

Physician Opportunities in Canada

Both students and residents have repeatedly called attention to the dearth of timely information with respect to which specialties will be in high demand by the time they have completed their education and training. While physician supply projection models can estimate what volume of physicians will be available in future years, full needs-based planning is required to project what services Canadians will require from physicians in the future. Some provincial governments use these kinds of models to help make funding decisions with respect to medical education.

Also of interest to students and residents is the annual number of retiring physicians by specialty; recent figures can be viewed within the specialty profiles at <https://www.cma.ca/En/Pages/specialty-profiles.aspx>. However, semi-retirement is difficult to measure and excluded from the data so the retirement figures shown may actually understate the need for replacement physicians.

Another tool is tracking, at a point in time, available opportunities posted on the various provincial/territorial government funded career websites. These sites are used to advertise physician positions available in communities and organizations such as health science centres (see attached links).

The information attached was compiled by visiting the various websites during a two week period in **August 2017**. Some sites contained very old postings that may or may not still be valid. If a posting date was available, anything before March 2017 was excluded.

The postings compiled are for **full-time permanent positions** so exclude locums and part-time positions (including those that may lead to full-time work) so it is an understatement of actual opportunities.

As with any profession, not all available positions are advertised. Often established networks among medical colleagues result in new physicians being offered full-time work based on their years of experience providing services as residents or fellows within a community or hospital. Also, not all opportunities are advertised on the government sites and may be posted elsewhere.

As an indicator of how the available opportunities align with the number and specialty of new physicians, the information attached includes the number and percent distribution of recent postgraduate exits from Canadian training programs. Note for instance that the number of dermatology opportunities in Canada in August 2017 was 81 whereas the 2016 output from the training programs was 23. CMA statistics show that 22% of dermatologists were 65 or older in January 2017¹.

¹ <https://www.cma.ca/Assets/assets-library/document/en/advocacy/03-spec-age.pdf>

Physician Opportunities by Province/Territory and Specialty, compiled as of August 2017 including posts still valid from March 2017; Excludes locums, part time and postings prior to March 2017

Specialty	NL	PEI	NS	NB	QC	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC	TERR	CANADA	% distn of positions	# of 2016 postgrad exits	% distn 2016 postgrad exits
Family Medicine	57	10	70	29	529	675	58	117	49	430	19	2,043	59.4%	1417	42.0%
MEDICAL SPECIALISTS	37	10	32	34	428	231	58	58	27	206	10	1,131	32.9%	1,358	40.3%
Anesthesiology	6	1	2	6		9	3	3	3	19		52	1.5%	134	4.0%
Critical Care Medicine						1				1		2	0.1%	33	1.0%
Dermatology				1	23	25		2		30		81	2.4%	23	0.7%
Diagnostic Radiology	2	1	6	3	23	3	1	9		9	1	58	1.7%	104	3.1%
Emergency Medicine	2			4	16	18		8	1	28		77	2.2%	76	2.3%
<i>Internal Med & Subspecialties</i>	9	3	9	8	171	80	5	18	5	39	8	355	10.3%	485	14.4%
Internal Medicine & GIM	8		2	1	31	45	1	7	1	21	5	122	3.5%	128	3.8%
Cardiology	1		1	2	8	9	2			3		26	0.8%	70	2.1%
Clinical Immun/Allergy					11	1						12	0.3%	11	0.3%
Clinical Pharm/Toxicol												0	0.0%	5	0.1%
Endocrinology/Met				2	10	6						18	0.5%	30	0.9%
Gastroenterology		1	2	2	9	1			1	2	3	21	0.6%	43	1.3%
Geriatric Medicine			2	1	51	3	1	1	1	3		63	1.8%	18	0.5%
Haematology		1			11	1		2		1		16	0.5%	28	0.8%
Infectious Diseases			1			2		1		4		8	0.2%	21	0.6%
Medical Oncology								2	1	2		5	0.1%	42	1.2%
Nephrology					18	1						19	0.6%	23	0.7%
Respirology		1	1		8	7		1	1	2		21	0.6%	35	1.0%
Rheumatology					14	4	1	4		1		24	0.7%	31	0.9%
Medical Genetics					10	1	1	1				13	0.4%	4	0.1%
Neurology	2		1	2	15	14	2		5	7		48	1.4%	60	1.8%
Nuclear Medicine					3		1		3	1		8	0.2%	8	0.2%
Paediatrics (incl subspec)	5	1	2	4	54	37	11	4		24		142	4.1%	186	5.5%
Physical Med/Rehab			1	2	22	1			2	6		34	1.0%	25	0.7%
Psychiatry	11	4	11	4	74	42	1	12	7	41	1	208	6.0%	180	5.3%
Public Health & Preventive Med					12							12	0.3%	16	0.5%
Radiation Oncology					5		2	1	1	1		10	0.3%	24	0.7%
LAB MEDICINE	6	0	3	1	33	6	2	4	2	6	0	63	1.8%	74	2.2%

