

Table 5: Main employment setting of optometrists and dispensing opticians, 2008

Main employment setting	Optometrists					Dispensing opticians				
	Male	Female	Not reported	Total		Male	Female	Not reported	Total	
				Number	%				Number	%
Private practice:										
self-employed	171	81	4	256	49.3	18	10	0	28	23.0
employed by an optometrist	55	102	0	157	30.3	23	43	0	66	54.1
employed by a dispensing optician	11	16	0	27	5.2	4	5	0	9	7.4
University	8	7	0	15	2.9	0	0	0	0	0.0
DHB	7	4	0	11	2.1	1	1	0	2	1.6
Other	9	17	0	26	5.0	5	8	0	13	10.7
Not reported	14	12	1	27	5.2	2	2	0	4	3.3
Total	275	239	5	519	100.0	53	69	0	122	100.0

Source: Ministry of Health, 2008

Table 6: Work type by main employment setting for active optometrists and dispensing opticians, 2008

Main employment setting	Optometrists							Dispensing opticians						
	General dispensing	Teaching	Study/research	Management	Other	Not reported	Total	General optometry	Teaching	Study/research	Management	Other	Not reported	Total
Private practice:														
self-employed	268	10	45	183	17	3	526	30	8	5	20	2	0	65
employed by an optometrist	171	2	13	15	7	1	209	67	11	2	24	5	0	109
employed by a dispensing optician	31	1	0	1	1	1	35	9	1	1	2	1	1	15
University	13	15	12	4	0	0	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DHB	10	0	1	5	3	0	19	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other	28	0	2	4	0	0	34	10	3	0	7	1	0	21
Not reported	27	3	4	12	0	2	48	4	1	0	1	1	0	7
Total	548	31	77	224	28	7	915	122	24	8	54	10	1	219

Source: Ministry of Health, 2008

This table shows that the active optometrists reported 915 and active dispensing opticians reported 219 worktypes. This is 1.8 worktypes per active optometrist or dispensing optician.

For Optometrists, the most common combination of work type by employment setting was general dispensing in self-employed private practice. For dispensing opticians, it was general dispensing in private practice employed by an optometrist.

The Ministry of Health would like to thank all the health care professionals who completed the 2008 workforce

questionnaire. This is an annual survey which all health care professionals are encouraged to complete.

If you have any comments or require further survey results please contact:

Analytical Services
Information Directorate
Ministry of Health
PO Box 5013
Tel (04) 816 2870
Fax (04) 816 2898
data-enquiries@moh.govt.nz

This pamphlet can be downloaded from: <http://www.nzhis.govt.nz>

Optometrist and Dispensing Optician Workforce

Summary Results from the 2008 Health Workforce Annual Survey

A health workforce survey was included with each invoice for Annual Practising Certificates (APC) sent to optometrists and dispensing opticians in February 2008.

Of the 626 optometrists who were sent an invoice, 519 optometrists (82.9 percent) indicated that they were working actively, 25 optometrists (4.0 percent) responded to the 2008 survey but did not report that they were actively working and 82 optometrists (13.1 percent) did not respond to the survey.

Of the 153 dispensing opticians who were sent an invoice, 122 dispensing opticians (79.7 percent) indicated that they were working actively, 1 dispensing optician (0.7 percent) responded to the 2008 survey but did not report that they were actively working and 30 dispensing opticians (19.6 percent) did not respond to the survey.

The 519 optometrists actively working represent 95.4 percent of survey respondents and the 122 dispensing opticians actively working represent 99.2 percent of survey respondents. It is not known if the APC holders who did not respond to the survey are working in this field. The following statistics are based on 519 active optometrists and 122 active dispensing opticians.

Of the active optometrist workforce, 53.0 percent were male, while 55.7 percent of the active dispensing optician workforce were female, as illustrated in Table 1. The median age of optometrists was 40 years and 41.5 years for dispensing opticians.

