

WELLSOUTH PRIMARY CARE SURVEY SUMMARY

NOVEMBER 2024

WHY WE DO THIS

First launched in 2024, this survey evolved from the earlier COVID-19 monthly workforce surveys. Now held every six months, it's designed to regularly capture your perspectives. This helps WellSouth better understand what's happening in primary care and focus our support where it's needed most.

THREE CORE THEMES

Your feedback revealed three strong themes that reflect the ongoing pressures in primary care. These challenges are not new — they've remained consistent across surveys and stem from wider system issues. Each theme is closely connected, with workforce shortages, funding constraints, and growing demand all compounding each other.

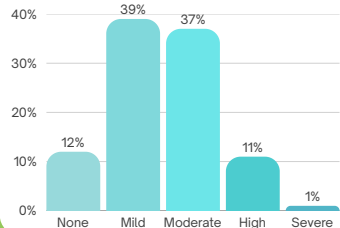
1. WORKFORCE

"We support each other", but it's not enough to ease the strain "We're on a knife edge — so we are vulnerable"

Recruitment, retention, and burnout remain persistent pressures in primary care. These long-standing challenges are heightened by rising demand and limited resourcing. While morale and job satisfaction appear stable, they're often upheld by team culture rather than system support. With GPs and Nurses in short supply, pressure is mounting putting long-term sustainability at risk.

"The whole health workforce likely needs a holiday to the Gold Coast."

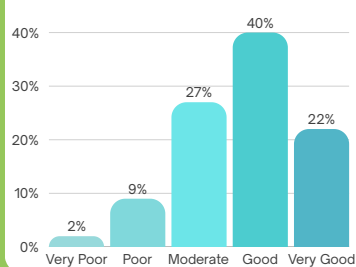
Current Levels of Burnout



- 62% rated morale as good or very good.
- Nearly half of respondents reported moderate to severe burnout.

While morale appears high, many comments highlight growing burnout as a quiet undercurrent — fuelled by administrative burden, rising patient complexity, and the ongoing demands of under-resourced care, even among those reporting high morale.

Current Mood and Morale in General Practice



WHO TOOK PART

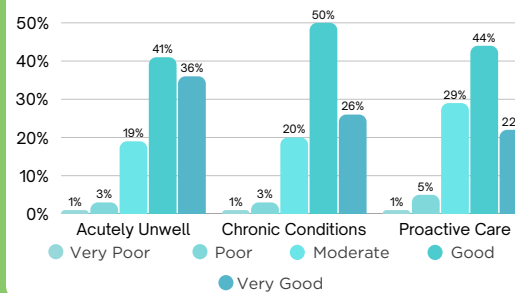
We received **143 responses** from across the primary care workforce, including GPs, Nurses, Practice Managers, Administrators and others.

- At least **30% of practices** were represented (likely more - 71% didn't share their practiced name)
- 45% were from rural areas and 55% urban**, closely matching our regional makeup.

2. CAPACITY

Proactive Care "has to take a back seat if we are busy fighting fires at the bottom of the cliff."

Practice Capacity to Meet Demand In Key Areas



Capacity remains strongest in acute care, but there's a clear gap between what practices want to provide and what's manageable. Rising complexity and time pressures are forcing teams to prioritise immediate care over proactive care.

3. FUNDING

Primary Care "is only surviving because GPs are personally propping up the system."

With funding, there was frustration over outdated, complex systems that don't reflect the realities of primary care. Key concerns included:

- Lack of transparency around funding and how it's distributed
- Complex processes with limited flexibility
- Underfunded services, Nurse pay parity and rural funding shortfalls

"Make it easier for us to get the funding needed to provide the care we want to provide."

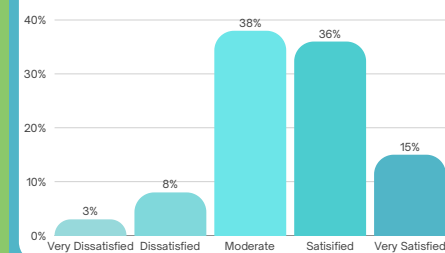
ADVOCACY & SUPPORT

Many providers value WellSouth's support, but the survey highlighted a desire for greater visibility and clarity around our advocacy efforts — including who we're speaking to, on what issues, and what's being achieved. Support from key staff and clinical programmes is valued,

though some providers wanted clearer communication about team roles and the advocacy WellSouth provides.

"The [WellSouth] team are readily available to answer questions, even if the answer is not necessarily what we are wanting."

How You Rated WellSouth's Support



WHAT WE ARE DOING

We've taken your feedback on board, and the findings are now informing work plans across WellSouth. These are some of the actions underway:

- Developing a **video and poster** outlining **PHO funding streams** and services.
- Introducing **CEO drop-in sessions** to share sector updates and invite open Q&A.
- Exploring **practical ways** to support practices experiencing **burnout**.
- Supporting workload management through **inbox delegation frameworks** and **safe use of AI**.
- Scoping options to improve **locum cover**.
- Improve communications** around **Population Health Pharmacist roles** and referrals.
- Delivering **Pacific health training** aligned with provider needs.
- Updating our website to better communicate **our team roles and support available to practices**.