

2014 Health Manpower Survey

Summary of the Characteristics of Optometrists Enumerated

I. Optometrists Covered

1.1 The optometrists covered in the 2014 HMS were optometrists registered with the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong under the Supplementary Medical Professions Ordinance (Chapter 359) as at the survey reference date - 31.3.2014.

1.2 The number of optometrists covered was 2 097.

1.3 Of the 2 097 optometrists covered, 1 227 had responded to the survey, giving an overall response rate of 58.5%. Among the respondents, 1 152 (93.9%) were economically active*† (active) in the local optometry profession as at 31.3.2014 and 75 (6.1%) reported to be economically inactive*‡ (inactive) in the local optometry profession (**Chart A**).

1.4 Of the 1 152 active optometrists enumerated, 1 144 (99.3%) were practising in the local optometry profession, seven (0.6%) were seeking jobs and one (0.1%) believed that work was not available in local optometry profession during the 30 days before the survey. The survey results presented in paragraph 1.6 below were based on the 1 144 responding optometrists who were practising in the local optometry profession as at 31.3.2014. As certain questionnaires had missing information, percentages presented below may not add up to 100%.

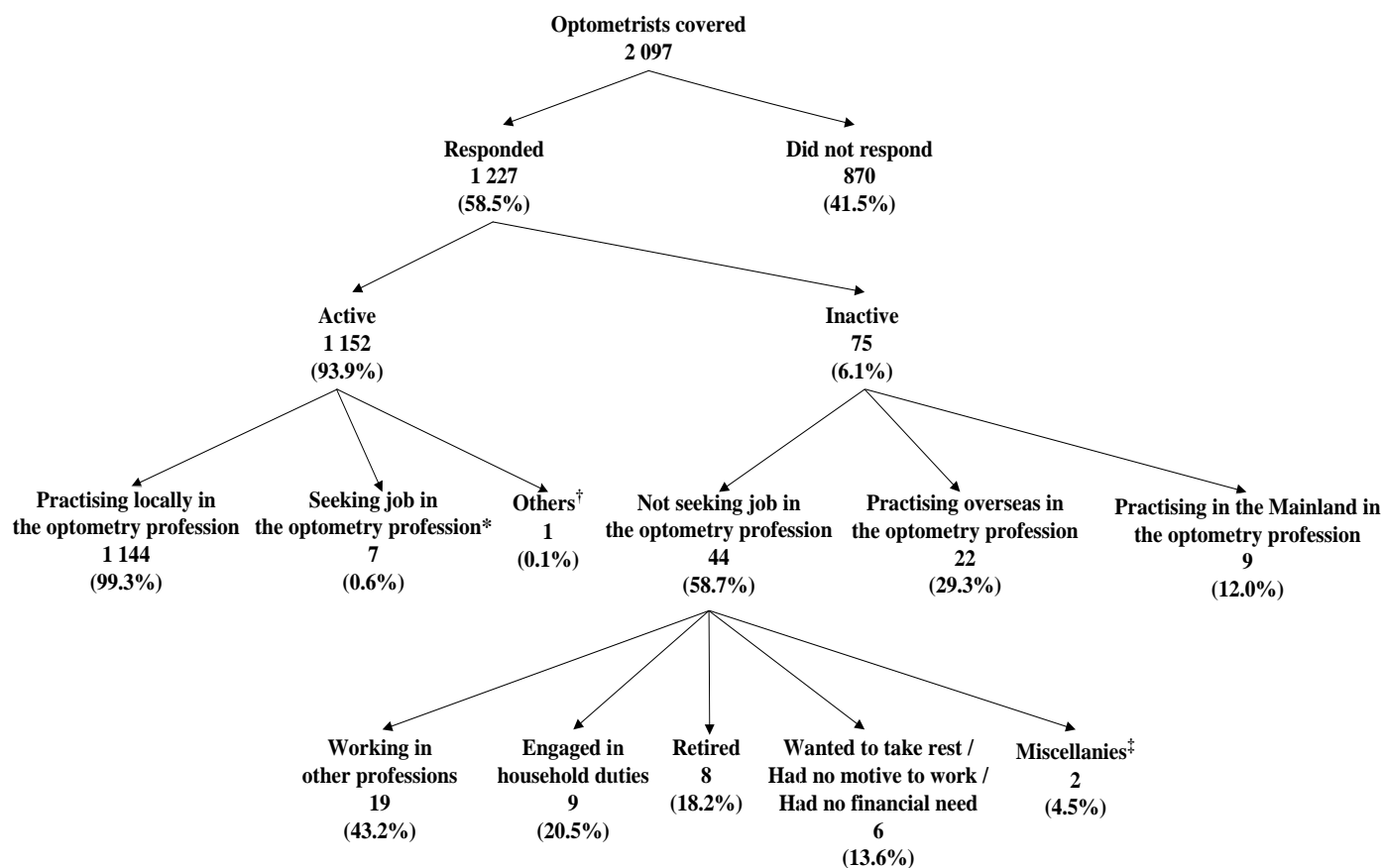
1.5 Of the 75 inactive optometrists, 22 optometrists reported practising overseas, nine optometrists reported practising in the Mainland and 44 optometrists reported not practising in the optometry profession in Hong Kong and not seeking jobs in the local optometry profession during the 30 days before the survey (Chart A). Among the 44 inactive optometrists who reported not seeking jobs in the local optometry profession, reasons 19 (43.2%) were working in other professions, nine (20.5%) were engaged in household duties, eight (18.2%) were retired and six (13.6%) wanted to take rest / had no motive to work / had no financial need.

