

AUSTRALASIAN PARAMEDICINE WORKFORCE SURVEY

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
OF THE THREE-YEAR STUDY

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Published and funded by the Australasian College of Paramedicine September 2026.

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About the College

The Australasian College of Paramedicine (the College) is the peak professional body representing and supporting paramedics and student paramedics across Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand since 1973.

For further information about the College, please visit www.paramedics.org or contact info@paramedics.org

Thank you

The College sincerely thanks the Research Team (Appendix 1) led by Associate Professor Liz Thyer (Project Chief Investigator), Western Sydney University and the partnering universities for their work in survey design and administration, and analysing the data from which the Australasian Paramedicine Workforce Survey Reports, and this Australasian Paramedicine Workforce Survey: Comparative analysis of the three-year study have been prepared. The College also thanks the teams and individuals involved in preparing this report.

We extend our thanks to the many dedicated and passionate paramedics who provided responses to the Australasian Paramedicine Workforce Surveys over the three years.

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Citation

Thyer L, Baldry S, Hernandez Grande A, Sharafizad F, Todd V, Miles A, & Farr-Wharton

B. Australasian Paramedicine Workforce Survey Comparative analysis of the three-year study 2024-2026 Sydney: Australasian College of Paramedicine 2026.

Acknowledgement

The College acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of the land and sea in which we live and work. We recognise their continuing connection to land, sea and culture, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

We recognise the unique role of Māori as Tangata Whenua and embrace Te Tiriti o Waitangi, recognising Māori as tino rangatiratanga of Aotearoa New Zealand while supporting the guiding principles of Te Tiriti – Tino rangatiratanga, Equality, Active protection, Options, and Partnership.

Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of the three years of data collected from the Australasian Paramedicine Workforce Survey. This study explored trends that affect the Aotearoa New Zealand and Australian paramedicine workforces; moving beyond demographic data, to consider career tenure, trajectory and aspirations, work demands and conditions, and individual wellbeing. The workforce is considered in four broad practice areas: clinical, management, education and research, reflecting the practice domains of Aotearoa New Zealand and Australian paramedicine.

The key findings are broadly classified into diversity and flexibility.

Diversity

The paramedic workforce is increasing in its diversity but is yet to reflect the Aotearoa New Zealand or Australian populations.

- Gender parity is apparent in early to mid career stages, but is not sustained into older paramedics and those in leadership and management roles.
- Although the percentage of Māori and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paramedics has increased over the three years, this figure remains below the population averages in most practice areas.

Flexibility

The paramedic workforce is seeking greater flexibility, either with single or multiple employers, potentially due to variable family and life commitments.

- A consistently high percentage of Aotearoa New Zealand and Australian paramedics have caring responsibilities for children and/or adults.
- Paramedics are asking for greater flexibility in their work arrangements with their employers, including short term reduction of hours, more convenient locations or a move away from rotating shifts.
- Many paramedics intend to leave their clinical roles within 10 years.
- Across the Aotearoa New Zealand and Australian samples, nearly one quarter of respondents had more than one employer.

Annual reports for each of the three years are available at: paramedics.org/apws
These reports also detail the methodology and development of the survey tool.

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Results

Total survey responses

The survey response rate was consistent across the first two years, meeting the a priori sample size of 647 for statistical power for paramedics (confidence level of 99% with 5% margin of error). The 2026 response rate dropped slightly and was just below the a priori sample size for paramedics (n = 623). Student responses across all three years were low, even following focused recruitment. This could indicate a population that is more difficult to access, or a group that is yet to engage with workforce concerns.

Table 1: Survey responses across the three years

	2024	2025	2026
Total number of responses received and consented	1668	1638	1098
Total number of responses used in primary analysis*	1236	1275	855
Total number of responses that were less than 60% complete [^]	432	363	243
Number of Australian responses (paramedic and student)	946	974	684
Number of Aotearoa New Zealand responses (paramedic and student)	287	301	171
Total Australian and Aotearoa New Zealand student responses	223	268	209

*Several analyses deal with specific data sub-cohorts and, as such, the 'primary analysis' includes only those sections related to the total collected data.

