

Pharmacy Workforce Demographic Report 2025

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Introduction

This annual Pharmacist Workforce Demographic Report provides an overview of movements in the register during the year 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. In addition, it provides a point in time analysis (30 June 2025) of the profession's registered practitioners.

Background

Pharmacy Council | Te Pou Whakamana Kaimatū o Aotearoa produces this report to provide the pharmacy profession and its stakeholders a trusted source of demographic insights. The data helps assess the current state of the profession and to provide a robust foundation for informed decision making and meaningful change. By ensuring accuracy and relevance the report supports pharmacists in delivering the best possible outcomes for their communities.

Council is the Responsible Authority in Aotearoa New Zealand, established under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003, responsible for regulating pharmacists. Our role is to protect public safety by ensuring pharmacists are competent and fit to practise. Some of the key ways we achieve this are by:

- ensuring that intern pharmacists, pharmacists, and pharmacist prescribers are qualified and registered
- determining the scopes of practice
- ensuring that pharmacists are competent to practise safely
- setting qualifications
- monitoring and accrediting education programmes.

For further information on our functions and how we perform these please visit our [website](#).

Council collects data each year from practitioners applying for intern pharmacist, pharmacist, or pharmacist prescriber registration. This information includes age, ethnicity, gender, workplace, and hours worked.

In our role as the Responsible Authority, we are required to provide workforce-related information to the Director-General of Health¹. We also provide this overview of the pharmacist workforce to the wider sector and interested stakeholders.

Note: In this report the terms '*registered, current pharmacist*' and '*practising pharmacist*,' are used interchangeably. The terms '*registered, inactive pharmacist*' and '*non-practising pharmacist*' are also used interchangeably. The term '*pharmacist*' includes pharmacist prescribers unless otherwise indicated.

¹ Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act (HPCAA) 2003, [section 134A](#).

Introduction from the Chief Executive

How this information can be used

The demographics of the pharmacy sector give us an important point-of-time glimpse into the pharmacy workforce and can help us track trends over the years.

However, information is not worth collecting if it is not used. To get the most out of this information, we hope the sector will use it to prompt discussion and questions about how and when pharmacists are currently working, and whether the current state is still the best way to be doing things.

For example, when looking at the hours worked, we might ask whether those hours are being used effectively? Are pharmacies using the right mix of technology and people resources to support the needs of an aging population? Are there areas of the stretched primary care system that can be filled by pharmacists, and what needs to be done to make that happen? How can we make the most of the steady increase in pharmacist prescribers to ensure that patients can access the care they need, where and when they need it?

The demographic report can be used by:

- Policy Makers and health planners for workforce planning, forecasting future needs, and developing health equity initiatives
- Employers and pharmacy owners for recruitment, retention, and intern placement
- Educators and universities for curriculum development and support for graduates
- Researchers and analysts for trend analysis and comparative studies
- Pharmacists and professional bodies for advocacy and career insights.

While the solutions to many of the challenges identified by the sector and supported by the data fall outside the remit of the Pharmacy Council, we are keen to support pharmacists achieve the vision of the sector.

Now is the time for bold and effective change within the sector, and we encourage people to use this information to drive innovation so that New Zealanders can safely access the pharmacy care they need, when and where they need it.



Michael A Pead
Chief Executive

Summary of the information

Pharmacist numbers

- On 30 June 2025, there were 4279 registered, current pharmacists in Aotearoa New Zealand. In the year prior there were 210 new pharmacists who registered with Council for the first time.
- The number of practising pharmacists increased by just 0.8 percent, a comparably small increase to that reported in the year ending 30 June 2023 (0.6 percent) and lower than the 2.4 percent growth reported last year.
- The average growth in the number of practising pharmacists over the past five years has now decreased to 1.8 percent per year, down from the 2.0 percent five-year average reported last year.
- The number of Pharmacist Prescribers also continues to grow steadily, with 102 registered in 2025 compared with 74 the previous year.
- Pharmacy continues to be a young, female dominated profession, with 54 percent of pharmacists under the age of 40, and 67 percent female.
- Last year, around 31.3 percent of pharmacists reported practising part-time, 33.6 percent full-time, and 35.1 percent more than full-time. The proportion of pharmacists who reported practising more than full-time hours continues to be high, although decreasing from what was reported in previous years.
- This relatively small increase in numbers of practising pharmacists, coupled with a growing and ageing population and increasing demands on pharmacists to provide health services, means that the profession continues to face workforce capacity issues.
- The number of pharmacists per 10,000 of the population remains low relevant to other comparable jurisdictions.

Pharmacists entering and leaving New Zealand

- We continue to experience a high number of "good standing" requests from Australia from pharmacists wishing to move across the Tasman.
- We are now seeing a small but growing increase in requests for Certificates of Good Standing from jurisdictions such as the Republic of Ireland and Canada, which have made changes to their registration pathways to make it easier for New Zealand pharmacists to practise there.
- This year saw a significant increase in the number of non-Recognised Equivalent Qualification Route (non-REQR) pharmacists entering the Intern Training Programme. Non-REQR pharmacists make up almost 30% of the 2025 intern cohort and we expect current numbers to at least double in 2026.

Pharmacy register

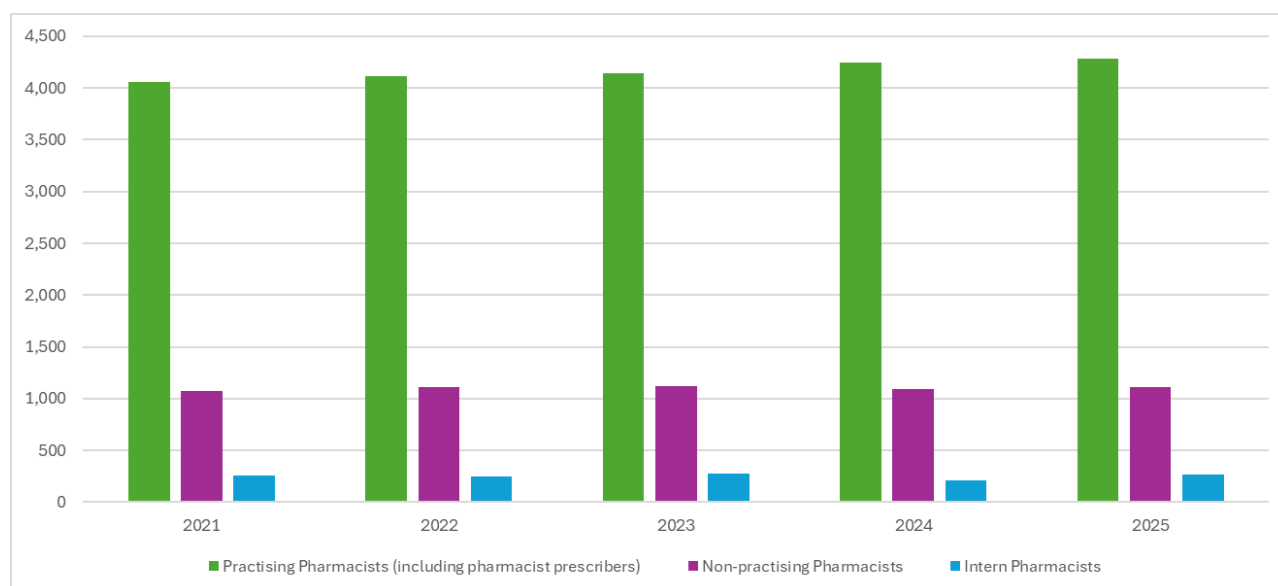
Pharmacists must be registered with Council and hold a current practising certificate under the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 to be entitled to practise pharmacy in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Table 1 – Composition of the Register on 30 June 2025

Practising status	Scope of practice	Practitioners
Registered, current ²	Intern pharmacists	267
	Pharmacists (includes 102 pharmacist prescribers) ³	4279
	Subtotal	4,546
Registered, inactive ⁴	Intern pharmacists	79
	Pharmacists (includes 3 pharmacist prescribers)	1112
	Subtotal	1,191
Suspended ⁵	Pharmacists	7
	Subtotal	7
Registered practitioners		5,744

On 30 June 2025, there were 4279 *registered, current* pharmacists in Aotearoa New Zealand. In the year prior there were 210 new pharmacists who registered with Council for the first time.

