



58%
of vacancies filled



4.9 applicants
(on average, per vacancy)



1.6 suitable applicants
(on average, per vacancy)



84% of employers
had applicants



72% of employers
had suitable applicants

Key research findings¹

- There was a tightening of the labour market for health professions in 2017-18.
 - The proportion of vacancies filled was the lowest since 2009-10 and the average number of suitable applicants per vacancy was similarly at a low level (see Figure 1).
 - Around 45 per cent of employers had unfilled vacancies in 2017-18, compared with 34 per cent in 2016-17.
 - Additionally, more than 28 per cent of employers attracted no suitable applicants for their vacancies in 2017-18, compared with 22 per cent in the previous year.

Recruitment difficulties

- Of the nine health professions assessed in 2017-18, four were found to be in national shortage and two have shortages mainly in regional areas (see Figure 2).
 - The occupation of sonographer has been in shortage since at least 2007 and optometrists have also been in shortage for most of that period. In 2017-18, around three quarters of sonographer vacancies and two thirds of optometrist vacancies remained unfilled six weeks after listing.
 - Medical diagnostic radiographers are in shortage for the first time since 2010.
- Where employers assessed applicants as unsuitable, the main reasons were lack of basic qualifications, or lack of either specific or general occupational experience.
- Around 12 per cent of employers had unfilled vacancies despite attracting suitable applicants. Some of these positions were unfilled because applicants found other employment or there was a lack of agreement over remuneration.

- Consistent with previous years, employers in regional areas generally experienced greater recruitment difficulties than employers in capital cities.
 - Regional employers filled 52 per cent of their vacancies compared with 59 per cent for capital city employers.
- However, the gap narrowed in 2017-18 compared with 2016-17.
 - The proportion of filled capital city vacancies fell by 15 percentage points, while the proportion of filled regional vacancies fell by 8 percentage points.