[^]The survey uses 'logic', meaning some cohorts were not asked certain questions due to their previous responses. A completion score of 60% or more indicates that respondents, in aggregate, completed enough items in their specific line of questioning to be used in analysis.

Demographics

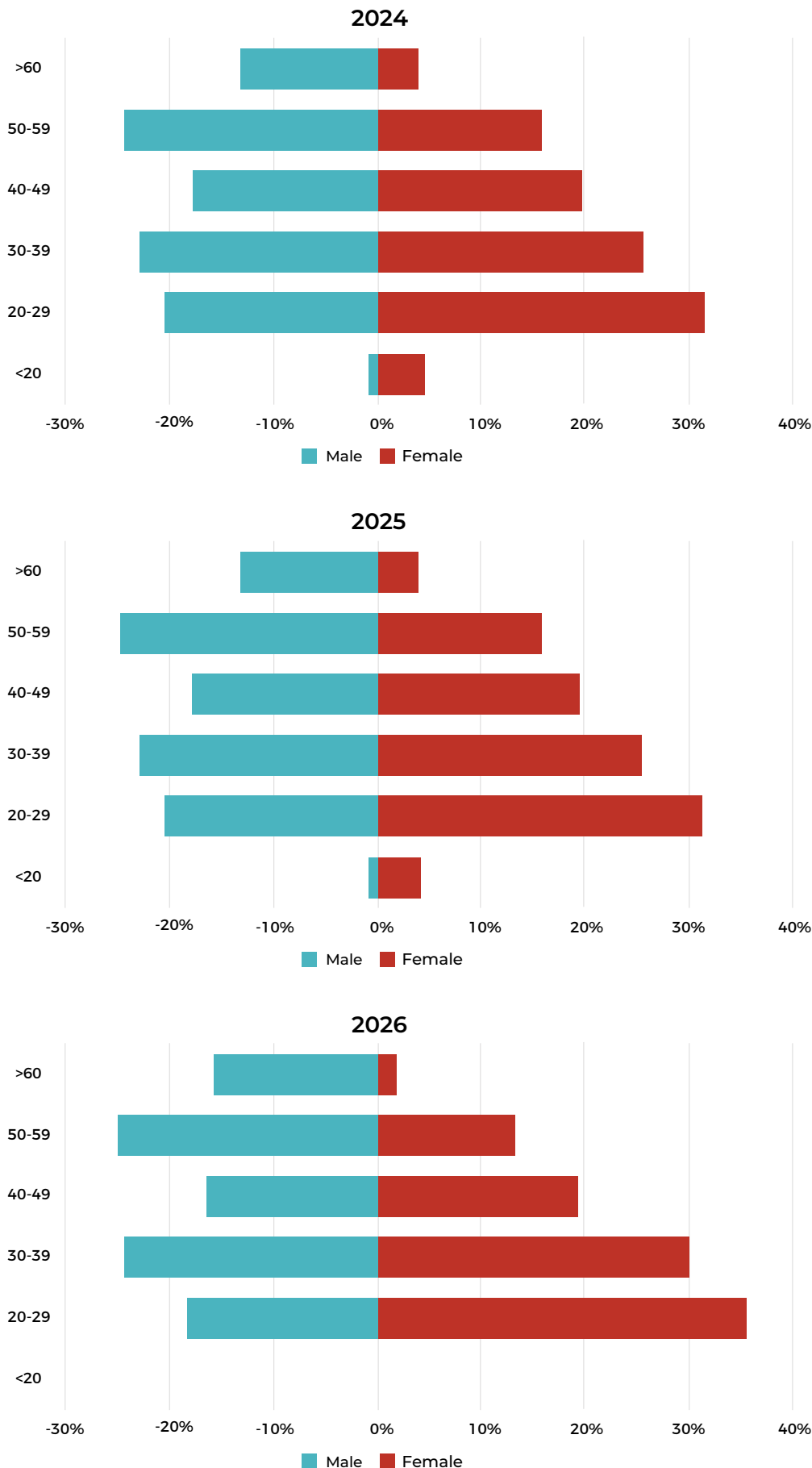
Comparative analysis of the three-year study

