

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation

An overview of the nursing and midwifery workforce in Australia

September 2026



**Australian
Nursing &
Midwifery
Federation**



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



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Introduction

This document contains 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 Law¹ all nurses and midwives must be registered to practice.

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

¹ 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, Disability and Ageing.²

How many nurses and midwives are in the workforce?

Workforce numbers include 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 registered and in the workforce for the years 2015 to 2025.³

Table 1: Number of registered nurses/midwives and enrolled nurses in the workforce 2015-2025

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
RN/Midwife ⁴	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
	2024	2025							
RN/Midwife	384,521	399,913							
EN only	60,930	60,141							
Total	445,451	460,054							

² Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, Health Workforce Data (HWD): <https://hwd.health.gov.au>. Links in this document were accessed 22 September 2026.

³ The number is a combined total for RNs and Midwives.

⁴ 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 2015-2025

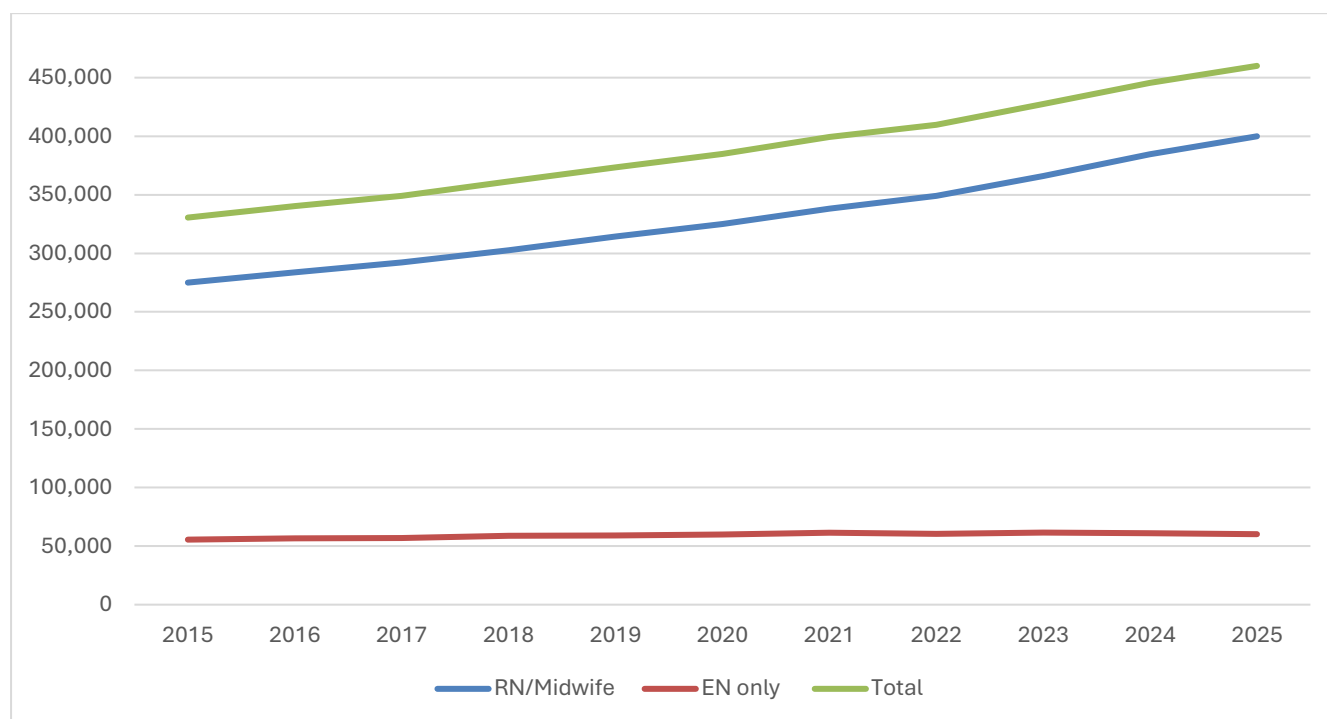


Table 2: Number of registered nurses, midwives and enrolled nurses in the workforce 2015-2025 by state/territory

