

2004 Health Manpower Survey on Doctors

Key Findings

- The doctors covered in the 2004 HMS were doctors fully registered* with the Medical Council of Hong Kong on the resident list† as at the survey reference date - 31.8.2004.
- The number of doctors with full registration covered in the 2004 HMS was 10 157.
- Of the 10 157 doctors with full registration covered, 4 782 had responded to the Survey, giving an overall response rate of 47.1%. As at 31.8.2004, 4 416 of the responding doctors were economically active‡§ whereas 362 reported to be economically inactive¶ in the local medical profession (*Annex*) (thereafter referred to as “active” and “inactive” respectively).
- Of the 4 416 active doctors, 17 doctors were seeking job in the local medical profession during the Survey period and another 11 doctors were waiting to take up new jobs in the medical profession, starting business in the medical profession at subsequent date or expecting to return to the original job in the medical profession, etc. during the 30 days before the Survey.
- The survey findings presented below were based on the 4 388 responding doctors who were practising in the local medical profession as at 31.8.2004. As certain questionnaires contained missing information, percentages presented below may not add up to 100%.
 - (i) Among the 4 388 active doctors enumerated, 3 249 (74.0%) were male and 1 139 (26.0%) were female, giving an overall sex ratio of 285 (males per 100 females). Four doctors did not indicate their age, and the median age of the remaining 4 384 active doctors enumerated was 42.0 years old.
 - (ii) Regarding the main job¶, the distribution by sector showed that a large proportion was either working in the Hospital Authority (46.1%) or the private sector (43.8%). Those working in the Government comprised 6.2%, the academic sector and subvented sector 3.4%.
 - (iii) The median number of hours of work (excluding meal breaks) per week of the 4 388 active doctors enumerated was 48.0 hours, while 2 080 (47.4%) doctors were required to undertake on-call duty in their posts. Their median number of hours of on-call duty (outside normal working hours) per week amounted to 21.0 hours.
 - (iv) Analysed by the highest percentage of time spent on the field of practice for the main job, 52.2% of the 4 388 active doctors spent most of their working time on specialist practice**, followed by general practice (40.0%), administration / management (2.0%), research (0.4%) and teaching / education (0.3%).
 - (v) 233 (5.3%) claimed that they had had second jobs¶.
- The distribution of the 362 inactive doctors was as follows (*Annex*):-
 - (i) 168 doctors reported practising overseas and five doctors reported practising in the Mainland.
 - (ii) 186 doctors reported not practising in the medical profession in Hong Kong and not seeking job in the local medical profession during the 30 days before the Survey. Among these, the reasons reported included: retired (81.2%) (with median age being 67.0 years old), working in other professions (8.1%) and emigrated (3.8%).
 - (iii) The remaining three doctors reported not practising in the medical profession in Hong Kong during the Survey period, and had been seeking job in the local medical profession during the 30 days before the Survey; but were not available for work during the seven days before the Survey.

* Refer to doctors registered in Part I of the Medical Register maintained by the Medical Council of Hong Kong under the Medical Registration Ordinance (Chapter 161). These include doctors who hold Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery issued in Hong Kong (MBBS (HK) / MBChB (CUHK)), Licentiate of Medical Council of Hong Kong (LMCHK) or other overseas qualification registered with the Medical Council of Hong Kong.

† As the 2004 Health Manpower Survey only aimed at covering all doctors practising in Hong Kong, doctors on the non-resident list of the Medical Register were excluded from the Survey.

‡ In the Survey, the criteria used in defining economically active and inactive follow those recommended by the International Labour Organisation, which are also being used by the Census and Statistics Department in Hong Kong.

§ “Economically active” doctors comprised all “employed” and “unemployed” doctors. The “employed” doctors referred to those doctors practising in the medical profession in Hong Kong during the Survey period, while the “unemployed” doctors referred to those doctors who (a) were not practising in the local medical profession during the Survey period; and (b) had sought work in the local medical profession during the 30 days before the Survey; and (c) had been available for work during the seven days before the Survey.

¶ “Economically inactive” doctors comprised the doctors who were not practising in the medical profession in Hong Kong during the Survey period, but excluding those who had been on leave during the Survey period and who were “unemployed”.

¶ Main job refers to the job in which the doctor had spent most of his or her working time, whereas the second job could be a part-time job.

** Refers to the specialties under which names of registered medical practitioners may be included in the Specialist Register.

Activity Status of Doctors Covered



Notes:

* Figure refers to the number of responding doctors who (a) were not practising in the medical profession in Hong Kong during the Survey period; and (b) had sought work in the medical profession during the 30 days before the Survey; and (c) had been available for work during the seven days before the Survey.

† Figure refers to the number of responding doctors who (a) were not practising in the medical profession in Hong Kong during the Survey period; and (b) had been available for work during the seven days before the Survey; and (c) were waiting to take up new job in the medical profession, starting business at subsequent date or expecting to return to their original jobs in the medical profession etc. during the 30 days before the Survey.

‡ Figure refers to the number of responding doctors who (a) were not practising in the medical profession in Hong Kong during the Survey period; and (b) had sought work in the local medical profession during the 30 days before the Survey; but (c) were not available for work during the seven days before the Survey.

§ Figure refers to the number of responding doctors who reported undertaking study or engaging in household duties, etc.