

## **Workforce Survey 2008**

The purpose of this survey was to update the demographic and qualification information gained from the 2005 survey, and to collect additional information about what support and service you would like from a professional association if there were one for pharmacy technicians and pharmacy assistants.

### **Summary of Main Findings**

There was a good spread of respondents from around the country and the ratio of respondents from community and hospital was in line with the estimated numbers of support staff in these areas.

We had an increase in the number of male respondents this year which confirms a noticeable increase in the number of male technicians enrolling into the National Certificate recently, all of them from overseas.

The 16-26 year age group continues to have the highest numbers and it is interesting to note that there is a 3% drop in those aged 60+. The increase in the 36-45 age group suggests that there is a slight increase in those either returning to the workforce or entering it for the first time, possibly after raising a family.

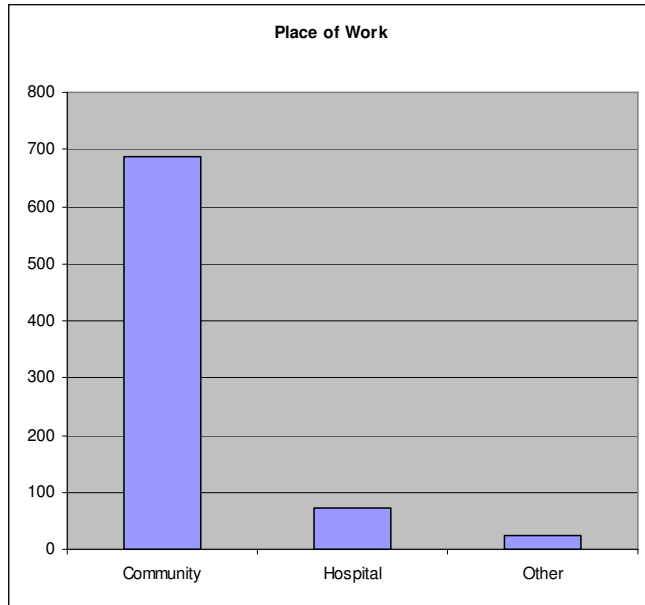
Overall, there was little change in the demographic information from 2005, or in the spread of qualifications. In 2005 we asked pharmacy assistants if they would be interested in training as a technician to which there was a very low response rate of 11.3%. This time we asked whether they would be interested in achieving the National Certificate for Pharmacy Assistants and got a much more positive response of 32%. If you responded to this question, Tina will be in touch with you before the end of the year.

The percentage of those wishing to engage in continuing professional development has risen just under 10% from 68.8% to 78%, with as much interest being expressed by assistants as technicians. We are working closely with the College of Pharmacists to provide opportunities for those holding the National Certificate (either technician or assistant) to broaden their skills and knowledge.

