

# 2018 Health Manpower Survey

## Summary of the Characteristics of Pharmacists Enumerated

### I. Registered Pharmacists Covered

1.1 The pharmacists covered in the 2018 Health Manpower Survey on Pharmacists (HMS-PHARM) were pharmacists registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong under the Pharmacy and Poisons Ordinance (Chapter 138) as at the survey reference date of 31 August 2018.

1.2 The number of pharmacists covered was 2 851.

1.3 Of the 2 851 pharmacists covered, 1 388 responded to the HMS-PHARM, giving an overall response rate of 48.7%. Among the respondents, 1 136 (81.8%) were economically active<sup>1,2</sup> (active) in the local pharmacy profession and 252 (18.2%) were economically inactive<sup>1,3</sup> (inactive) in the local pharmacy profession (**Chart A**).

1.4 Of the 1 136 active pharmacists enumerated, 1 032 (90.8%) were practising in the local pharmacy profession, 85 (7.5%) were seeking jobs, 18 (1.6%) believed that work was not available, were waiting to take up a new job in the local pharmacy profession or starting business in the pharmacy profession at subsequent date, and one (0.1%) had not been available for work because of temporary sickness during the 30 days before the survey. The survey results presented in paragraph 1.6 below were based on the 1 032 responding pharmacists who were practising in the local pharmacy profession as at 31 August 2018. The percentages presented below may not add up to 100% due to missing responses or rounding.

1.5 Of the 252 inactive pharmacists, 89 (35.3%) reported practising overseas, eight (3.2%) reported practising in the Mainland and 155 (61.5%) reported not seeking jobs in the pharmacy profession during the 30 days before the survey (**Chart A**). Among the 155 inactive pharmacists who reported not practising in Hong Kong and not seeking jobs in the local pharmacy profession, the main reasons reported for not seeking jobs included: 67 (43.2%) were working in other professions, 58 (37.4%) were retired, 12 (7.7%) wanted to take a rest / had no motive to work / had no financial need and ten (6.5%) were engaged in household duties.

