



NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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Practice nurse survey reveals an increase in numbers

The number of nurses working in general practice has jumped 23 per cent in the last two years with more than half of practices now employing at least one, according to an Australian Divisions of General Practice survey.

The results of the National Practice Nurse Workforce Survey Report demonstrated the growing clinical role for nurses, particularly in the management of chronic disease, according to ADGP Chief Executive Kate Carnell.

“Practice nurses are highly skilled health care providers that have a key role to play in improving access to quality primary health care services in general practice,” Ms Carnell, ADGP CEO said.

The survey:

- Estimated the number of practice nurses employed across Australia in 2005 at 4924. This compares with an estimate of 4000 in 2003 and represents a 23 per cent increase in two years
- Estimated 57 per cent of general practices in Australia employ one or more practice nurses, a 17 per cent increase on 2003
- Showed, consistent with the workforce as a whole, practice nurses were an aging workforce, with 73 per cent over 40 years
- Showed the workforce was predominantly part-time (82 per cent), but that there had been a 4 per cent increase in the number working full time since 2003.

Ms Carnell said more could be done to expand the role of nurses and take pressure off the health system.

“To continue to support general practice to employ nurses and expand their role, it will be important for government to increase the number of practice nurse Medicare Benefits Schedule item numbers and to make these available to all practices, not only those in rural areas,” she said.

The Divisions of General Practice play a pivotal role in assisting practices to recruit and retain nurses and in the provision of continuing education and training programs.

A copy of the report is available from the ADGP website at: http://www.adgp.com.au/client_images/44225.pdf

For more information please call Kate Carnell, ADGP Chief Executive Officer, on 0415 662 266.

WHAT IS ADGP?

- ADGP is the peak body representing 119 Divisions of General Practice and eight State-based organisations (SBOs) around Australia. The Divisions Network supports general practice and their practice teams and drives the implementation of innovative health strategies.
- ADGP, through the Divisions Network, works to integrate general practice with other sectors of the health system, both government and non-government, to deliver high quality care to the Australian community.
 - ADGP is committed to promoting the health of all Australians by supporting the role of Divisions in the nation’s primary health care system.

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