

## LA452 Tabled Paper

The Commonwealth Government has primary responsibility for primary care services, including general practitioner services. The Department of Health relies on data published by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing for information on numbers of general practitioners.

(1)(a) The latest Department of Health and Ageing data on the number of General Practitioner (GP) FTEs is for 2011/12. This shows that in WA there was one GP FTE per 1,589 persons, or 6.3 GPs per 10,000 population. This was the lowest of any State (but higher than the two territories), and well below the national average of 7.8 GPs per 10,000 persons.

State/Territory	No of GP FTEs	Population	Persons per GP	GPs per 10,000 Population
NSW	5,860	7,248,000	1237	8.1
Victoria	4,435	5,574,000	1257	8.0
Queensland	3,645	4,513,000	1238	8.1
Western Australia	1,502	2,387,000	1589	6.3
South Australia	1,399	1,645,000	1176	8.5
Tasmania	407	512,000	1258	7.9
Australian Capital Territory	227	371,000	1634	6.1
Northern Territory	132	232,000	1758	5.7
Australia	17,607	22,482,000	1277	7.8

Source: Department of Health and Ageing, 2013, *General Practice Workforce Statistics - 1984-85 to 2011-12*, available from:

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/General+Practice+Statistics-1>  
(accessed 17 June 2013)

(1)(b) The Commonwealth does not provide data on the location of GPs that would enable the State to determine the number of GPs by health service. However, 2011/12 data on the number of GP FTEs mapped by Medicare Local is available and provides an indication of the availability of GP services by location. The data by Medicare Local is presented in the table below.

Medicare Local	No of GP FTEs	Population	Population per GP FTE	GPs Per 10,000 Popltn
<b>Metropolitan</b>				
Perth Central and East Metro	344	456,474	1327	7.5
Perth North Metro	296	512,626	1732	5.8
Fremantle	164	233,011	1421	7.0

Bentley – Armadale	211	402,646	1908	5.2
Perth South Coastal	153	231,714	1514	6.6
<b>Metropolitan Total</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>1,836,471</b>	<b>1572</b>	<b>6.4</b>
<b>Rural, Regional and Remote</b>				
South West WA	206	290,616	1411	7.1
Goldfields – Midwest	78	127,448	1634	6.1
Kimberley – Pilbara	50	100,409	2008	5.0
<b>Rural, Regional and Remote Total</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>518,473</b>	<b>1552</b>	<b>6.4</b>
<b>STATE GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>1,502</b>	<b>2,354,944</b>	<b>1568</b>	<b>6.4</b>
<b>AUSTRALIAN TOTAL</b>	<b>17,607</b>	<b>22,323,933</b>	<b>1,268</b>	<b>7.9</b>

Sources:

(1) General practitioner numbers from Commonwealth of Australia, 2013, *Medicare Local Statistics and Data*, available from: <http://www.medicarelocals.gov.au/internet/medicarelocals/publishing.nsf/Content/medicarelocalstats> (accessed 18 June 2013).

(2) Population statistics from Public Health Information Development Unit, 2013, *Social Health Atlas of Australia: Data by Medicare Locals, May 2013 Release*, available from: <http://www.publichealth.gov.au/content/view/314/> (accessed 17 June 2013).

As the table shows, there is fluctuation within the metropolitan and country areas in terms of the number of GP FTEs per 10,000 population. The lowest ratio of GP FTEs to population is in the Kimberley-Pilbara Medicare Local region, with 5.0 GPs per 10,000 population.

The average for Medicare Locals in both the Perth metropolitan area and WA country areas is 6.4 GPs per 10,000 population. However, it is noteworthy that it takes a higher ratio of GPs to population to service widely dispersed country populations than concentrated metropolitan populations. Accordingly, the data suggesting similar GP to population ratios for the metropolitan and country areas masks a relative undersupply in country areas.

The GP to population ratio for Australia as a whole is 7.9 GP FTEs per 10,000 population, considerably higher than the WA average.