

# **NDS Workforce Census**

## **What is the NDS Workforce Census?**

The NDS Workforce Census is an important source of data, heavily relied upon for our advocacy, helps improve the services that are received by people with disability and assists with workforce development initiatives.

The NDS Workforce Census started in 2015 to fill a gap in the labour force statistics. In 2024, NDS is still collecting the Workforce Census data as there are no other reliable, high quality, up-to-date datasets which specifically look at the disability workforce. The Workforce Census has tracked changes in the disability workforce overtime and reports trends such as the current move towards a more permanent workforce which differs from the early days of the NDIS when casualisation was more prevalent.

## **Workforce data to include in your Workforce Census**

To assist you to complete the Workforce Census, we have included some definitions. Please take note of the disability workforce definitions

### **Disability Support Workers**

The work Disability Support Workers do includes providing general household assistance, personal and emotional support, therapy assistance, case co-ordination and independent living assistance for people with disability in their own homes or in the community. The disability workforce consists of the workers directly providing disability services and those who coordinate or supervise their work, including client support officers, key workers, case managers and managers who also have a direct client support role.

Volunteers, unpaid carers and supported employees within supported employment organisations are not included in the NDS Workforce Census.

### **Allied Health Professionals who operate in disability services**

Allied Health Professionals are health professionals who are not doctors, dentists or nurses. Allied Health Professionals are tertiary educated and in the disability sector, deliver therapeutic supports to people with disability. Allied Health Professionals who operate within the disability sector and captured in the Workforce Census are:

- Art therapists and music therapists
- Audiologists
- Behaviour Support Practitioners
- Dietitians
- Exercise physiologists
- Occupational therapists
- Optometrists and orthoptists
- Orthotist and prosthetists
- Physiotherapists, osteopaths and chiropractors
- Podiatrists
- Psychologists
- Social workers

- Speech pathologists
- Early childhood educators
- Orientational mobility instructors

### **Allied Health Assistants who operate in disability services**

Allied Health Assistants are those who work under the direction of the Allied Health Professional. Allied Health Assistants assist with the implementation of the participant's program and manage the administration aspect of the individual's care.

### **Spotlight topic**

Our spotlight topic looks at the recruitment of behaviour support practitioners. For the purposes of the Workforce Census, a behaviour support means a person the NDIS Commissioner considers suitable to undertake behaviour support assessments (including functional behavioural assessments) and to develop behaviour support plans that may contain the use of restrictive practices. This is the definition according to section 5 of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Restrictive Practices and Behaviour Support) Rules 2018.

Core Practitioner: a NDIS behaviour support practitioner that has self-assessed and been endorsed against the Capability Ratings for Practitioner Levels and as a Core practitioner.

Proficient Practitioner: a NDIS behaviour support practitioner that has self-assessed and been endorsed against the Capability Ratings for Practitioner Levels and as a Proficient practitioner.

Advanced Practitioner: a NDIS behaviour support practitioner that has self-assessed and been endorsed against the Capability Ratings for Practitioner Levels and as an Advanced practitioner.

Specialist Practitioner: a NDIS behaviour support practitioner that has self-assessed and been endorsed against the Capability Ratings for Practitioner Levels and as a Specialist practitioner.

Sub-contractor: independent practitioners who are paid on invoice. Rates paid are a percentage of the full billable NDIS fee. Variable arrangements for supervision and training are offered.

## **Workforce data collected**

To complete the Workforce Census, the following data fields are required. If you don't have all the data available, that's ok. The dataset looks at the entire number of disability support workers and/or allied health professionals who work in the disability sector:

- Types of employment in the sector (full-time, part-time, casual)
- Turnover rates
- Average hours worked
- Demographic data including age and gender of the disability workforce
- Spotlight topics, highlighting the key issues for the sector.

Refer to the following table which outlines the data collected.

## NDS Workforce Census – definitions

Data field	Definition
Full-time worker	Full-time workers ordinarily work 38 hours or more per week
Part-time worker	Part-time workers ordinarily work fewer than 38 hours per week
Permanent worker	Permanent workers have an expectation of ongoing employment with the service. They are entitled to holiday and sick leave.
Casual worker	Casual workers have no expectation of ongoing employment or definite work with the service. They are not entitled to either holiday or sick leave but are usually paid a casual loading instead
Fixed-term worker	Fixed-term workers have no expectation of ongoing employment with the service, and have a definite contract termination date. They may be entitled to some holiday or sick leave but are not paid any kind of casual loading.
Hours worked	Hours actually worked during normal periods of work. Paid leave, or public holidays are not included
Turnover rate	Permanent workforce turnover rate measures the number of permanent workers who left the workforce as a ratio of the number of permanent workers in the workforce. Casual workforce turnover rate measures the number of casual workers who left the workforce as a ratio of the number of casual workers in the workforce.
Commenced work	Commenced work means actually started working as part of the workforce
Left work	Left work means stopped working as part of the workforce irrespective of whether they were terminated or left for their own reasons.
Full-time equivalent (FTE)	FTE is a measure of employee workload. It shows the number of full-time workers that would be required to cover the number of hours worked. It is a ratio between the total hours worked during a period, and the number of hours considered a full-time workload (i.e. 38 hours per week).

## **NDS Workforce Census Data Privacy and Confidentiality**

The NDS Workforce Census is issued from the Qualtrics platform, a University grade research survey tool with high levels of security and data protection.

Qualtrics interacts with NDS's CRM (Microsoft Dynamics) which hosts information about organisations and the people connected to them. When you complete the Workforce Census, we can identify that the survey response is from your organisation because you are responding to a personalised link. All data is reported in aggregate and will not identify your organisation or the respondent.

All responses will remain strictly confidential. Independent analysis of the Workforce Census results will be undertaken by the Centre for Disability Research and Policy, The University of Sydney. Quantitative results will only be reported in aggregate. Quotations from text responses may be used in reporting but no organisation or person will be identifiable in that reporting, nor will any information collected from this survey be distributed to any third party.

You can contact NDS to update or correct your personal data by contacting [NDS](#). For further information about how NDS uses your personal data, go to the [NDS website](#).

## **Data entry dates for 2024**

Proposed data collection dates are:

- 5 March – 28 March 2024 for the data period as at 31 December 2023.

## **Further information**

If you have any further questions or want to register for the Workforce Census, contact your State Manager or the NDS Workforce Team at [workforce.data@nds.org.au](mailto:workforce.data@nds.org.au)