

2017 Health Manpower Survey

Summary of the Characteristics of Medical Laboratory Technologists Enumerated

I. Medical Laboratory Technologists Covered

1.1 The medical laboratory technologists covered in the 2017 Health Manpower Survey (HMS-MLT) were medical laboratory technologists registered with the Medical Laboratory Technologists Board of Hong Kong under the Supplementary Medical Professions Ordinance (Chapter 359) as at the survey reference date of 31 March 2017.

1.2 The number of medical laboratory technologists covered was 3 426.

1.3 Of the 3 426 medical laboratory technologists covered, 1 205 responded to the HMS-MLT, giving an overall response rate of 35.2%. Among the respondents, 1012 (84.0%) were economically active^{*†} (active) and 193 (16.0%) were economically inactive^{*‡} (inactive) in the local medical laboratory technology profession (**Chart A**).

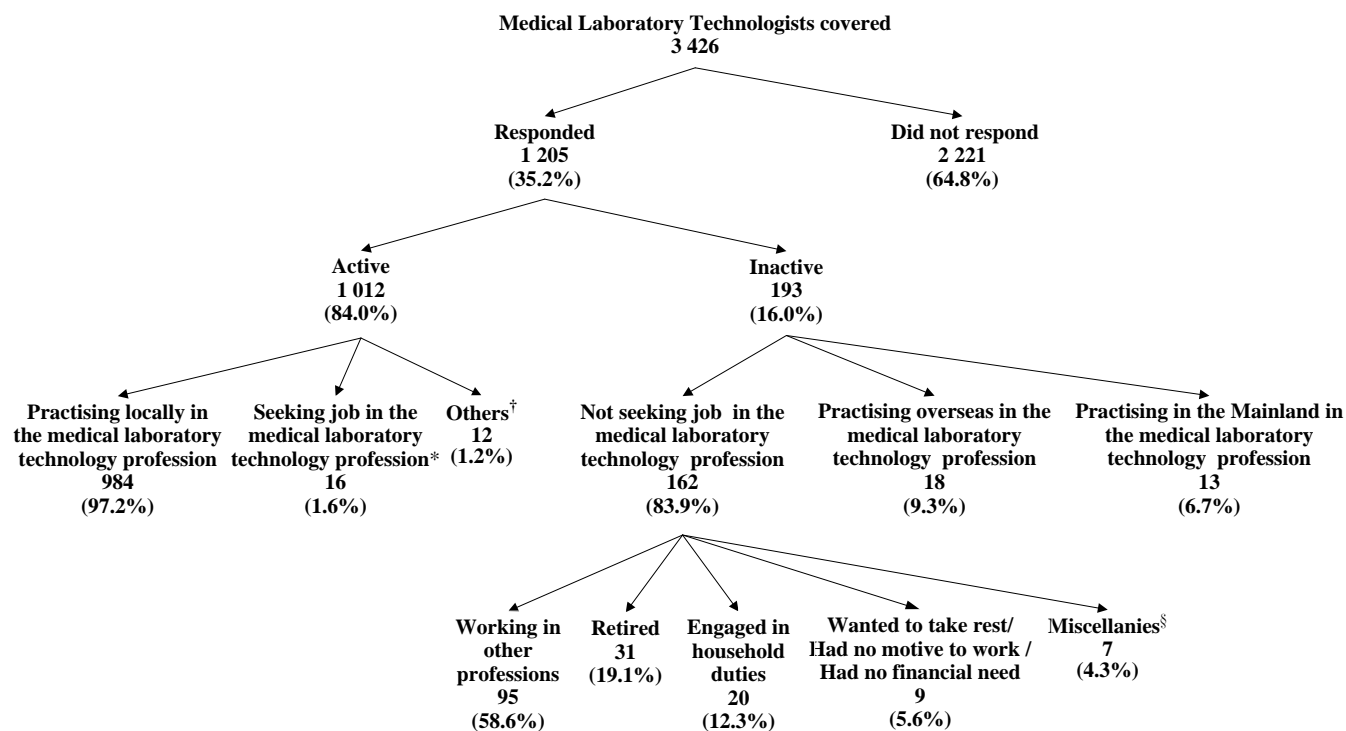
1.4 Of the 1 012 active medical laboratory technologists enumerated, 984 (97.2%) were practising in the local medical laboratory technology profession, 16 (1.6%) were seeking jobs and 12 (1.2%) believed that work was not available, were waiting to take up a new job, expecting to return to their original jobs or starting business at subsequent date in the local medical laboratory technology profession during the 30 days before the survey. The survey results presented in paragraph 1.6 below were based on the 984 responding medical laboratory technologists who were practising in the local medical laboratory technology profession as at 31 March 2017. The percentages presented below may not add up to 100% due to missing responses or rounding.

