Safeguarding the health & well-being of the NSW nursing & midwifery workforce

FIT For the FUTURE

FIT FOR THE FUTURE: AUSTRALIAN NURSES' HEALTH STATUS AND HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

Lin Perry, Christine Duffield,
Robyn Gallagher, David Sibbritt
and partner NSWNMA

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WHO CARES FOR THE CARERS?

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WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT NURSES' HEALTH

- Lots about nurses as a female population group (US Nurses Health Study)
- Some studies of student nurses
- Quite a lot about nurses' job stress, burn-out and coping
- A scatter of single-site topic studies e.g. smoking
- The Nurses and Midwives e-Cohort study
- **As the single biggest healthcare workforce – pitifully little**

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NURSING & NURSES' HEALTH:

Nursing advantage:

- Working age/ >93% employed AIHW 2013
- Predominantly female
- Largely graduate
- Socio-economic advantage
- High health literacy

Occupational risk factors:

- Ageing profiles
- Shift work
- 'Stress' → → dysfunctional coping
- Manual / desk work
- Occupational exposures & physical injuries

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OUR OBJECTIVES

1. Conduct the first representative survey to:

a) Determine the health of the workforce and prevalence of modifiable risk factors

b) Identify factors motivating and driving choices of health-related behaviours.

2. **Consult** to identify research, policy & practices to safeguard the future capability of the workforce and optimise their capacity to deliver care.

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We used established questions:

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women's health australia
australian longitudinal study on women's health

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ABOUT | WHO IS INVOLVED | HOW TO ACCESS THE DATA | STUDY OUTCOMES | SUBSTUDIES AND ANALYSES | CONTACT ALSWH

Nurses & Midwives e-cohort

Home | Investigators | Publications

Australian Bureau of Statistics

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ABS Home > Statistics > By Catalogue Number

4364.0.55.001 - Australian Health Survey: First Results, 2011-12

LATEST ISSUE Released at 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) 29/10/2012 **First Issue**

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Contents

- About this Release
- Expanded Contents
- History of Changes
- Media release - Australian Health Survey: First Results (Media Release)

CONTENTS

Key Findings

About the Australian Health Survey
Includes: **Structure of the Australian Health Survey and Release schedule**

General Health
Includes: **Self-assessed health and Psychological distress**

Long-Term Health Conditions
Includes: **Arthritis, Osteoporosis, Asthma, Cancer, Diabetes Mellitus, Hear**

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CONSTRUCT AND DELIVER AN ELECTRONIC SURVEY

Used established questionnaires where we could:

- Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health
- Nurses and Midwives e-Cohort Study
- Australian Health Survey / Australian Census
- Impact of Adding Nursing Support workers to Patient, Nurse and System outcomes Survey

Used established tools where available:

- SF 12
- Insomnia Severity Index … and others

Our pilot study in 2 Sydney hospitals

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WE ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT -

- **Demographic characteristics**
  age, gender, highest educational qualification, ethnicity, carer commitments
- **Workforce characteristics**
  work role, work setting, workplace location, work contract, hours worked per week, shifts worked, workplace injuries and abuse
- **General health and well-being**
  perceived general health, presence of disease and symptoms: continence, pain and sleep, medications, hospital admissions and sick days etc.

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WE ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT -

- **Health behaviours**
  diet, exercise, weight/ BMI, smoking, alcohol
  (routine health screening uptake)
- **Intention to leave** their job within 6 / 12 months

- **(Job satisfaction**
- **Quality of life – reports to follow)**

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RESPONSES

- 5,446 surveys submitted
- 385 (7%) excluded due to missing data
  20 not practicing in NSW
- Final sample **5,041 respondents**

- Approx 88,319 RNs and ENs & 9,524 midwives eligible
- NSWNMA ≈ 63,000
- Representative of NSW workforce?

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REPRESENTATIVE OF NSW N & M WORKFORCE?