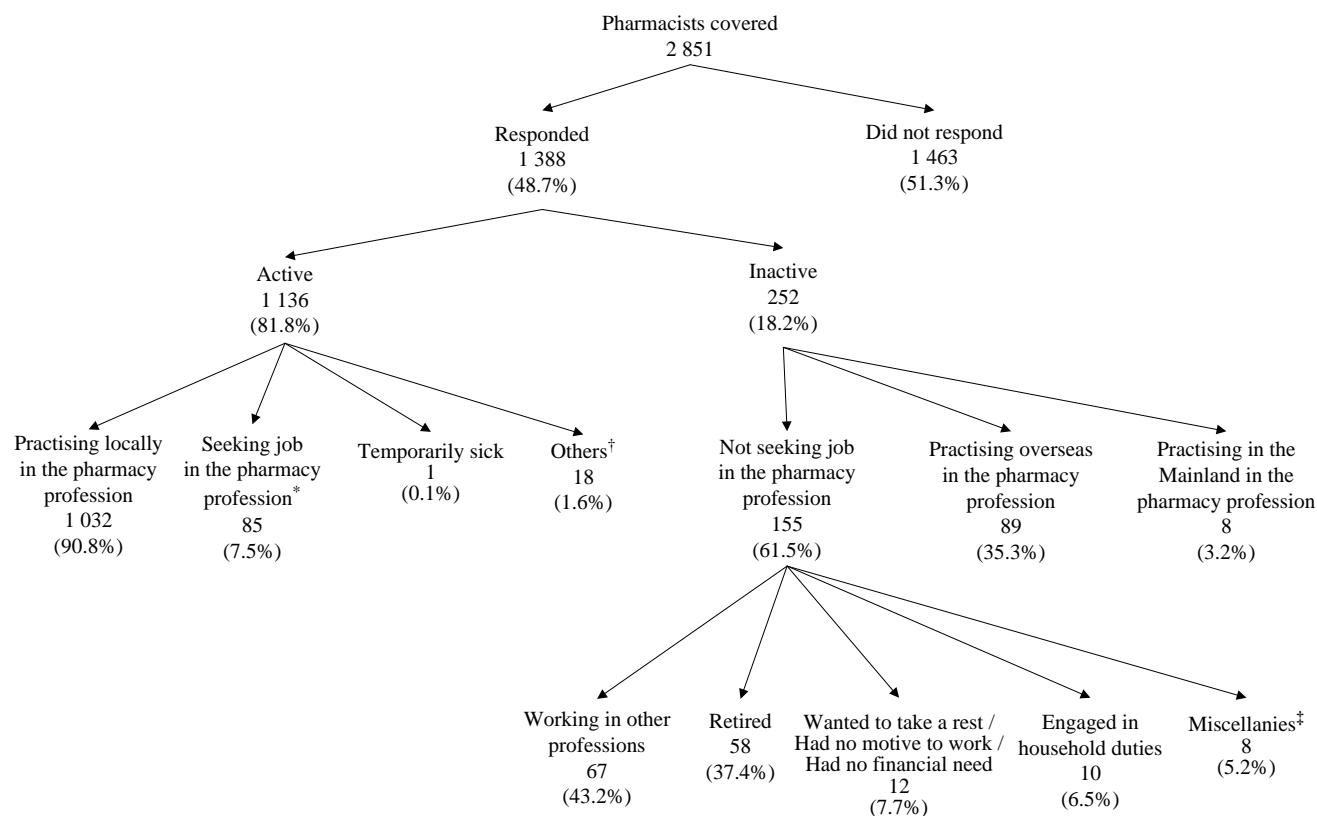
1.6 Four active pharmacists did not indicate their gender. Among the remaining 1 028 active pharmacists enumerated who were practising in the local pharmacy profession, 485 (47.2%) were male and 543 (52.8%) were female, giving an overall sex ratio (males per 100 females) of 89. Apart from the seven pharmacists who did not indicate their age, the median age of the remaining 1 025 active pharmacists enumerated was 39.0 years. The median age of the active female pharmacists enumerated was 39.0 years and that of their male counterparts was 41.0 years.

1 In the survey, the criteria used in defining economically active / inactive followed those recommended by the International Labour Organization, which are also being used by the Census and Statistics Department in Hong Kong.

2 “Economically active” pharmacists comprised all “employed” and “unemployed” pharmacists. “Employed” pharmacists referred to those pharmacists practising in the pharmacy profession in Hong Kong during the survey period, while “unemployed” pharmacists referred to those pharmacists who (a) were not practising in the local pharmacy profession during the survey period; (b) had been available for work during the seven days before the survey; AND (c) had sought work in the local pharmacy profession during the 30 days before the survey.

3 “Economically inactive” pharmacists comprised the pharmacists who were not practising in the pharmacy profession in Hong Kong during the survey period, excluding those who had been on leave during the survey period and who were “economically active” but “unemployed”.

**Chart A : Activity Status of Pharmacists Covered**



Note : \* Figure refers to the number of responding pharmacists who (a) were not practising in the pharmacy profession in Hong Kong during the survey period; (b) had been available for work in the local pharmacy profession during the seven days before the survey; AND (c) had sought work in the local pharmacy profession during the 30 days before the survey.

† Figure refers to the number of responding pharmacists who (a) were not practising in the pharmacy profession in Hong Kong during the survey period; AND (b) believed that work was not available or were waiting to take up a new job in the local pharmacy profession during the 30 days before the survey. Some of them had been available for work in the local pharmacy profession during the seven days before the survey.

‡ Figure refers to the number of responding pharmacists who reported emigrated, undertaking study, etc.

Percentage may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

1.7 The responding active pharmacists were requested to indicate the characteristics of their main jobs<sup>4</sup>. Distribution by sector for the main jobs of those enumerated showed that 580 (56.2%) active pharmacists enumerated were working in the private sector, followed by 316 (30.6%) in the Hospital Authority, 99 (9.6%) in the Government and 37 (3.6%) in the academic and subvented sectors.