* 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” medical laboratory technologists comprised all “employed” and “unemployed” medical laboratory technologists. “Employed” medical laboratory technologists referred to those medical laboratory technologists practising in the medical laboratory technology profession in Hong Kong during the survey period, while “unemployed” medical laboratory technologists referred to those medical laboratory technologists who (a) were not practising in the local medical laboratory technology 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 medical laboratory technology profession during the 30 days before the survey.

‡ “Economically inactive” medical laboratory technologists comprised the medical laboratory technologists who were not practising in the medical laboratory technology 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 Medical Laboratory Technologists Covered



Note : * Figure refers to the number of responding medical laboratory technologists who (a) were not practising in the medical laboratory technology 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 local medical laboratory technology profession during the 30 days before the survey.

† Figure refers to the number of responding medical laboratory technologists who (a) were not practising in the medical laboratory technology profession in Hong Kong during the survey period; (b) had not 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, expecting to return to their original jobs or starting business at subsequent date in the local medical laboratory technology profession during the 30 days before the survey.

§ Figure refers to the number of responding medical laboratory technologists who reported undertaking study or emigrated.

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

1.5 Of the 193 inactive medical laboratory technologists enumerated, 18 (9.3%) reported practising overseas, 13 (6.7%) reported practising in the Mainland and 162 (83.9%) reported not practising in the medical laboratory technology profession in Hong Kong and not seeking jobs in the local medical laboratory technology profession during the 30 days before the survey (**Chart A**). Among the 162 inactive medical laboratory technologists who reported not seeking jobs, the main reasons reported for not seeking jobs included: 95 (58.6%) were working in other professions, 31 (19.1%) were retired, 20 (12.3%) were engaged in household duties and nine (5.6%) wanted to take rest / had no motive to work / had no financial need.

1.6 One medical laboratory technologists did not indicate the gender. Among the remaining 983 active medical laboratory technologists enumerated, 427 (43.4%) were male and 556 (56.6%) were female, giving an overall sex ratio (males per 100 females) of 76.8. Apart from seven medical laboratory technologists who did not indicate their age, the median age of the remaining 977 active medical laboratory technologists enumerated was 43.0 years. The median age of the active female medical laboratory technologists enumerated was 40.0 years and that of their male counterparts was 46.0 years.

1.7 The responding active medical laboratory technologists were requested to indicate the characteristics of their main jobs*. Distribution by sector for the main job showed that 491 (49.9%) were working in the Hospital Authority, followed by 341 (34.7%) in the private sector, 83 (8.4%) in the Government and 69 (7.0%) in the academic and subvented sectors.

1.8 The median age of the active medical laboratory technologists enumerated were highest for those working in the private sector (45.5 years), followed by the Government (45.0 years), the academic and subvented sectors (43.0 years) and the Hospital Authority (39.0 years).

1.9 Of the 984 active medical laboratory technologists enumerated, 79.2% spent most of their working time on medical laboratory tests, whilst 16.2%, 3.0% and 0.9% most of their working time on administration / management, research and teaching respectively.

1.10 The median number of hours of work (excluding meal breaks) per week of the 984 active medical laboratory technologists enumerated was 44.0 hours. Among them, 139 (14.1%) medical laboratory technologists were required to undertake on-call duty (excluding normal duty), with a median of 10.0 hours of on-call duty (excluding normal duty) per week.

1.11 Of the 984 active medical laboratory technologists enumerated, 33.4% held Bachelor's Degree, 28.2% held Diploma / Higher Diploma, 19.3% held Certificate of Competence / Ordinary Certificate / Higher Certificate and 17.7% held Certificate issued by the Medical Laboratory Technologists Board as their earliest basic qualifications.

1.12 Of the 984 active medical laboratory technologists enumerated, 693 (70.4%) had received / were receiving additional training. Of the 693 active medical laboratory technologists with additional training, 24 (3.5%) had not yet completed the additional training, 142 (20.5%) held Bachelor's Degree and 415 (59.9%) held Master's Degree as the highest qualification.

* Main jobs referred to the jobs in which the medical laboratory technologists had spent most of their working time.

1.13 Of the 693 active medical laboratory technologists who had received / were receiving additional training, 440 (63.5%) had received / were receiving training in one field only. Among them, 28.6% had received / were receiving training in biomedical sciences, 25.5% in medical laboratory sciences, 11.4% in medical microbiology, 6.8% in medical laboratory technology, 5.9% in haematology and serology, 5.5% in pathology and 4.5% in health care management / health services management.