	Respondents:	NSW registrants
Mean age	48.0 yrs	44.6 yrs
Female	88.5%	89.8%
Hospital-based	59.7%	62.6%
Metro	65.8%	68.4%

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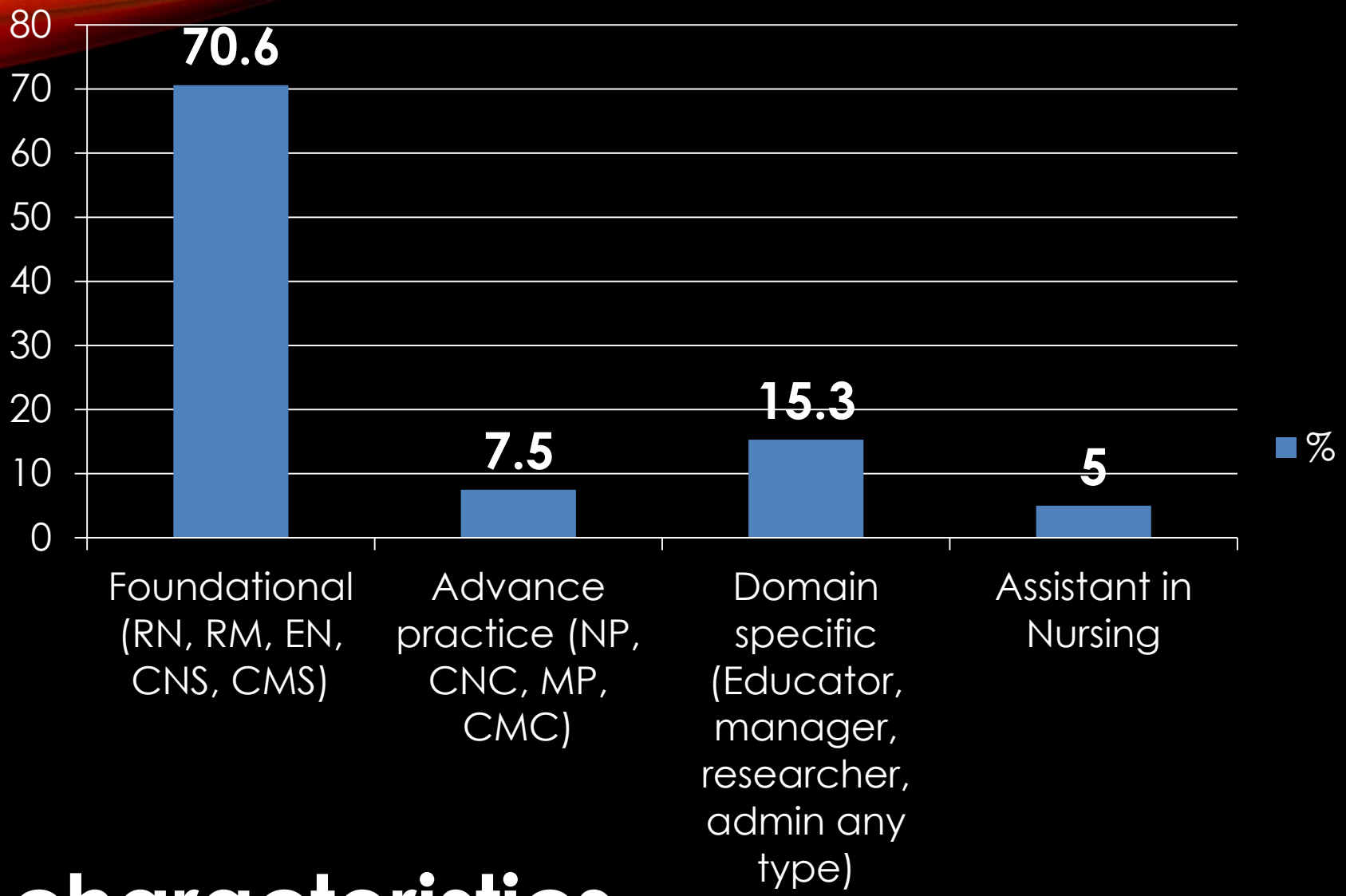

