

Summary report



Physicians in Canada, 2019



Canadian Institute
for Health Information

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d'information sur la santé

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About CIHI's physician data

Collecting and reporting physician information assists decision-makers in health human resource planning, as well as in the distribution and funding of physicians. Information on the supply, distribution and migration of physicians from the data sources used for this report is available as far back as 1968, and information on physician service utilization and payments is published from 1996–1997 onward. The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) has collected this information since its inception in 1994, and has been reporting on it since 1997.

The *Physicians in Canada* release provides readers with a complete set of documents for physician-related data on the supply and distribution of physicians, their payments and the services they provide.

To ensure that our work reflects priority needs, we invite our readers to join the discussion using CIHI's Facebook page (facebook.com/CIHI.ICIS), Twitter account (twitter.com/CIHI_ICIS) or email (physicians@cihi.ca).

Any questions regarding this publication should be directed to

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More information

The following physician products are available on [CIHI's website](#):

- *Physicians in Canada, 2019* (report)
- *A profile of physicians in Canada, 2019* (infographic)
- *Supply, Distribution and Migration of Physicians in Canada, 2019* (data tables, historical data tables, methodology notes)
- *National Physician Database, 2018–2019* (payments and utilization data tables, historical payments and utilization data tables, methodology notes)
- *Physician Services Benefit Rates, 2018–2019* (data tables, methodology notes)

The following health workforce products are also available on [CIHI's website](#):

- *Nursing in Canada, 2019: A Lens on Supply and Workforce* (report)
- *A profile of nursing in Canada, 2019* (infographic)
- *Nursing in Canada, 2019* (data tables, methodology notes)
- *Health Workforce in Canada, 2019* (Quick Stats)
- *Canada's Health Care Providers, 2014 to 2018* (data tables, methodology notes)

Feedback and questions are welcome at physicians@cihi.ca.

Highlights

This report contains information on the supply of physicians in Canada, physician service utilization and payments to physicians that are administered through the provincial and territorial medical care plans. Data on the supply, distribution and migration of physicians is as of December 31, 2019. Service utilization and payments data is for fiscal year 2018–2019.

The number of physicians in Canada continues to increase, although growth slowed in 2019.

- 2019 saw the smallest single-year increase in the number of physicians since 2007. In 2019, there were 91,375 physicians in Canada, representing a 1.8% increase over 2018.
- Growth in the number of physicians kept pace with that of the population, and the number of physicians per 100,000 population remained unchanged at 241 in 2019.

The proportion of female physicians in Canada is rising, particularly among family medicine physicians.

- In 2019, 47.5% of family medicine physicians and 38.0% of specialist physicians in Canada were female. Since 2015, the number of female physicians in the workforce has increased by 19.2%, while the number of male physicians has increased by 5.8%.
- In 2019, Quebec had the highest proportion of female physicians, at 50.6%, while Prince Edward Island had the lowest, at 33.1%.

Clinical payments to physicians in Canada reached \$28.2 billion in 2018–2019.

- Total clinical payments to physicians increased 3.0% over the previous year to almost \$28.2 billion. Total clinical payments to physicians in Canada increased 13.4% over the 5 years from 2014–2015 to 2018–2019.
- Since 2012–2013, the proportion of clinical payments paid through fee for service has gradually increased from 70.6% to 72.6% of total clinical payments, a level last observed 9 years earlier.

The average gross payment per physician reached \$347,000 in 2018–2019.

- The average gross clinical payment per physician increased by just under 1% (0.9%) in 2018–2019 to \$347,000. It ranged from \$272,000 in Nova Scotia to \$391,000 in Alberta.
- The average gross clinical payment per family medicine physician remained unchanged in 2018–2019 at \$280,000. The average gross clinical payment per medical specialist and per surgical specialist increased 1.5% and 2.6% to \$363,000 and \$490,000, respectively.
- Some jurisdictions had increases in average payments, while others remained virtually unchanged. Changes in average payments ranged from an increase of 6.1% in Newfoundland and Labrador (\$291,000) to virtually no change in New Brunswick (\$294,000) and Quebec (\$345,000).