1.14 Among the 693 medical laboratory technologists enumerated who had received / were receiving additional training, some of them selected more than one field of additional training. The total number of count of active medical laboratory technologists who had received / were receiving additional training was 1 157, in which 22.4% had received / were receiving training in biomedical sciences, 22.0% in medical laboratory sciences, 12.6% in medical microbiology, 11.0% in medical laboratory technology, 9.7% in haematology and serology and 7.8% in pathology.

1.15 Regarding Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities, 702 (71.3%) of the active medical laboratory technologists reported that they had participated in CPD activities in 2017, 266 (27.0%) reported no participation in any CPD activities, whilst 16 (1.6%) did not report whether they had participated in any CPD activities or not. Among the 702 active medical laboratory technologists enumerated who had participated in CPD activities, the distribution of CPD credits attained in the past 12 months was: 1 to 10 credits (52.7%), 11 to 20 credits (36.0%), 21 to 30 credits (5.8%), 31 to 40 credits (2.1%) and more than 40 credits (3.3%).

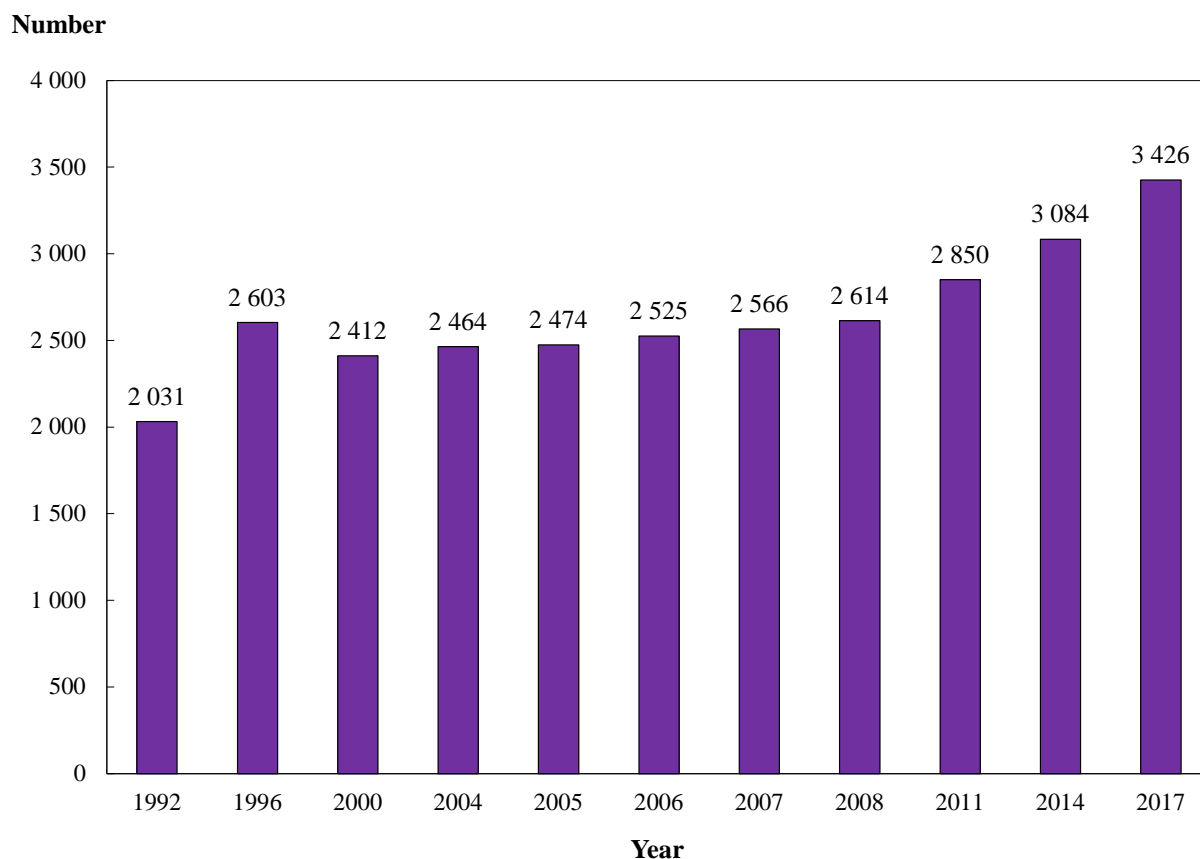
II. Trend Analysis

2.1 Comparison of findings of the 2017 HMS-MLT with those surveys conducted before 2004 should be made with caution as the survey methods and reference dates had been changed.

2.2 With the enactment of the Medical Laboratory Technologists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulations (Chapter 359A), registration of medical laboratory technologists commenced on 1 October 1990 while disciplinary control of the profession was effective on 1 August 1991, it is mandatory for a person practising medical laboratory technology in Hong Kong to hold a valid practising certificate. Between 1992 and 2017, the number of registered medical laboratory technologists increased from 2 031 to 3 426 (**Chart B**).