Figure 1 – Register composition on 30 June 2021-2025



² Registered with Pharmacy Council and holds, or is deemed to hold, a current practising certificate and is entitled to practise.

³ All pharmacist prescribers are also registered in the Pharmacist scope of practice.

⁴ Registered with Pharmacy Council but does not hold a practising certificate and is not entitled to practise.

⁵ Registration or practising certificate is suspended, and the pharmacist is not entitled to practise.

Table 2 – Register composition on 30 June 2021-2025

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Registered, current					
Intern pharmacists	256	249	278	213	267
Pharmacists	4,062	4,118	4,143	4,245	4,279
^L incl. Pharmacist prescribers	(37)	(46)	(51)	(74)	(102)
Registered, inactive					
Intern pharmacists	30	40	52	70	79
Pharmacists	1,074	1,109	1,123	1,092	1,112
^L incl. Pharmacist prescribers	(3)	(3)	(2)	(2)	(3)
Suspended					
Intern pharmacist	-	-	-	1	-
Pharmacists	9	8	6	5	7
Registered practitioners	5,431	5,524	5,602	5,626	5,744

Number of practising pharmacists

Table 3 – Number of registered, current pharmacists on 30 June 2021-2025

Year	Registered, current pharmacists	Percent change
2025	4,279	0.8%
2024	4,245	2.4%
2023	4,143	0.6%
2022	4,118	1.4%
2021	4,062	4.0%

In the year to 30 June 2025, the number of registered, current pharmacists in Aotearoa New Zealand increased from 4,245 to 4,279. This increase of 34 pharmacists represents a 0.8 percent increase on last year.

In 2024 we reported growth of 2.46 percent and commented that this represented growth slightly above the long-term average previously reported. The average growth over the last five years has now decreased to 1.8 percent per year, down from the last reported five-year average growth of 2.1 percent per year.

Of the 4,279 pharmacists registered and entitled to practise, 102 were also pharmacist prescribers. The significant increase in the number of pharmacist prescribers (28) is primarily because the University of Otago offered its revised Post Graduate Certificate in Pharmacist Prescribing for the first time in 2024. This programme will be offered annually. The University of Auckland programme was also offered in 2024 and continues to be offered annually.

Although starting from a relative low baseline, the growth in numbers of practising pharmacist prescribers over the 5 years of data in Table 2, shows a significant 175.7% increase compared with 5.3% for practising pharmacists.

Figure 2 – Summary of changes to the number of registered, current pharmacists⁶

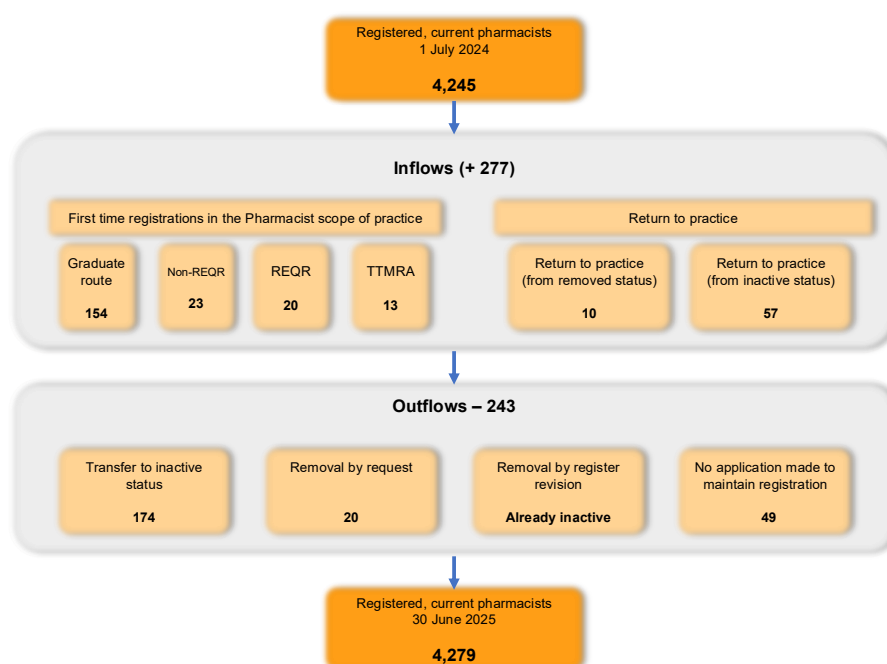


Figure 3 illustrates changes to the number of practising pharmacists between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025. The number of additional practising pharmacists (inflows = 277) was only slightly greater than those no longer practising (outflows = 243).

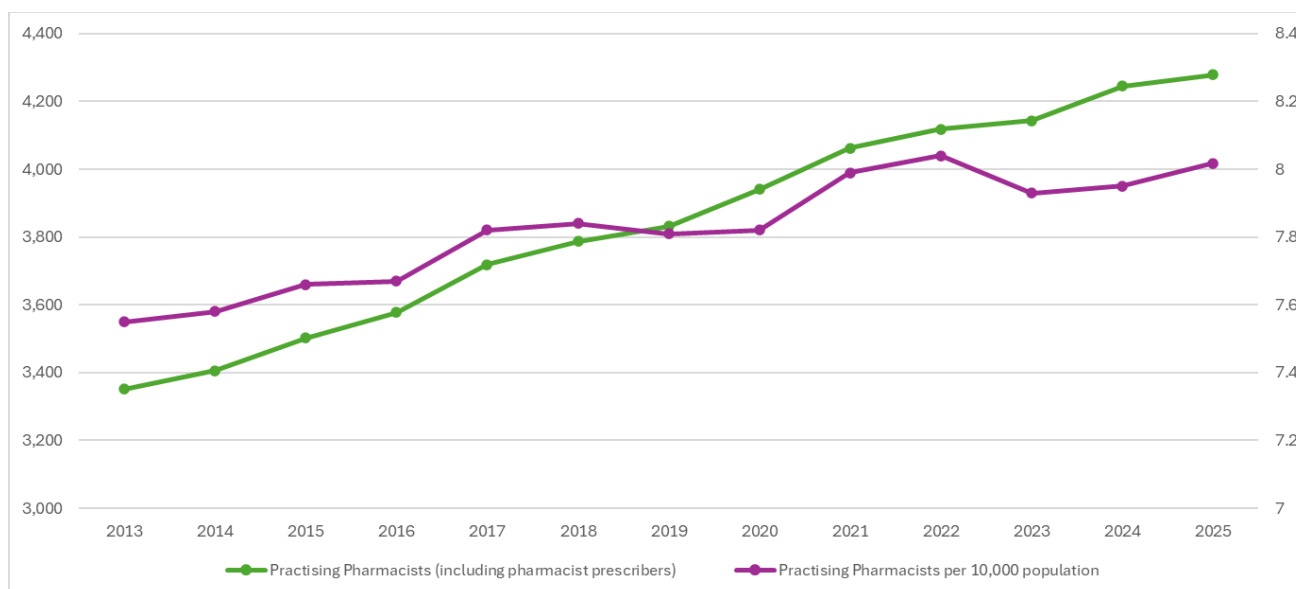
In this period, 177 new pharmacists (63.9 percent of inflow) were intern pharmacists registering in the Pharmacist scope of practice for the first time. These are either New Zealand or Australian graduates or Non-Recognised Equivalent Qualifications Route (non-REQR)⁷ pharmacists. A further 67 (24.2 percent of inflow) were pharmacists returning to practice.