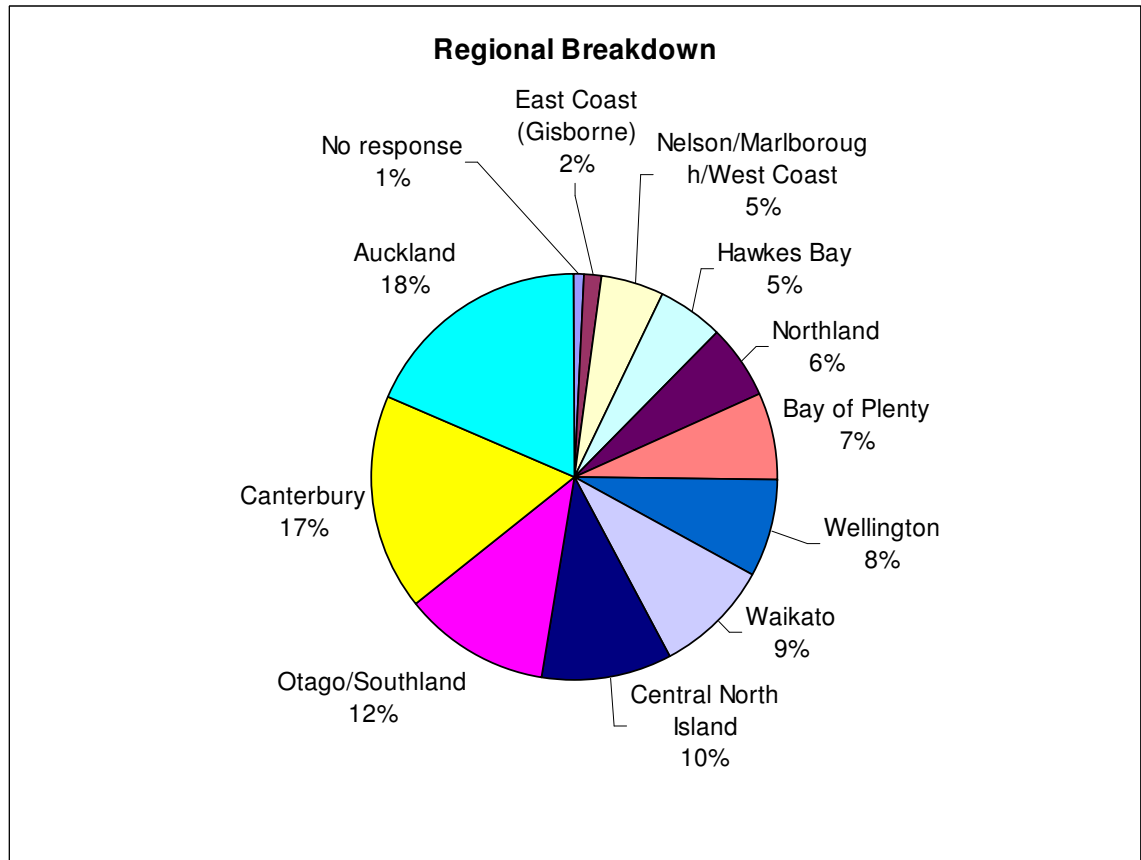
An encouraging 46% of respondents chose to comment on the benefits to be offered by a professional association and how they thought PITO could raise the profile of pharmacy technicians and assistants.

While the most frequent comment was a request for more post qualification training, there is evidence of growing concern amongst technicians as to their protection should they make an error and also the general lack of public awareness of the job that they do and the level of responsibility they hold.

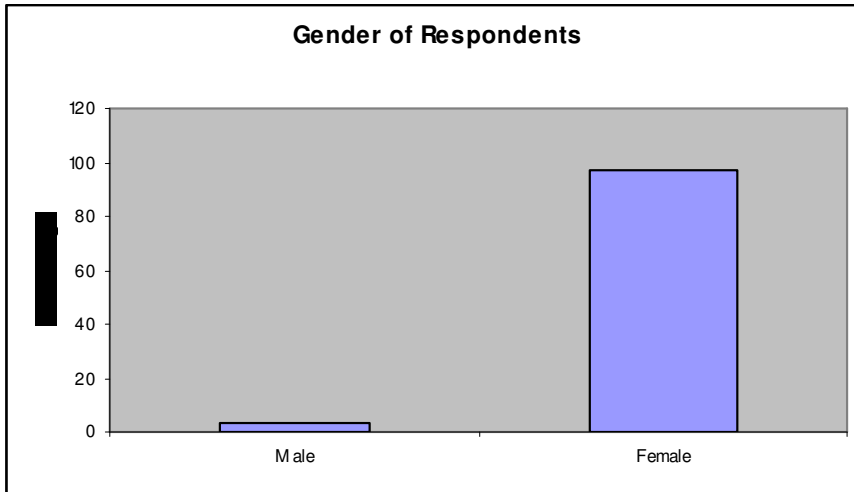
# Findings



The response rate was reasonable with a good geographical spread of pharmacy assistants and technicians from both community and hospital pharmacy. 3% of respondents chose other which included manufacturing.

