospital	245,546	35
Residential health care facility	47,742	36
Community health care service	34,541	34
Outpatient service	15,499	34
Other	14,117	35
General practitioner (GP) practice	13,360	29
Other private practice	7,081	32
Independent private practice	6,794	30
Other government department or agency	4,611	36
Tertiary education facility	4,275	35
Correctional service	2,650	38
Commercial/business service	2,256	33
School	2,057	30
Aboriginal Community Controlled health service	1,735	38
Defence forces	1,646	37
Virtual care <sup>11</sup>	1,541	33
Hospice	1,259	35
Midwifery group practice / caseload	1,236	38
Other educational facility	1,026	33
Other Aboriginal health service	697	38
Specialist (O&G) practice	125	28
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>409,794</b>	<b>35</b>

Chart 2: Headcount of employed nurses and midwives by principal work setting



<sup>10</sup> HWD, [Nurses & Midwives Dashboard](#).

<sup>11</sup> New category

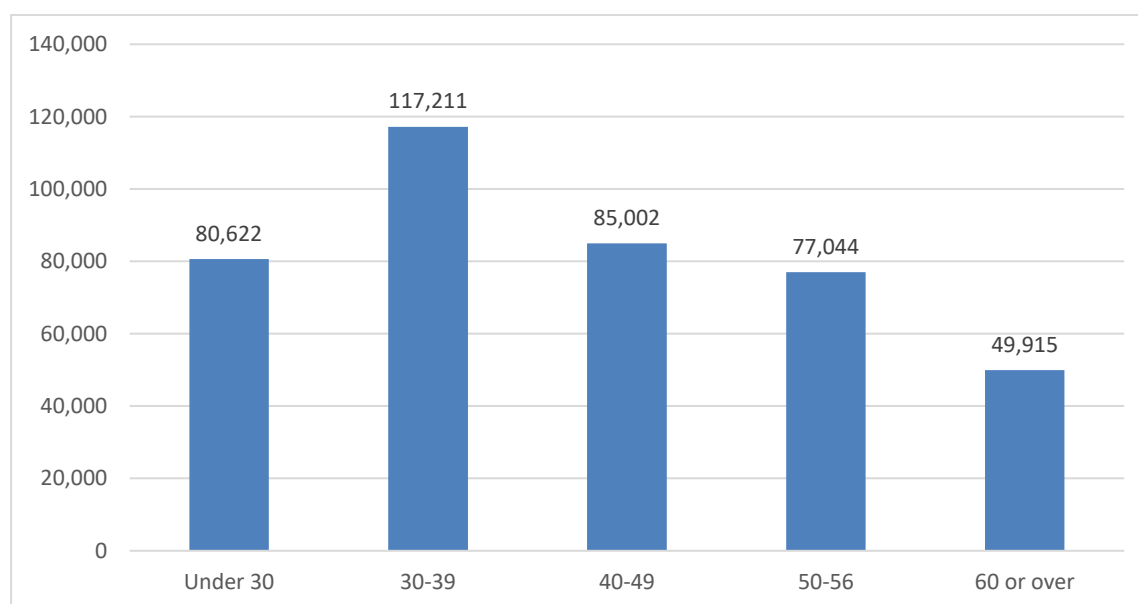




### Summary 2024 demographic data – employed nurses and midwives

- 87.9% identify as female and 12.1% male.
- 1.56% identify as Indigenous and Australian born.
- Average age nationally – 42.15 years. The number of nurses and midwives within the listed age ranges are shown below.

Chart 3: Nurses and midwives by age group



The average age of a nurse/midwife is trending downwards. To see changes to the age group data since 2017, view this [bar chart race graph online](#).

Table 8: Sector in which clinical hours were worked - 2024<sup>12</sup>

Sector	2024
Public sector only	223,795
Private sector only	145,391
Both	13,104
Not stated	27,504
<b>Total</b>	<b>409,794</b>

<sup>12</sup> HWD, [Nurses & Midwives Dashboard – Factsheet](#).



## 2. Registration statistics

Every quarter the NMBA provides information on the number of nurses and midwives registered to practice in Australia. The tables below are extracted from the latest NMBA statistical report. The [NMBA website has comprehensive details](#).

The latest quarterly report (1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025) states there are 523,676 nurses and midwives registered. This includes general, non-practising and provisional registration.

Table 8: Number of Registrants by state and territory

ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	No ppp <sup>13</sup>	TOTAL
8,822	129,926	5,166	107,241	40,074	12,004	133,944	51,583	34,916	523,676

Table 9: Number of nurse and midwife registrants by registration type and by state/territory

Profession	Registration type	ACT	NSW	NT	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	No PPP	Total
Nurse	General	7,971	118,665	4,563	97,998	36,833	11,080	121,718	47,260	32,529	478,617
	Non-practising	200	2,676	51	2,071	806	228	2,746	913	1,735	11,426
	Provisional	3	64	2	73	29	5	74	20	20	290
<b>Total nurse</b>		<b>8,174</b>	<b>121,405</b>	<b>4,616</b>	<b>100,142</b>	<b>37,668</b>	<b>11,313</b>	<b>124,538</b>	<b>48,193</b>	<b>34,284</b>	<b>490,333</b>
Nurse and midwife	General	358	6,201	422	4,957	1,304	580	7,424	2,676	209	24,131
	Non-practising	21	212	5	114	47	12	152	47	28	638
	Provisional	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
<b>Total nurse and midwife</b>		<b>379</b>	<b>6,414</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>5,072</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>7,576</b>	<b>2,723</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>24,772</b>
Midwife	General	260	2,047	120	1,970	1,029	96	1,780	651	369	8,322
	Non-practising	9	60	3	56	24	3	47	16	26	244
	Provisional	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	0	0	5
<b>Total midwife</b>		<b>269</b>	<b>2,107</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>2,027</b>	<b>1,054</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1,830</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>8,571</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8,822</b>	<b>129,926</b>	<b>5,166</b>	<b>107,241</b>	<b>40,074</b>	<b>12,004</b>	<b>133,944</b>	<b>51,583</b>	<b>34,916</b>	<b>523,676</b>

The NMBA also publishes nursing and midwifery summary data as part of their Annual Report. The latest (2024-2025) summary data and spreadsheets [are on the NMBA website](#).

<sup>13</sup> Principal place of practice