

Other health care workers

Introduction

Other health care workers are those who also work in the primary health sector and have not already been covered in earlier sections of this report. This includes any health care worker other than GPs, primary health care nurses, oral health workers and complementary and alternative health care workers.

What were the survey questions?

In the 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey, adult participants and parents of child participants were asked how many times they had seen another health care worker about their own (or their child's) health. A show card which listed the following types of health care workers was used:

- Well Child nurse
- other nurse
- pharmacist
- physiotherapist
- chiropractor
- osteopath
- dietitian
- optician or optometrist
- occupational therapist
- speech-language therapist
- midwife
- mental health worker (eg, social worker, psychologist or counsellor).

Use of a Well Child nurse for children aged under five years

Well Child nurses include Plunket nurses as well as other community workers who provide support services for the development, health and wellbeing of children under five years of age.

Over half (54.6%, 51.4–57.9) of children aged under five were reported by their parent to have seen a Well Child nurse in the previous 12 months. European/Other (SRR 1.05, 1.02–1.09) children aged under five years were significantly more likely than all children aged under five years to have seen a Well Child nurse in the previous 12 months. There were no significant differences for those who saw a Well Child nurse by gender or neighbourhood deprivation.

For those who saw a Well Child nurse in the previous 12 months, the median number of visits was two.

Use of other health care workers in the previous 12 months

Other types of health care workers most commonly seen by children in the previous 12 months, other than a Well Child nurse, were pharmacists, followed by opticians then midwives. Other types of health care workers most commonly seen by adults in the previous 12 months were pharmacists, followed by physiotherapists and opticians (Table 6.12).

Table 6.12: Use of other health care workers in the previous 12 months for children and adults (unadjusted)

Type of health care worker	Prevalence in children (95% CI)	Prevalence in adults (95% CI)
Pharmacist	8.8 (7.8–9.9)	18.4 (17.4–19.3)
Physiotherapist	2.7 (2.1–3.4)	13.0 (12.2–13.7)
Chiropractor	3.0 (2.4–3.6)	5.4 (4.9–5.9)
Osteopath		4.4 (3.9–4.9)
Dietitian	0.9 (0.5–1.3)	1.9 (1.6–2.2)
Optician or optometrist	6.1 (5.0–7.2)	12.9 (12.1–13.7)
Occupational therapist	0.7 (0.4–1.2)	0.8 (0.6–1.0)
Speech-language therapist	2.3 (1.7–2.9)	–
Midwife	5.3 (4.6–6.1)	2.9 (2.5–3.2)
Psychologist, counsellor or social worker	3.3 (2.5–4.0)	3.5 (3.1–3.9)

Source: 2006/07 New Zealand Health Survey

Note: – indicates that numbers were very small. Chiropractor and Osteopath were not asked about separately in the child questionnaire.