

Chapter 7

The Chiropractic Practitioner in Australia

This chapter examines the demographic data pertaining to the chiropractic practitioner/survey respondent. The survey questions began with personal data, then addressed education, specialization, work environment, and more.

Preliminary Criteria

Following some preliminary questions, the survey sought to qualify each respondent. As discussed in Chapter 5, the only criterion for participation was that the individual be a licensed, full-time practitioner of chiropractic.

Question number 4 on the first page of the survey asked if the respondent was currently in active full-time chiropractic practice.

If the individual answered “no” to this question, he/she was instructed to return the uncompleted questionnaire. Approximately 86% of practicing respondents reported their practice to be full-time (Figure 7.1).

The next question asked the participants how many hours per week they devoted to their practices. The number of hours reported averaged 38.7 (Figure 7.2).

Personal Demographics

In addition, the full-time practitioners who participated in the study were asked to provide demographic data about themselves.

The survey responses revealed that 89.6% of the participants were male and 10.4% were female. In comparison, information taken from the *United States Job*

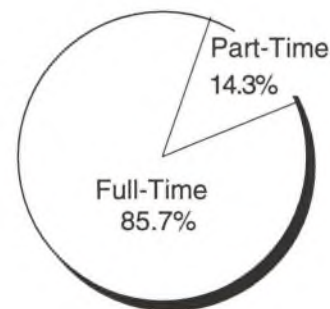


FIGURE 7.1
Full-time Respondents*

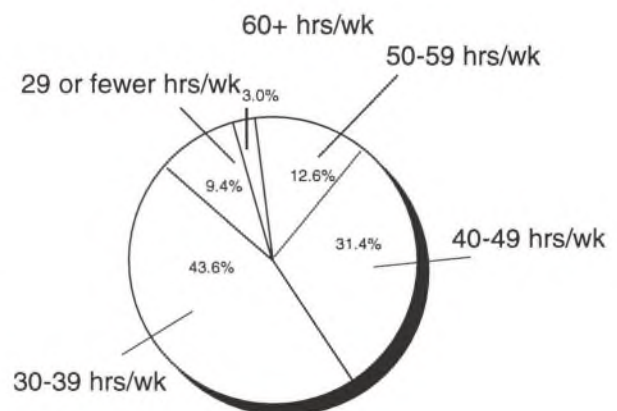


FIGURE 7.2
Hours per Week*

*Data are not weighted

Analysis of Chiropractic indicated that 86.7% of American practitioners are male and 13.3% are female.

Place of Birth

Overall, 72.3% of the respondents were born in Australia while the remaining were born in North America, New Zealand, Europe or another country (Figure 7.3).

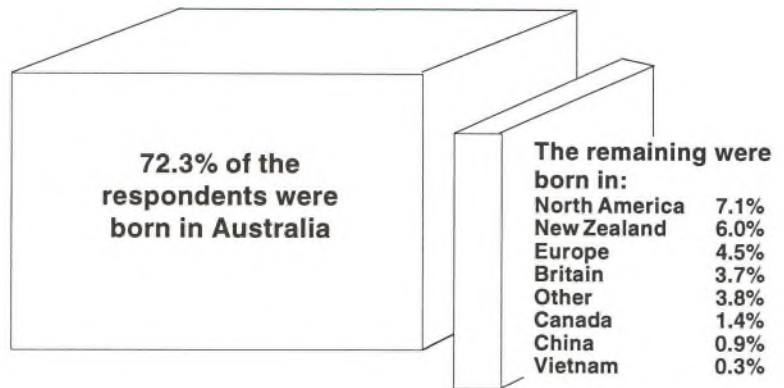


FIGURE 7.3
Respondents' Place of Birth

Level of Education

The participants were asked to mark the highest level of non-chiropractic education they had achieved. Findings revealed that 8.4% had an associate degree, 18.7% had a baccalaureate degree, 1.2% had a master's degree, and 0.5% had a doctoral degree. The "other" category was noted by 11.5% of the respondents (Figure 7.4).