Over the same period, 174 pharmacists holding a practising certificate until 31 March 2025 did not apply to continue practising beyond 1 April 2025 but applied to transfer to inactive (non-practising) status. Twenty pharmacists requested removal from the register. As of 30 June 2025, a further 49 pharmacists who held a practising certificate until 31 March 2025 (20.2 percent of outflow), had not made an application to either practise or remain on the register as non-practising.

⁶ Changes relating to practising status (i.e. practising to non-practising) occur from 1 April as the practising certificate expires on 31 March annually.

⁷ The Non-Recognised Equivalent Qualifications Route (non-REQR) is for overseas registered pharmacists (who qualified in countries other than Australia, Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the USA), who are pursuing pharmacist registration in New Zealand.

Figure 3 – Number of registered, current pharmacists and per capita analysis



There were 8.01 practising pharmacists for every 10,000 people in Aotearoa New Zealand on 30 June 2025. This represents a decrease from 2024 (8.13) and a minimal increase from 2023 (7.93) to a value in between that reported in 2020 (7.81) and 2021 (7.99). This negligible growth rate for practising pharmacists in 2024 is out of step with the estimated national population growth rate of 2.21 percent.

The density of pharmacists per 10,000 people in Aotearoa New Zealand⁸ is less than that reported for comparable jurisdictions: Australia (9.4 in 2022), Canada (11.4 in 2023), Ireland (11 in 2023), United Kingdom (8.9 in 2022), and United States of America (11.3 in 2022).

⁸ The metric we use (pharmacists per 10,000 population) is used internationally by other health organisations including the World Health Organisation. [https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/pharmacists-\(per-10-000-population\)](https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/indicators/indicator-details/GHO/pharmacists-(per-10-000-population))

Non-practising pharmacists

When a pharmacist's practising status is registered, inactive they are on the register but do not hold a current practising certificate and cannot practise. Applying to remain on the register is done annually.

Table 4 – Number of registered, inactive pharmacists on 30 June 2021-2025

Year	Registered, inactive pharmacists	Percent change
2025	1,112	1.8%
2024	1,092	-2.8%
2023	1,123	1.3%
2022	1,109	3.5%
2021	1,071	

Despite growth in the total register over time, the number of registered, inactive pharmacists has remained within a range of about 900 to 1,100 pharmacists since 2005. Of the 1,112 pharmacists with registered, inactive practising status, 905 made an application to retain this registration status, while 207 had not submitted any application as of 30 June 2025.

Table 5 – Pharmacist reasons for discontinuing practice

Reason for not practising	2025	Percentage
Overseas - practising	346	35.0%
Overseas - not practising	146	14.8%
Working in a non-health role	112	11.3%
Parental leave	85	8.6%
Other	99	10.0%
Retired	78	7.9%
Working in another health profession	73	7.4%
Full-time study	16	1.6%
Seeking employment in a non-pharmacy profession	30	3.0%
Seeking employment as a pharmacist	3	0.3%
Total reasons provided	988	100.0%

When a pharmacist applies to remain on the register but not practise, we ask them to provide reasons for not practising. Table 5 collates data from the 905 pharmacists who made an application for *inactive* status. Most of the responses came from pharmacists who were already not practising. Table 5 shows total reasons (988) exceeding the number of respondents as some pharmacists provided multiple reasons for not practising. Overall, the mix of reasons for not practising has not changed significantly from previous years.

Intern pharmacists

Intern pharmacists are registered health practitioners who train and practise under supervision to meet the prescribed qualifications to register in the Pharmacist scope of practice. Like pharmacists, an intern pharmacist must hold a practising certificate to practise, (i.e., show as *registered, current* on the register).

The number of intern pharmacists reported in Tables 6 and 7 is the total number of intern pharmacists holding a practising certificate on 30 June 2025. This represents a mix of graduates from various university cohorts. Therefore, the count of *registered, current* intern pharmacists is not a reliable measure of the number of graduates for a given year.

Table 6 – Intern pharmacists on 30 June 2021-2025

Year	Intern pharmacists	Percent change
2025	267	25.35%
2024	213	-23.38%
2023	278	11.65%
2022	249	-2.73%
2021	256	

Table 6 shows that there were 267 intern pharmacists registered and holding a practising certificate on 30 June 2025.

To register in the Intern Pharmacist scope of practice, an applicant must either hold a pharmacy degree from New Zealand or Australia or have completed the first three requirements of the non-REQR.⁹

Therefore, the number of intern pharmacists is determined by two key factors: the number of New Zealand (and Australian) pharmacy graduates and overseas (non-REQR) pharmacists entering the scope, and the number of intern pharmacists who successfully meet the requirements for registration in the Pharmacist scope of practice.

Table 7 – Origin of pharmacy qualification for intern pharmacists

Number of interns by university or country of university				
		2023	2024	2025
New Zealand and Australian pharmacy graduates	University of Auckland	95	66	89
	University of Otago	161	112	99
	Australian universities	1	1	0
Overseas pharmacists		21	34	79
Total intern pharmacists		278	213	267

⁹ New Zealand Gazette. "Pharmacy Council Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications Amendment Notice 2014 - 2014-gs6347." New Zealand Gazette. Last modified October 16, 2014. <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2014-gs6347>.

Table 7 shows that of the 267 intern pharmacists registered on 30 June 2025, 188 (70.4 percent) held a qualification from a New Zealand (or Australian) university, compared with 179 (84 percent) in 2024 and 256 (92.1 percent) in 2023.

Non-REQR pharmacists make up almost 30% of the 2025 intern pharmacist cohort. This is a significant increase, and it appears the increase will continue in 2026.

