

# Ahpra Survey on Doctors' Work Hours

Reading time:

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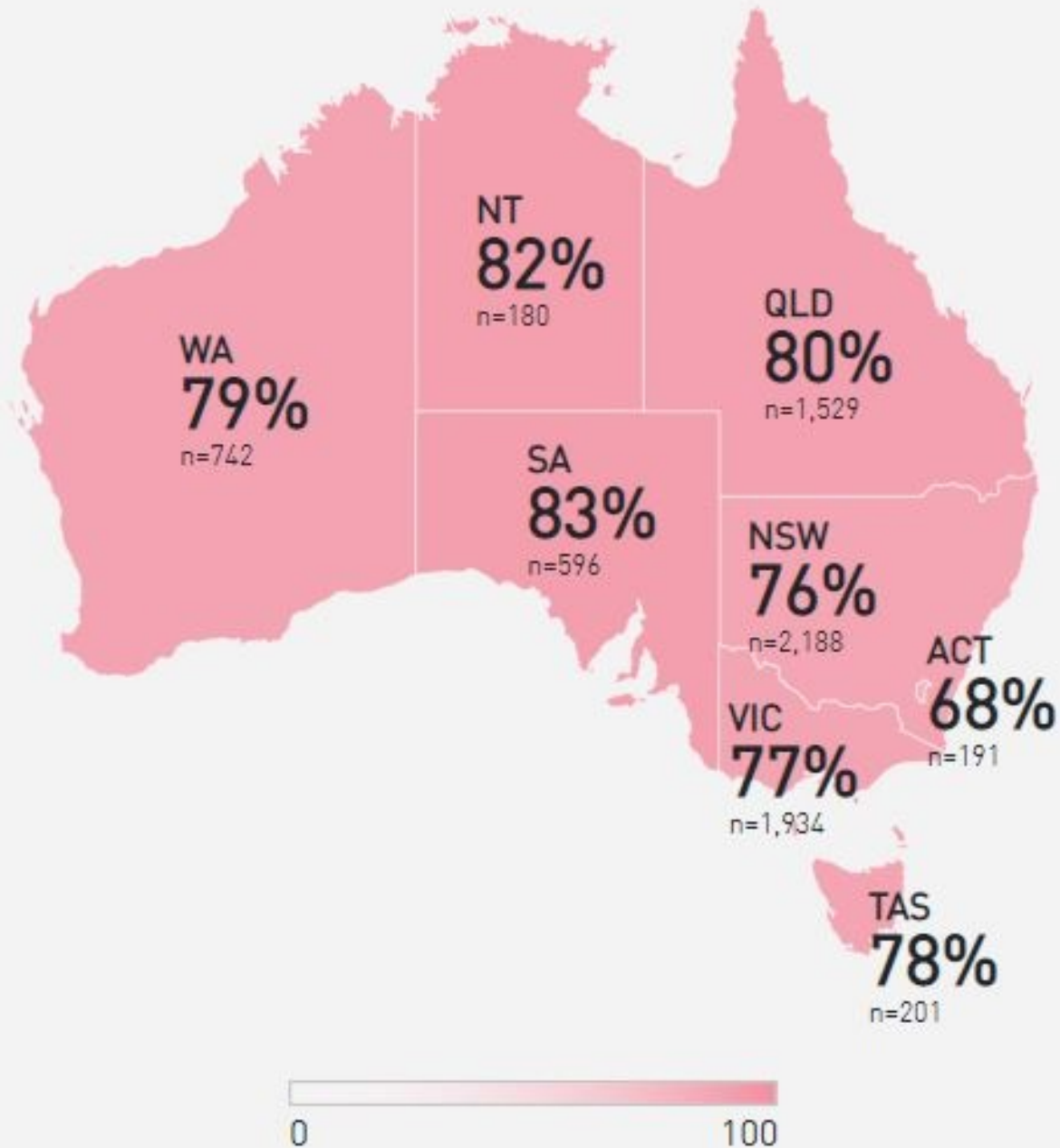
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In 2019, Ahpra sought the opinions of doctors in training by conducting the Medical Training Survey (MTS) to provide a snapshot of medical training in Australia. The aim of the survey was to allow data to be used by employers, colleges, educators and others to strengthen the quality of medical training.

## Average rating score by state/territory

Current result selected 'Recommend current training'



Q50: Thinking about your setting, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - I would recommend my current training position to other doctors. % total strongly agree / agree

