

PROFILE OF THE WA *rural/resident specialist*

WORKFORCE 2025



REPORTING RESIDENT SPECIALIST TRENDS

Rural Health West maintains a database of resident specialists who work in rural Western Australia in Modified Monash Model locations (MMM) 2 to 7.

Rural Health West defines a 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.

Rural Health West's database is updated continuously with intelligence from rural areas and annually through the Resident Specialist Survey. One hundred and five (45.7%) of the 230 recorded rural resident specialists responded to the latest survey in 2025.

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

OF THE

230

RECORDED
RURAL
RESIDENT
SPECIALISTS



105

RESPONDED
TO THE
SURVEY

45.7%
RESPONSE
RATE

NUMBER AND LOCATION OF RESIDENT SPECIALISTS

At the census date of 30 September 2025, there were 230 resident specialists (excluding specialist registrars) identified as working in rural WA. This compares to 205 in 2024.

89 resident specialists (38.7%) lived and worked in an MMM 2 location and 86 (37.4%) in an MMM 3 location. 49 resident specialists (21.3%) were in an MMM 6 location, with the remaining 6 specialists in MMM 4 or 7. There were no resident specialists in MMM5. There was an increase in the number of specialists working in MMM 2, 3, 6 and 7 locations between 2024 and 2025, while MMM 4 remained similar.

The table on the right shows the workforce by region; notably almost half (102 resident specialists or 44.3%) are in the South West.

REGION	N RESIDENT SPECIALISTS	%
GOLDFIELDS	10	4.4
GREAT SOUTHERN	33	14.3
KIMBERLEY	36	15.7
MIDWEST	31	13.5
PILBARA	15	6.5
SOUTH WEST	102	44.3
WHEATBELT	3	1.3
TOTAL	230	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.