The potential reasons behind this increase in overseas applications could include:

- A Pharmacy Council policy change in 2023 which:
 - slightly lowered English language requirements
 - allowed applicants to complete the process steps as suited them (not set order)
 - removed the requirement for applicants to have a minimum of 1 year practice experience in their country of registration within the past 5 years
- Auckland University introduced a second Pharmacy Legislation course
- The Pharmacy Council shifting to online applications and improving the material explaining the process
- Pharmacists being added to the Immigration Green list in August 2023 (see Fig.4)
- The increased difficulty for overseas pharmacists to get an internship in Australia

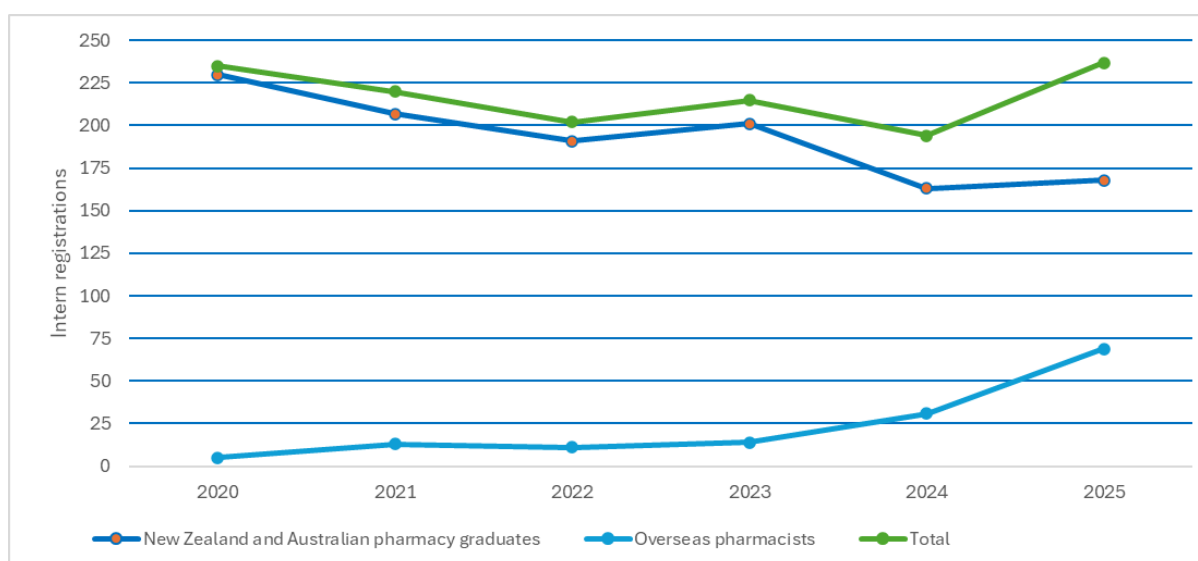
Most international pharmacists who apply for registration in New Zealand are accepted. The small number of unsuccessful applications are generally due to the applicant having experience in the wider pharmaceutical industry rather than in a patient-facing role.

Table 8 – Origin of newly registered intern pharmacists

Newly registered interns	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
New Zealand and Australian pharmacy graduates	230	207	191	201	163	168
Overseas pharmacists	5	13	11	14	31	69
Total	235	220	202	215	194	237

Table 8 shows the number of new interns (i.e. those registering in the intern scope for the first time) from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. As interns can remain registered practising for a second year while they work towards achieving pharmacist registration, the number of interns registered as of 30 June 2025 is greater than the number of newly registered interns.

Figure 4 – Number of newly registered intern pharmacists per year



Since April 2023, Immigration NZ has recognised 'Pharmacist' as a Tier 1 role for a Straight to Residence Visa (Green list occupations)¹⁰. Most of the 69 overseas pharmacists registering as interns completed their pharmacy degree in India (37.7 percent), Philippines (17.4 percent) and South Africa (11.6 percent).

Pharmacists removed from the register

Pharmacists may request removal from the register at any time and apply for reinstatement if they want to return to the register. Pharmacists who fail to apply for either an Annual Practising Certificate or to remain on the register as non-practising by the end of April each year are included in the Council's register revision process¹¹. If no application is received from the pharmacist after attempts to contact them, Council may remove them from the register, typically nine months later.

Table 9 – Removed from the register

Removals	2023	2024	2025
Register revision process	109	135	105
Removed at own request	55	59	69
Total pharmacists removed	164	194	174

In the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, 174 pharmacists were removed from the register. The status of these pharmacists may either have been registered, active or registered,

¹⁰ Immigration New Zealand - <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/about-us/media-centre/news-notifications/government-announces-more-health-roles-to-be-added-to-the-green-list>

¹¹ Section 144 of the HPCAA 2003.

inactive at the time of removal. Of those removed, 69 pharmacists were removed at their own request, and 105 were removed following the register revision process.

Table 10 – Reason provided by pharmacists requesting removal from the register¹²

Reasons for requesting removal	2025	Percentage
Retired	35	47.95%
Overseas – practising	18	24.66%
Working in a non-health role	5	6.85%
Overseas – not practising	3	4.11%
Parental leave	0	0.00%
Seeking employment in a non-pharmacy profession	1	1.37%
Working in another health profession	3	4.11%
Other	5	6.85%
Full-time study	3	4.11%
Total reasons provided	73	100%

When a pharmacist requests removal from the register, we collect information on the reason(s) for wanting to be removed (Table 10). Consistently, most pharmacists requesting removal indicate retirement as their reason. Table 10 shows total reasons (73) exceeding the number of respondents (69) as some pharmacists provided more than one reason for requesting removal.

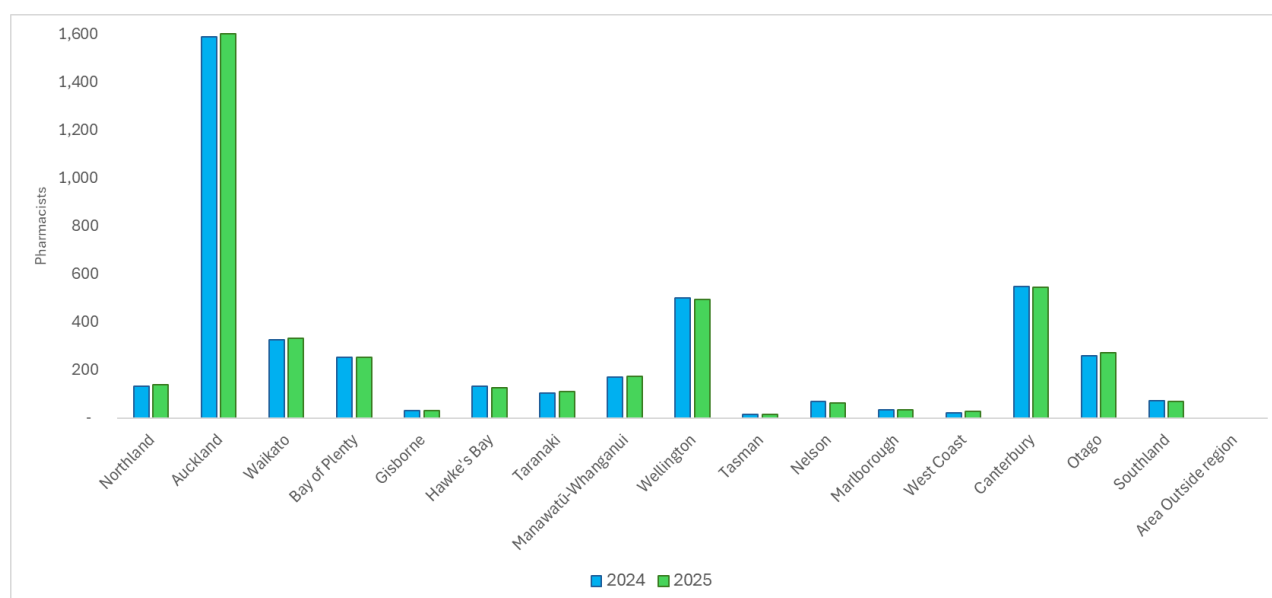
¹² Only applies to pharmacists requesting removal.