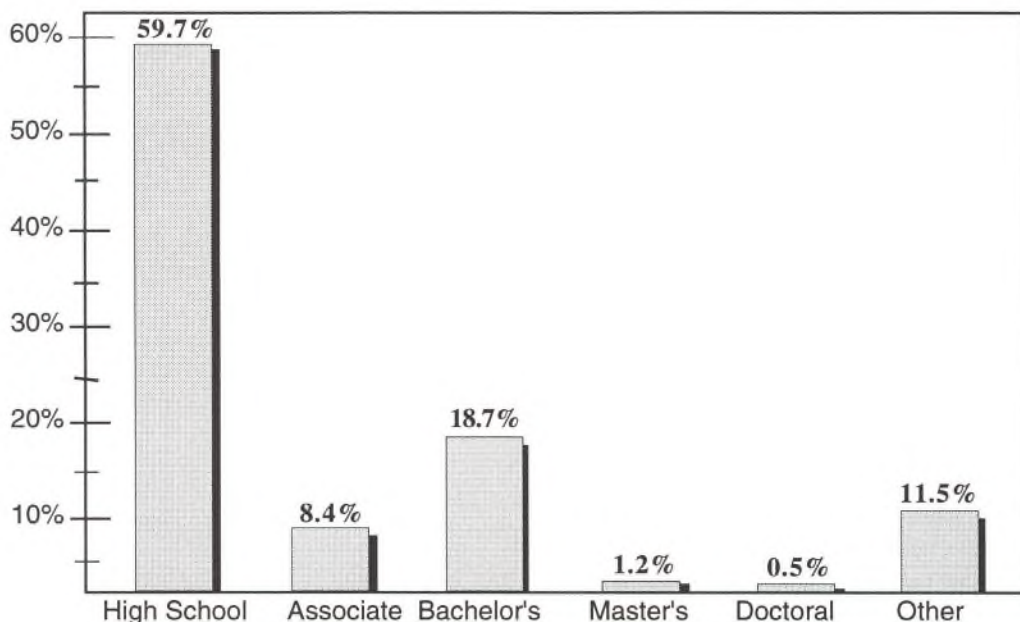


FIGURE 7.4
Non-chiropractic Education

Specialization

94.5% of the participants had no post-graduate specialty board eligibility or certification; 4.5% indicated that they had certification in areas other than those listed (Table 6.1).

Chiropractic Colleges Represented

Respondents next indicated the college which conferred their Chiropractic degree (Table 7.1). The percent of graduates from each Chiropractic college was as follows:

RMIT University	41.3%	Los Angeles	0.8%
(Previously Phillip Inst. of Tech.)		Sherman	0.7%
Sydney	24.6%	Life	0.6%
Palmer	17.0%	Northwestern	0.5%
Other	8.0%	New York	0.3%
Canadian Memorial	2.7%	Cleveland-Los Angeles	0.2%
Anglo-European	1.1%	Logan	0.2%
Cleveland-Kansas City	0.8%	Parker	0.2%
National	0.8%	Western States	0.2%

TABLE 7.1
Source of Chiropractic Degree*

Respondents' Work Environment

Relative to the respondents' work environment, 62.0% of those participating in the survey indicated that they currently practice in a setting in which they are the only doctor in the office; 36.1% indicated that there are two or more doctors in the office in which they practice. Approximately 0.2% indicated that they are working either as a junior associate or an examining doctor. The "other" category was marked by 1.6% of the respondents.

Practice Locations

68.7% of the participants indicated that they currently practice in one location; 31.3% of the participants indicated they practice in more than one location (Figure 7.5).

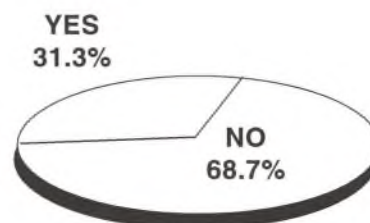


FIGURE 7.5
Do you practice in more than one office location?

* See Appendix for complete listing of colleges.

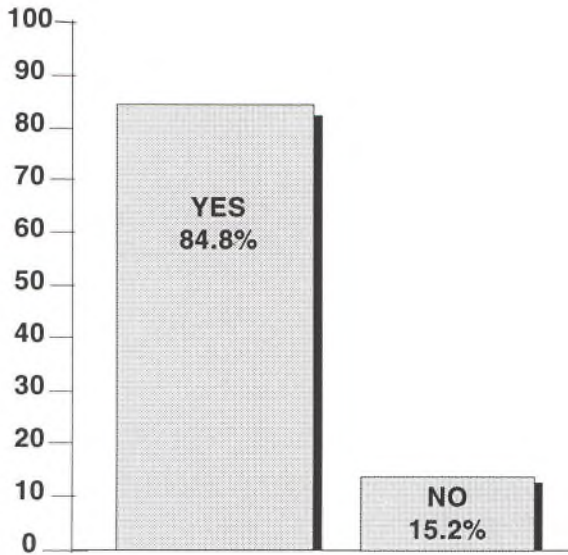


FIGURE 7.6
Do you ever deliver chiropractic care outside an office setting?