Consultations and visits made up the majority of both services and payments.

- In 2018–2019, the average cost per service paid to physicians was \$68.70. Family medicine physicians billed an average cost per service of \$51.01, while medical and surgical specialists billed an average of \$87.60 and \$91.88 per service, respectively.

Physician information and COVID-19

This current iteration of CIHI's *Physicians in Canada* report is based on supply data as of December 31, 2019, and on payments and service utilization data for 2018–2019. Although this time period is not directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, CIHI is preparing to look at physician activity throughout the pandemic as the data for this period becomes available.

Some initial work to prepare for analyzing and reporting physician information as it relates to the global pandemic involves tracking changes to billing rules and billing options for physicians. In response to the crisis, provincial and territorial governments and medical associations moved rapidly to adapt their physician fee schedules to meet the emerging needs of physicians and their patients, especially for virtual care services. CIHI is continuing to track these changes and other impacts of the pandemic in anticipation of reporting physician information for this period in the near future.

Further information on some of these modifications can be found on CIHI's [COVID-19 resources web page](#).



Supply, distribution and migration

Physician supply, distribution and migration data includes active physicians in clinical and non-clinical practice (e.g., research and academia) who have a Doctor of Medicine (MD) degree and a valid mailing address. The data excludes residents, physicians in the military, and semi-retired and retired physicians. The data also excludes non-registered physicians who requested that their information not be published as of December 31 of the reference year. Data is as of December 31, 2019.

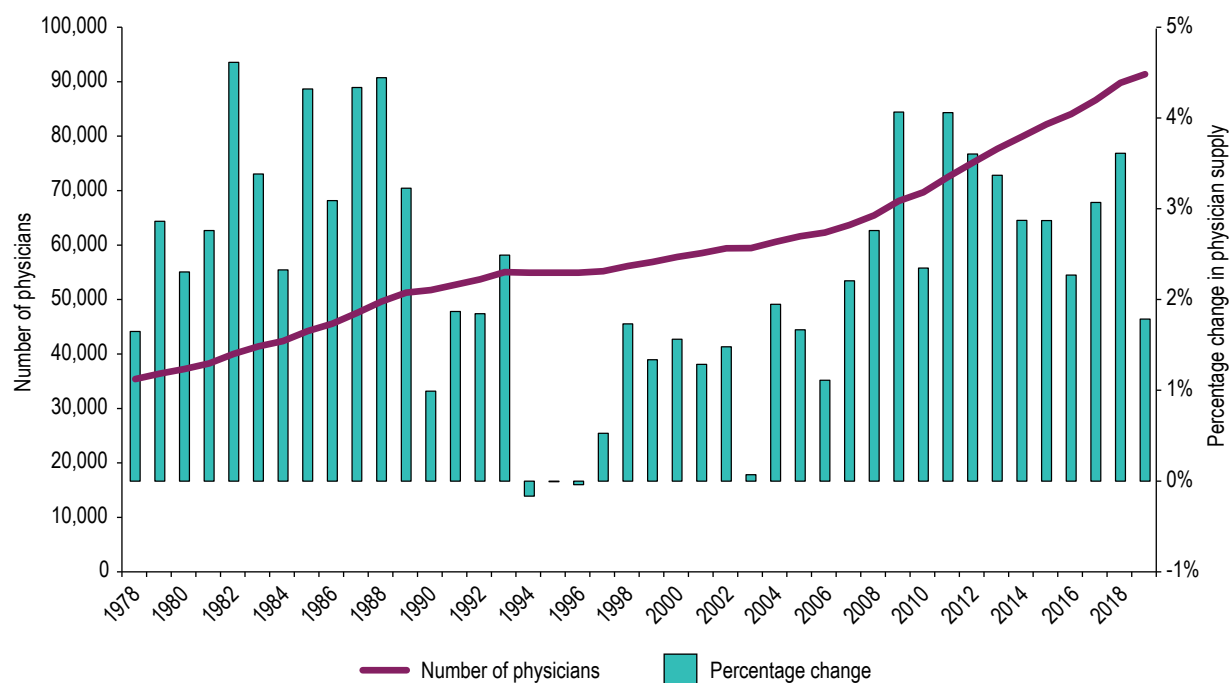


Physician supply

Although the pace of growth slowed in 2019, the physician supply in Canada continued to increase. For the last 13 years, the growth rate of the physician population has outpaced that of the general population, and between 2015 and 2019, the growth rate was twice that of the general population.