Practising pharmacists in detail

Where pharmacists practise in Aotearoa New Zealand

New Zealand has 16 regional and unitary councils.¹³ To understand the distribution of pharmacists, Council assigns each pharmacist to a region based on their reported primary place of work. Failing this, the postal address provided is used. This workforce data is collected at the time of APC renewal and is retrospective. As such, this data reflects pharmacist practice based on the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. We no longer report geographical distribution by district health board (DHB).

Figure 5 – Distribution of practising pharmacists by regional council



¹³ Local Government New Zealand. "Regional and Unitary Councils Aotearoa." Ko Tātou Local Government New Zealand. <https://www.lgnz.co.nz/regionals/>.

Table 11 – Distribution of practising pharmacists by regional council

Regional council	2023-2024			2024-2025		
	Pharmacists	Population	Pharmacists per ¹⁴ 10,000	Pharmacists	Population ¹⁵	Pharmacists per 10,000
Northland	133	203,900	6.52	138	202,668	6.81
Auckland	1587	1,739,300	9.12	1599	1,814,000	8.81
Waikato	325	522,600	6.22	331	532,509	6.22
Bay of Plenty	252	354,100	7.12	252	354,972	7.10
Gisborne	31	52,600	5.89	31	53,493	5.80
Hawke's Bay	132	184,800	7.14	125	182,785	6.84
Taranaki	103	128,700	8.00	111	131,714	8.43
Manawatū-Whanganui	170	260,900	6.52	174	263,529	6.60
Wellington	498	550,500	9.05	492	546,538	9.00
Tasman ¹⁶	14	59,400	2.36	15	60,357	2.49
Nelson ¹⁶	67	55,600	12.05	62	54,910	11.29
Marlborough	34	52,200	6.51	34	52,081	6.53
West Coast	21	32,900	6.38	26	34,620	7.51
Canterbury	548	666,300	8.22	545	693,494	7.86
Otago	258	254,600	10.13	272	253,640	10.72
Southland	72	103,900	6.93	68	104,770	6.49
Total	4,245	5,223,040	8.13	4,275	5,336,700	8.01

Regional population has not been updated by Statistics New Zealand for the year 2024. Therefore, the regional population information used for the purpose of this report is based on the estimate on the stats NZ website for the 2024-2025 period. Pharmacist density per region for the 2023-2024 period should only be used as a guide as we do not hold up to date information about regional population changes.

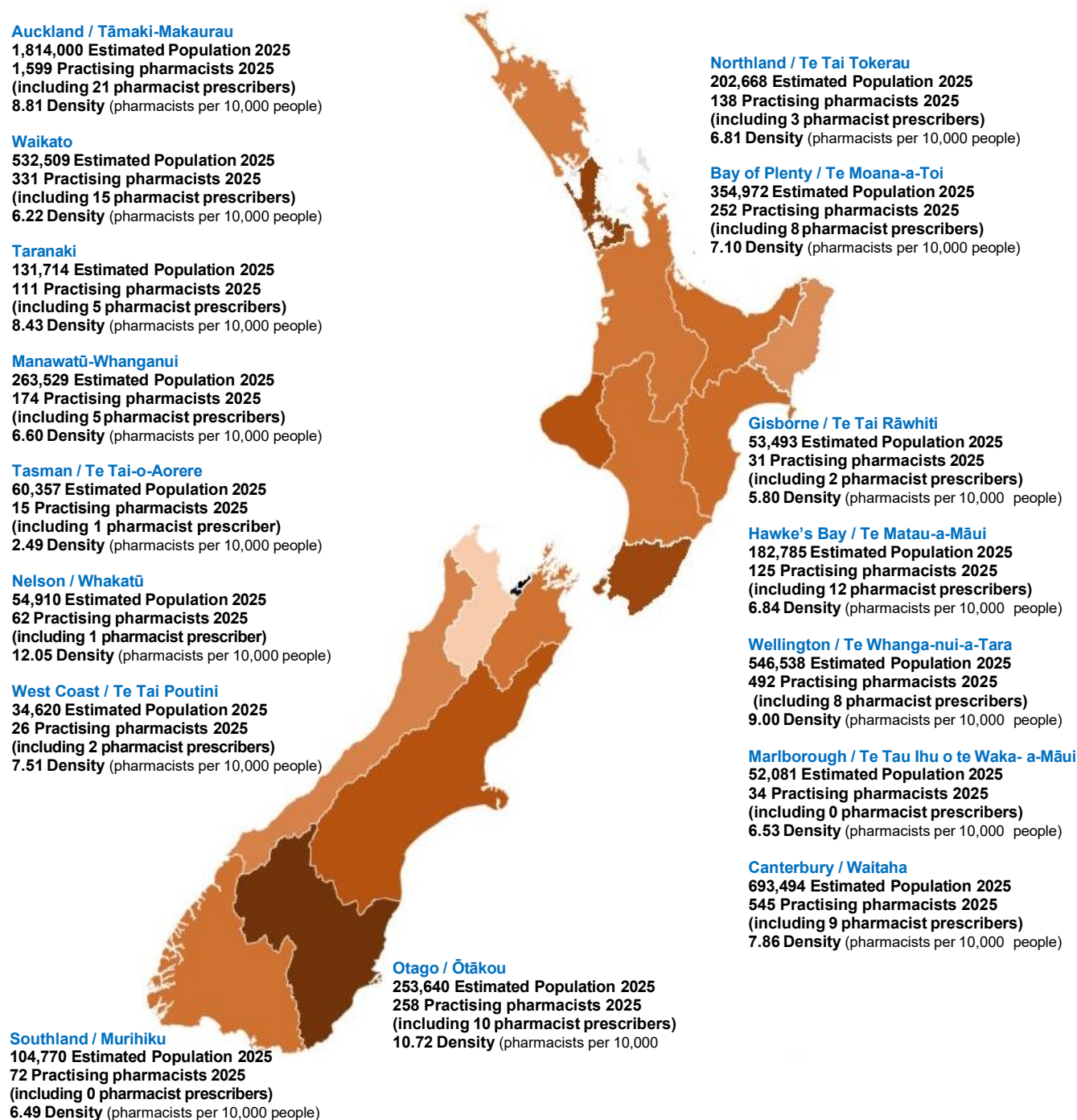
Most regions stayed largely the same as 2024, or lost pharmacists. Nelson has the highest number of pharmacists per 10,000 of population at 11.29, while Tasman (2.49) followed by Gisborne (5.80) have the lowest. Although the West Coast gained 1.13 pharmacists per 10,000 people that increase represents just 5 pharmacists.

¹⁴ The figure for pharmacists per 10,000 population for 2023/24 has been revised due to updated population figures now available.

