2016 Health Manpower Survey on Registered Nurse
Key Findings

➢ The registered nurses covered in the 2016 Health Manpower Survey (HMS) were nursing personnel registered in the register under the Nurses Registration Ordinance (Chapter 164) as at the survey reference date - 31.8.2016.

➢ The number of registered nurses covered was 38 719.

➢ Of the 38 719 registered nurses covered, 15 250 responded to the survey, giving an overall response rate of 39.4%. Among the respondents, 12 513 (82.1%) were economically active*† (active) and 2 737 (17.9%) were economically inactive*‡ (inactive) in the local nursing / midwifery profession *(See Chart)*.

➢ Of the 12 513 active registered nurses, 12 215(97.6%) were practising in the local nursing / midwifery profession, 185 (1.5%) were seeking jobs, 47 (0.4%) had not been available for work because of temporary sickness, and 66 (0.5%) believed that work was not available, were waiting to take up a new job in the local nursing / midwifery profession or expecting to return to their original jobs in local nursing / midwifery profession during the 30 days before the survey.

➢ The survey findings presented below were based on the 12 215 responding registered nurses who were practising in the local nursing / midwifery profession as at 31.8.2016. As some questionnaire items had missing responses, percentages presented below may not add up to 100%.

  (i) A total of 35 registered nurses did not indicate the gender. Among the remaining 12 180 active registered nurses enumerated, 1 634 (13.4%) were male and 10 546 (86.6%) were female, giving an overall sex ratio (males per 100 females) of 15.5. Apart from 237 registered nurses did not indicate their age, the median age of the remaining 11 978 active registered nurses enumerated was 42.0 years.

  (ii) Distribution by sector of the main job§ showed that 8 212 (67.2%) were working in the Hospital Authority, followed by 2 191 (17.9%) in the private sector, 816 (6.7%) in the Government and 958 (7.8%) in the academic & subvented sectors.

  (iii) 19.2% spent most of their working time on medicine, followed by 15.0% on surgery, 7.3% on ambulatory / outpatients, 7.2% on geriatric, 6.6% on administration / management, 6.3% on paediatrics, 5.5% on mental health / psychiatric / addiction treatment, 5.3% on public health and 5.2% on obstetrics.

  (iv) The median number of hours of work (excluding meal breaks) per week of the 12 215 active registered nurses enumerated was 44.0 hours. Among them, 994 (8.1%) registered nurses were required to undertake on-call duty (excluding normal duty), with a median number of 10.0 hours of on-call duty (excluding normal duty) per week.

➢ Among the 2 737 inactive registered nurses *(See Chart)*:-

  (i) 2 301 registered nurses reported not practising in the nursing / midwifery profession in Hong Kong and not seeking job in the local nursing / midwifery profession during the 30 days before the survey. The reasons for not seeking job included: 1 063(46.2%) were retired, 509(22.1%) were engaged in household duties, 372(16.2%) were working in other professions, 241(10.5%) wanted to take a rest / had no motive to work / had no financial need, and 116(5%) reported emigrated, undertaking study, etc.