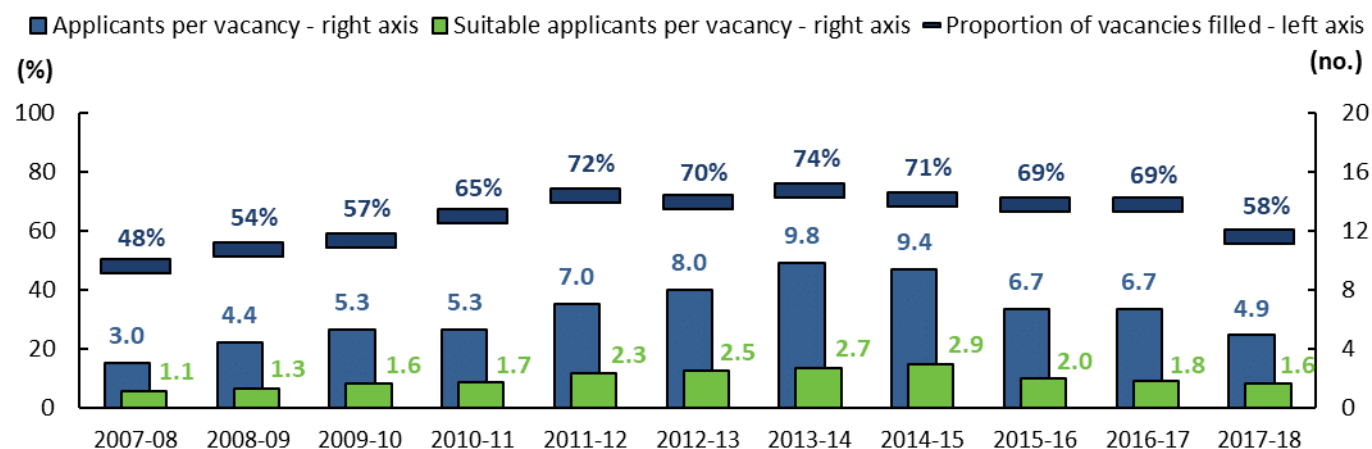
Supply and demand²

- The demand for health professions is growing strongly.
 - Over the past five years, the level of employment and the number of internet advertised vacancies both grew faster for health professions than for the average of all occupations in Australia.
 - Employment in the health care and social assistance industry (a major employer of health professions) is projected to expand at double the pace of all industries over the five years to May 2023.
- Supply has also grown strongly.
 - Over the five years to 2016, completions in higher education courses related to the assessed occupations increased by 30 per cent.
- The solid growth in demand has contributed to a steady improvement in employment outcomes for graduates of health services and support degrees.
 - In 2017, 72.7 per cent of all bachelor degree graduates seeking full-time employment were in full-time employment four months after graduation, compared with 68.3 per cent in 2014.

¹ The methodology underpinning this research is outlined at [Skill Shortage Research Methodology | Department of Jobs and Small Business - Document library, Australian Government](#).

² Sources: ABS, Labour Force Survey, Department of Jobs and Small Business trend; Department of Jobs and Small Business, Internet Vacancy Index, June 2018, 12 month moving average (health diagnostic and therapy professionals); Department of Jobs and Small Business, Industry Employment Projections, five years to May 2023; Department of Education and Training, Higher Education Students Data Collection, custom tables, 2016, count is based on completions in selected narrow (ASCED 4-digit) fields within the Health broad field of education; QILT, Graduate Outcomes Survey, custom tables, 2017

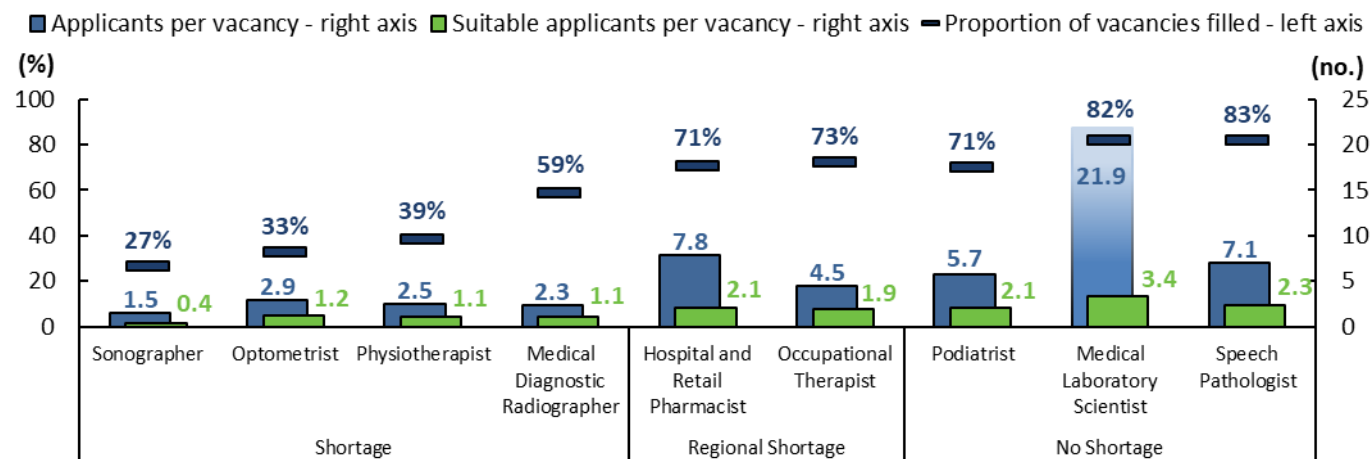
Figure 1: Proportion of vacancies filled (%), average number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy (no.), Health Professions, Australia, 2007-08 to 2017-18



Source: Department of Jobs and Small Business, Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised

Note: Occupational coverage varies over time series.

Figure 2: Proportion of vacancies filled (%), average number of applicants and suitable applicants per vacancy (no.), and national ratings, Health Professions, Australia, 2017-18



Source: Department of Jobs and Small Business, Survey of Employers who have Recently Advertised