¹⁵ Statistics New Zealand. "NZ.Stat." Statistics New Zealand. Last updated October 2023. NZ Statistics won't update 2024 figures until 2023 census data is available in 2025. [NZ.Stat \(stats.govt.nz\)](https://stats.govt.nz/)

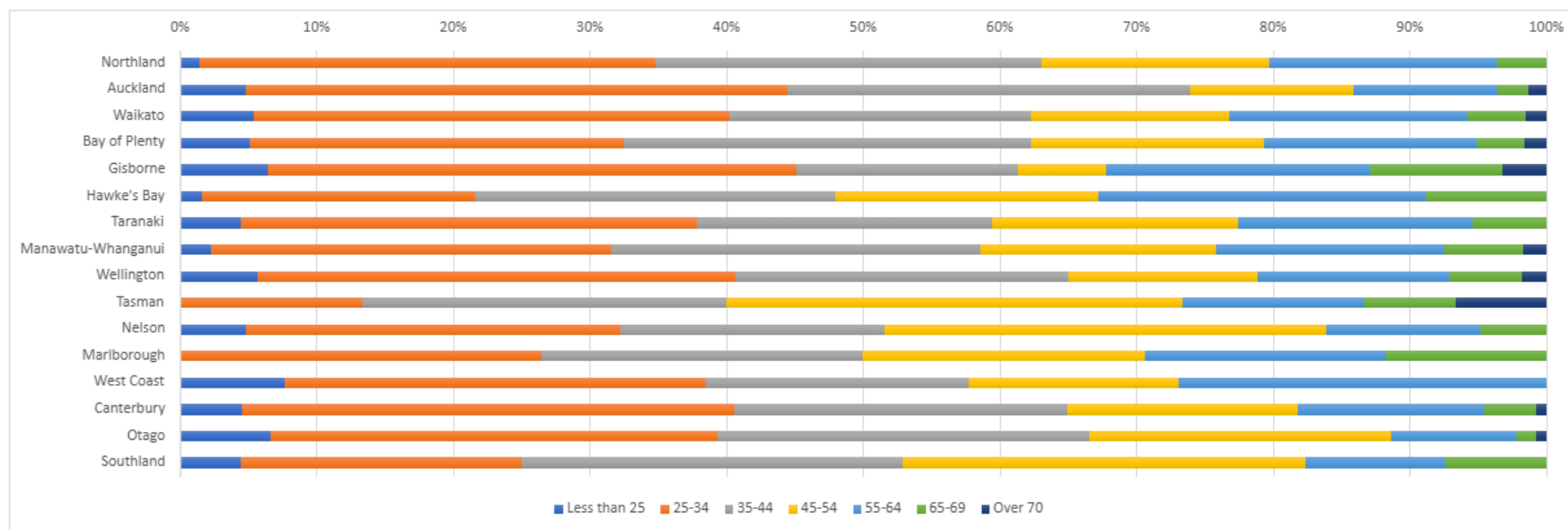
¹⁶ Tasman and Nelson regions respectively consistently return low- and high-density pharmacist numbers. However, when the regions are combined a more typical figure of 7.22 pharmacists per 10,000 population is calculated.

Figure 6 – Geographical distribution of the pharmacy workforce



Across Aotearoa New Zealand
5,336,700 estimated population 31 March 2025
4,275 practising pharmacists 30 June 2025
8.01 pharmacists per 10,000 people

Figure 7 – Practising pharmacists by regional council and age



As in 2024, there is a relatively consistent mix of early career and experienced pharmacists across regions. The four regions with the largest metropolitan areas (Auckland, Canterbury, Wellington, and Waikato) continue to show a younger age profile.

Table 12 – Distribution of practising pharmacists by regional council and age

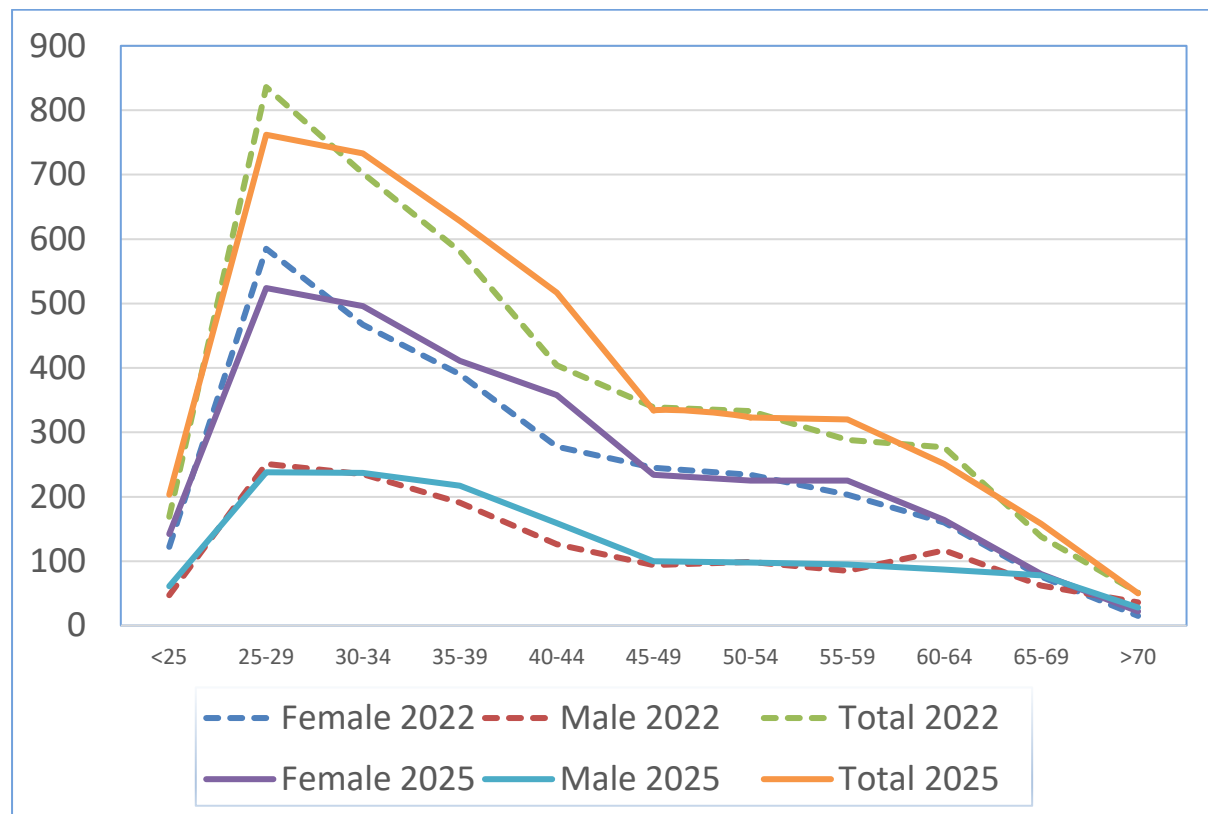
Region	Under 25	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 69	Over 70	Total
Northland	2	46	39	23	23	5	0	138
Auckland	78	633	472	190	169	36	21	1,599
Waikato	18	115	73	48	58	14	5	331
Bay of Plenty	13	69	75	43	39	9	4	252
Gisborne	2	12	5	2	6	3	1	31
Hawke's Bay	2	25	33	24	30	11	0	125
Taranaki	5	37	24	20	19	6	0	111
Manawatū-Whanganui	4	51	47	30	29	10	3	174
Wellington	28	172	120	68	69	26	9	492
Tasman	0	2	4	5	2	1	1	15
Nelson	3	17	12	20	7	3	0	62
Marlborough	0	9	8	7	6	4	0	34
West Coast	2	8	5	4	7	0	0	26
Canterbury	25	196	133	92	74	21	4	545
Otago	18	89	74	60	25	4	2	272
Southland	3	14	19	20	7	5	0	68
Total	203	1,495	1,143	656	570	158	50	4,275

This total of 4,275 pharmacists differs from the total numbers of pharmacists as 4 have indicated they are living overseas (while retaining an APC).