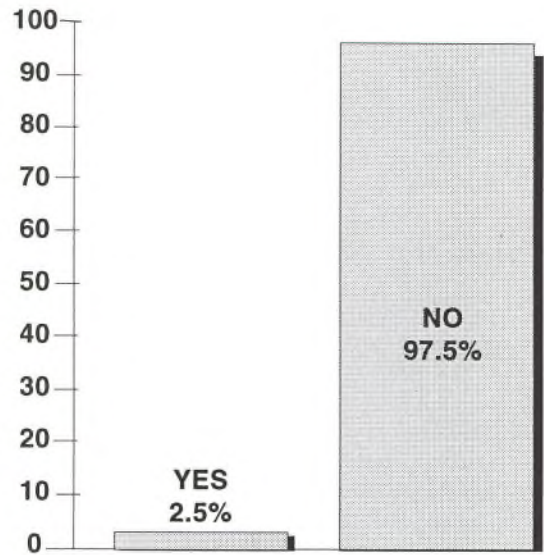


FIGURE 7.7
Do you have staff privileges at a hospital?

Delivery of Care

In regard to whether the respondents EVER delegate certain patient care to a chiropractic assistant, 33% indicated “yes” while 67% indicated “no” (Figure 7.8).

84.8% of the participants indicated that they do deliver chiropractic care outside the office setting and 15.2% indicated that they do not deliver care outside the office setting (Figure 7.6).



FIGURE 7.8
Do you delegate some of your patient care to a chiropractic assistant?

Hospital Staff Privileges

In regard to having staff privileges at a hospital, 2.5% indicated that they do and 97.5% indicated that they do not (Figure 7.7).

Chiropractors referred to and received referrals from medical practitioners. Of the survey respondents, 93.2% reported that they had received referrals from medical physicians within the past two years, while 6.8% indicated they had not.

Experience and Orientation

The initial survey questions established the length of time the practitioners had been practicing in the state in which they are currently located. In answer to these questions, 45.9%

indicated that they had been practicing for 5 to 15 years in their current state; another 23.9% had been practicing for more than 15 years, and 30.2% indicated that they had been practicing for less than 5 years (Figure 7.9).

Total Length of Practice

Responses as to how long they had been in practice altogether, including their current state and other states or countries, were very similar to the previous survey question regarding experience and orientation. A total of 49.6% had been practicing 5 to 15 years; 28.6% had been practicing more than fifteen years, and 21.9% had been practicing less than five years (Figure 7.10).

Clinical Orientation

When asked to indicate the type of clinical orientation the survey respondents had

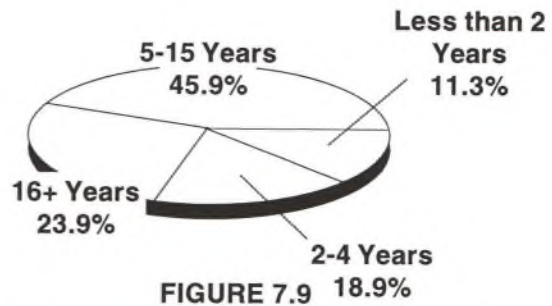


FIGURE 7.9
How long have you been in practice in the state in which you are currently located?

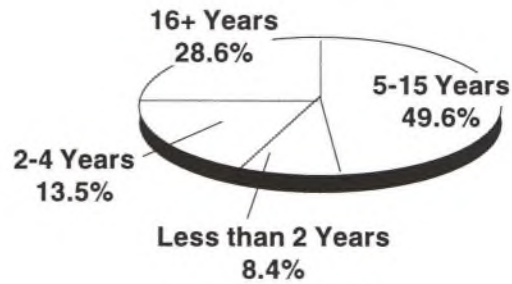


FIGURE 7.10
How long have you been practicing altogether?

