

WORKFORCE SURVEY 2023

The 2023 workforce survey was sent to all practice centre assistants to be completed over a two-week period, between 17-31 May, that work at general practices within the Midlands Health Network (MHN) PHO (the “network”).

The practice centre assistant (PCA) is an unregulated health worker role that has been developed as part of the extended general practice team in response to changing health workforce needs. The original roles were as key enablers to support the implementation of the core components of the health care home model of care.

The valuable role provides administrative and clinical support to the general practice team, freeing up clinician time to allow more quality time to interact with clients/patients. PCAs work under the direction and delegation of regulated health professionals.

Practice centre assistants covers similar job titles such as medical centre assistant, primary care assistant, patient care assistant, health centre assistant, health care assistant and other variations of this role in general practice.

A total of 47 PCAs responded to the workforce survey.

OUR PRACTICE CENTRE ASSISTANT (PCA) WORKFORCE



Our PCA workforce is **predominantly female** with an **average age of 46.6 years**



Two in five PCAs work in a rural practice



PCAs who do not identify as Māori or Pacific make up 67.4% of our workforce

Nearly one-third of the PCA workforce identify as Māori or Pacific



The PCA workload is varied; most commonly:

- Collecting baseline data 93.5%
- Decontaminating and sterilising equipment 93.5%
- Stock control 93.5%
- Urine testing 91.3%
- Cleaning beds/equipment 91.3%

One-fifth of PCAs are Authorised Vaccinating Health Worker (VHW) Stage 1



Nearly 10% of PCAs have symptoms of burnout and 63% identify occasionally being under stress

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ABOUT THE SURVEY

The last full Pinnacle Workforce Survey was completed in 2009. The landscape of primary care in NZ has changed considerably in this time. This survey was an opportunity to better understand the complexities that are faced in primary care today, and how our services can best meet the people we serve into the future.

PCAs are a newer role developed following previous workforce surveys.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PRIMARY CARE TO THRIVE

Better funding:

- For long appointments so patients do not have to pay
- For more staff
- Better access to mental health support for patients
- For PCA training and education

Flexible working was suggested, including working from home which would be helpful for completing administrative tasks if access was available.

Annual appreciation and recognition in the form of awards that are voted on.



RESPONSIVENESS TO MĀORI

All workforce surveys included questions about Māori responsiveness to provide a baseline and to enable targeting of health messaging focussed on equitable health outcomes for Māori.

Three-quarters of PCAs are utilising knowledge from Te Tiriti or cultural safety training in their day-to-day work with clients/patients.

60% indicated consideration for Māori engagement/participation in recalls. As this is often a key part of the PCA role, this is a factor that could be addressed.

Less than half of PCAs work to (or may be aware of) a Māori Health Plan within their prac-

MENTORSHIP/SUPERVISION

PCAs are required to work under delegation. Nearly all PCAs (98%) have access to a workplace mentor/supervisor. Supervisors are commonly accessed daily or a few times a week, with one-third 'only as needed'.

From the nursing survey, less than half of supervisors have received formal training and it would be useful in future to understand what that supervision looks like – informal check-in versus more structured supervision techniques.

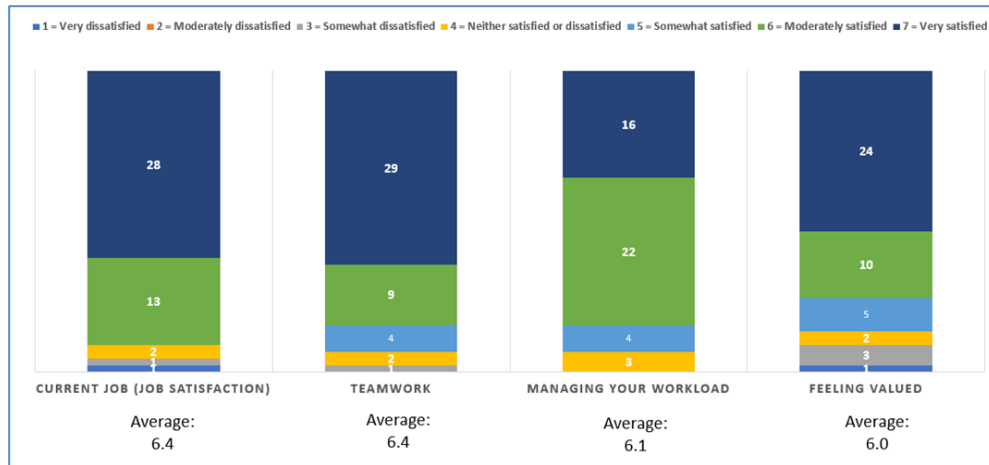
RETIREMENT INTENTIONS

20% of the PCA workforce indicated retirement in the next 5 years, although over half were 16+ years from now or not really sure, suggesting a stable workforce.



JOB SATISFACTION AND OTHER TOPICS

A range of topics was provided for PCAs to rate from very dissatisfied to very satisfied based on their current job (job satisfaction), teamwork, managing your workload and feeling valued. Each result is introduced, displayed on a graph and has some key findings featured. Each response was scored with 1 = very dissatisfied to 7 = very satisfied. The average is reported without a standard unit. The number towards 7 indicates greater satisfaction and vice-versa, the lower the average, indicates greater dissatisfaction.



PCAs showed a high degree of **job satisfaction** although there are pockets of PCAs who are dissatisfied with their current job.

They were on average moderately to very satisfied with **teamwork** and this was rated highest of the topics.

PCAs identified being predominantly satisfied with **managing their workload** and no-one identified dissatisfaction in this area.

Many PCAs felt satisfied with feeling **valued**.

"PCAs were appreciative of the opportunity to have their say through this survey. Most PCAs felt valued and supported, although recognised the pressure general practice was under and the pressure on staff ('leaving in droves'). A pay rise, which recognised rising costs, and paid training were important, as was not feeling like a number."

WORKFORCE RECOMMENDATIONS



PLAN

- A population health approach
- Workforce sustainability measures
- Strengthen engagement on workforce issues
- Build understanding of the nuances of workforce issues in the network
- A coordinated workforce leadership strategy
- Research and evaluation network



RECRUIT

- Growing the Māori and Pasifika workforce in general practice and primary care
- Promotion of general practice and primary care, including rural practice as a career pathway (for New Zealand and internationally qualified)
- Build skill-mix development



RETAIN

- Support wellbeing and reduce burnout
- Strengthen induction and early career support
- Workforce flexibility options for early career, mid-career and staff approaching retirement
- Gather feedback on how we can make primary care a place staff want to stay
- Expanding professional practice
- Growing existing staff
- Organisationally led representation