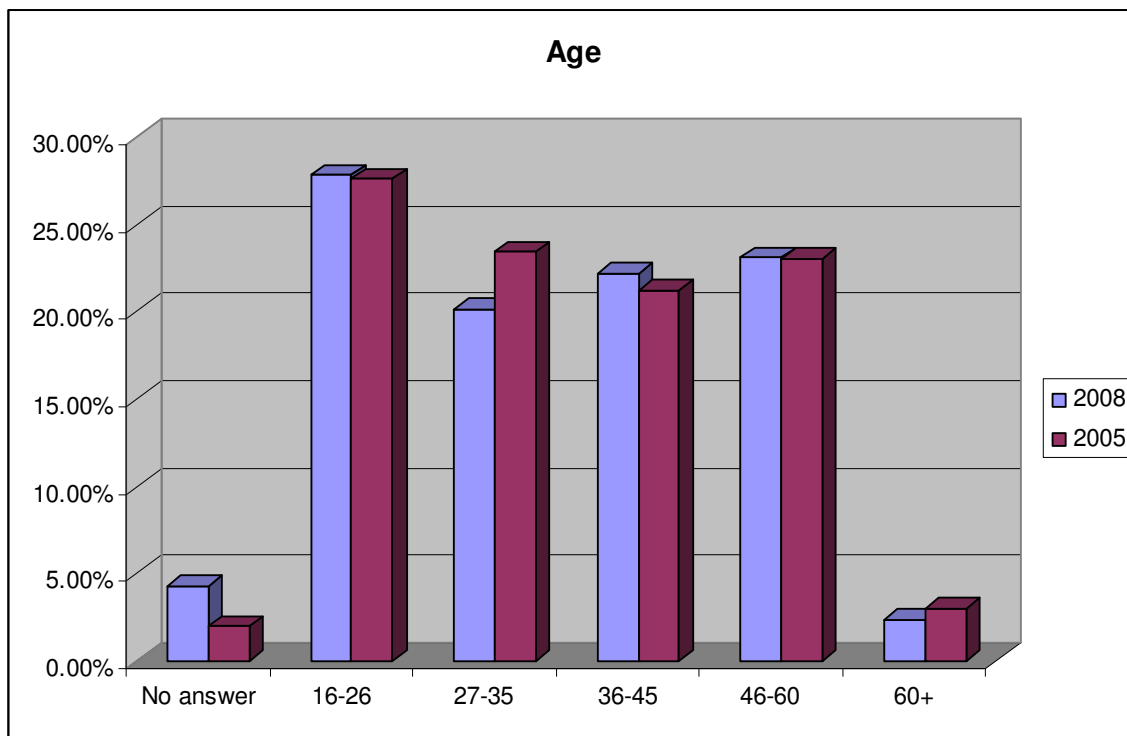


## Demographics



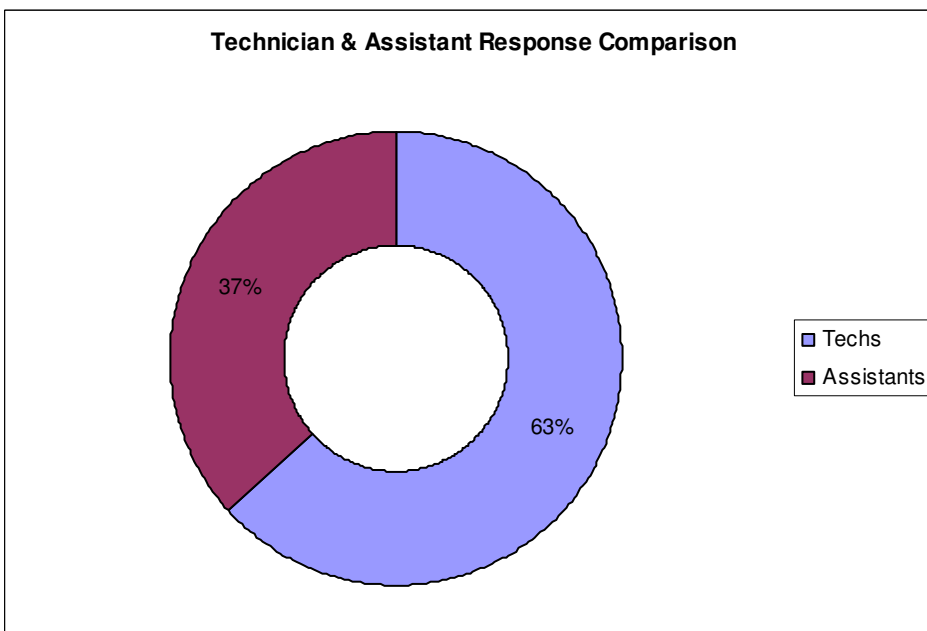
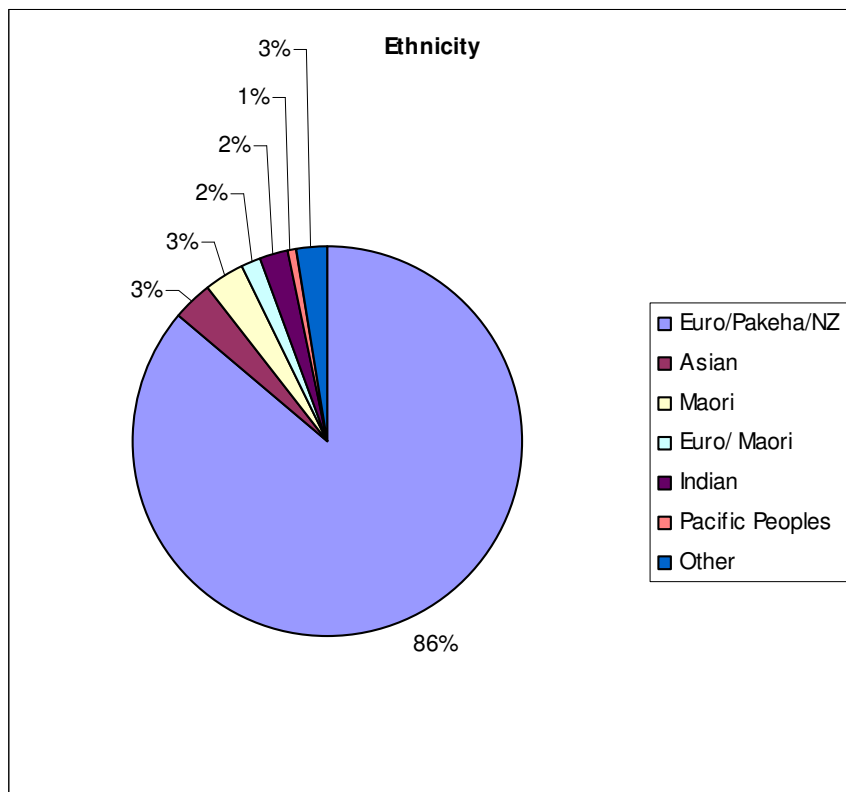
There was an increase in male respondents this year – up from 1.75% to 3%, all are pharmacy technicians from overseas.