The data indicate a growing gender parity in clinical roles similar to the most recent data collected by the Paramedicine Board of Australia¹, yet a trend continues to display gender segregation in the workforce, where males dominate management roles and graduates entering the workforce are disproportionately female. This may point to exclusion that occurs over the course of careers, being particularly pronounced for female paramedics.

Table 2: Gender by role type and country

Aotearoa New Zealand	Clinical			Management			Student		
	2024 (n=165)	2025 (n=166)	2026 (n=92)	2024 (n<20)	2025 (n<20)	2026 (n<20)	2024 (n=81)	2025 (n=89)	2026 (n=49)
Male	55%	54%	55%	82%	78%	100%	37%	34%	31%
Female	44%	44%	42%	18%	11%	0%	59%	58%	67%
Non-binary	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	6%	2%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	1%	0%	11%	0%	1%	2%	0%
Other	N/A	0%	0%	N/A	0%	0%	N/A	0%	0%
Australia	Clinical			Management			Student		
	2024 (n=588)	2025 (n=547)	2026 (n=362)	2024 (n=74)	2025 (n=70)	2026 (n=37)	2024 (n=179)	2025 (n=157)	2026 (n=138)
Male	59%	63%	61%	76%	76%	65%	46%	42%	27%
Female	39%	34%	37%	24%	24%	32%	54%	54%	67%
Non-binary	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	4%
Prefer not to say	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%
Other	N/A	1%	0%	N/A	0%	0%	N/A	1%	1%

Figure 1: Age and Gender Distribution (combined sample)



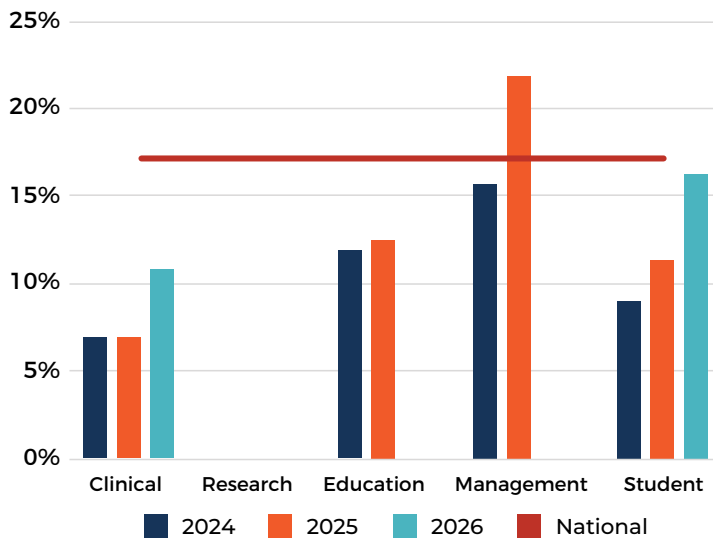
The data in Figure 1 highlights the disproportionate dominance of males in later age groups, and the incoming high proportion of females in junior and training roles. While increasing the proportion of female entrants into the profession is a positive step, a gender balance (and hence a pyramid graph) would present the ideal target to structure the workforce, from the perspective of sustainability, diversity, inclusion and equality.