Work characteristics

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WORK PATTERNS

• Current work contract:	
Full time	53.6%
Part time	38.7%
Casual/pool/agency/other	7.1%
• Av hours worked/week	34.3 (+/-9.8)
• Work 40 hrs/wk or more	39.2%
• **Shift worker** (not days only)	53.1%
• Av years in RN/RM/EN role	21.5 (+/-12.8)

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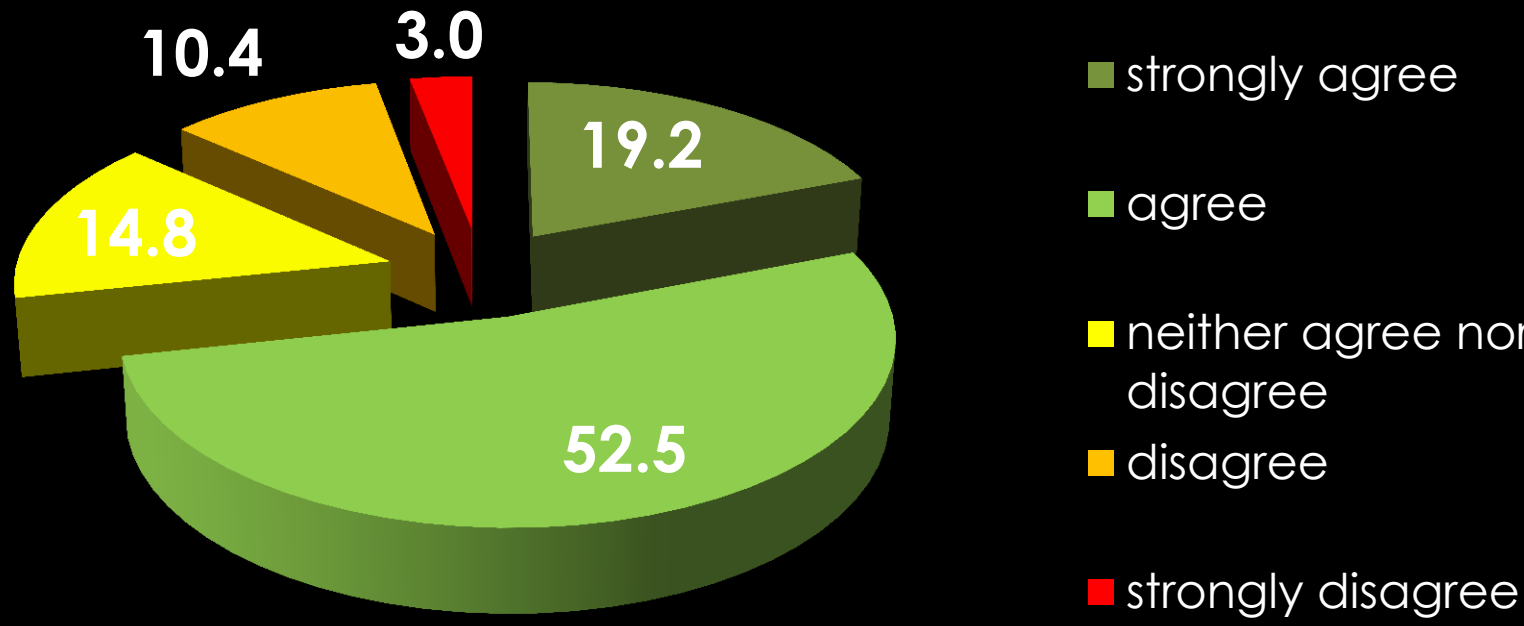

"Overall, I am satisfied with my current job"