Age-wise, there was a slight growth in the percentage of respondents aged 16-26 and 36-45 of 0.2% and 1% respectively and decrease in the 27-35 group of 3.2% and the 60+ group of 0.6%.



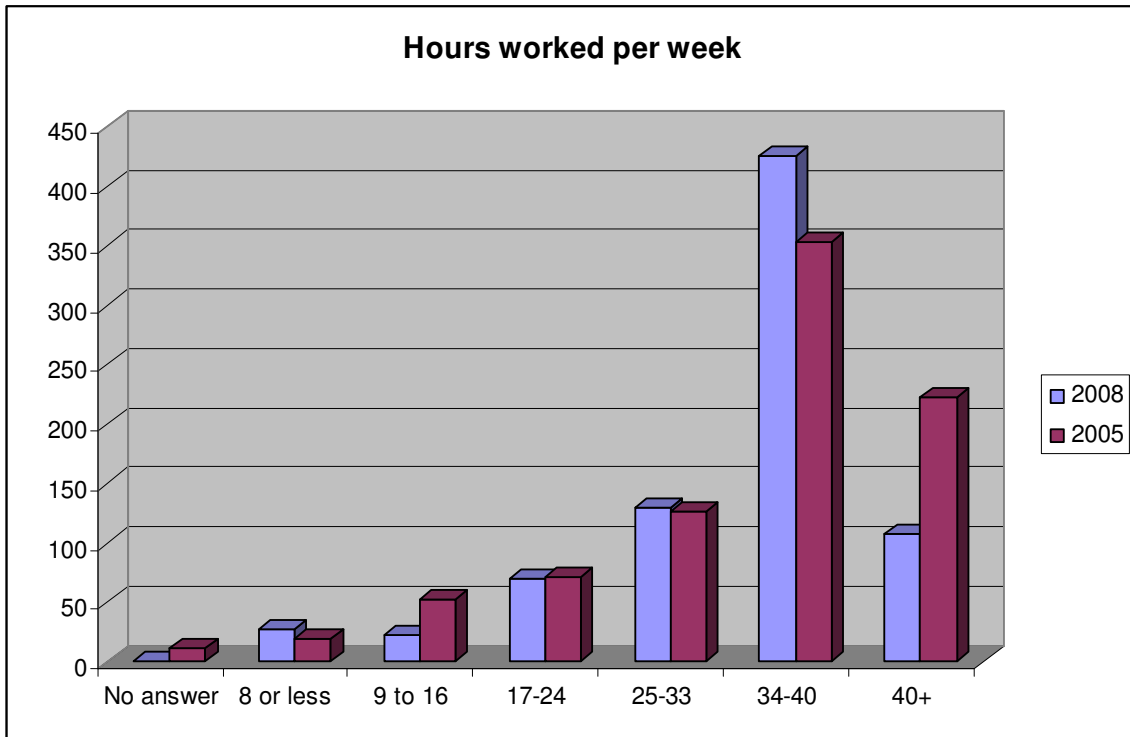
We altered the ethnic groupings this year and requested that respondents tick only one box.