2.3 The sex ratio (males per 100 females) of active medical laboratory technologists enumerated decreased from 151 in 1982 to 95 in 1990, then slightly rebounded to 100 in 1992, and then gradually decreased to 77 in 2017 (**Table A**).

Chart B : Number of Registered Medical Laboratory Technologists Covered by Year (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017)



Note : Figures of the year 2000 and before refer to the number of medical laboratory technologists registered with the Medical Laboratory Technologists Board of Hong Kong as at the 1 July of the respective years, whereas the figures of 2004 to 2017 refer to that as at the 31 March of the respective years.

2.4 The mean age of the active medical laboratory technologists enumerated increased from 31.6 years in 1982 to 42.8 years in 2017.

2.5 From 1984 to 1990, the largest proportion of active medical laboratory technologists enumerated was working in the Government, which accounted for about 40% and the remaining medical laboratory technologists were working in the private, academic and subvented sectors. Since its setup in 1991, the Hospital Authority has been the largest working sector, with the range of 42.5% to 54.3% of active medical laboratory technologists enumerated between 1992 and 2017. The proportion of active medical laboratory technologists enumerated working in the private sector increased from 26.3% in 1992 to 34.7% in 2017. During the same period, the proportion of active medical laboratory technologists enumerated working in the academic and subvented sectors* decreased from 18.5% to 7.0%.

* Military sector was included in the 1987 HMS and 1996 HMS.

Table A : Selected Characteristics of Active Medical Laboratory Technologists Enumerated (1982, 1984, 1987, 1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017)

Characteristics	Year														
	1982	1984	1987	1990	1992	1996	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2011	2014	2017
A. Registered Medical Laboratory Technologists Covered*	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	2 031	2 603	2 412	2 464	2 474	2 525	2 566	2 614	2 850	3 084	3 426
B. Active Medical Laboratory Technologists Enumerated															
Number Enumerated	793	839	1 157	1 278	1 731	1 715	1 698	1 131	1 239	1 260	1 037	942	1 144	944	984
Sex															
Male	477	462	613	624	866	812	815	532	584	608	490	446	507	439	427
Female	316	377	544	654	865	903	883	599	652	650	547	496	635	505	556
Unknown	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	3	2	N.A.	N.A.	2	N.A.	1
Sex Ratio (males per 100 females)	151	123	113	95	100	90	92	89	90	94	90	90	80	87	77
Mean Age	31.6	32.3	32.7	34.2	33.5	34.5	36.7	40.0	39.3	40.8	41.7	41.2	42.5	43.3	42.8
Median Age	-	-	-	-	-	-	35.0	39.0	39.0	40.0	41.0	41.0	43.0	44.0	43.0
Sector of Work[†]															
Government	299 (37.7%)	374 (44.6%)	504 (43.6%)	544 (42.6%)	218 (12.6%)	206 (12.0%)	277 (16.3%)	161 (14.2%)	168 (13.6%)	162 (12.9%)	124 (12.0%)	123 (13.1%)	138 (12.1%)	85 (9.0%)	83 (8.4%)
Hospital Authority	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	736 (42.5%)	932 (54.3%)	888 (52.3%)	578 (51.1%)	602 (48.6%)	608 (48.3%)	457 (44.1%)	419 (44.5%)	502 (43.9%)	435 (46.1%)	491 (49.9%)
Private	104 (13.1%)	147 (17.5%)	193 (16.7%)	278 (21.8%)	456 (26.3%)	455 (26.5%)	453 (26.7%)	300 (26.5%)	362 (29.2%)	401 (31.8%)	372 (35.9%)	326 (34.6%)	412 (36.0%)	342 (36.2%)	341 (34.7%)
Others [‡]	390 (49.2%)	318 (37.9%)	460 (39.8%)	456 (35.7%)	321 (18.5%)	122 (7.1%)	80 (4.7%)	89 (7.9%)	106 (8.6%)	88 (7.0%)	84 (8.1%)	74 (7.9%)	90 (7.9%)	79 (7.4%)	69 (7.0%)
Unknown	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	3 (0.3%)	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)	N.A.	N.A.	2 (0.2%)	3 (0.3%)	N.A.

Notes : * Figures of 1992, 1996 and 2000 refer to the number of medical laboratory technologists registered with the Medical Laboratory Technologists Board of Hong Kong as at the 1 July of the respective years, whereas the figures of 2004 to 2017 refer to that as at the 31 March of the respective years.

† In 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017, the sector refers to the sector for the main job.

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

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

N.A. Not applicable

‘-’ Not available