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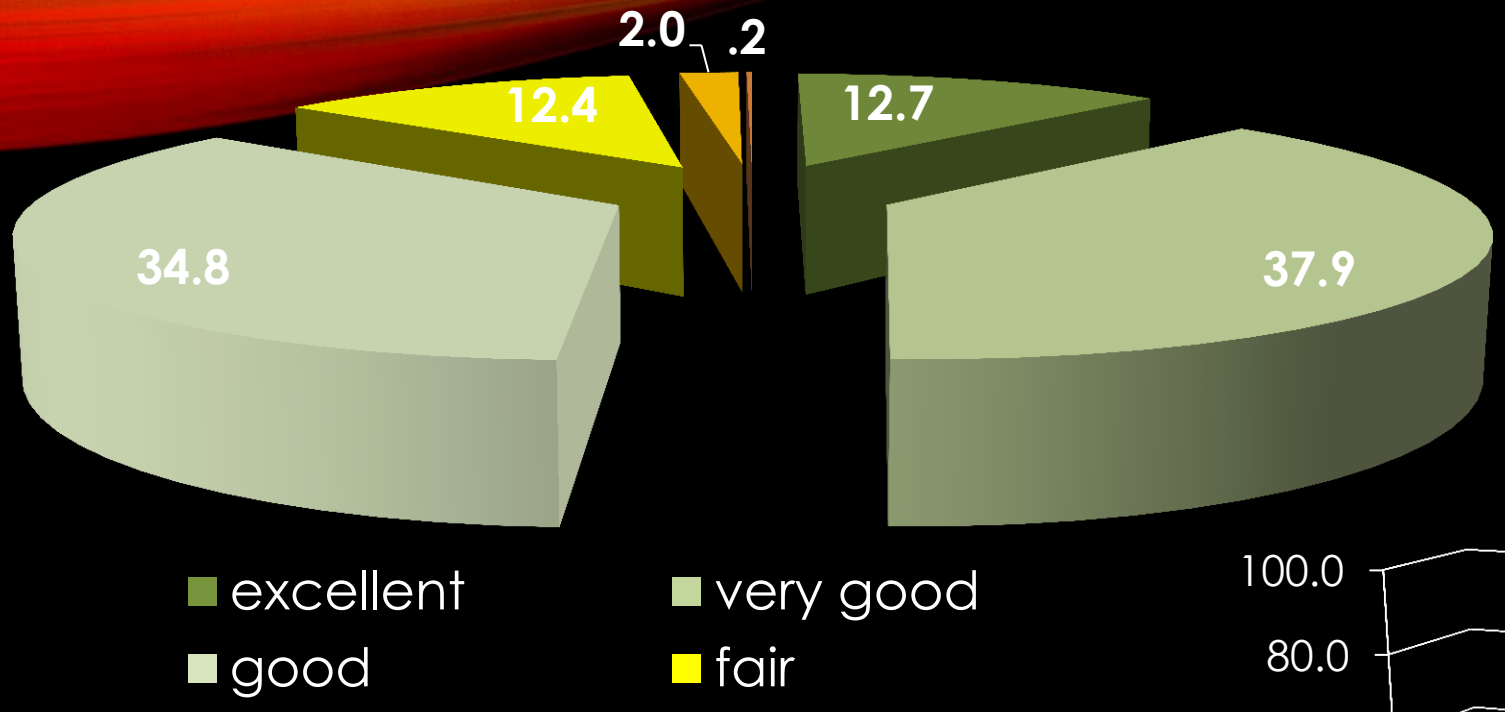