1.8 The median age of active pharmacists enumerated was the highest for those working in the private sector (44.0 years), followed by in the Government (40.0 years), the academic and subvented sectors (39.0 years) and the Hospital Authority (33.0 years).

4 Main jobs referred to the jobs in which the pharmacist had spent most of their working time.

1.9 Of the 1 032 active pharmacists enumerated, 718(69.6%) spent most of their working time on service in pharmacy<sup>5</sup>, followed by 135(13.1%) on administration / management<sup>6</sup> and 90(8.7%) on manufacturing / marketing / sales<sup>7</sup>.

1.10 The median number of hours of work (excluding meal breaks) per week of the 1 032 active pharmacists enumerated was 43.0 hours. Among them, 110 (10.7%) were required to undertake on-call duty (excluding normal duty), with a median of 8.0 hours of on-call duty (excluding normal duty) per week.

1.11 In terms of the earliest basic qualification in pharmacy profession, of the 1 032 active pharmacists enumerated, 862 (83.5%) held Bachelor's Degree, 145 (14.1%) held Master's Degree and 20 (1.9%) held Doctoral Degree as their earliest basic qualification.

1.12 Of the 1 032 active pharmacists enumerated, 708 (68.6%) had received / were receiving additional training after obtaining their earliest basic qualification. Of the 708 active pharmacists enumerated with additional training, 51 (7.2%) had not yet completed the additional training, 464 (65.5%) held Master's Degree, 74 (10.5%) held Certificate, 32 (4.5%) held Bachelor's Degree and 32 (4.5%) held Graduate Diploma as the highest qualification.

1.13 Of the 708 active pharmacists enumerated who had received / were receiving additional training after obtaining their earliest basic qualification, 561 (79.2%) had received / were receiving additional training in one field only. Among them, 359 (64.0%) were trained in clinical pharmacy, 57 (10.2%) in Chinese medicine, 48 (8.6%) in pharmacy, 28 (5.0%) in health administration, 12 (2.1%) in pharmaceutical science, nine (1.6%) in medical sciences and seven (1.2%) in pharmaceutical technology.

1.14 Among the 708 active pharmacists enumerated who had received / were receiving additional training, 134 (18.9%) selected more than one field of additional training. The cumulative total number of active pharmacists enumerated by the field of additional training obtained was 878. Among these 878, 452 (51.5%) had received / were receiving additional training in clinical pharmacy, 118 (13.4%) in Chinese medicine, 90 (10.3%) in pharmacy, 52 (5.9%) in health administration, 28 (3.2%) in pharmaceutical science, 27 (3.1%) in medical sciences, 23 (2.6%) in pharmaceutical technology and eight (0.9%) in chemical analysis.

1.15 Regarding continuing education training, 902 (87.4%) of the active pharmacists enumerated reported that they had participated in continuing education training in 2018, 124 (12.0%) reported no participation in any continuing education training, and six (0.6%) did not report whether they had participated in continuing education training or not. Among the 902 active pharmacists enumerated who had participated in continuing education training, the distribution of continuing education training hours attained in the past 12 months was: 1 to 10 hours (25.7%), 11 to 20 hours (24.8%), 21 to 30 hours (19.5%), 31 to 40 hours (7.2%) and more than 40 hours (22.7%).

5 Service in pharmacy referred to the work which had direct contact with patients in dispensing and patient counselling.

6 Administration / Management referred to the work which was out of scope of pharmacy such as supervising staff, accounting, budget control, procurement of drugs, etc.

7 Manufacturing / Marketing / Sales referred to the work involving in the pharmaceutical company (wholesaler) or pharmaceutical manufacturer such as manufacturing, marketing and sales.

## II. Trend Analysis

2.1 Comparison of findings of the 2018 HMS-PHARM with those surveys conducted on or before 2004 should be made with caution as the survey methods and reference date had been changed\*.

