

1996 Health Manpower Survey

Summary of the Characteristics of Doctors Enumerated

1. All Doctors

1.1 Three types of doctors were covered in the 1996 Health Manpower Survey (HMS), namely, **doctors with full registration**, **doctors with provisional registration** and **doctors with limited registration**. They were registered on Part I (local list only), Part II and Part III of the Medical Register maintained by the Medical Council of Hong Kong respectively under the Medical Registration Ordinance (Chapter 161). Part I includes doctors who hold Bachelor of Medicine/Surgery issued in Hong Kong (MBBS(HK)/MBChB(CUHK)), Licentiate of Medical Council of Hong Kong (LMCHK) or other overseas qualification registrable with the Medical Council. Part II includes **interns**, who are fresh medical graduates undergoing internship training, and **externs**, who are undergoing the period of assessment and training determined by the Medical Council. Part III includes the exempted clinic doctors and those unregistrable doctors (previously termed as “deemed to be registered”) working in the public sector and teaching in the universities.

1.2 A total of 8 069 doctors were covered in the 1996 HMS, representing an increase of 16.6% over the 1992 survey (6 921). When compared with 3 230 doctors in 1980, the figure represented an average annual growth rate of 5.9%.

1.3 The numbers of interns and doctors with full registration covered in the survey both recorded increases from 1980 to 1996. On the other hand, the numbers of externs and doctors with limited registration both experienced a decreasing trend after 1984.

1.4 Of the 8 069 doctors covered, 6 180 had responded to the survey, giving an overall response rate of 76.6%. Among these responded doctors, 5 750 were practising in the medical profession whereas 430 were reported to be inactive with migration and retirement being the common reasons cited. Based on the data collected on the 5 750 enumerated personnel, their characteristics were analysed and the details were presented below.

1.5 Among the 5 750 doctors enumerated, 94.2% had been fully registered with the Medical Council. The corresponding shares of other types of doctors, in descending order, was 2.9% for interns, 2.6% for doctors with limited registration and 0.3% for externs.

1.6 Majority of the doctors enumerated worked in the Hospital Authority (HA) (48.0%) and the private sector (38.1%). Those working in the government accounted for 8.7% only.

1.7 A decreasing trend was observed in the proportion of male doctors, as indicated by the continuous decrease in the overall sex ratio from 472 (males per 100 females) in the 1982 HMS to 357 (males per 100 females) in the 1996 HMS.

1.8 The overall mean age of the doctors was 41.2, which was similar to the results of the previous rounds of HMS. Doctors with limited registration and those who held LMCHK were on average older whilst the interns were generally younger compared with other types of doctors.

2. Doctors with Full Registration

2.1 A total of 5 416 doctors with full registration were enumerated in the survey, of whom 47.6% worked in the HA, followed by the private sector (38.2%) and the government (9.2%).

2.2 65.6% of the doctors with full registration enumerated were locally trained. This percentage had been increasing gradually since the 1987 survey whilst the corresponding figures for those who held LMCHK and other basic qualifications recorded slight decreases.

2.3 It was found that 55.9% of the doctors with full registration enumerated possessed higher qualification(s).

2.4 Among those doctors with full registration enumerated, 22.6% obtained their higher qualification(s) in internal medicine, followed by surgery (14.1%), and obstetrics and gynaecology (5.6%).

2.5 24.1% of the doctors with full registration enumerated worked mainly in the field of general practice, followed by internal medicine (11.7%) and surgery (8.0%).

3. Inter-sector Flow of Doctors with Full Registration Enumerated

3.1 For the 5 416 doctors with full registration enumerated, 4 310 reported to be practising locally in the medical profession as at 1.7.1992, of whom 10.3% had undergone inter-sector flow between 1.7.1992 and 1.7.1996.

3.2 On the other hand, 1 106 of the doctors with full registration enumerated reported to be not practising locally in the medical profession as at 1.7.1992. At that time, they were studying for the medical profession, working in the medical profession abroad or working in other professions etc. Among them, 66.8% joined the HA after 1.7.1992, followed by the private sector (17.9%) and the government (8.0%).