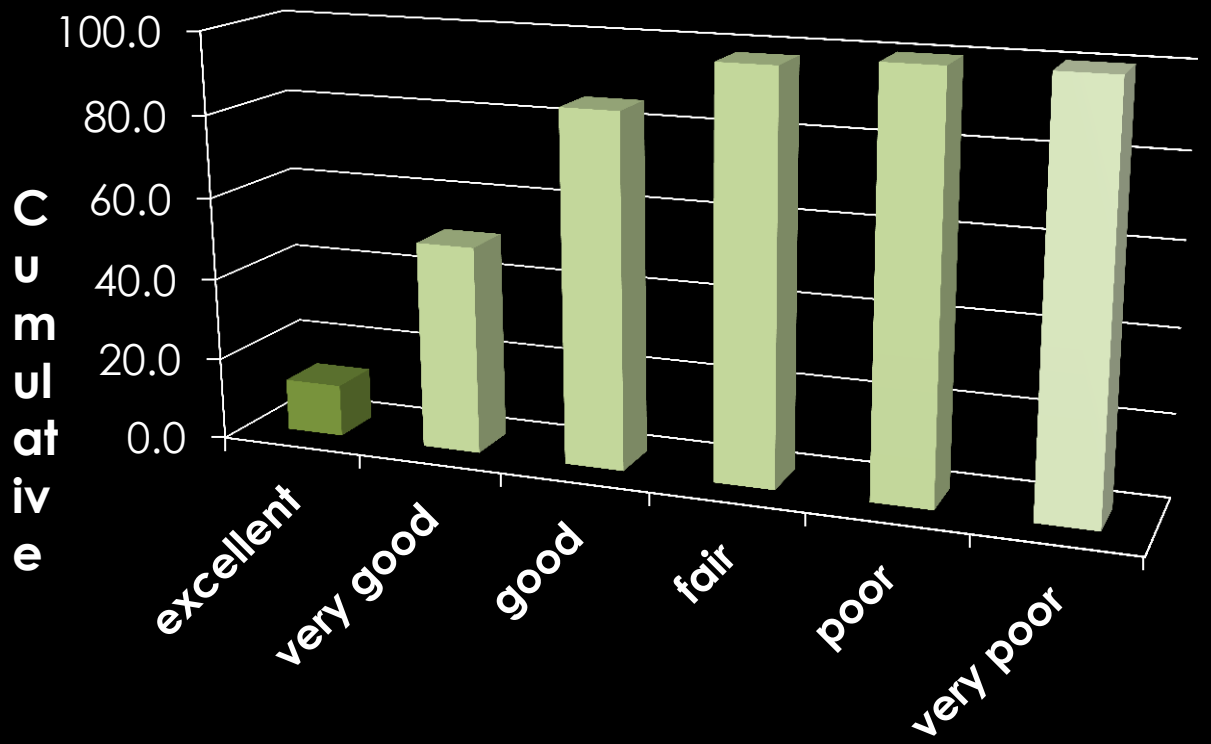

'In general, would you say your health is –'

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HEALTH RECORD

• Av number of sick days	5.5 +/- 12.7
• Av number 'mental health' days	1.7 +/- 7.2
• Had hospital admission	16.8%
• **Reports at least 1 chronic disease**	**64.9%**
mood disorders	26.1%
bone & joint	19.4%
cardiovascular	19.0%
respiratory	18.8%
diabetes	8.3%

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SYMPTOMS 'SOMETIMES OR MORE OFTEN' IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

• Back pain	46.6%
• Stiff joints	39.8%
• Allergies	33.8%
• Anxiety	20.7%
• Mouth problems	13.1%
• Night sweats	16.5%
• Severe tiredness	43.9%
• Headaches	39.2%
• Indigestion	24.2%
• Depression	18.1%
• Constipation	12.2%
• Urine leakage	11.1%
• Breathing problems	8.3%