SPECIALISTS															
Anatomical Pathology	3		3	1	16	1		1		2		27	0.8%	39	1.2%
General/Clinical Path	2							2		2		6	0.2%	7	0.2%
Haematologic Pathology	1					3	1		1	1		7	0.2%	6	0.2%
Medical Biochemistry					9	1			1			11	0.3%	5	0.1%
Medical Microbiology					8	1		1		1		11	0.3%	15	0.4%
Neuropathology							1					1	0.0%	2	0.1%
SURGICAL SPECIALISTS	8	0	4	18	97	47	7	5	3	14	1	204	5.9%	501	14.9%
Cardiac Surgery						1	1			1		3	0.1%	5	0.1%
Thoracic Surgery				2	4					2		8	0.2%	10	0.3%
General Surgery	2		1	2	14	12	1		1	2		35	1.0%	104	3.1%
Vascular Surgery					3							3	0.1%	12	0.4%
Neurosurgery					4			1				5	0.1%	22	0.7%
Obstetrics/Gynecology	3		1	6	6	12	2	2		5		37	1.1%	109	3.2%
Ophthalmology	1		1	4	13	4	1					24	0.7%	38	1.1%
Otolaryngology	1			3	6	3	1	1	2		1	18	0.5%	36	1.1%
Orthopaedic Surgery					7	7	1	1		3		19	0.6%	101	3.0%
Plastic Surgery					23	7						30	0.9%	28	0.8%
Urology	1		1	1	17	1				1		22	0.6%	36	1.1%
ALL SPECIALISTS	51	10	39	53	558	284	67	67	32	226	11	1,398	40.6%	1,933	57.3%
Administration						1	3			6	1		0.0%	0	0.0%
Hospitalists	1	1				5	1			13			0.0%	0	0.0%
Palliative	1												0.0%	21	0.6%
Other/unspecified						15							0.0%		0.0%
TOTAL ALL PHYSICIANS	110	21	109	82	1,087	980	129	184	81	675	31	3,441	100.0%	3,371	100.0%

Sources: Provincial/territorial government sponsored websites; 2017 CAPER Census

Notes:

1. Excludes locums and part-time positions
2. It is assumed that many opportunities are never posted and are filled through personal networks of colleagues known to be seeking employment. Therefore the total number of opportunities in the table are no doubt an understatement of positions available to new physicians.
3. For websites that include a posting date, those posted prior to March 2017 have been excluded. Duplicate postings were eliminated.
4. In Quebec, a provincial plan for family medicine positions is compiled only on an annual basis. The figures shown are for the year 2017.
5. In Alberta, a few clinics with multiple positions did not indicate the actual number of openings. For this table, it was assumed there were two which could be an undercount.

Links to career sites:

NL

<http://www.practicenl.ca/?/jobs/default.asp#2>

PEI

<http://www.healthjobspei.ca/index.php?number=1024780&lang=E>

NS

<http://physicians.novascotia.ca/opportunities.html>

NB

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/corporate/promo/careers_in_healthcare.html

QC

http://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/sujets/organisation/medecine/prem/index.php?postes_disponibles_prem_specialiste

http://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/sujets/organisation/medecine/prem/index.php?postes_disponibles_omnipratique

ON

<http://www.healthforceontario.ca/en/Home/Physicians>

MB

<http://www.healthcareersmanitoba.ca/>

SK

<http://www.saskdocs.ca/work/opportunities/>

AB

<http://apljobs.ca/jobs>

BC

<https://www.healthmatchbc.org/Jobs-in-BC/Find-a-Job>

Yuk

<http://www.yukonmd.ca/>

NU

<http://www.nunavut-physicians.gov.nu.ca/>

NWT

<http://www.practicenorth.ca/index.php?page=physicians>