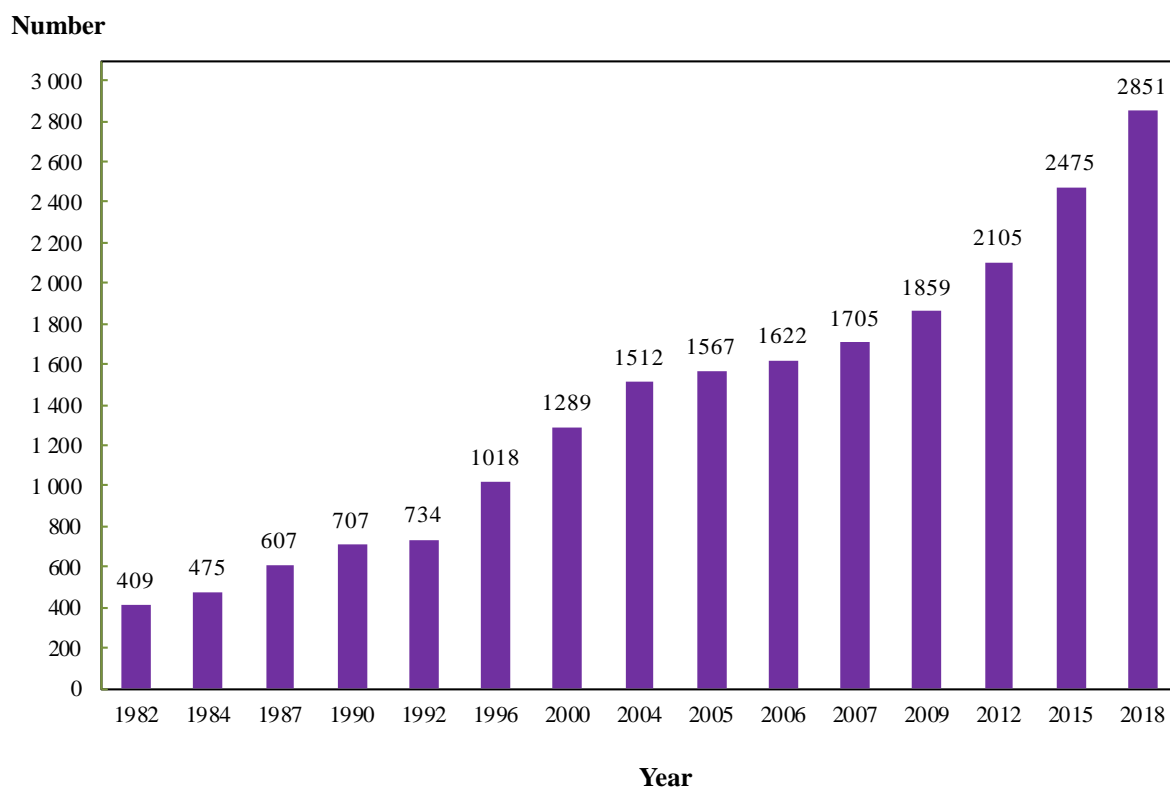
2.2 A total of 2 851 pharmacists were covered in 2018 HMS-PHARM, representing an increase of 88.6% over the survey coverage in 2004 (1 512). Compared with the coverage in 1982, the number of pharmacists covered in the HMS-PHARM recorded an average annual growth rate of 5.6% (**Chart B**).

2.3 There was a decreasing proportion of male pharmacists. The overall sex ratio (males per 100 females) had shown a decrease from 199 in 1984 to 89 in 2018 (**Table A**).

2.4 In view of a large variation in the number of pharmacists enumerated secondary to different survey methodologies in the past, it would be desirable to restrict comparison to data between year 2005 and 2017. The median age of the active pharmacists enumerated increased gradually from 37.0 years in 2005 to 39.0 years in 2018 (**Table A**).