Results showed a reduction in those identifying as Maori from 8.61% to 3% while Asian and Pacific Peoples remained very similar. There was a reduction of 3% in those identifying themselves as European/Pakeha however, 2% identified as European/Maori.

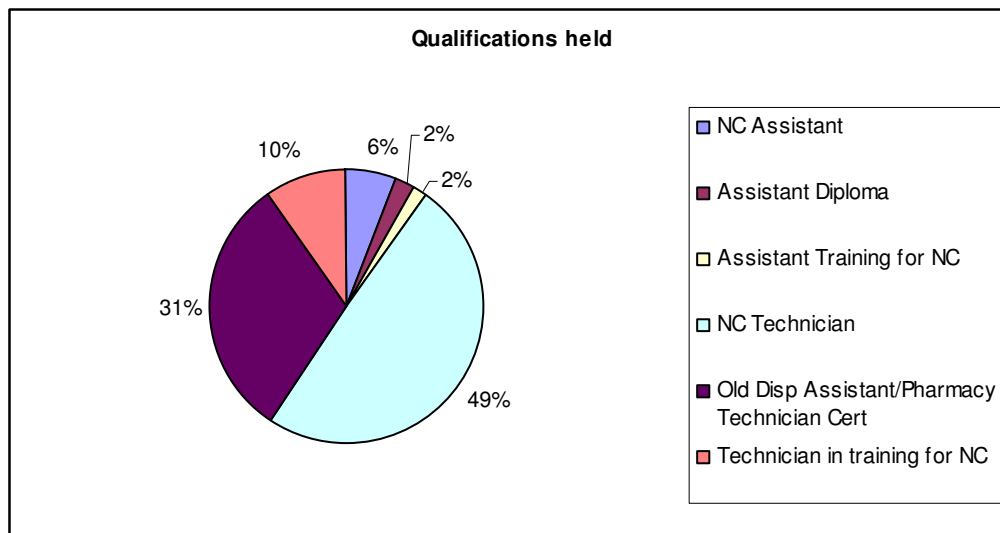


63% of responses were from pharmacy technicians and 37% from pharmacy assistants,

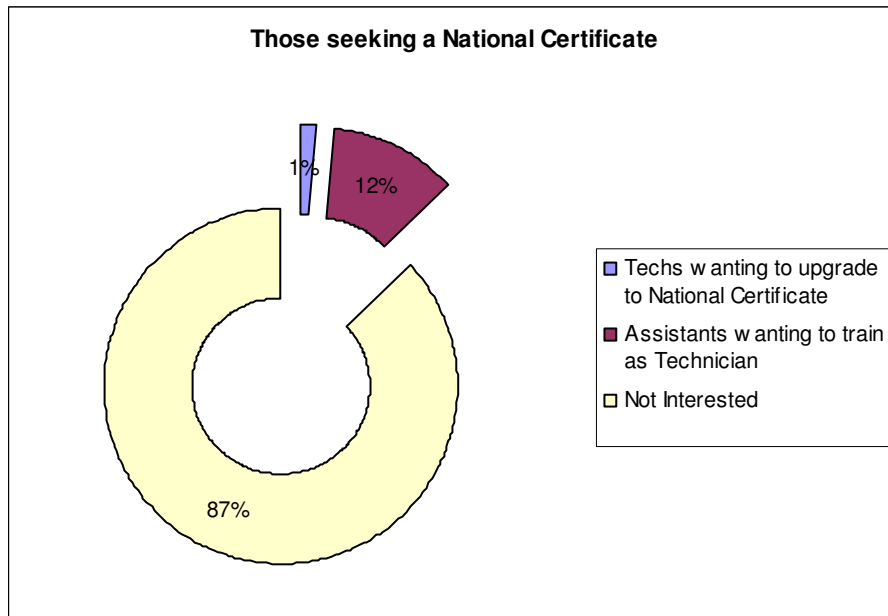
Looking at the hours worked, there appears to be a reduction of 6% in the number of pharmacy support staff working less than 30 hours per week as well as a reduction of 13% in those working over 40 hours, indicating a possible trend towards more full-time positions.



