

Canada's Health Workforce: A Snapshot



Regulated Nurses

- More than 360,000 regulated nurses were employed in Canada in 2011, representing an increase of approximately 8% since 2007. This total includes registered nurses, nurse practitioners, registered psychiatric nurses¹ and licensed practical nurses.
- The number of regulated nurses per 100,000 population also increased between 2007 and 2011, from 1,011 to 1,046.
- The average age of regulated nurses in Canada was 44.8 in 2011.
- More than 56% of regulated nurses were employed on a full-time basis in 2011, a slight increase from 2007.
- Between 2007 and 2011, the number of nurse practitioners doubled from 1,344 to 2,777. This growth is due, in part, to increased provincial/territorial investment in NPs and in part to additional jurisdictions submitting NP data to CIHI.

Notes

¹ Registered psychiatric nurses are regulated separately in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia and Yukon. CIHI data does not include RPNs in Yukon.

(Canadian Institute for Health Information. Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2007 to 2011. Ottawa, ON: CIHI; 2012.)

Occupational Therapists (OTs)

- From 2006 to 2011, the supply of registered occupational therapists (OTs) grew by 14.6%, reaching a total of 13,501.
- The OT workforce was predominantly female (91.8%) and more than half (55.6%) were younger than 40 years.
- Nearly two-thirds of the OT workforce (62.8%) were employed on a full-time basis, one-third (33.0%) on a part-time basis.
- Just more than 7% of the OT workforce (7.1%) was educated outside of Canada, while the remainder (92.8%) obtained their basic education in occupational therapy in Canada

Pharmacists

- The supply of registered pharmacists in Canada grew by 19.8% between 2006 and 2011 reaching a total of 32,132.
- More than half of pharmacists in 2011 were female (59.7%) and the average age was 43.5 years.
- Of the five jurisdictions (Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, B.C. and Yukon) whose data was included in the international graduate analysis, 27.4% of pharmacists were educated outside of Canada.
- Findings indicated that more than three-quarters of the pharmacist workforce (75.4%) was employed in commu-

Facts-at-a-Glance

nity pharmacies, followed by 18.7% employed in hospitals and other health care facilities. A higher percentage of males (83.4%) worked in community pharmacies than females (70.1%).

- Almost two-thirds (64.2%) of pharmacists were employed as staff pharmacists, followed by 29.8% who were employed as pharmacy owners/managers. A higher percentage of males (44.4%) worked as pharmacy owners/managers than females (20.0%).

(Canadian Institute for Health Information. Pharmacists in Canada, 2011 – National and Jurisdictional Highlights. Ottawa, ON: CIHI; 2012)

Physiotherapists

- The supply of registered physiotherapists in Canada grew by 7.5% between 2007 and 2011 (excluding the Northwest Territories and Nunavut), reaching a total of 17,653.
- More than three-quarters of physiotherapists in 2011 were female (77.1%) and the average age was 41.9 years.
- More than one-tenth (11.9%) of practising physiotherapists were educated outside of Canada.
- Findings indicate that the physiotherapist workforce was employed almost equally in hospital settings (39.7%) and group or solo professional practice settings (36.9%), with community settings accounting for 12.9%.
- Almost half (49.5%) of physiotherapists worked in the public sector.

(Canadian Institute for Health Information. Physiotherapists in Canada, 2011 – National and Jurisdictional Highlights. Ottawa, ON: CIHI; 2012)

Medical Radiation Technologists (MRT)

- In 2011, Canada had 17,674 registered MRTs in the workforce.
- In 2011, the majority of MRTs were female, representing approximately 80% of the registered workforce and the average age of the MRT workforce was 42.
- The majority of MRTs in seven provinces (Newfoundland and Labrador, P.E.I., New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta) and the three territories, in 2011, held a diploma (approximately 94%) as their basic level of education for entry to practice.
- In 2011, for all jurisdictions except Nova Scotia, Alberta and B.C., the majority (84.6%) of MRTs were permanent employees, while more than 12% had either temporary or casual employment.
- For all jurisdictions combined (except Nova Scotia, Ontario,

Saskatchewan and B.C.) in 2011, more than three-quarters (76.4%) of MRTs worked in a hospital setting, ranging from 55.2% in Alberta to 96.0% in New Brunswick, reflecting different organizational structures and unique ways of delivering medical imaging services across the jurisdictions. More than one-tenth (13.4%) of MRTs worked in a free-standing imaging facility/clinic, while 3.9% worked in a cancer care centre.

(Canadian Institute for Health Information. Medical Radiation Technologists in Canada, 2011. Ottawa, ON: CIHI; 2012.)

Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLT)

- In 2011, Canada had 19,664 registered MLTs in the workforce.
- In 2011, the majority of MLTs were female, representing 85.4% of the workforce in the regulated provinces. Ontario had the lowest percentage of females (82.2%) and Saskatchewan had the highest (93.0%) and the average age for all MLTs in the regulated provinces was 45;
- In 2011, the majority of MLTs in the regulated provinces held a diploma (91.3%) as their basic level of education for entry to practice.
- In 2011, the top three areas in which MLTs practised were clinical chemistry (18.4%), hematology (16.5%) and transfusion medicine/science (13.6%) for Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta.
- More than three-quarters (76.5%) of MLTs in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba and Alberta worked in a hospital setting in 2011. A small number of MLTs worked in other settings, such as centralized diagnostic laboratories (7.3%), free-standing diagnostic laboratories (3.1%), public health laboratories/departments/units (2.6%), blood transfusion centres (1.9%) and post-secondary educational institutions (1.6%).

(Canadian Institute for Health Information. Medical Laboratory Technologists in Canada, 2011. Ottawa, ON: CIHI; 2012.)

Sources:

Breast Cancer Surgery in Canada, 2007-2008 to 2009-2010 Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) and the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer.