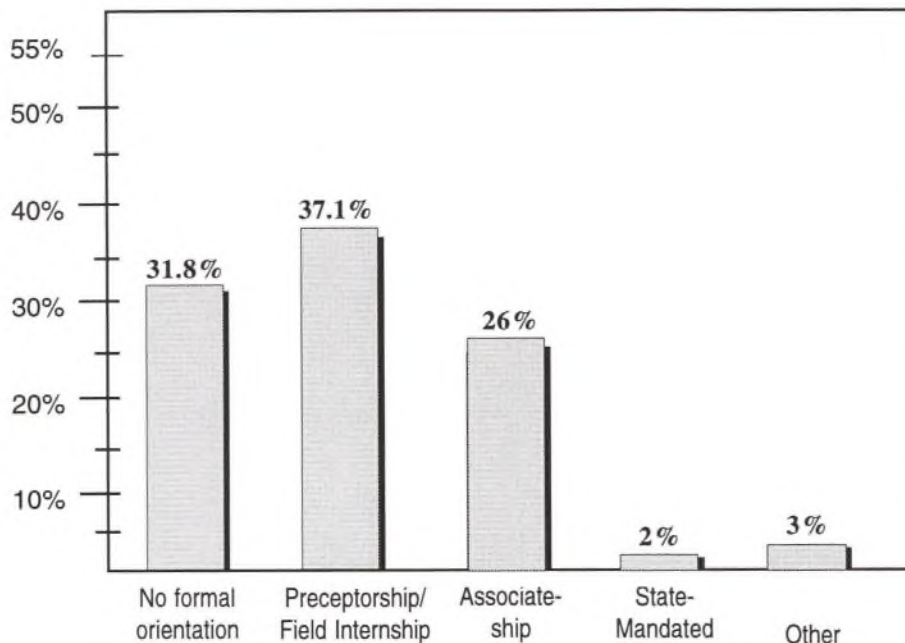


FIGURE 7.11
What kind of orientation did you receive in your first field practice setting?

received in their first practice setting, the following responses were given as indicated in Figure 7.11: 31.8% indicated they had received no formal orientation, 37.1% said they had a preceptorship or field internship, 26% had an associateship while 2% indicated they had a state-mandated program. The “other” category was designated by 3% or fewer of the respondents.

Breakdown of Time/Types of Patients

In exploring the percentage of time chiropractors typically spend on various aspects of their practices (business management, direct patient care, patient education, and research), information was gathered by way of a percentage scale with five answer choices. Additionally, respondents indicated patient Sex, Age, Ethnic Origin, and Occupation on a similar 5-point scale.

The mid-point of the percentage range was utilized to calculate each overall percentage (Figure 7.12). For example, if the respondent indicated that 1-25% of his/her time was spent on

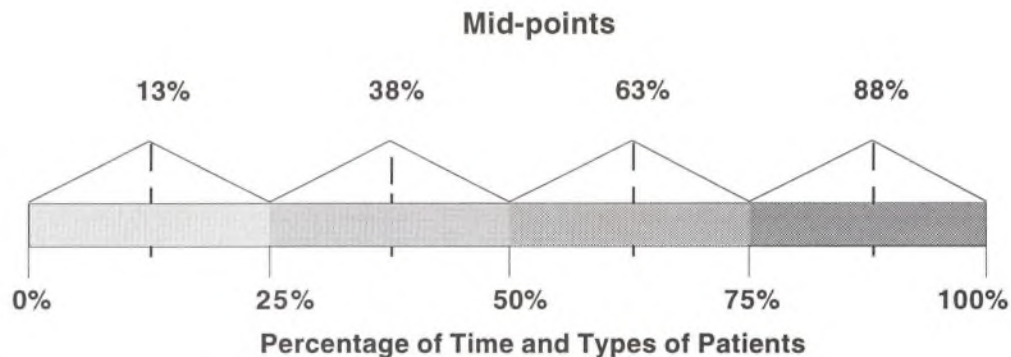


FIGURE 7.12

A mid-point of the percentage range was utilized to calculate an overall percentage for practitioners' use of time and patient demographics (pages 3-4 of the survey).

research, this was converted to a mid-point of 13%. In like manner, the 26-50% answer choice was converted to a mid-point value of 38%; 51-75% to 63%; and 76-100% to 88%. (Data were scaled within each question so that the score totaled 100%.)

By scoring responses in this manner, an average percentage was calculated. (Standard errors for these questions were similar to other questions reported on a percentage scale.) The respondents indicated that 58.6% of their time is typically spent on direct patient care, while patient education involved 19.8% of their time, with approximately 15.3% spent on business management. Little or no time (6.4%) was spent on research. (Percentages for patient demographic data were obtained in the same manner and are reported on pages 52 and 72.)