

Profile of the **rural resident specialist workforce** 2021



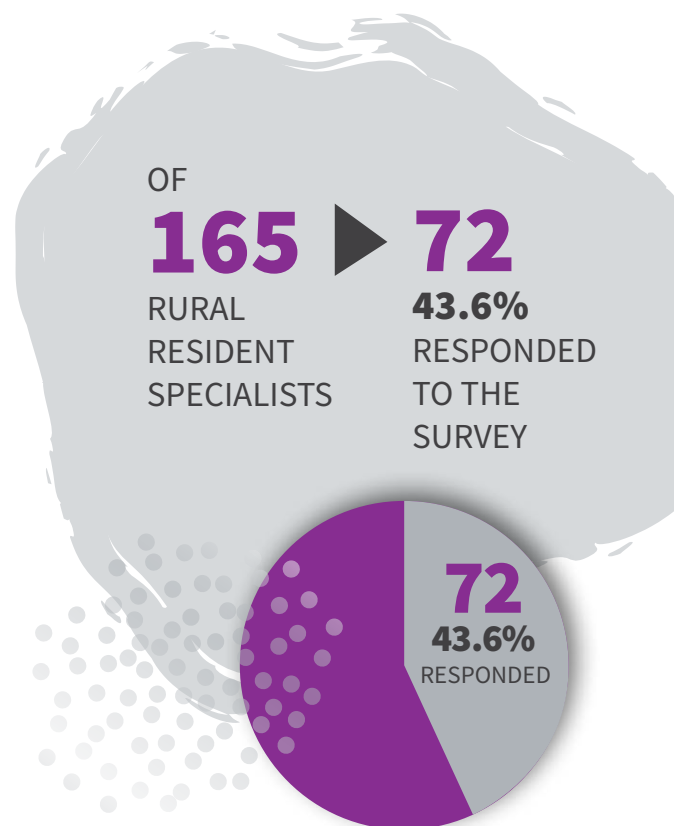
REPORTING RURAL RESIDENT SPECIALIST TRENDS

Rural Health West maintains a database of medical specialists who live and work in rural Western Australia (WA) in Modified Monash Model (MMM) 2 to 7 locations. They are known as rural resident specialists.

Rural Health West defines a rural resident specialist as one whose primary working situation is in a rural area. Doctors who live in Perth or interstate and do sessional work in a rural or remote location are not included in this dataset, nor are registrars engaged in a specialist training program.

Rural Health West's database is updated continuously with information from rural areas and annually through the Resident Specialist Survey. Seventy-two (43.6%) of the 165 recorded rural resident specialists responded to the latest survey in 2021.

Together with ongoing data collection strategies, Rural Health West can offer contemporary, valid evidence about trends in the rural resident specialist workforce.



NUMBER AND LOCATION OF RURAL RESIDENT SPECIALISTS

At the census date of 30 September 2021, there were 165 rural resident specialists identified. This compares to 152 in 2020.

Seventy-nine rural resident specialists (47.9%) worked in an MMM 2 location and 54 (32.7%) in an MMM 3 location. Thirty-two rural resident specialists (19.4%) were located in MMM 4 to 7 locations.

The table, on the right, shows the workforce by region; notably more than half (84 rural resident specialists or 50.9%) are located in the South West.

Region	N Rural Resident Specialists	%
GOLDFIELDS	9	5.5
GREAT SOUTHERN	20	12.1
KIMBERLEY	22	13.3
MIDWEST	20	12.1
PILBARA	7	4.3
SOUTH WEST	84	50.9
WHEATBELT	3	1.8
TOTAL	165	100

Please note

Rural definition: Rural Health West uses 'rural' in place of 'rural, regional and remote' for brevity. All references to 'rural' should be taken as the broader definition and relate to all locations classified as MMM 2 to 7 locations.