The number of physicians in Canada has increased each year since 1997.

Figure 1 Number and percentage growth in the supply of physicians, Canada, 1978 to 2019



In 2019, there were **91,375** physicians in Canada, reflecting a **1.8%** increase over 2018.

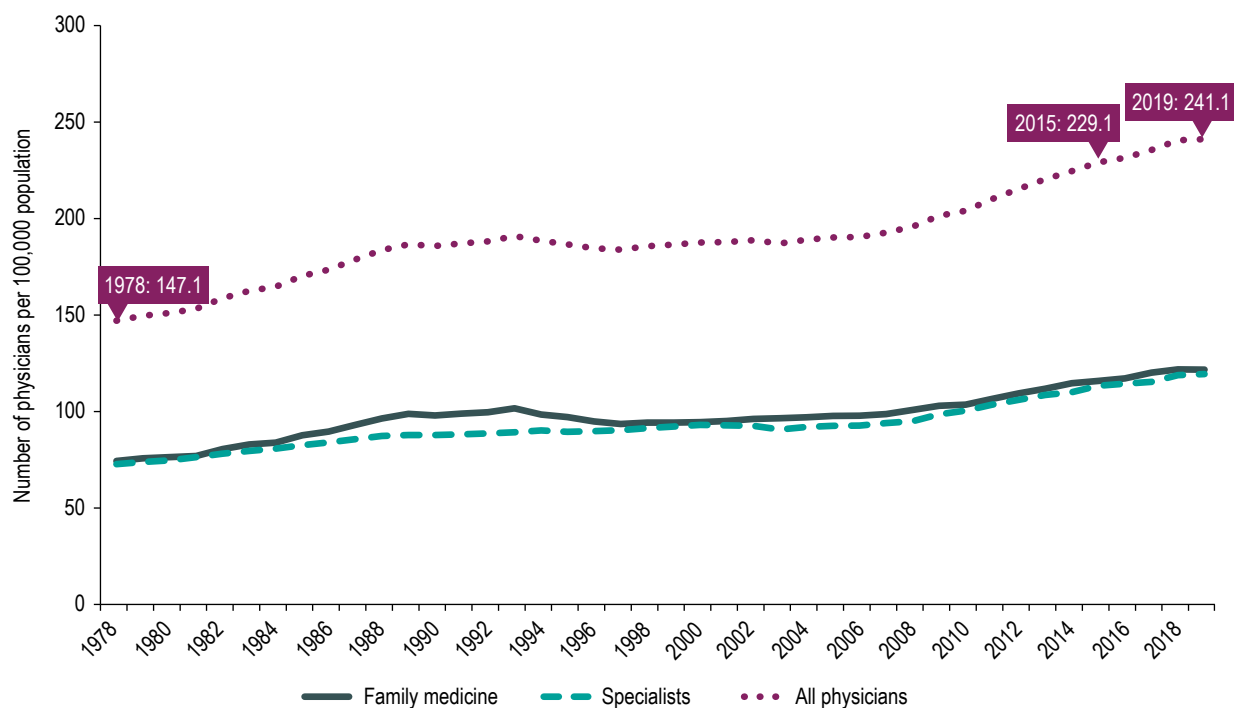
- The increase in physician supply in 2019 was the smallest single-year increase since 2007.
- Following yearly increases in the number of physicians of more than 2% since 2007, the slower growth rate narrowly outpaced Canada's population growth over the previous year.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Physician supply in Canada continues to outpace population growth.