Māori and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples representation

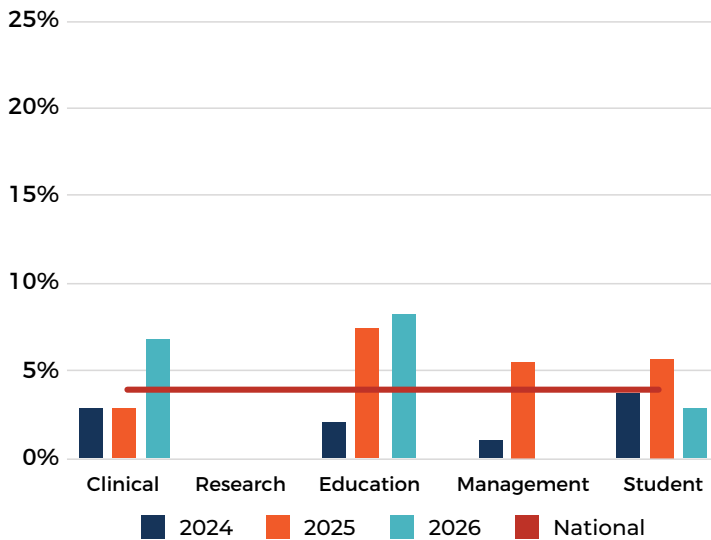
Across the three years there is an increase in the workforce percentage who identify as Māori and Australian Aboriginal. Notable positives include growth in clinical and therefore patient-facing roles, as well as a rise in Māori student numbers in Aotearoa New Zealand. Notwithstanding this, progress remains limited in some practice areas. In Aotearoa New Zealand only the 2025 management responses exceeded the population average and more than half of roles across the three years failed to meet Australia's population average.

Figure 2: Proportion of Māori paramedics in Aotearoa New Zealand and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paramedics in Australia by role

Māori paramedics in Aotearoa New Zealand



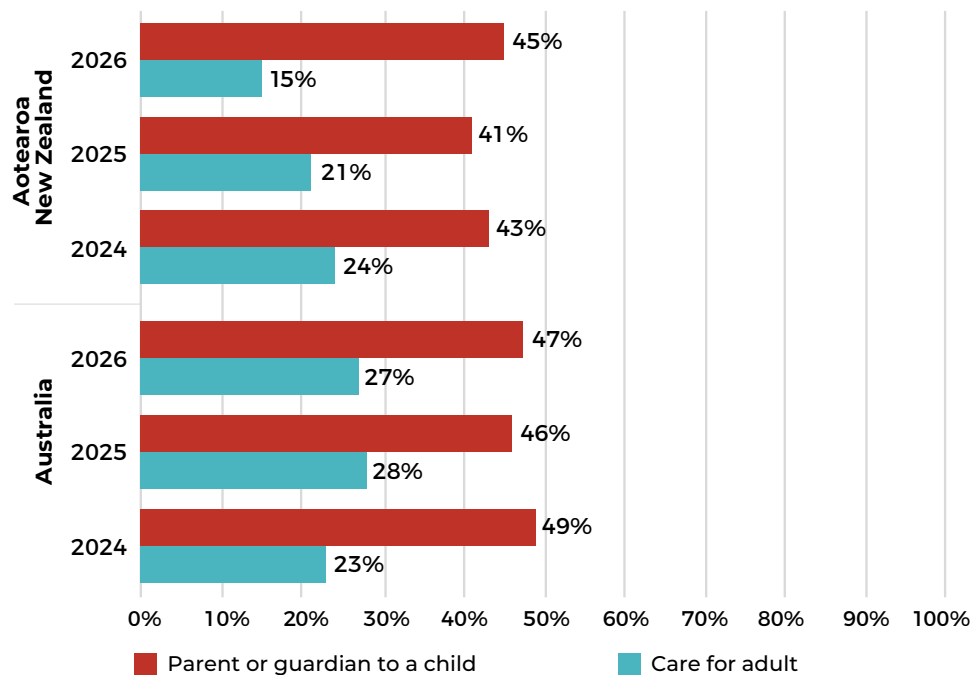
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paramedics in Australia