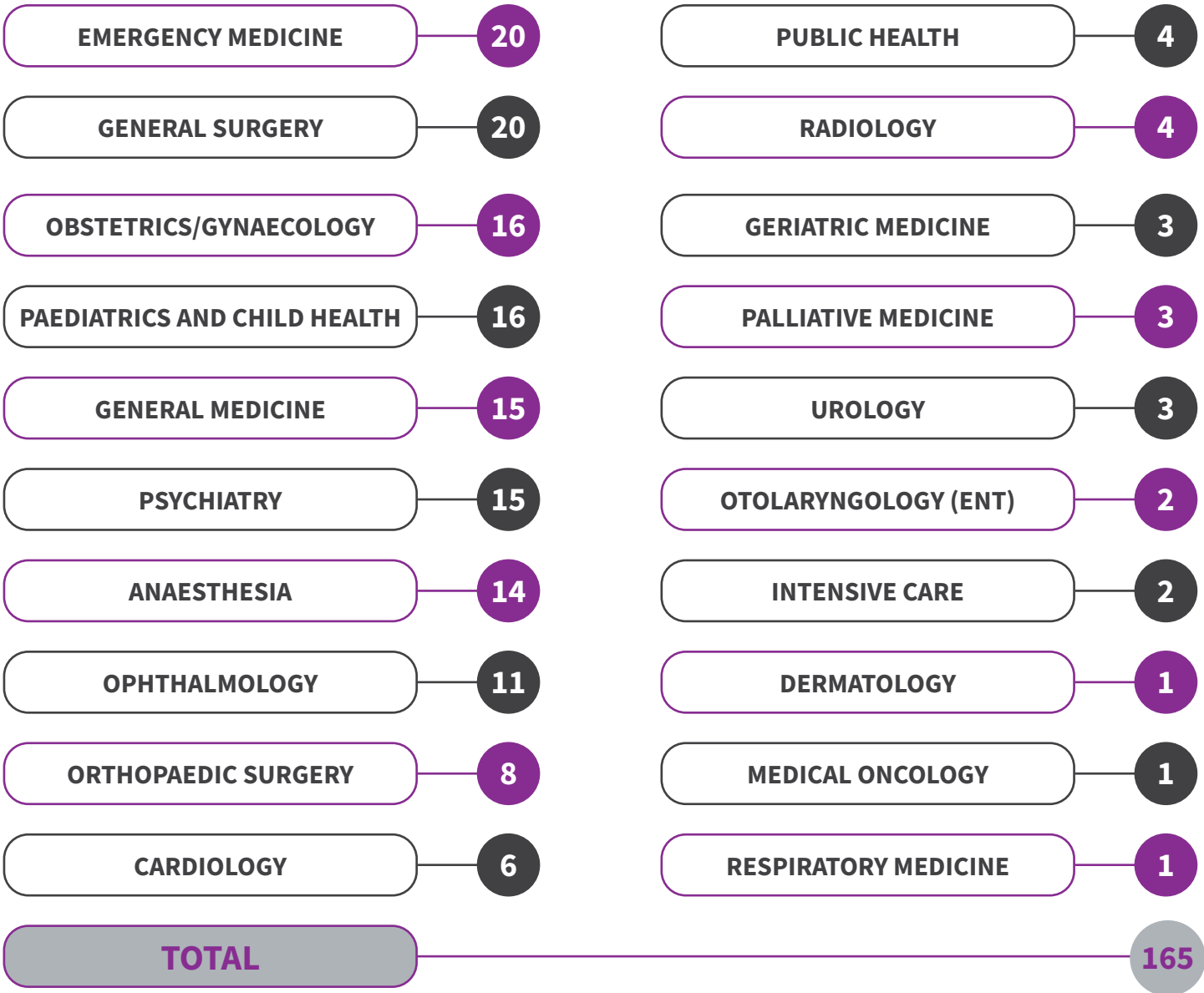
AGE AND GENDER

At the census date of 30 September 2021, fifty (30.3%) of the 165 rural resident specialists were female and 115 (69.7%) were male. The average age of rural resident specialists at 30 September 2021 was 51.2 years, with males averaging 52.3 years and females 48.6 years.

Age	All	Female	Male
25-34	3	1	2
35-44	46	20	26
45-54	63	17	46
55-64	32	7	25
65+	21	5	16
Average age	51.2	48.6	52.3
Total number of males	115		
Total number of females	50		

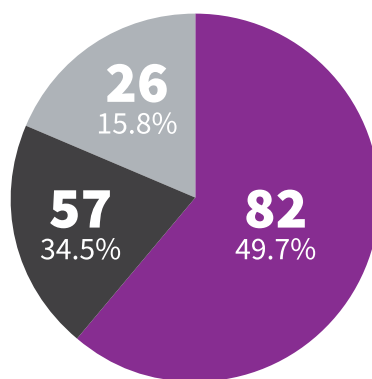
SPECIALTIES PRACTISED

At the census date of 30 September 2021, 165 rural resident specialists practised across the following 20 specialties.



LENGTH OF STAY

At the census date of 30 September 2021, the average length of stay for rural resident specialists in their current location was 8.5 years. There was a difference between the average length of stay for males (9.3 years) and females (6.5 years).