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

‡ “Economically inactive” optometrists comprised the optometrists who were not practising in the optometry profession in Hong Kong during the survey period, but excluding those who had been on leave during the survey period and who were “economically active” “unemployed”.

Chart A : Activity Status of Optometrists Covered



Note : * Figure refers to the number of responding optometrists who (a) were not practising in the optometry 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 optometry profession during the 30 days before the survey.

† Figure refers to the number of responding optometrist who (a) was not practising in the optometry 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 in the local optometry profession during the 30 days before the survey.

‡ Figures refer to the number of responding optometrists who reported emigrated or undertaking study.

1.6 Two active optometrists did not indicate the gender. Of the remaining 1 142 active optometrists enumerated, 890 (77.9%) were male and 252 (22.1%) were female, giving an overall sex ratio (males per 100 females) of 353. Apart from six optometrists who did not indicate age, the median age of the remaining 1 138 active optometrists enumerated was 49.0 years. The median age of the active female optometrists enumerated was 37.0 years and that of their male counterparts was 51.0 years.

1.7 The responding active optometrists were requested to indicate the characteristics of their main jobs*. Distribution of the main job showed that the largest proportion (90.6%) of the active optometrists were working in the private sector, followed by those working in the Government, academic and subvented sectors (5.3%) and the Hospital Authority (3.2%). Among the 1 037 active optometrists enumerated who were working in the private sector, the majority (90.5%) were working in optical company / shop, followed by those working in medical clinic[†] (5.1%) and private hospital[‡] (1.5%).

1.8 The median age of the active optometrists enumerated was 50.0 years for those working in the private sector, followed by 40.0 years in the Government, academic and subvented sectors and 34.0 years in the Hospital Authority.

1.9 Of the 1 144 active optometrists enumerated, 90.3% spent most of their working time on service of optometric care, followed by 5.5% on administration / management, 0.8% on research and 0.6% on teaching.

1.10 The median number of hours of work (excluding meal breaks) per week of the 1 144 active optometrists enumerated was 54.0 hours. Among them, 86 (7.5%) 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.

* Figure refers to those optometrists who had exemption from the examination conducted by the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong.

† Figure refers to those optometrists who had certifications issued by the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong.

‡ Refers to private institutions licensed under the Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Maternity Homes Registration Ordinance (Chapter 165).

1.11 Of the 1 144 active optometrists enumerated, 38.4% had exemption from the examination*, 32.3% held Bachelor's Degree and 17.0% had certifications† issued by the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong as their basic qualifications.

1.12 Of the 1 144 active optometrists enumerated, 439 (38.4%) with additional training. Of the 439 active optometrists enumerated with additional training, 16 (3.6%) had not yet completed the additional training, 274 (62.4%) held Certificate / Higher Certificate, 61 (13.9%) held Master's Degree and 37 (8.4%) held Bachelor's Degree as the highest qualification.