2.5 From 2005 to 2018, the largest proportion of active pharmacists enumerated was working in the private sector, ranging from 55.9% to 66.3%. Prior to the establishment of the Hospital Authority in 1991, more than one-fifth of active pharmacists enumerated worked in the Government (20.7% to 25.9%); and the proportion decreased to less than 9% from 1992 onwards. The proportion in the Hospital Authority increased from 18.9% in 1992 to 30.6% in 2018 (**Table A**).

**Chart B : Number of Pharmacists Covered by Year (1982, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2018)**



Notes : \* Figures of the year 2000 and before refer to the number of pharmacists registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong as at the 1 July of the respective years, whereas the figures of 2004 to 2007, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2018 refer to that as at the 31 August of the respective years.

**Table A: Selected Characteristics of Active Pharmacists Enumerated (1982, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2018)**

Characteristics	Year														
	1982	1984	1987	1990	1992	1996	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2012	2015	2018
<b>A. Registered Pharmacists Covered*</b>	409	475	607	707	734	1 018	1 289	1 512	1 567	1 622	1 705	1 859	2 105	2 475	2 851
<b>B. Active Pharmacists Enumerated</b>															
<b>Number Enumerated</b>	282	317	366	391	439	610	758	613	809	798	831	949	823	817	1 032
<b>Sex</b>															
Male	-	211	234	237	259	351	413	299	387	388	399	446	386	375	485
Female	-	106	132	154	180	259	345	314	421	408	432	496	431	437	543
Unknown	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	1	2	N.A.	7	6	5	4
<b>Sex Ratio (males per 100 females)</b>	189	199	177	154	144	136	120	95	92	95	92	90	90	86	89
<b>Mean Age</b>	36.1	36.4	37.0	38.6	37.5	37.1	37.3	38.6	38.6	38.8	39.2	40.3	42.0	42.0	41.6
<b>Median Age</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	36.0	36.0	37.0	37.0	38.0	39.0	41.0	40.0	39.0
<b>Sector of Work †</b>															
Government	73 (25.9%)	78 (24.6%)	88 (24.0%)	81 (20.7%)	30 (6.8%)	36 (5.9%)	46 (6.1%)	28 (4.6%)	34 (4.2%)	34 (4.3%)	35 (4.2%)	55 (5.8%)	70 (8.5%)	70 (8.6%)	99 (9.6%)
Hospital Authority	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	83 (18.9%)	179 (29.3%)	183 (24.1%)	172 (28.1%)	223 (27.6%)	228 (28.6%)	232 (27.9%)	259 (27.3%)	230 (27.9%)	261 (31.9%)	316 (30.6%)
Private	190 (67.4%)	215 (67.8%)	257 (70.2%)	285 (72.9%)	321 (73.1%)	384 (63.0%)	518 (68.3%)	403 (65.7%)	536 (66.3%)	526 (65.9%)	551 (66.3%)	616 (64.9%)	503 (61.1%)	457 (55.9%)	580 (56.2%)
Others ‡	19 (6.7%)	24 (7.6%)	21 (5.8%)	25 (6.4%)	5 (1.1%)	11 (1.8%)	11 (1.5%)	9 (1.5%)	12 (1.4%)	7 (0.9%)	13 (1.6%)	16 (1.7%)	20 (2.4%)	29 (3.5%)	37 (3.6%)
Unknown	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	1 (0.2%)	4 (0.5%)	3 (0.4%)	N.A.	3 (0.3%)	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.

Notes : \* Figures of the year 2000 and before refer to the number of pharmacists registered with the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong as at 1 July of the respective years, whereas the figures of 2004 to 2007, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2018 refer to that as at 31 August of the respective years.

† In 2004 to 2007, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2018 HMS-PHARM, the sector refers to the sector of main job.

‡ Included academic and subvented sectors. Military was included in the 1987 and 1996 HMS-PHARM.

There may be slight discrepancy between the sum of individual items and the total due to rounding.

N.A. Not applicable

'-' Not available