



Fact File

The Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia

**New Zealand Pathologist
Workforce Study 2018
Other Pathology**

NEW ZEALAND PATHOLOGIST WORKFORCE - OTHER PATHOLOGY

Overview

Only Anatomical Pathology and Haematology had enough numbers to be able to model. Workforce projections. All other disciplines had to be combined. The profile of Other Pathologists in the NZ Pathologist workforce includes other disciplines, accounting for 22.9% of the total NZ Pathologist workforce. The largest discipline was Microbiologists with 29 practitioners (10.3% of the total workforce), Chemical Pathologists with 18 practitioners (6.7% of the total workforce), and other disciplines each had less than ten practitioners.

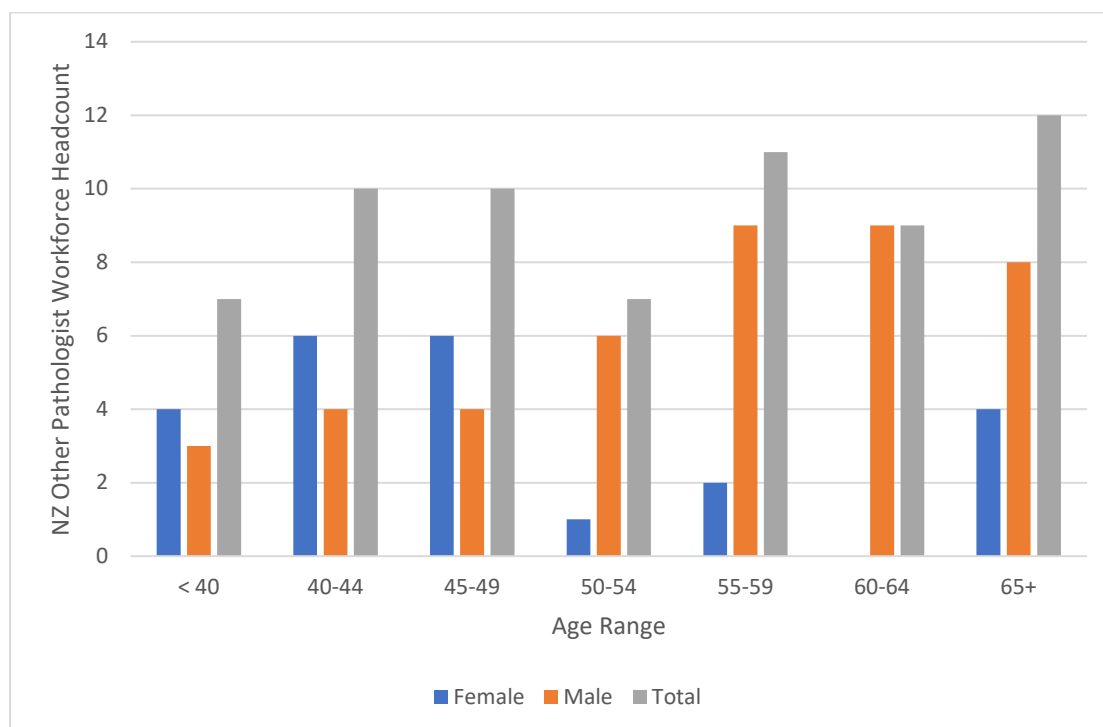
Workforce profile and trends

Table 1: NZ Other Pathologist Workforce, 2016, Age and Sex Profile

Age Group	Headcount			Percentage	Percentage
	Female	Male	Total	by Age	Female by Age
less than 40	4	3	7	10.6%	57.1%
40-44	6	4	10	15.2%	60.0%
45-49	6	4	10	15.2%	60.0%
50-54	1	6	7	10.6%	14.3%
55-59	2	9	11	16.7%	18.2%
60-64	0	9	9	13.6%	0.0%
65+	4	8	12	18.2%	33.3%
Total	23	43	66	100.0%	34.8%
55 years and older	6	26	32		
% 55 years and older	26.1%	60.5%	48.5%		

Source: RCPA data base, 2016

Figure 1: NZ Other Pathologist Workforce, 2016, Age and Sex Profile



Source: RCPA data base, 2016

Table 1 and Figure 1 show that the modal age range for the workforce is 65 years and older (18.2%), followed by 55 to 59 years (16.7%). The modal age range for the female workforce is 40 to 49 years, and for the male workforce is 55 to 59 years and 60 to 64 years. This shows the aged profile of the workforce. Females are in the majority up to 49 years. Males are in the majority for all age cohorts 50 years and over.

Nearly one half of the workforce is 55 years or older (48.5%), with 26.1% of females in this age range, and over sixty percent of males (60.5%). This profile has significant implications for the retirement of a very large proportion of the workforce in the next ten years. Furthermore, there are 31.8% of the workforce aged 65 years and older, so that 21 Other Pathologists nationally will retire in a much shorter time frame. This has major implications for the sustainability of the Other Pathologist workforce.

Trends in trainee numbers

NZ Other Pathologist trainees increased from 14 to 17 trainees over the period 2011 to 2016. This was a relatively low growth of 21.4% over the period.

Workforce demand and supply

Demand drivers

The assumption was made for the projection modelling that the service demand growth used for modelling the Australian Pathologist workforce would also be applied to the NZ Other Pathologist workforce.