AGE AND GENDER

Average males vs females

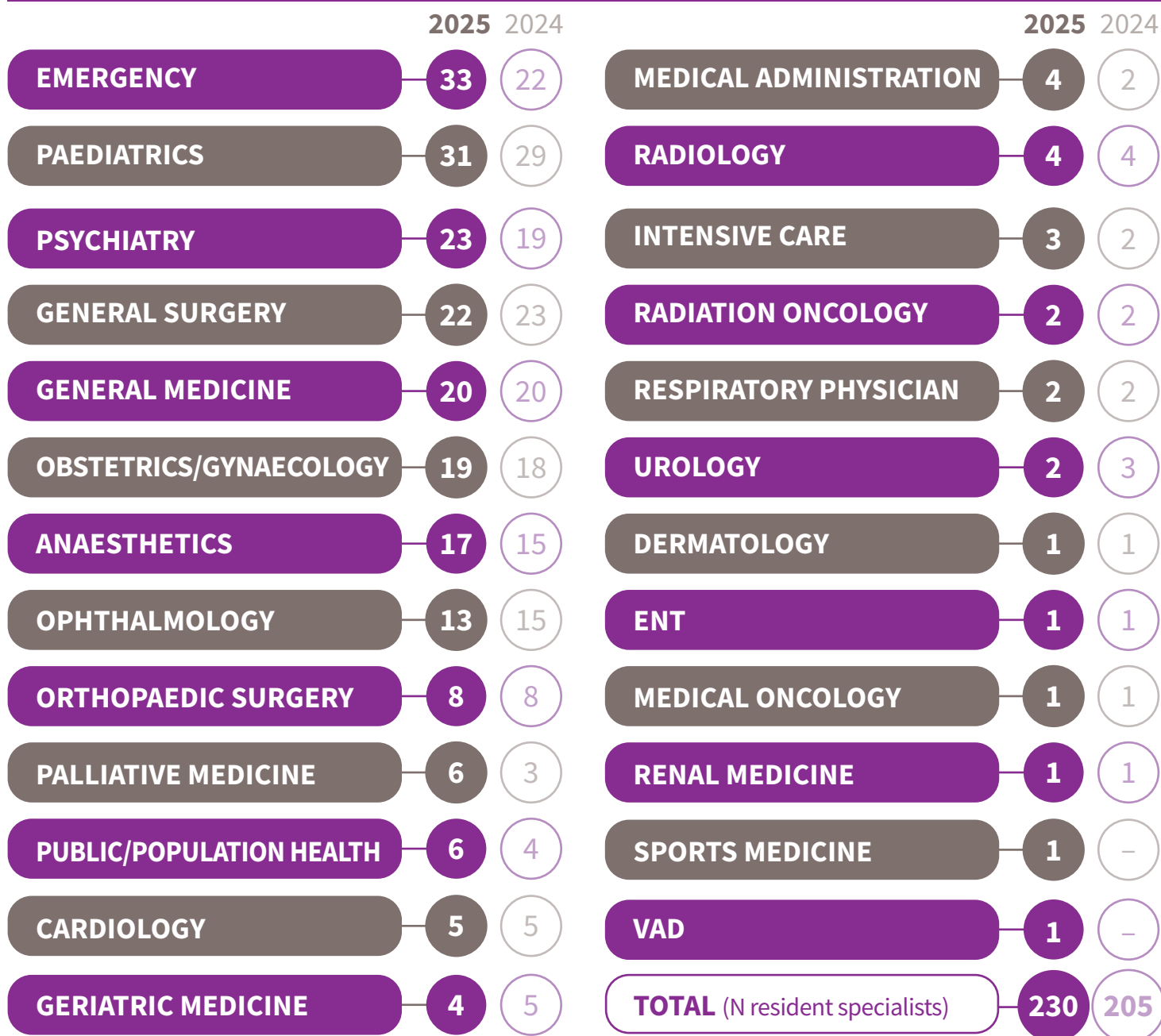


82 (35.7%) resident specialists were female. The average age of resident specialists at 30 September 2025 was 51.0 years, with females averaging 48.8 years and males averaging 52.1 years.

SPECIALIST AGE	ALL	FEMALE	MALE
25-34	6	2	4
35-44	64	32	32
45-54	83	29	54
55-64	56	13	43
65+	21	6	15
Average age	51.0	48.8	52.1
TOTAL NUMBER OF MALES	148		
TOTAL NUMBER OF FEMALES	82		

SPECIALTIES PRACTISED

The 230 resident specialists practised across 25 specialties. (2024 numbers are depicted below as a tint in the open circle).



RESIDENT SPECIALISTS BY REGION AND SPECIALTY

SPECIALTY	GOLDFIELDS	GREAT SOUTHERN	KIMBERLEY	MIDWEST	PILBARA	SOUTH WEST	WHEATBELT	TOTAL
Emergency	1	7	2	5	1	17	-	33
Paediatrics	3	5	7	4	6	6	-	31
Psychiatry	-	6	5	1	3	8	-	23
General Surgery	1	3	2	4		12	-	22
General Medicine	3	1	4	4	1	6	1	20
Obstetrics/Gynaecology	2	2	5	3	1	6	-	19
Anaesthetics	-	2	2	3	1	9	-	17
Ophthalmology	-	3	2	2	-	6	-	13
Orthopaedic Surgery	-	-	-	2	-	6	-	8
Palliative Medicine	-	1	1	-	-	4	-	6
Public/Population Health	-	-	3	1	1	1	-	6
Cardiology	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	5
Geriatric Medicine	-	1	-	-	-	2	1	4
Medical Administration	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	4
Radiology	-	-	-	1	-	3	-	4
Intensive Care	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	3
Radiation Oncology	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Respiratory Physician	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	2
Urology	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Dermatology	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
ENT	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Medical Oncology	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Renal Medicine	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Sports Medicine	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
VAD	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
TOTAL	10	33	36	31	15	102	3	230

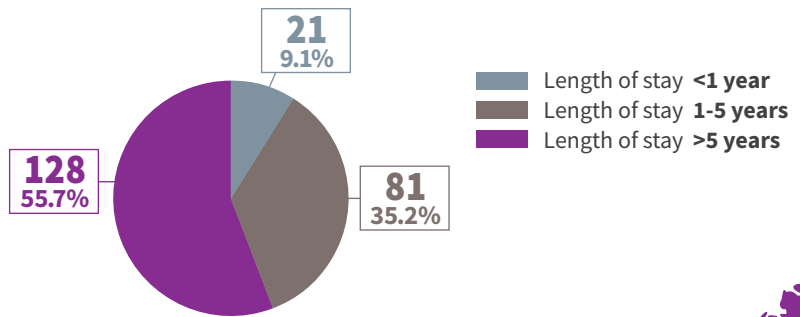
MODE OF EMPLOYMENT

The majority of resident specialists (120, 52.2%) work solely for WA Country Health Service (WACHS).



LENGTH OF STAY

The average length of stay for resident specialists in their current practice was 8.3 years. There was a difference between the average length of stay for males (9.1 years) and females (7.0 years).