■ Length of stay <1 year
 ■ Length of stay 1-5 years
 ■ Length of stay >5 years

AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY IN CURRENT PRACTICE (YEARS)

REGION

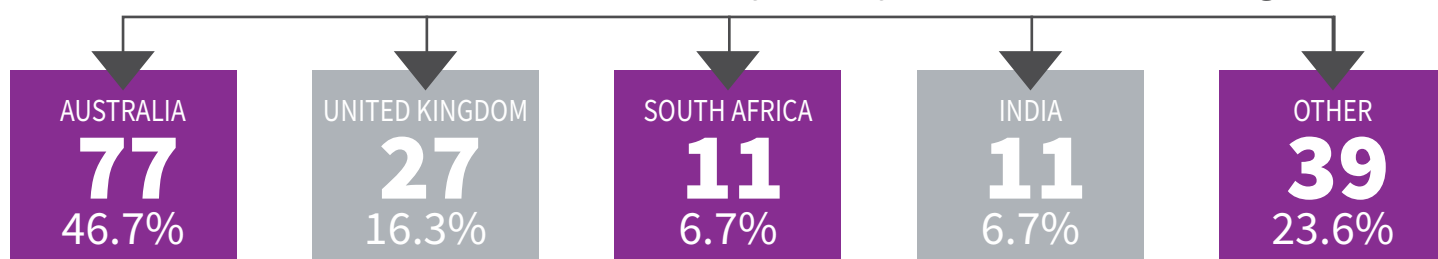
YEARS

GOLDFIELDS	5.8
GREAT SOUTHERN	7.3
KIMBERLEY	4.2
MIDWEST	8.4
PILBARA	6.7
SOUTH WEST	10.4
WHEATBELT	5.7

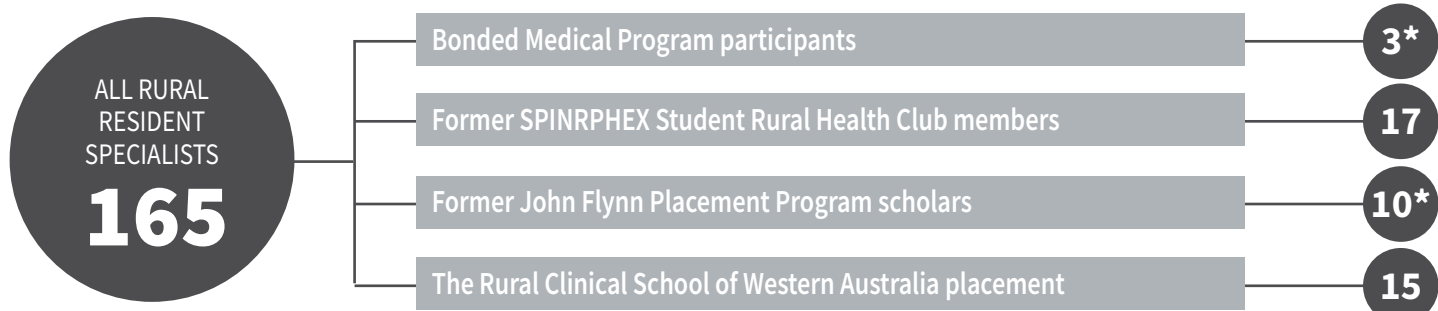
PRIMARY MEDICAL TRAINING

At the census date of 30 September 2021, of the 165 rural resident specialists, 77 (46.7%) completed their basic medical qualification at an Australian university, of whom 44 (26.7%) trained in WA. Of the 88 (53.3%) who completed their basic medical qualification overseas, doctors from the United Kingdom (27, 16.3%), South Africa (11, 6.7%) and India (11, 6.7%) represent the majority.