Care responsibilities

The proportion of the workforce with caring responsibilities remained stable across the three years and across both countries. Around half of respondents were the parent or guardian of a child, while 15-28% were caring for an adult. Such a sizeable cohort requires consideration in relation to workforce planning, flexibility and retention. Legal requirements exist in both countries in relation to leave to care for children, but this is not as well defined in relation to caring for adult family members. Future work should also consider individuals who have dual caring responsibilities for both children and adults, the so-called 'sandwich generation'.²

Figure 3: Proportion of respondents with caring responsibilities



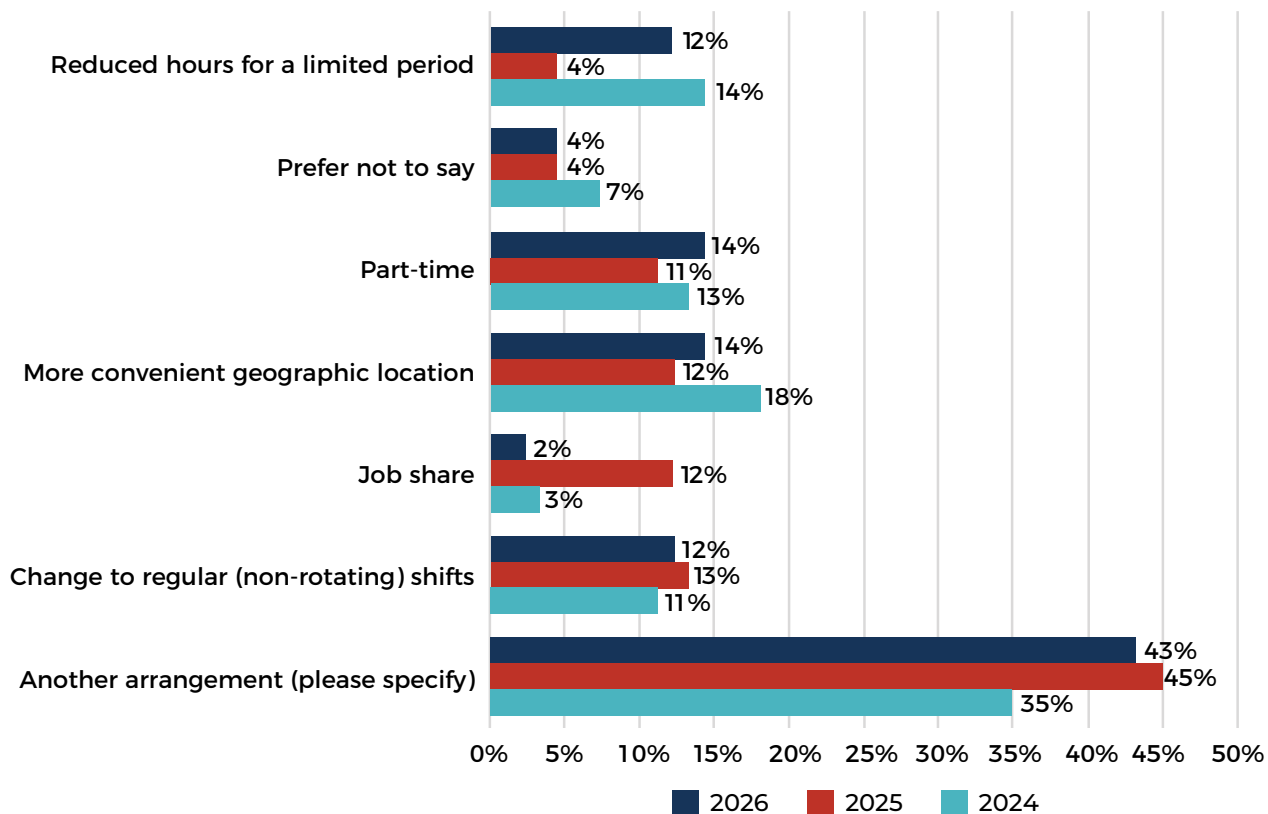
Change to work arrangements

Year on year, more than one quarter of respondents requested a change to their work arrangements in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. Reasons were consistent across the three years and most frequently related to: a move to a more convenient location, a change to part-time, reduced hours for a limited period, or a change to non-rotating shifts.