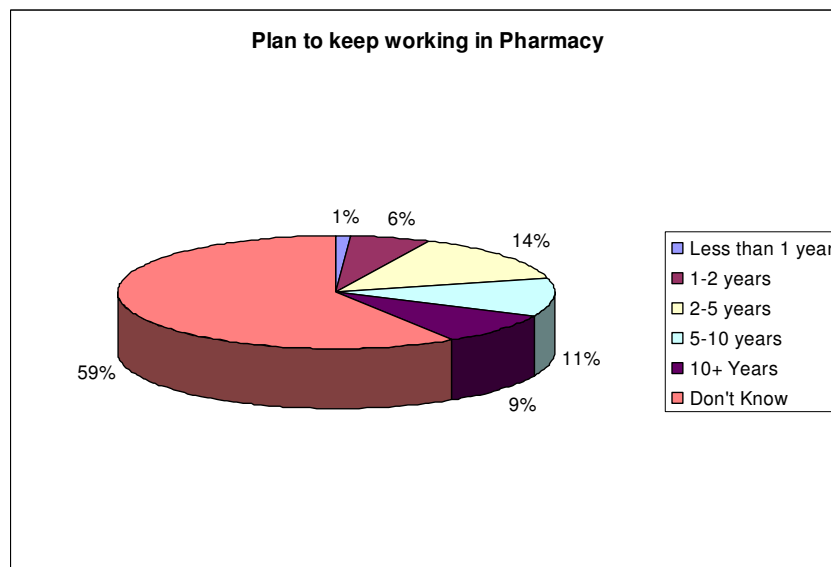
All pharmacy technician respondents held a New Zealand qualification or were in training to achieve the National Certificate. The number of pharmacy assistant respondents in training to achieve the National Certificate was 2% with 6% holding the National Certificate and 2% holding the old New Zealand Pharmacy Assistant's Diploma.



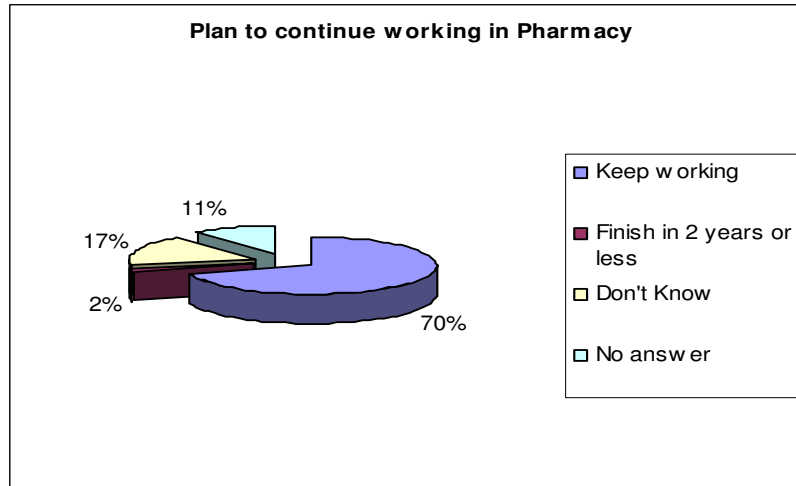
32% of assistant respondents expressed interest in gaining the National Certificate, with 2% of technicians holding an old NZ qualification being interested in upgrading to the current National Certificate.