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
NSW	92,591	95,262	97,490	99,949	103,079	105,585	109,233	110,857	115,089	119,116	121,699
Vic	89,891	92,205	94,889	98,794	102,106	105,649	109,090	111,021	116,389	121,937	125,315
Qld	65,763	68,978	71,780	75,093	78,220	81,175	84,838	88,144	91,828	96,267	100,276
SA	30,454	30,605	30,670	31,358	32,180	32,765	33,866	35,012	36,399	37,286	37,942
WA	34,057	34,857	35,388	36,395	37,406	38,402	40,095	41,744	44,077	46,280	48,385
Tas	7,985	8,131	8,375	8,782	9,130	9,438	9,906	10,372	10,727	10,980	11,554
NT	4,143	4,306	4,423	4,610	4,685	4,754	4,947	4,745	4,655	4,645	5,286
ACT	5,422	5,680	5,896	6,034	6,360	6,678	7,096	7,314	7,519	7,832	8,364
Other territories	223	228	245	274	348	330	354	454	688	1,108	1,233
Total	330,529	340,252	349,156	361,289	373,514	384,776	399,425	409,663	427,371	445,451	460,054

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.⁵

Table 3: Number of registered and employed nurses and midwives in Australia 2015-2025

Profession/Division	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Registered nurse⁶	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/midwife⁷	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
	2024	2025							
Registered nurse	329,192	341,798							
Enrolled nurse only	54,006	53,395							
RN/midwife	19,934	19,635							
Midwife only	6,662	6,968							
Total	409,794	421,796							

Table 4: Age and weekly hours of nurses and midwives registered and employed in Australia, 2025

Profession	Headcount	Total FTE	Average age	Average total hours
Registered nurse	361,339	332,437	41.9	35.0
Enrolled nurse	53,395	45,962	43.0	32.7
Midwifery	26,603	24,184	44.8	34.6
Total⁸	421,796	384,252	42.0	34.6

⁵ HWD, [Summary Statistics Nursing and Midwifery Professions](#) (last updated 28 August 2026)

⁶ Includes 'registered and enrolled nurse'

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

⁸ 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, 2025

State	Headcount	FTE	Average age	Average weekly hours
NSW	111,934	104,781	42.3	35.6
Vic	114,480	101,550	41.5	33.7
Qld	92,249	83,982	42.2	34.6
SA	35,071	31,021	42.6	33.6
WA	44,615	40,677	42.3	34.6
Tas	10,685	9,746	42.7	34.7
ACT	7,676	7,358	39.9	36.4
NT	4,841	4,897	42.4	38.4
Unknown	245	240	41.1	37.2
Australia	421,796	384,252	42	34.6

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.⁹

Table 6: Modified Monash Model of nurses and midwives registered and employed in Australia, 2025

Modified Monash Model	Headcount	Total FTE	Average age	Average total hours
1 - Metropolitan	307,873	280,269	41.4	34.6
2 - Regional	43,638	39,785	42.5	34.6
3 - Large rural towns	32,414	29,504	43.7	34.6
4 - Medium rural towns	14,936	13,209	45.0	33.6
5 - Small rural towns	15,049	13,328	46.7	33.7
6 - Remote communities	4,590	4,544	43.2	37.6
7 - Very remote communities	3,072	3,387	45.8	41.9
Total	421,796	384,252	42.0	34.6

⁹ Further information on the Monash Modified Model: <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 2025.

Table 7: Employed nurses and midwives by principal work setting, 2025¹⁰

Principal work setting	Headcount	Avg weekly hours
Hospital	250,364	34.6
Residential health care facility	49,537	37.1
Community health care service	37,631	33.8
Other	20,879	35.2
Outpatient service	16,256	33.6
General practitioner (GP) practice	13,801	29.9
Other private practice	7,875	32.4
Independent private practice	6,203	31.1
Other government department or agency	4,735	36.3
Tertiary education facility	3,847	36.1
Correctional service	2,751	38.3
Commercial/business service	2,859	33.5
School	2,064	31.1
Aboriginal Community Controlled health service	1,945	38.3
Defence forces	1,837	38.0
Virtual care	1,648	33.5
Hospice	1,119	33.3
Midwifery group practice / caseload	1,235	38.6
Other educational facility	1,313	33.3
Other Aboriginal health service	673	38.9
Specialist (O&G) practice	125	26.3
TOTAL	421,796¹¹	34.6