Table 3: Reasons for requesting a change to contracted work

	Aotearoa New Zealand			Australia		
	2024	2025	2026	2024	2025	2026
Requested a change to contracted work arrangements in the past 12 months	30%	28%	27%	32%	28%	27%

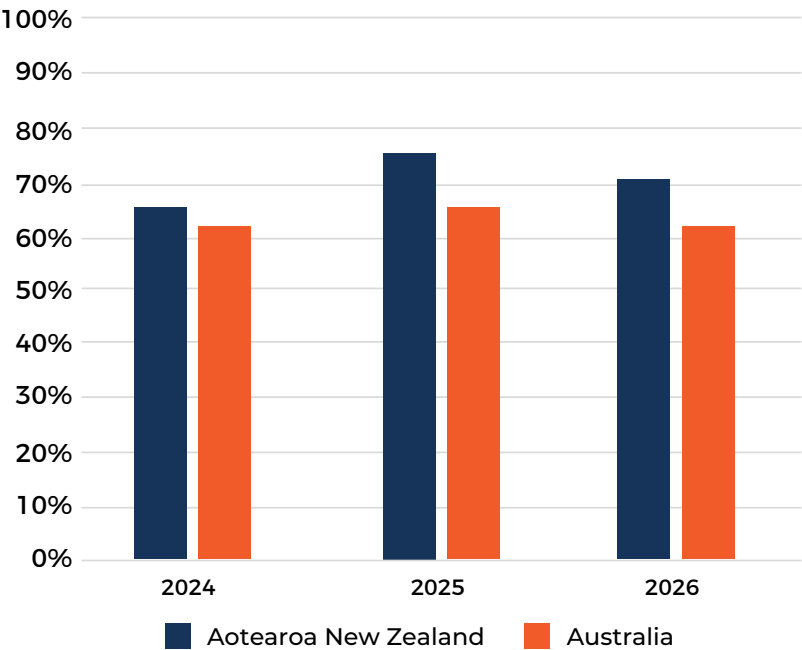
Figure 4: Reasons for applying to change contracted work arrangements



Career intentions and experiences

When asked about the likelihood of staying in a clinical (i.e. patient-facing) role, paramedics indicated an alarming trend: intending to leave a clinical role within 10 years or less. This is similar to other health research where nurses are most likely to consider leaving at seven years.³

Figure 5: Percentage of clinical paramedics who intend to leave their position in 10 years or less



Unexpectedly, many paramedics reported being employed by two or more employers (21%-25%). This finding was consistent across the two countries and three years.

Table 4: Number of paramedicine employers

Aotearoa New Zealand				Australia		
	2024 (n=194)	2025 (n=188)	2026 (n=106)	2024 (n=714)	2025 (n=694)	2026 (n=455)
1	76%	75%	76%	76%	76%	79%
2+	24%	25%	24%	24%	24%	21%

Other results

The remaining results covered areas of investigation including demographic data such as languages spoken, ethnicity, location of work and number of years employed as a paramedic. These data were similar across the three years and consistent with findings published by ambulance services and registration bodies. Similarly, there was minimal change across the three years in responses relating to income, work setting, work roster, clinical supervision or motivation to become a paramedic.

Job demands remained high across the three years for both countries with a proportion of paramedics reporting difficulty getting meal breaks and little 'down time'.

Finally, career planning remained consistent throughout the data collection. Although many Aotearoa New Zealand and Australian paramedics planned to undertake informal education or apply for specialist clinical roles, there were very few planning to engage in formal education or consider management or advanced education or research roles. These positions are critical to the development of the future paramedic workforce and any shortfall may have considerable implications for future workforce sustainability and development.

Full details of results from these sections can be found in the three annual reports via College webpage link: paramedics.org/apws

Appendix 1: Research Team

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Australasian Paramedicine
Workforce Survey

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