Diversity of the workforce

Age of pharmacists

Figure 8 – Comparison of age (smoothed) or practising pharmacists by gender¹⁷



On 30 June 2025, the median age of a practising pharmacist in Aotearoa New Zealand was 37 years. This is similar to results for 2024 (37) and 2023 (37.8).

Figure 8 shows that most pharmacists are aged between 25 and 39 years old with 52 percent of pharmacists under 40 years of age.

¹⁷ We use 2021 data as a baseline and intend to continue doing so for future reports for continuity.

Gender

For practitioner gender, Council uses the taxonomy described by the Ministry of Health.¹⁸

Table 13 – Comparison of age profiles of practising pharmacists by gender

Age group (years)	2024				2025			
	Female	Percent	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Male	Percent
< 25	179	4%	69	2%	142	3%	61	1%
25-29	531	13%	251	6%	524	12%	238	6%
30-34	493	12%	230	5%	496	12%	237	6%
35-39	401	9%	227	5%	411	10%	217	5%
40-44	307	7%	132	3%	358	8%	159	4%
45-49	240	6%	99	2%	234	5%	100	2%
50-54	222	5%	98	2%	225	5%	98	2%
55-59	215	5%	90	2%	225	5%	95	2%
60-64	167	4%	102	2%	164	4%	87	2%
65-69	71	2%	70	2%	80	2%	78	2%
> =70	23	1%	28	1%	22	1%	28	1%
Total	2,849	67%	1,396	33%	2,881	67%	1,398	33%

Two-thirds of pharmacists identify as female and one-third as male. No pharmacists have identified as 'indeterminate' or 'unknown' gender.

The general trend over time has been that the proportion of male pharmacists has decreased and correspondingly the proportion of female pharmacists has increased. For example, in 2008 the split was 42 percent male and 58 percent female. However, from about 2020 to currently, the ratios have remained steady.

¹⁸ Ministry of Health. "Sex Type Code Table." Ministry of Health <https://www.tewhātuora.govt.nz/for-health-professionals/data-and-statistics/nz-health-statistics/data-references/code-tables/common-code-tables#sex-type-code-table>.

Ethnicity

We report to Level 2 of the Ethnicity Data Protocols for the health and disability sector.¹⁹ The number of answers reported is greater than the number of registered current pharmacists (4,279) as multiple ethnicities per pharmacist can be selected.

The top three ethnic groups selected are NZ European (38.1 percent), Chinese (14.0 percent) and other Asian (10.1 percent). The proportion of the profession that identify as Māori (2.75 percent) or Pacific (2.61percent) remains low and similar to previous years.

Table 14 – Practising pharmacists by ethnicity (Level 1 and Level 2)

Level 1 Ethnic group code description	Level 2 Ethnic group code description	Pharmacists
European	European not further defined	69
	NZ European	1901
	Other European	282
	Total	2252
Māori	NZ Māori	137
	Total	137
Pacific	Pacific Island not further defined	6
	Samoa	14
	Cook Island Māori	6
	Tongan	8
	Niuean	4
	Tokelauan	0
	Fijian	84
	Other Pacific Island	8
	Total	130
Asian	Asian not further defined	47
	Southeast Asian	191
	Chinese	701
	Indian	405
	Other Asian	502
	Total	1846
Middle Eastern/ Latin American/ African	Middle Eastern	169
	Latin American/Hispanic	3
	African	79
Other	Total	251
	Other ethnicity	365
	Don't know	8
Total		373
Grand total		4989

¹⁹ Ministry of Health. 2017. HISO 10001:2017 Ethnicity Data Protocols. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

Table 15 – Practising pharmacists by ethnicity and age

Ethnicity	Age group						Total
	Under 25	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Over 65	
European	48	561	457	457	496	232	2251
Māori	2	47	34	24	19	11	137
Pacific	4	46	51	18	11	0	130
Asian	83	840	650	176	78	19	1846
MELAA ²⁰	12	77	100	36	22	5	252
Other	3	194	83	45	40	7	372
Total	152	1765	1375	756	666	274	4988

Table 15 shows that most pharmacists aged under 44 (47.8 percent) identify as Asian, while most pharmacists aged over 45 (69.9 percent) identify as European.

Requests for a certificate of current professional status

Council issues Certificates of Current Professional Status on behalf of pharmacists seeking registration with overseas jurisdictions.

Table 16 – Certificates of current professional status issued

Country	Certificates issued
Australia	76
New Zealand	5
Other countries	30
Total	111

Between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, Council issued 111 Certificates of Current Professional Status (the same total as for the previous year). Of these, 76 were issued to pharmacists seeking registration in Australia under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 (TTMRA). Since 2018, the number of certificates issued has ranged between 57 and 65.

The requests from practitioners within New Zealand are generally from people looking to move their registration into another registered profession.

²⁰ MELAA = Middle Eastern, Latin American and African

Sources of additional registered, practising pharmacists

New registrations in the Pharmacist scope of practice

Table 17 – Initial registrations in the Pharmacist scope of practice 2020-2024

Year	Pharmacists registering for the first time	Percent change
2025	210	-21.1%
2024	266	37.1%
2023	194	-11.0%
2022	218	-17.4%
2021	264	

Between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025, 210 pharmacists registered for the first time. The majority (73.3 percent) were NZ graduate interns who met all requirements to register in the Pharmacist scope of practice but also included non-REQR overseas pharmacist interns.

Table 18 – Initial registrations by route of registration

Registration route	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Graduates (New Zealand and Australia)	242	191	165	224	154
TTMRA	2	6	6	11	13
REQR	10	10	14	16	20
Non-REQR	10	11	9	15	23
Total	264	218	194	266	210

Table 18 shows the four possible routes to register as a pharmacist in Aotearoa New Zealand:

- New Zealand (and Australian) graduate route
- Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 (TTMRA) route
- Recognised Equivalent Qualification Route (REQR)²¹
- Non-Recognised Equivalent Qualification Route (non-REQR)²².

²¹ Registered pharmacists from Ireland, the United Kingdom, Canada, or the United States of America.

²² All other jurisdictions than those listed above.

Table 19 – From Intern to Pharmacist scope of practice

Origin of qualification	New pharmacists
New Zealand:	153
- University of Auckland	64
- University of Otago	89
Australia	1
Other country	23
Total	177

Table 19 shows that in the year to 30 June 2025, 177 intern pharmacists met the registration requirements and registered in the Pharmacist scope of practice. Of these, 153 were New Zealand graduates, 1 was an Australian graduate and 23 were overseas pharmacists who followed the non-REQR route to register in the Pharmacist scope of practice.