Summary of 2025 demographic data – employed nurses and midwives

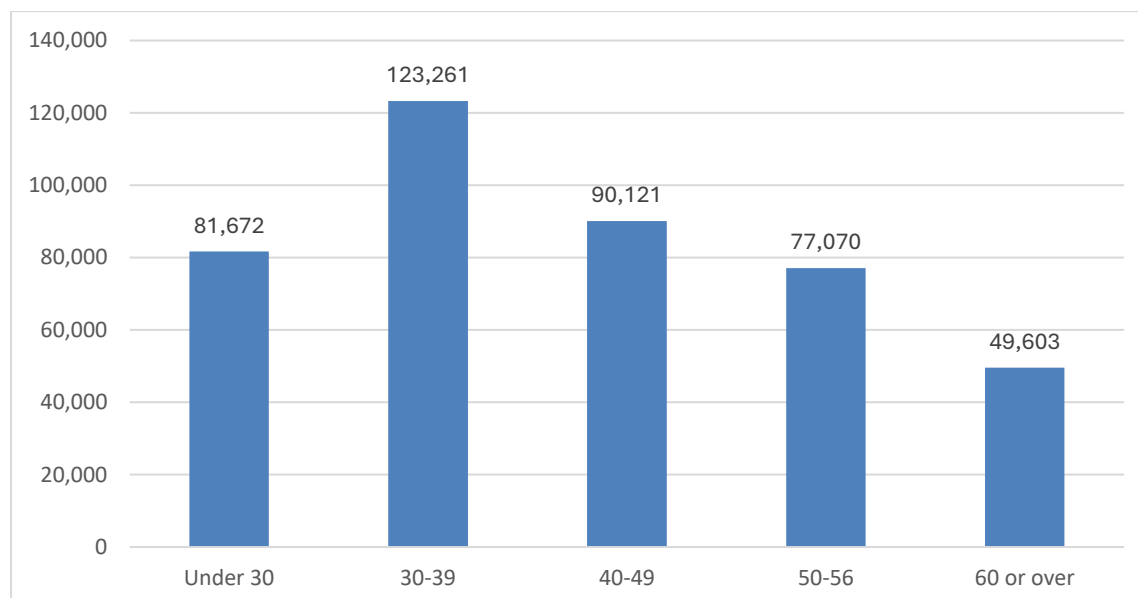
- 87.8% identify as female.
- 1.5% identify as Indigenous and Australian born.
- Average age: 42.0 years. The number of nurses and midwives within the listed age ranges are shown below.

¹⁰ HWD, [Nurses & Midwives Dashboard](#).

¹¹ Figures do not sum correctly. This is not explained clearly in the data.



Chart 2: Nurses and midwives by age group, 2025



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, 2025¹²

Sector	2025
Public sector only	233,198
Private sector only	148,073
Both	15,698
Not stated	24,827
Total	421,796

¹² HWD, [Nurses & Midwives Dashboard](#)



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 published quarterly report (1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026) states there are 547,021 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 ¹³	TOTAL
9,204	135,527	5,306	112,188	41,903	12,508	139,774	53,812	36,799	547,021

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	8,337	123,936	4,690	102,642	38,550	11,574	127,231	49,354	34,387	500,701
	Non-practising	192	2,655	47	2,056	800	221	2,687	913	1,710	11,281
	Provisional	3	70	4	90	30	6	80	32	9	324
Total nurse		8,532	126,661	4,741	104,788	39,380	11,801	129,998	50,299	36,106	512,306
Nurse and midwife	General	363	6,367	433	5,095	1,332	593	7,718	2,765	202	24,868
	Non-practising	21	216	5	115	46	12	155	45	28	643
	Provisional	0	1	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	5
Total nurse and midwife		384	6,584	438	5,213	1,379	605	7,873	2,810	230	25,516
Midwife	General	279	2,224	125	2,133	1,120	99	1,852	687	436	8,955
	Non-practising	9	58	2	53	24	3	47	16	27	239
	Provisional	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	5
Total midwife		288	2,282	127	2,187	1,144	102	1,903	703	463	9,199
TOTAL		9,204	135,527	5,306	112,188	41,903	12,508	139,774	53,812	36,799	547,021

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](#).

¹³ Principal place of practice