1.13 Among those active optometrists enumerated who received / were receiving additional training, some of them selected more than one field of additional training. The total number of count of active optometrists who received / were receiving additional training was 729, in which 46.6% were trained / receiving additional training in optometry, 22.9% in contact lens technology, 12.3% in orthokeratology, 9.9% in optometric research and 5.3% in optical mechanics.

1.14 Of the 439 active optometrists enumerated who received / were receiving additional training, 248 (56.5%) were trained / receiving in one field. Among them, 68.1% were trained / receiving training in optometry, 10.9% in orthokeratology, 8.9% in optometric research and 4.4% in contact lens technology.

1.15 Regarding Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities, 772 (67.5%) of the active optometrists reported that they had participated in CPD activities in 2014, 325 (28.4%) had not participated in any CPD activities and 47 (4.1%) did not report whether they had participated in any CPD activities or not. Among the 772 active optometrists enumerated who had participated in CPD activities, the distribution of CPD hours attained in the past 12 months was: 1 to 10hours (67.9%), 11 to 20 hours (22.9%) and 21 to 30 hours (3.9%), 31 to 40 hours (0.6%) and more than 40 hours (4.7%).

II. Trend Analysis

2.1 Comparison of findings of the 2014 HMS with those surveys before 2004 should be made with caution as the survey methodology and reference date had been changed.

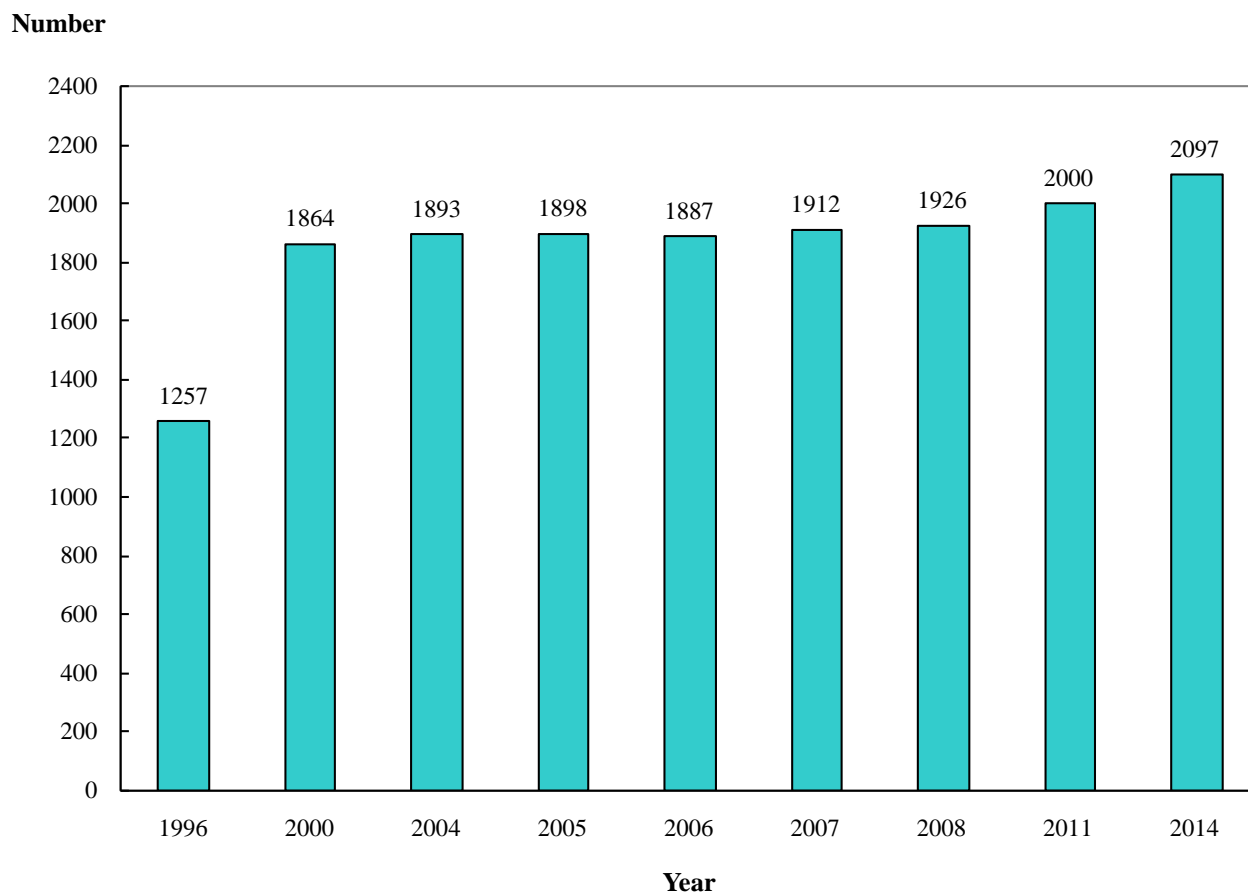
2.2 With the enactment of the Optometrists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulation (Chapter 359F), registration of the profession of optometrists commenced on 1 December 1994 while disciplinary control of the profession was effective on 1 April 1996, it is mandatory for a person practising optometry in Hong Kong to hold a valid practising certificate. Between 1996 and 2014, the number of optometrists increased from 1 257 to 2 097 (**Chart B**).