Note: Asked of all respondents

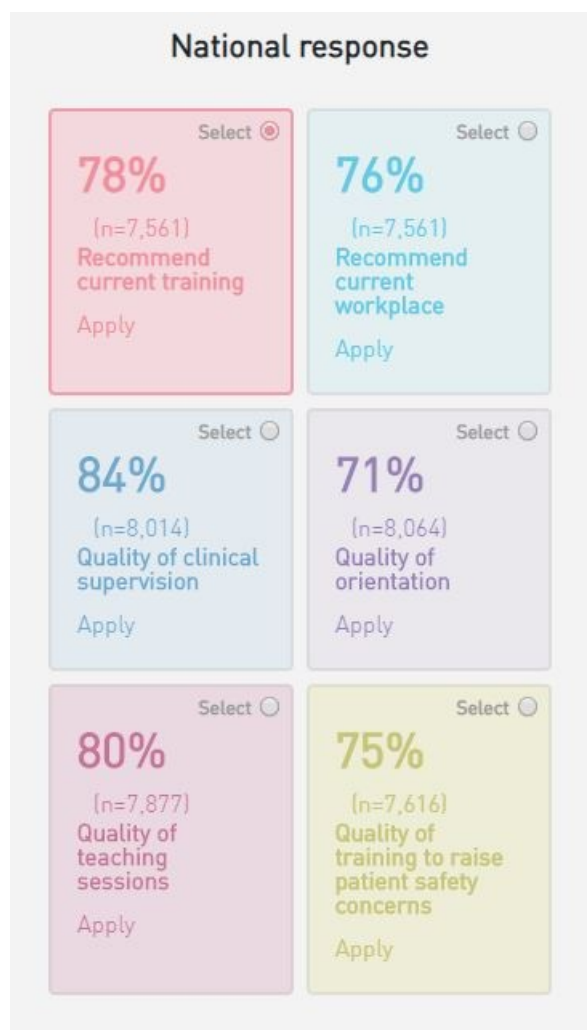
By getting anonymous feedback from doctors in training, the survey was aimed to deliver robust national data that would help identify strengths in medical training, as well as potential issues so these can be addressed. It's about quality improvement.

Aggregated results data were to:

- promote better understanding of the quality of medical training in Australia
- identify how best to improve medical training in Australia, and
- identify and help deal with potential issues in medical training that could impact on patient safety, including environment and culture, unacceptable behaviours and poor supervision.

Five versions of the survey were conducted, one each for interns, prevocational and unaccredited trainees, specialist trainees (non-GP and GP) and international medical graduates (IMGs). The aim was to collect data on training curriculum, orientation, clinical supervision, access to and quality of teaching sessions, workplace environment and culture and future career intentions of doctors in training.

The survey found that 76% of Australian doctors in training are working more than 40 hours on average per week, and one in eight of them are working at least 60 hours on average a week. [Ahpra's Medical Training Survey 2019](#) surveyed 9,378 doctors and is the first comprehensive national survey of medical training in Australia.



Overall the satisfaction rating for doctors in training was largely positive

- 78% would recommend their current training position to other doctors (vs 8% who wouldn't)
- 76% would recommend their current workplace as a place to train

Only 1% of specialist trainees indicated they did not intend to continue in their specialty training program and 5% of IMGs expressed they had no intention of continuing a pathway to general or specialist registration.

49% of interns, prevocational and unaccredited trainees and IMGs had a training plan and reported that these training plans effectively prepared them for the next steps in their medical career.

93% of doctors in training received an orientation in their training setting. 62% received a formal orientation and 30% received an informal one. 71% rated their training orientations as 'excellent' or 'good' with only 5% rating them as 'poor' or 'terrible'.

42% of specialist trainees who sat for College exams reported a high level of dissatisfaction with feedback received on exam performance (non-GP – 46%, GP – 44%).

76% of specialists (including specialist GPs) are responsible for the day-to-day supervision of doctors in training. 84% of doctors in training rated their training as 'excellent' or 'good'. Feedback and discussion around goals and objectives were potential areas for improvement.

89% were complimentary about opportunities to advance their clinical skills and 77% to advance their procedural skills. However, only 57% agreed they were able to participate in research activities and 63% had access to study time/leave.

59% agreed they had a good work/life balance, but 21% disagreed. 50% considered their workload 'heavy' or 'very heavy'.

27% reported negative impact on their wellbeing 'always' or 'most of the time', with 25% having to work unpaid overtime, 24% having to relocate for work, 22% dealing with patient expectations, and lack of appreciation (21%).

75% reported knowing how to access support for their mental and physical health if they needed to.

91% acknowledged the support of senior medical staff in their setting. However, 22% felt they had personally experienced bullying, harassment and/or discrimination and 33% had witnessed such behaviour.

Only one in three had reported bullying or harassment they experienced, and half of these were aware of a follow up. The vast majority of doctors in training (80%) reported knowing how to raise concerns about such behaviour, 71% had confidence to do so and 75% said that bullying, harassment and/or discrimination (including racism) was not tolerated in their setting.

View the [full survey report](#)

The Medical Board is currently reviewing the MTS results in the context of the [Professional Performance Framework](#), which is designed to ensure that all registered medical practitioners practise competently and ethically throughout their working lives. The Board aims to collaborate with the MTS to foster a positive culture in medicine and help build a culture of respect.

MIPS members should take necessary steps to seek appropriate assistance and help they require in their professional roles. As an indemnity provider, MIPS is exempt from Ahpra's requirement to make mandatory notifications. This enables you to undertake a confidential discussion with experienced clinicians.

MIPS can provide risk education to assist with work life balance, difficult colleagues and difficult work environments.

If you have any queries surrounding your professional practice, please contact MIPS for Clinico-Legal Support on 1800 061 113.

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