Av total symptom count 3.4 +/- 2.7 symptom groups per person

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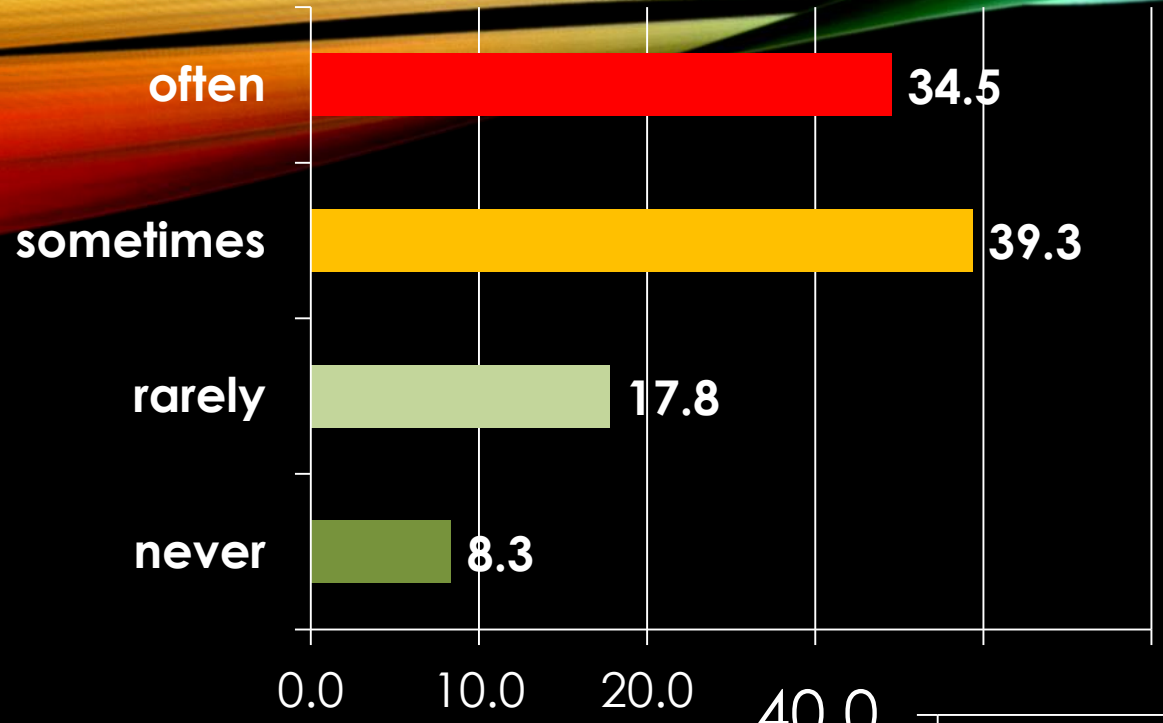
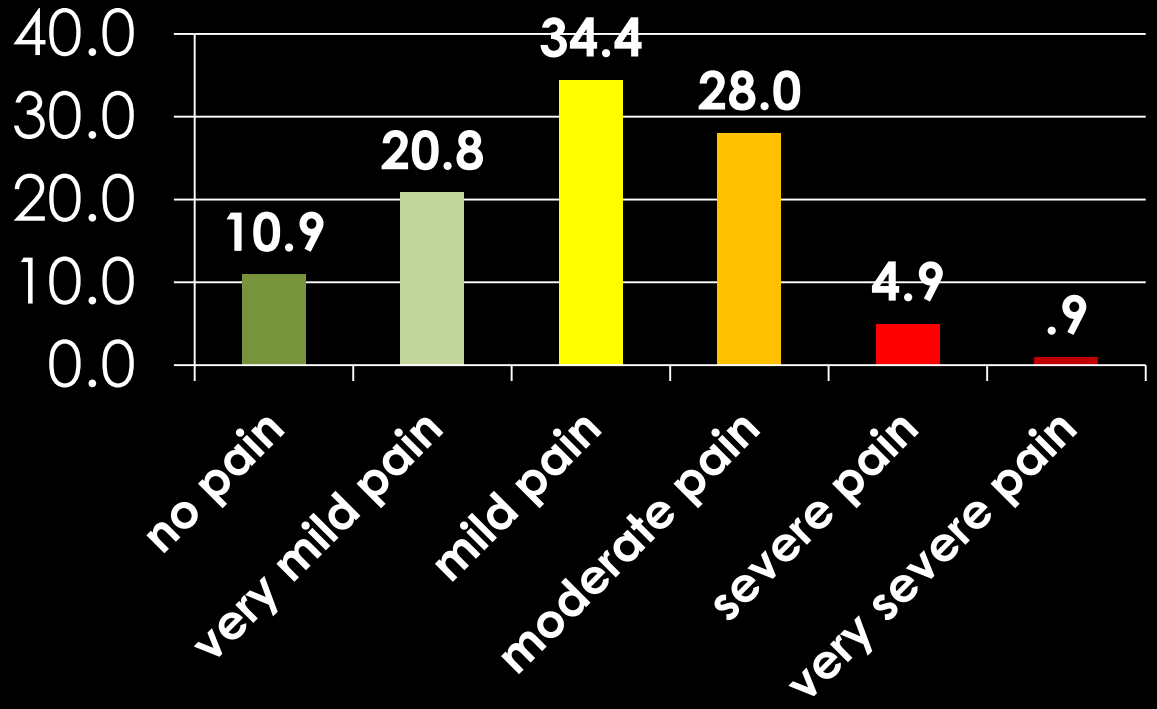
How often experienced bodily pain in past 4 weeks?