Table 20 – Registrations granted by country of first registration

Country of first registration	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Australia	2	6	6	11	12
Ireland or the United Kingdom	6	9	12	13	11
Canada or the United States of America	2	1	2	3	9
Total	10	16	20	27	32

Table 20 provides further detail on overseas pharmacists who registered as a pharmacist in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Twelve Australian applicants registered under TTMRA in the year to 30 June 2025. Registered pharmacists from Ireland, the United Kingdom, Canada, or the United States of America may apply to register as pharmacists in Aotearoa New Zealand via the REQR route. This route recognises that the qualifications and practice in these countries are similar to Aotearoa New Zealand, allowing for a simpler registration process than for pharmacists from non-recognised countries.

The number of overseas registrations in 2025 remained consistent with those reported in previous years. Although numbers are small, there was a noticeable increase in the number of North American pharmacists registering in NZ. The lower numbers seen during 2021 and 2022 are likely explained by Aotearoa New Zealand's border restrictions due to Covid.

Return to practice

A registered pharmacist may apply for a practising certificate and return to practice at any time. The requirements depend on the **period away from practice** in Aotearoa New Zealand, and whether (and where) they have practised overseas.

**Table 21 – Return to practice applicants
(by number of years since last practice in NZ)**

Years since last practice in New Zealand	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Less than three years away from New Zealand practice	75	82	94	68	42
Three to eight years away from New Zealand practice	12	11	26	16	18
More than eight years away from New Zealand practice	1	1	8	8	7
Total	88	94	128	92	67

The total number of pharmacists returning to practice in the year to 30 June 2025 was slightly lower than previous years. In the past three years, there has been an increase in the number of pharmacists returning to practice after more than eight years away from practice in Aotearoa. The timeframes in Table 21 align to the return to practice categories detailed in Council's Return to Practice Policy.²³

Practice settings

We gather information on the types of work carried out by pharmacists with Annual Practising Certificate (APC) applications in March each year. Pharmacists are asked to describe their practice over the previous 12 months. Therefore, this data reflects practice for the year ending 31 March 2025.

We received 4,203 applications for an APC by 31 March 2025. By 30 June 2025 the total of registered pharmacists had increased to 4,279 as we also registered intern pharmacists in the Pharmacist scope of practice after they passed the May 2025 Assessment Centre, as well as issuing practising certificates to overseas pharmacists and New Zealand pharmacists returning to practice. These applicants had not practised as pharmacists in New Zealand the previous year and, therefore, did not have workforce data to declare.

This data is self-reported by pharmacists along with a declaration that all information is correct.

The table reflects the pharmacist's primary practice setting only. For example, a pharmacist who reports that 51 percent of time is spent in "community pharmacy" practice and 49 percent in "general practice" will be categorised as a community pharmacy.

²³ Pharmacy Council. [Return to Practice Policy \(pharmacycouncil.org.nz\)](https://pharmacycouncil.org.nz/return-to-practice-policy)

Table 22 – Primary type of pharmacy practice undertaken by practising pharmacists

Primary type of pharmacist work	Pharmacists	Percentage
Community Pharmacy	3145	74.8%
Hospital Pharmacy	617	14.7%
General Practice	130	3.1%
Teaching / Research	81	1.9%
Other	79	1.9%
Government / Regulatory Health Organisation	64	1.5%
Pharmaceutical Industry	35	0.8%
Primary Health Organisation	35	0.8%
Pharmacy Professional Association	17	0.4%
Total	4,203	100.0%

Community pharmacy remains the most common practice setting for pharmacists. Since 2018, the proportion of community pharmacists has remained between 75 and 80 percent. Hospital pharmacy remains the second most common practice setting at 14.7 percent.

Table 23 – Average hours per week worked in scope by practising pharmacists

Hours worked per week	10 or fewer	11-19 hours	20-29 hours	30-39 hours	40-49 hours	50+ hours	Total
Community Pharmacy	96	172	372	622	1568	315	3145
Hospital Pharmacy	12	17	71	105	395	17	617
General Practice	2	11	20	39	53	5	130
Teaching / Research	7	2	10	14	38	10	81
Other	6	4	15	17	34	3	79
Government / Regulatory Health Organisation	2	2	3	13	38	6	64
Pharmaceutical Industry	0	1	3	5	23	3	35
Primary Health Organisation	0	1	10	14	9	1	35
Pharmacy Professional Association	1	0	3	1	9	3	17
Total	126	210	507	830	2167	363	4203

Table 24 – Number of weeks worked in scope by practising pharmacists

Weeks worked per year	10 or fewer	11-19 weeks	20-29 weeks	30-39 weeks	40-49 weeks	50-52 weeks	Total
Community Pharmacy	66	134	96	138	1876	835	3145
Hospital Pharmacy	23	16	21	26	436	95	617
General Practice	1	1	3	4	104	17	130
Teaching / Research	3	1	1	8	55	13	81
Other	4	1	2	1	59	12	79
Government / Regulatory Health Organisation	1	1	1	2	47	12	64
Pharmaceutical Industry	0	0	2	2	20	11	35
Primary Health Organisation	0	0	1	0	26	8	35
Pharmacy Professional Association	1	1	0	0	7	8	17
Total	99	155	127	181	2630	1011	4203

Hours practised

The full-time equivalent analysis is calculated by multiplying each practitioner's total weeks practised by average hours practised per week to give the total number of hours practised in the year. We define part-time as 1,440²⁴ hours or less in a year, full-time as more than 1,440 hours and up to 1,920 hours, and more than full-time is defined as more than 1,920 hours.

This analysis only places a pharmacist into one practice setting (i.e., their primary practice setting) but gives further insight into workforce capacity.

Table 25 – Full-time equivalents worked in scope by practising pharmacists

Full-time equivalents	Part-time	Full-time	More than Full-time	Total
	Up to 1,440 hours per year	Between 1,440 and 1,920 hours per year	More than 1,920 hours per year	
Community Pharmacy	991	926	1228	3145
Hospital Pharmacy	184	293	140	617
General Practice	45	61	24	130
Teaching / Research	27	28	26	81
Other	35	30	14	79
Government / Regulatory Health Organisation	10	34	20	64

²⁴ 30 hours per week over 48 weeks.

Pharmaceutical Industry	7	14	14	35
Primary Health Organisation	11	21	3	35
Pharmacy Professional Association	4	4	9	17
Total	1314	1411	1478	4203

In the year to 31 March 2025, around 31.3 percent of pharmacists reported practising part-time, 33.6 percent full-time, and 35.1 percent more than full-time. The proportion of pharmacists who reported practising more than full-time hours continues to be high, although decreasing from what was reported in previous years (down from 36 percent in the year to 31 March 2024, 40 percent in the year to 31 March 2023 and 45 percent in the year to 31 March 2022). There is a slight decrease in part-time reporting (down from 32.9 percent in 2024), but this figure still represents a significant proportion of the workforce.

Additionally:

- 2,167 (51.6 percent) reported working 40-49 weeks for the year to 31 March 2025
- 363 (8.6 percent) reported working 50 hours or more per week on average
- 221 (5.3 percent) reported total annual hours equalling 2,450 hours or greater, i.e. equivalent to working for 49 weeks at 50 hours per week on average.

While the percentage of pharmacists reporting they work 50 hours or more per week is slightly less than 2024, it still raises questions about the impact of long hours on pharmacists' wellbeing and the risk of harm of pharmacists' practice to the public.