2.3 The sex ratio (males per 100 females) of active optometrists enumerated increased from 524 in 1992 to 580 in 2000 and then decreased to 353 in 2014 (**Table A**).

* Figure refers to those optometrists who had exemption from the examination conducted by the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong.

† Figure refers to those optometrists who had certifications issued by the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong.

Chart B : Number of Optometrists Covered by Year (1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011 and 2014



Note : Figures of the year 2000 and before refer to the number of optometrists registered with the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong as at the 1st of July of the respective years, whereas the figures of 2004 to 2014 refer to that as at the 31st of March of the respective years.

2.4 The mean age of the active optometrists enumerated increased from 33.5 years in 1992 to 48.0 years in 2014.

2.5 The proportion of the active optometrists enumerated working in the private sector decreased from 97.2% in 1992 to 90.6% in 2014. On the other hand, the proportion of active optometrists working in the Government, academic and subvented sectors increased from 1.6% in 1996 to 5.3% in 2014 (Table A).

Table A : Selected Characteristics of Active Optometrists Enumerated (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011 and 2014)

Characteristics	Year									
	1992	1996	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2011	2014
A. Optometrists Covered*	-	1 257	1 864	1 893	1 898	1 887	1 912	1 926	2 000	2 097
B. Active Optometrists Enumerated										
Number Enumerated	674	1 054	1 359	1 084	1 294	1 321	1 198	1 034	1 297	1 144
Sex										
Male	566	890	1 159	890	1 059	1 081	967	820	1 018	890
Female	108	164	200	194	231	239	231	214	275	252
Unknown	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	4	1	N.A.	N.A.	4	2
Sex Ratio (males per 100 females)	524	543	580	459	458	452	419	383	370	353
Mean Age	33.5	39.9	40.0	42.8	42.3	43.7	44.7	44.4	46.7	48.0
Median Age	-	-	38.0	42.0	41.0	43.0	44.0	44.0	47.0	49.0
Sector of Work[†]										
Hospital Authority	7 (1.0%)	19 (1.8%)	25 (1.8%)	18 (1.7%)	25 (1.9%)	25 (1.9%)	18 (1.5%)	19 (1.8%)	34 (2.6%)	37 (3.2%)
Private	655 (97.2%)	1 018 (96.6%)	1 308 (96.2%)	1 005 (92.7%)	1 209 (93.4%)	1 235 (93.5%)	1 123 (93.7%)	963 (93.1%)	1 193 (92.0%)	1 037 (90.6%)
Government, Academic & Subvented	12 (1.8%)	17 (1.6%)	26 (1.9%)	52 (4.8%)	53 (4.1%)	55 (4.2%)	57 (4.8%)	52 (5.0%)	64 (4.9%)	61 (5.3%)
Unknown	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	9 (0.8%)	7 (0.5%)	6 (0.5%)	N.A.	N.A.	6 (0.5%)	9 (0.8%)

Notes : * Figures of the year 2000 and before refer to the number of optometrists registered with the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong as at the 1st of July of the respective years, whereas the figures of 2004 to 2014 refer to that as at the 31st of March of the respective years.

† In 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011 and 2014, the sector refers to the sector for the main job.

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

N.A. Not applicable

‘ - ’ Not available