How much bodily pain in past 4 weeks?



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COMPARED TO THE AUSTRALIAN POPULATION -

? Broadly similar ?

- Mental health diagnoses, eg diagnoses in previous 12 months :
  23% anxiety/ depression compared to
  20% any MH diagnosis in 2007 population
- Chronic diseases eg **17%** hypertension compared to
  22% age 18 yrs + with measured high BP in 2012
- Asthma rates higher - **15.0%** versus **10.2%**

Shouldn't nurses look better than the general population?

- **50.6%** excellent/ very good health
  55.1% of Australian population

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Do we eat our veggies? (5 portions pd)
YES 10.9%
Australians: 8.3%

Do we eat 2 portions of fruit pd?
YES 54.6%
Australians: 48.3%

Tobacco smoke exposure:

At work:	11.5%
Own home:	6.6%
Others' homes:	5.5%
Public places:	0.2%
Outdoor areas:	25.4%

Any smoking	13.1%
Daily smoking	7.9%
Australians	16.3%

6% intend to quit within 6 mths……

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Drinking 5+ days per week: 10.8%
‘Risky drinking’: 14.8%
Australians: 19.5%

Average BMI 27.8 (+/- 6.2) kg/m2

(n=4503)

Australians:
35% overweight
28.3% obese

obese
27.0%

under/ normal
weight 34.6%

overweight
28.0%

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medium risk 15.1%

'at risk' 44.1%

high risk 29.1%

Waist circumference (n=3,508): **88.3%**

Australian women: 66.6% at increased risk

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Within 6 months: 6.0%
Within 12 months: 22.2%

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NURSES WERE MORE LIKELY TO INTEND TO LEAVE IF THEY -

- Were younger
- In a foundational role
- Worked in residential aged care, rehabilitation or disability
- Reported less job satisfaction
- Experienced workplace injury or abuse

Nurses were less likely to intend to leave if they –

- Were family care providers
- Worked in inner regional areas

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THOSE WHO INTENDED TO LEAVE -

- Poorer general health
- More sick days
- More hospitalisations
- More often diagnosed with anxiety
- Experienced:
  more severe bodily pain,
  more symptoms of back pain, severe tiredness, indigestion, depression, breathing & sleeping problems

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TAKING EVERYTHING INTO ACCOUNT, NURSES LESS LIKELY TO INTEND TO LEAVE IF -

- **Older:** every 5 years of age reduced the odds of leaving by more than 7% (OR=0.924; 95% CI: 0.892, 0.957)
- Worked in **inner regional areas** (OR=0.76; 95% CI: 0.63, 0.91)
- Did not work **night shifts** (OR=0.76; 95% CI: 0.65, 0.90)
- Reported better **job satisfaction** (OR=2.64; 95% CI: 2.43, 2.86)
- and better **general health** (OR=0.92, 95% CI: 0.84, 0.99)

Those with breathing problems 34% more likely to intend to leave (OR=1.34; 95% CI: 1.03, 1.76)

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NEXT: CONSULTATION STAGE:

- Identify research, policy & practices which policy-makers and managers can initiate to safeguard the future capability of the workforce and optimise their capacity to deliver care.
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