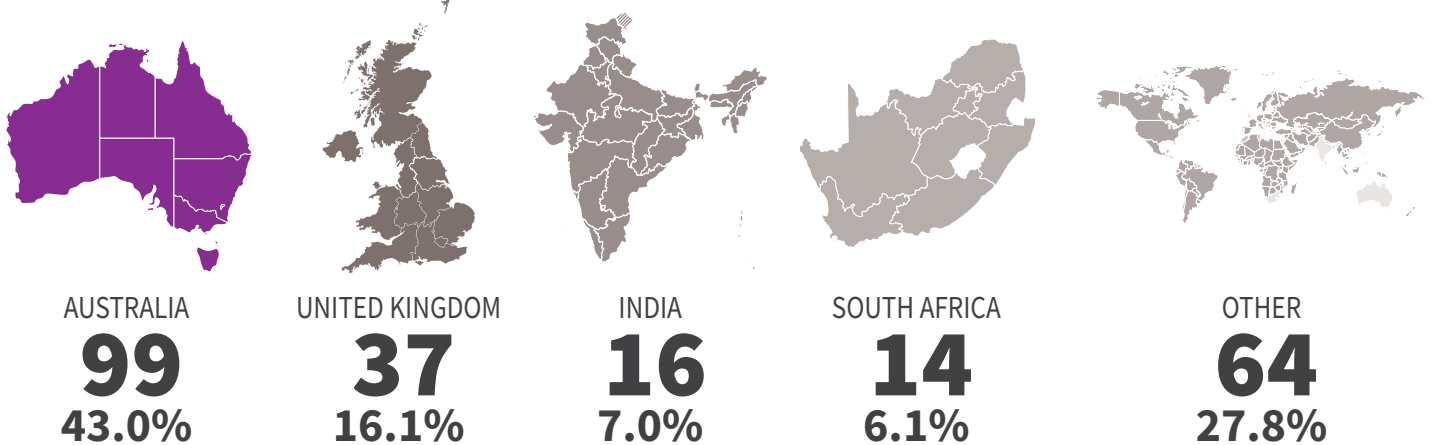
Average length of stay males vs females



PRIMARY MEDICAL TRAINING

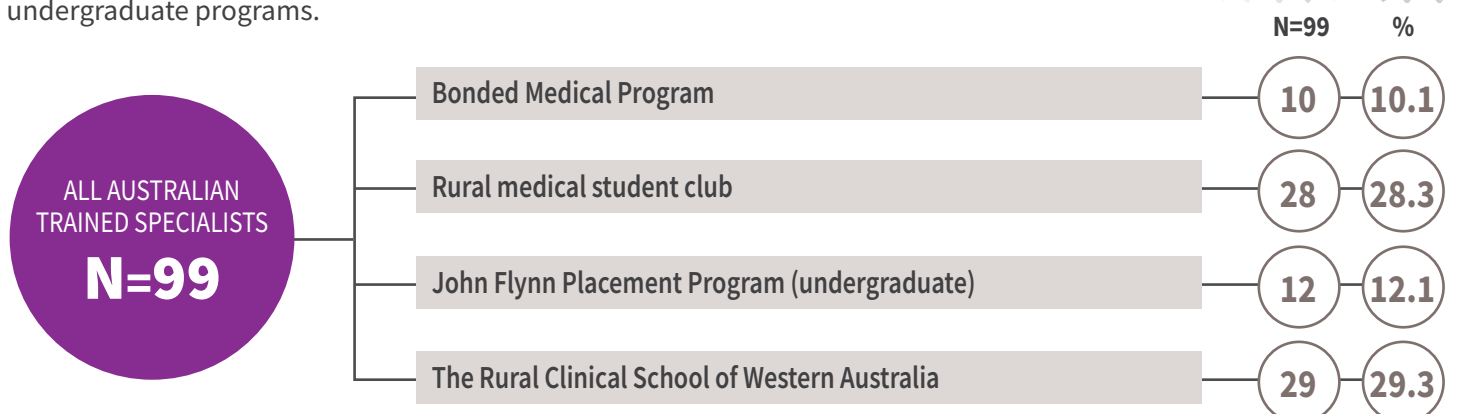
Of the 230 rural resident specialists, 99 (43.0%) completed their basic medical qualification at an Australian university, with 60 (60.6%) completing their training in Western Australia. Of the 131 (57.0%) who completed their basic medical qualification overseas, doctors from the United Kingdom, India and South Africa represent the majority.