Number of rural resident specialists by country of basic medical training



QUICK STATS ON RURAL RESIDENT SPECIALIST WORKFORCE

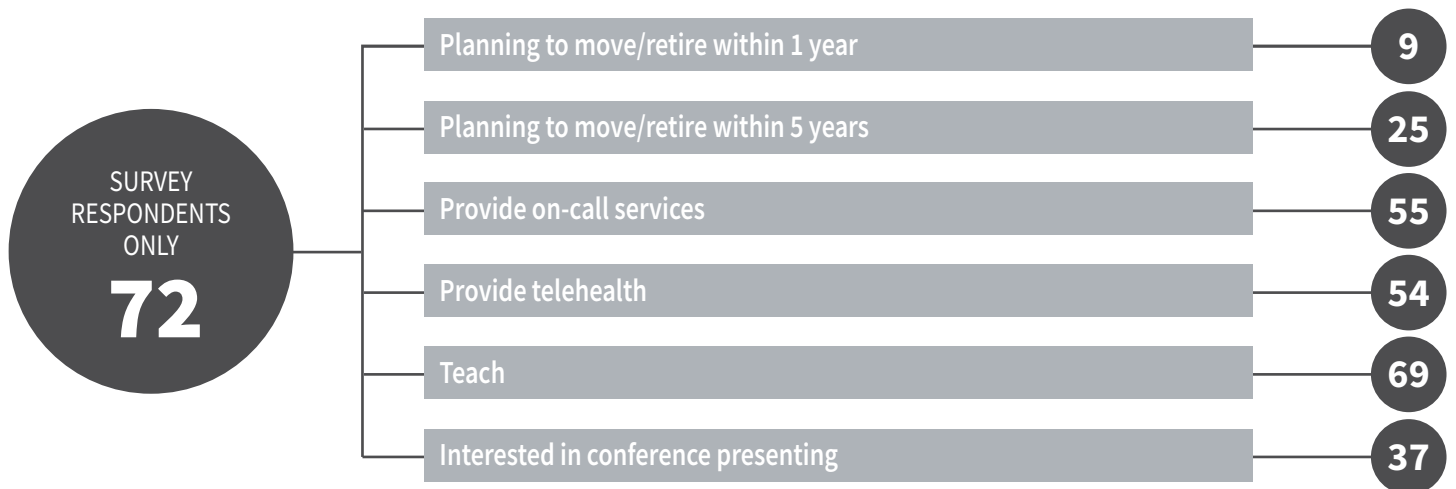


* Known to Rural Health West at the time of the report.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Below is data from the 72 rural resident specialists who responded to the survey.

QUICK STATS ON RURAL RESIDENT SPECIALIST RESPONDENTS

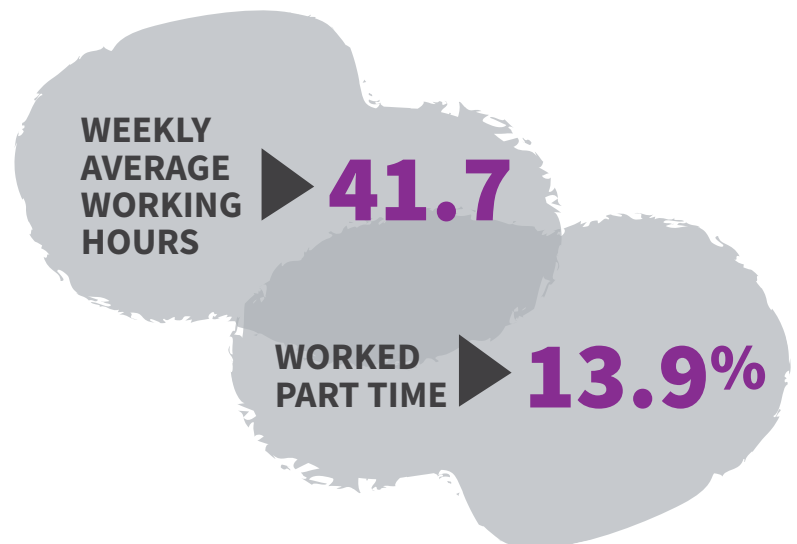


HOURS WORKED

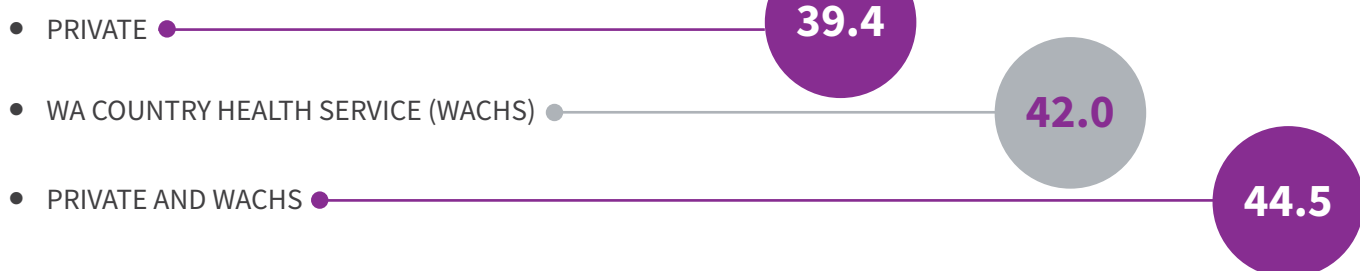
All 72 rural resident specialists who returned their surveys in 2021, provided working hours. The average working hours per week were 41.7.

10 respondents (13.9%) worked part-time.

Rural resident specialists working in a combined employment type worked, on average, more hours than those with only 1 employment type.



Average hours worked per week by employment type:



VISITING SPECIALISTS

Below is data on visits from rural resident, Perth and interstate specialists.

At the census date of 30 September 2021, of the 165 rural resident specialists, 85 (51.5%) visited rural locations other than their primary practice town. These 85 rural resident specialists visited 235 additional locations, an average of 2.8 each person (range between 1 and 14). The Australian Government Department of Health Outreach programs administered by Rural Health West fund 134 of the 235 visits (57.0%) to other locations, the majority of which are general medicine, ophthalmology and paediatric visits. As well as having access to rural resident specialists, patients in rural WA are supported by visiting specialists based in Perth or interstate. Rural Health West has identified 321 specialists who currently provide visiting services to rural locations in WA (including those providing services under the Outreach program).

Other annual health workforce fact sheets can be found at ruralhealthwest.com.au/workforcedata