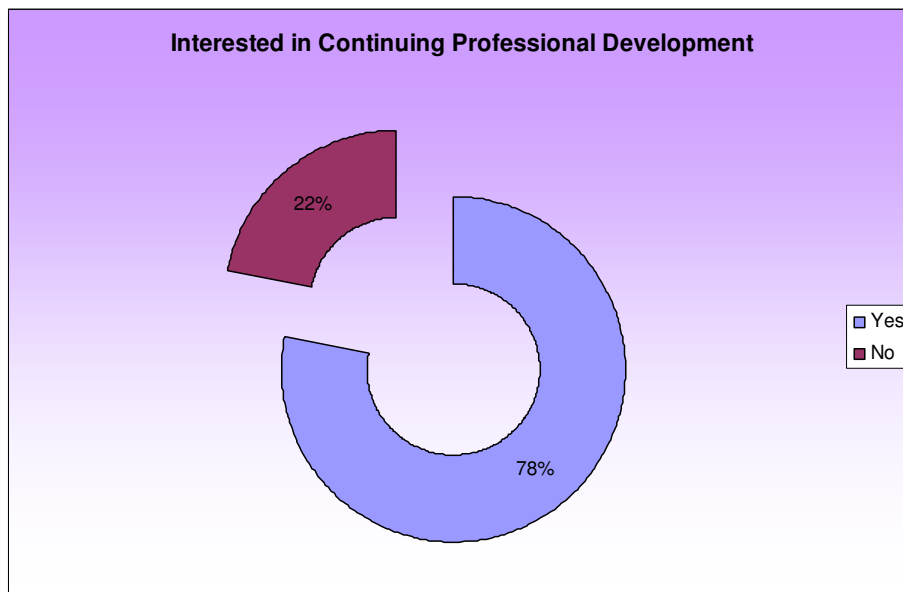
### Looking to the Future



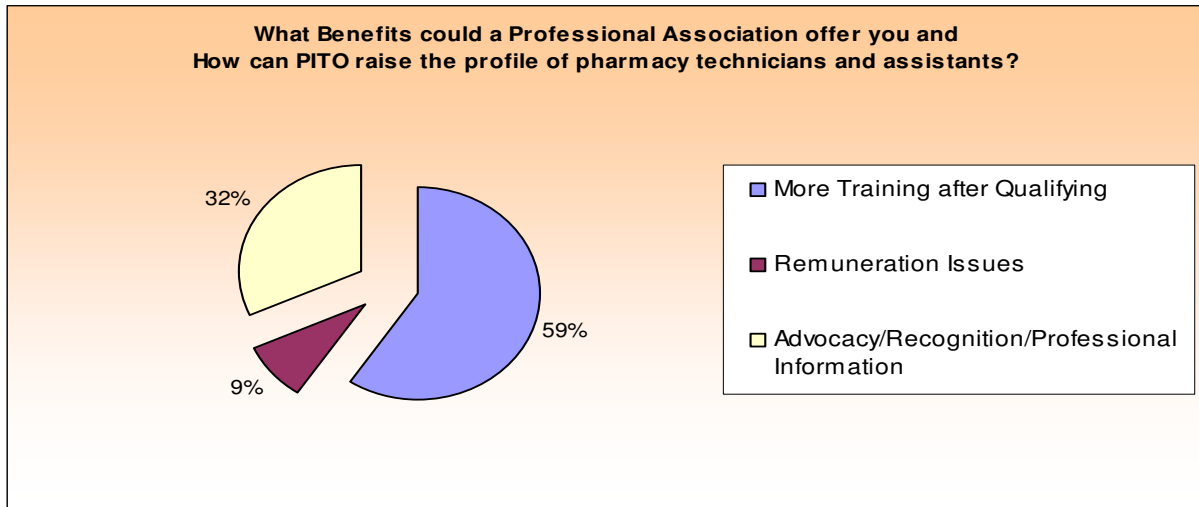
Of those who responded to this question, 70% plan to keep working, 2% expect to finish work within the next two years and 17% and 11% respectively either didn't know how long they would continue working, or didn't answer this part of the question.



When asked whether or not they were interested in undertaking additional study to continue their professional development, 78% of all respondents expressed interest.



We asked what would be the most important benefits a professional organisation could offer and also asked for ideas on how PITO can raise the profile of pharmacy technicians and assistants. The answers given to these two questions were, in many cases, interchangeable. We have therefore combined the responses:



It was interesting to note the number of comments concerning the lack of public awareness of the role of pharmacy technician and the associated responsibilities. We will be considering how best to address these issues over the coming months.

### Website Access

17% of respondents accessed the PITO website on a regular basis. Of those accessing the website regularly, 89% said that they found it useful.

Of those that had never accessed the website, a significant number said that while they hadn't previously been aware that it existed, they would now go and have a look.

There were a small number of respondents who had gone into the website and said that they would now use it and found the information and resources useful.

