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Private practice dietetics workforce: A review of the literature

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Private practice is the fastest growing employment sector for dietitians in Australia, including for new graduates⁽¹⁾. There is an anecdotal concern that current graduate cohorts are not adequately prepared for private practice. The present study aims to assess the existing literature relevant to workforce development specific to private practice dietetics, including areas such as workforce size, distribution, competency, practices and global challenges. The secondary aim is to identify gaps in the literature to inform future priority areas and to inform private practice dietetics workforce development research. Five databases were systematically searched from inception to August 2023 and grey-literature was searched using the Google search engine using key search terms to identify studies for inclusion. Of the 2361 peer-reviewed publications and 1800 grey literature, eighty were included. Directed content analysis and qualitative constant comparison technique were used to deductively extract data from eligible private practice literature. Intelligence sources covering the following themes proved to be limited: workforce size, distribution, attributes, demography, supply/preparation, competencies, continued professional development and challenges. However, clear structural issues present workforce challenges for private practice dietitians. There is an overwhelming paucity of comprehensive literature on the private practice dietetics workforce across the world. Private practice dietetics workforce development research is warranted to address current research gaps in a coordinated, collaborative approach to ensure this rapidly expanding workforce is well supported.

Keywords: private practice dietitian; workforce; dietetics; education

Ethics Declaration

No

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Reference

1. Heafala A, Mitchell LJ & Williams LT (2021) *Nurs & Health Sci* 23, 723–32.