Table 1: Age and sex of active optometrists and dispensing opticians, 2008

Age group	Optometrists					Dispensing opticians				
	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	%	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	%
20–	7	13	0	20	0.8	0	1	0	1	3.9
25–	20	44	0	64	4.9	1	5	0	6	12.3
30–	27	62	0	89	15.6	9	10	0	19	17.1
35–	34	41	0	75	20.5	8	17	0	25	14.5
40–	35	31	1	67	20.5	10	15	0	25	12.9
45–	32	22	0	54	13.1	8	8	0	16	10.4
50–	40	16	1	57	12.3	8	6	1	15	11.0
55–	31	9	1	41	4.9	4	2	0	6	7.9
60+	46	0	0	46	7.4	5	4	0	9	8.9
Not reported	3	1	2	6	0.0	0	0	0	0	1.2
Total	275	239	5	519	100.0	53	68	1	122	100.0

Source: Ministry of Health, 2008

The majority of the active optometrists (60.3 percent) and dispensing opticians (59.8 percent) identified themselves as belonging to the New Zealand European ethnic group (see

Table 2). This has been a consistent feature of this profession over previous years.

Table 2: Ethnicity of active optometrists and dispensing opticians, 2008

Ethnicity	Optometrists		Dispensing opticians	
	Total	%	Total	%
NZ European	313	60.3	73	59.8
Other European	83	16.0	36	29.5
Chinese	47	9.1	0	0.0
Indian	27	5.2	1	0.8
Other Asian	12	2.3	3	2.5
Māori	9	1.7	1	0.8
South East Asian	5	1.0	0	0.0
Fijian	2	0.4	2	1.6
Samoan	1	0.2	0	0.0
Other	16	3.1	3	2.5
Not reported	4	0.8	3	2.5
Total	519	100.0	122	100.0

Source: Ministry of Health, 2008

Most optometrists (76.5 percent) and dispensing opticians (60.7 percent) qualified in New Zealand. The next most common qualification country for both was the United Kingdom (see Table 3).

Table 4 shows District Health Board (DHB) of employer, by average hours worked. Please note that, because the number of active practitioners in some DHBs is very low, the average figure must be treated with caution. Also, numbers greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed for privacy reasons.

Of those DHBs with more than five respondents, the highest average hours worked per week was in Whanganui DHB for optometrists (44.3 hours) and Capital and Coast DHB for dispensing opticians (44.6 hours). The lowest was in Southland DHB for optometrists (37.6 hours) and Waitemata DHB for dispensing opticians (38.5 hours).

Table 5 (overleaf) shows that just under a majority of active optometrists are self employed in a private practice (49.3 percent) while the majority of active dispensing opticians are employed by an optometrist (54.1 percent).

Table 6 (overleaf) shows the main employment setting by work type of the active respondents to the 2008 survey. Each optometrist and dispensing optician can specify more than one work type.

Table 3: Qualification country of active optometrists and dispensing opticians, 2008

Qualification country	Optometrists		Dispensing opticians	
	Total	%	Total	%
New Zealand	397	76.5	74	60.7
United Kingdom	84	16.2	32	26.2
Australia	16	3.1	14	11.5
USA	14	2.7	0	0.0
Austria	3	0.6	0	0.0
South Africa	2	0.4	0	0.0
Canada	0	0.0	1	0.8
Not reported	3	0.6	1	0.8
Total	519	100.0	122	100.0

Source: Ministry of Health, 2008

Table 4: District Health Board of employer, by average hours worked, 2008

DHB Description	Optometrists		Dispensing opticians	
	Number	Ave. full-time hrs per week	Number	Ave. full-time hrs per week
Northland	11	39.4	8	39.4
Waitemata	41	40.9	8	38.5
Auckland	86	43.5	17	42.2
Manukau	32	42.3	6	43.8
Waikato	27	42.0	10	40.6
Lakes	12	41.0	*	38.7
Bay of Plenty	26	42.2	11	39.6
Tairāwhiti	*	39.3	*	48.0
Hawke's Bay	15	44.2	*	36.7
Taranaki	7	38.7	*	42.3
MidCentral	12	42.5	*	40.0
Whanganui	6	44.3	0	0.0
Capital & Coast	39	41.6	8	44.6
Hutt Valley	13	42.8	*	50.0
Wairarapa	*	44.7	0	0.0
Nelson Marlborough	14	42.9	*	37.3
West Coast	*	45.0	0	0.0
Canterbury	48	41.5	13	42.8
South Canterbury	*	35.0	*	44.5
Otago	21	43.6	0	0.0
Southland	7	37.6	0	0.0
Not reported	3	34.0	1	38.0
Total full-time	430	41.6	104	41.6
Part-time	84	16.9	15	21.3
Not reported	3	--	1	--
Total	519	-	122	-

Source: Ministry of Health, 2008

Note: Numbers greater than zero but less than five have been suppressed for privacy reasons