Number of rural resident specialists by country of basic medical training



RURAL UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS*

Of the 99 Australian trained specialists, the following number of specialists participated in rural undergraduate programs.



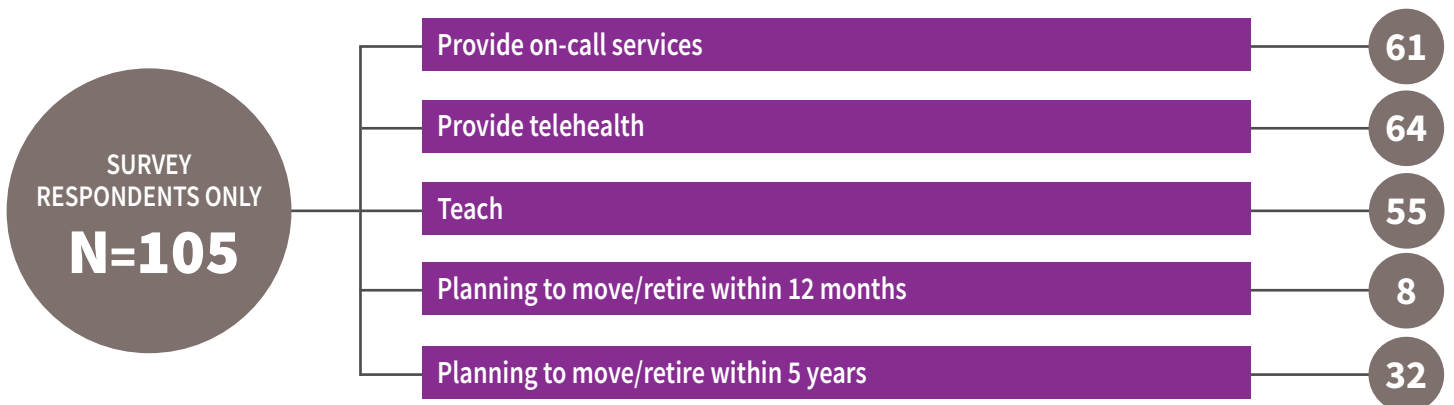
*Known to Rural Health West at the time of the report.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Below is data from the 105 rural resident specialists who responded to the survey.

CAREER ATTRIBUTES AND INTENTIONS

DEFINE/MOVE INTENTIONS

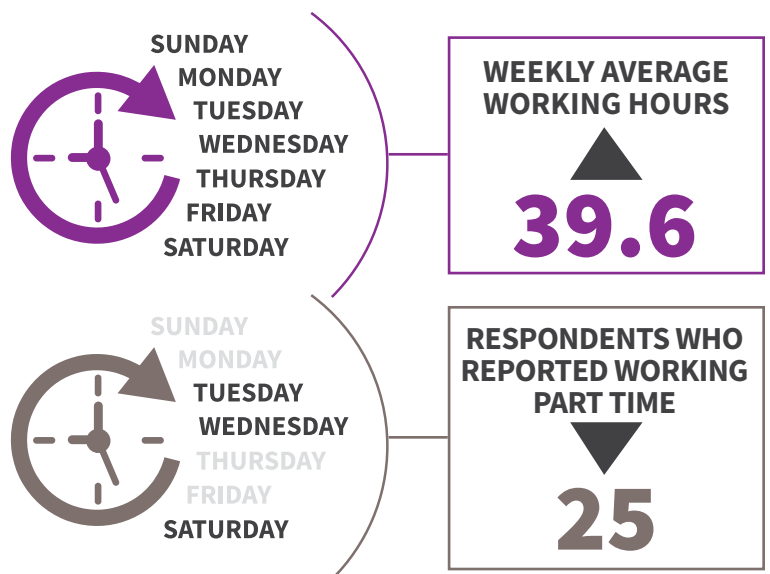


HOURS WORKED

102 of the 105 specialists who returned their surveys provided working hours. The average working hours per week was 39.6.

25 respondents (24.5%) reported working part-time.

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 SERVICES

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

Of the 230 resident specialists, 100 (43.5%) visit rural locations other than their primary practice town. These 100 specialists visit 222 additional locations, an average of 2.2 each specialist (range between 1 and 10). Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing Outreach programs administered in WA by Rural Health West funded visits to 85 of the 222 other locations, the majority of which were general medicine and paediatric visits.

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