  (ii) 408 registered nurses reported practising overseas and 28 reported practising in the Mainland.
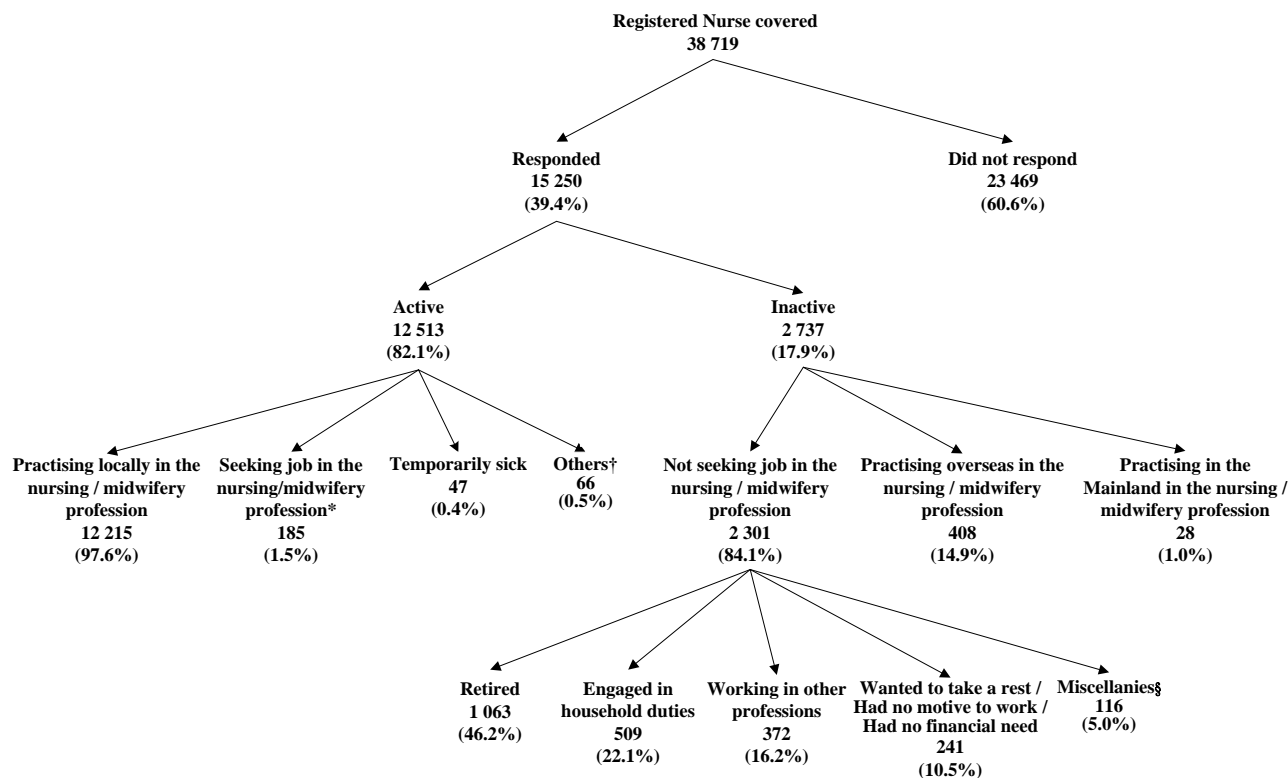
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* In the survey, the criteria used in defining economically active / inactive followed those recommended by the International Labour Organization, which are also being used by the Census and Statistics Department in Hong Kong.

† "Economically active" registered nurse comprised all "employed" and "unemployed" registered nurses. "Employed" registered nurse referred to those registered nurses practising in the local nursing / midwifery profession in Hong Kong during the survey period, while "unemployed" registered nurse referred to those registered nurses who (a) were not practising in the local nursing / midwifery 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 nursing / midwifery profession during the 30 days before the survey.

‡ "Economically inactive" registered nurse comprised the responding registered nurses who were not practising in the nursing / midwifery profession in Hong Kong during the survey period, but excluding those who had been on leave during the survey period and those who were "economically active" but "unemployed".

§ Main jobs referred to the jobs in which the registered nurses had spent most of their working time.

Activity Status of Registered Nurses Covered

Registered Nurse covered
38 719

Responded
15 250
(39.4%)

Did not respond
23 469
(60.6%)

Active
12 513
(82.1%)

Inactive
2 737
(17.9%)

Practising locally in the nursing / midwifery profession
12 215
(97.6%)

Seeking job in the nursing/midwifery profession*
185
(1.5%)

Temporarily sick
47
(0.4%)

Others†
66
(0.5%)

Not seeking job in the nursing / midwifery profession
2 301
(84.1%)

Practising overseas in the nursing / midwifery profession
408
(14.9%)

Practising in the Mainland in the nursing / midwifery profession
28
(1.0%)

Retired
1 063
(46.2%)

Engaged in household duties
509
(22.1%)

Working in other professions
372
(16.2%)

Wanted to take a rest / Had no motive to work / Had no financial need
241
(10.5%)

Miscellanies§
116
(5.0%)

Notes: * Figure refers to the number of responding registered nurses who (a) were not practising in the nursing / midwifery profession in Hong Kong during the survey period; (b) had been available for work during the seven days before the survey; and (c) had sought work in the nursing / midwifery profession during the 30 days before the survey.

† Figure refers to the number of responding registered nurses who (a) were not practising in the nursing / midwifery profession in Hong Kong during the survey period; (b) had been available for work during the seven days before the survey; and (c) believed that work was not available, were waiting to take up a new job or expecting to return to their original jobs in the local nursing / midwifery profession during the 30 days before the survey.

§ Figure refers to the number of responding registered nurses who reported emigrated, undertaking study, etc.