

<b>Nuclear Medicine Technologist</b>		<b>Australia</b>
<b>ASCO Code:</b> 2391-15	March 2008	
<b>Labour market rating</b>	No Shortage	
<b>Comment</b>		

### **Occupational demand**

Demand for nuclear medicine technologists is largely generated by the demand for diagnostic and treatment procedures in large hospitals and specialist medical centres and consequently the need for skilled staff in the areas of radiopharmaceuticals, handling of radionuclide and operation of nuclear instrumentation. Department of Health and Ageing statistics show that in the year to December 2007, diagnostic imaging services increased by 4.9 per cent which reflects an ageing population and increasingly early detection of illnesses and diseases for which nuclear medicine is an effective option. Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data show that in 2006, 503 people were employed in this occupation, an increase from 450 in 2001. Industry contacts stated that demand for the occupation has risen moderately in the last few years due to an increasing demand for health services, higher funding for testing facilities and the expansion of private services.

### **Occupational supply**

Entry into this occupation is by way of completion of a bachelor degree. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations data indicate the number of people completing an undergraduate degree in nuclear medicine technology or medical radiations specialising in nuclear medicine have increased since 2002, from around 40 to 70 in 2006, or 13 per cent of occupational employment. Accreditation is not mandatory in all states but it is available through the Australia and New Zealand Society of Nuclear Medicine (ANZSNM). The ANZSNM website says “accreditation states to any prospective employer that the person holding this has met the minimum standard required by the ANZSNM for a practicing NMT in Australia”. To gain accreditation by the society university graduates who have successfully completed their course must undertake an approved PDY. Upon successful completion of approved study and commencement of work in an approved workplace, applicants apply for interim Accreditation and entry into the Professional Development Year (PDY) programme. Accreditation is granted at the successful completion of the PDY programme. Department of Immigration and Citizenship figures show in 2006-07, there was a net gain of 24 people on a long term basis who identified their occupation as medical imaging professionals. It is, however, unclear how many of these were nuclear medicine technologists, but given the small occupation size it is unlikely the numbers are significant.

### **Employer and industry comments/current labour market**

Nationally, employers contacted for this survey filled 80 per cent of advertised positions within six weeks of advertising. On average employers received six applicants per vacancy with 4.2 of these considered suitable for the position. The majority of identified vacancies were for PDY placements which employers generally had little trouble filling with relatively large numbers of graduates reportedly seeking to fulfil this requirement of their studies. Those employers whose vacancies were for senior or experienced staff met with greater difficulties when trying to fill positions with a consensus amongst employers that while there were plenty of graduates seeking work there were very few experienced technologists available. Employers also reported that while there appeared to be more graduates than there were available positions, strict criteria governing PDY placements within clinics mean only larger hospitals or private facilities were able to offer such positions and the ANZSNM website supports employer comments that completion of the PDY is sometimes difficult due to lack of places.

### **Labour market outlook**

There is no evidence to suggest that labour market conditions will change significantly over the next six months.

*National Office*

*Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)*

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