

Short-term job demand sign of times

WITH the flow-on from the global economic crisis now on our doorstep, many employers have moved ahead in their plans to recession-proof their businesses.

A large part of this shift has involved taking on contract, temporary and part-time workers, with the rise in this type of employment clearly evident in recent months.

Towards the end of last year, 43,500 part-time positions were created nationally - the most since April, 2001 - compared with the loss of 9200 full-time jobs. It's a trend that looks set to continue.

Most notably in the administration sector, temp receptionists and office professionals are continually in demand.

While temp work can mean taking a risk financially, the variety of industries and professions you come into contact with can be rewarding. The length of placements is also negotiable, with long-term and short-term contracts available.

Entree Recruitment general manager Nicole Underwood says her experience in the field certainly points to a rise in part-time positions, with "clients more likely to put permanent recruitment decisions on hold".

A not so bitter pill

Jessica Leo

AS the state's doctor shortage intensifies, the role of pharmacists and pharmacy assistants is taking on new meaning. Once a simple dispensary, the pharmacy is now a one-stop shop for basic medical consults and alternative health and wellness programs as well as the traditional prescription.

While government funding in recent years has allowed more university places in an attempt to stem pharmacist shortages, the professional demand is still there.

Pharmacy Guild of South Australia state president Ian Todd says the face of the industry is constantly evolving.

"As doctors have become less and less accessible - there being a shortage of doctors and more people with chronic diseases - pharmacists are doing a lot more," Mr Todd says.

"The pharmacy is usually the first port of call now for people with basic ailments."

And while the doctor shortage is expected to ultimately be resolved, Mr Todd says this is unlikely to diminish the role or importance of pharmacists. "Even after that you don't go backwards...and it allows

doctors (the time) to deal with chronic diseases," he says.

Pharmacist Daniel Ravalico, who owns Norwood Place Amcal, agrees, saying that even the layout of pharmacies has changed in recent years to accommodate a broader consulting role.

"Pharmacists generally wouldn't move out of the dispensary. Now I tend to serve a lot more in the shop and we have provided areas for counselling," Mr Ravalico says.

Having followed his father into the industry, Mr Ravalico says he grew up in pharmacy and sees it as a rewarding and highly considered profession.

"I saw my father as well respected among his peers and in the community," he says.

"What I like about it is when you give someone a piece of advice and it works for them.

"It's a very rewarding job and you get to meet new people."

In terms of the growing need for pharmacists, Mr Ravalico says the evidence is well and truly there.

"There's always demand for pharmacists, especially in the country, and it's always hard to find relieving pharmacists when you want some time off," he says.



WELL PRESCRIBED: Daniel Ravalico, who owns Norwood Place Amcal, admits there is a growing need for pharmacists. **Picture:** Alice Prokopec



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