Supply Issues

The 2015 NZ workforce profile and the analysis in this report show the following trends for the other disciplines:

- Microbiologists -The workforce size has increased in the time period 2011 to 2016 from 21 to 29 practitioners (7.6% per annum on average growth), while registrar numbers have remained relatively stable. This is felt to be due to the reconfiguration of laboratory service funding and delivery models in the major centres of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. There have also been more flexible working arrangements supporting part time work that have been introduced;
- Chemical Pathologists- Chemical Pathologists are the fourth largest discipline in the New Zealand workforce and grew from 16 pathologists in 2003 to 18 pathologists in 2015. Chemical Pathology has shown a decline in trainee numbers in New Zealand from three in 2003 to no trainees in 2015. However, the RCPA data base showed one trainee in 2015 and two trainees in 2016. The difference could be due to the time period when the data was recorded. The survey indicated that 30% of the cohort were aged over 61 years, indicating an ageing workforce.
- Forensic Pathologists – Small growth from four practitioners in 2011 to five practitioners in 2016, although numbers were higher in 2009 with eight practitioners (p.6). The 2015 report highlighted concerns about the lack of sufficient practitioners to maintain forensic pathology expertise for the management of the New Zealand criminal justice system;
- Genetics – There is no Genetic Pathologist in New Zealand at the time this study was conducted and this is of concern with the increasing importance of genomics within the pathology profession and health care in general. A small number of experienced Anatomical Pathologists are leading the development of this new technology; (NB. In 2018 there is now one Genetic Pathologist in New Zealand)
- General Pathology – General Pathology has not developed as a discipline within New Zealand and so most practice as Anatomical Pathologists. As there have been no registrars for over a decade it is indicated that the discipline will cease to operate when the current ageing workforce retires;
- Immunology – Access to services is limited to three major cities, with significant waiting times for consultation and follow up treatment and management services. There has been a small increase in practitioners from five to seven between 2011 and 2016, however the low number of trainees is of concern;
- Oral Pathology- There is concern that there was only one practitioner in New Zealand in 2015 and that this has reduced to no practitioners in 2016. As a result there is no specialist advice available within the country.

Results of projection modelling

The lack of available data on trends in services in New Zealand due to the lack of an available data source resulted in the decision to use Australian data on Medicare service trends for modelling demand. Therefore, the same assumptions were applied to the New Zealand modelling for services demand as were applied for the Australian national workforce modelling. The high scenario has 3.8% and the low scenario has 3.4%

Figure 2: Results of Projection Modelling for New Zealand Other Pathologist Workforce, High Scenario (Service Demand)

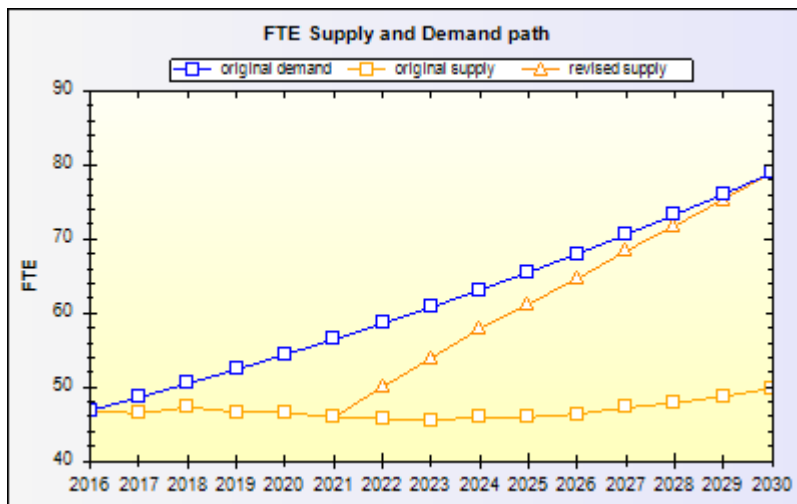


Figure 3: Results of Projection Modelling for New Zealand Other Pathologist Workforce, Low Scenario (Workforce Demand)

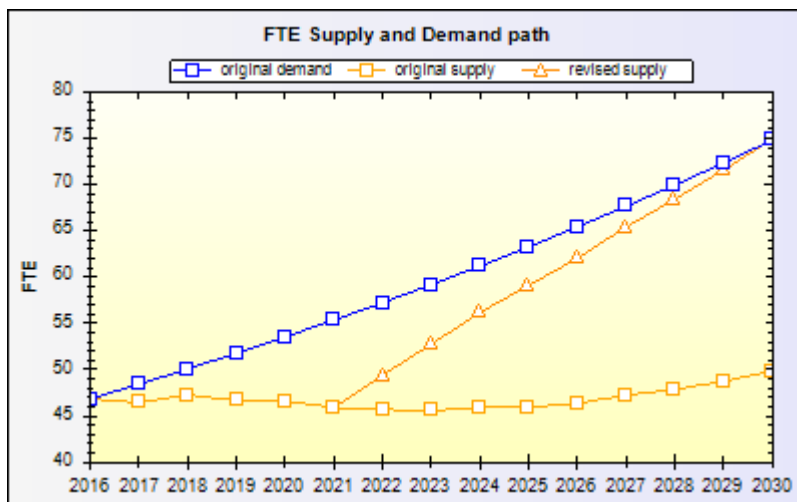


Table 2: Results of Workforce Modelling for New Zealand Other Pathologist Workforce

	Trainees				
	Base Year	Low Scenario	High Scenario	Gap Low Scenario	Gap High Scenario
	2016	2030	2030	2030	2030
Other	1	6	6	5	5
Total three disciplines	11	26	34	15	23
Total NZ Workforce	11	25	29	14	18
	New Fellows				
Other	1	5	6	4	5
Total three disciplines	10	23	31	13	21
Total NZ Workforce	10	23	26	13	16

Five additional trainees are needed under the Low Scenario for Other disciplines and the same for the High Scenario.