Figure 2 Number of physicians per 100,000 population, by physician type, Canada, 1978 to 2019



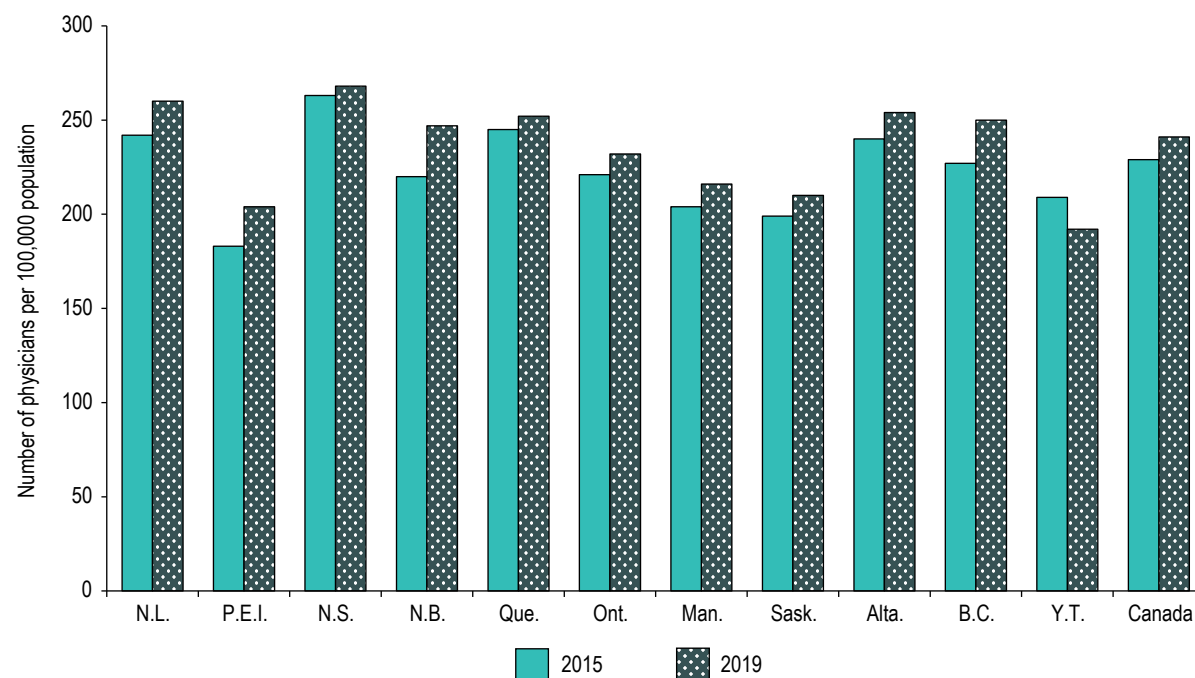
Between 2015 and 2019, the number of physicians in Canada increased at a faster pace than the population.

- In 2019, there were 241 physicians per 100,000 population: 122 family medicine physicians and 119 specialists per 100,000.
- The proportion of family medicine and specialist physicians has remained relatively equal since the late 1970s, with family medicine physicians representing between 50% and 53% of the physician workforce.

Source
Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Over the last 5 years, the number of physicians per 100,000 population has increased in all but 1 jurisdiction.

Figure 3 Number of physicians per 100,000 population, by jurisdiction, 2015 and 2019



The number of physicians per 100,000 population in Canada increased by 5.2% between 2015 and 2019.

- Jurisdictions with the highest number of physicians per 100,000 population included Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador (268 and 260 per 100,000 population, respectively).
- The number of physicians per 100,000 population in New Brunswick increased by 12.3% between 2015 and 2019, representing the largest per capita increase of all jurisdictions during that period.

Notes

Due to small numbers, data for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is not displayed individually but is included in the Canada totals.

The number of physicians per 100,000 population in Yukon includes only those who reside in the territory. If itinerant physicians were also included, this would provide a more comprehensive estimate of the total physician supply. CIHI has been working with the Yukon government to this end.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

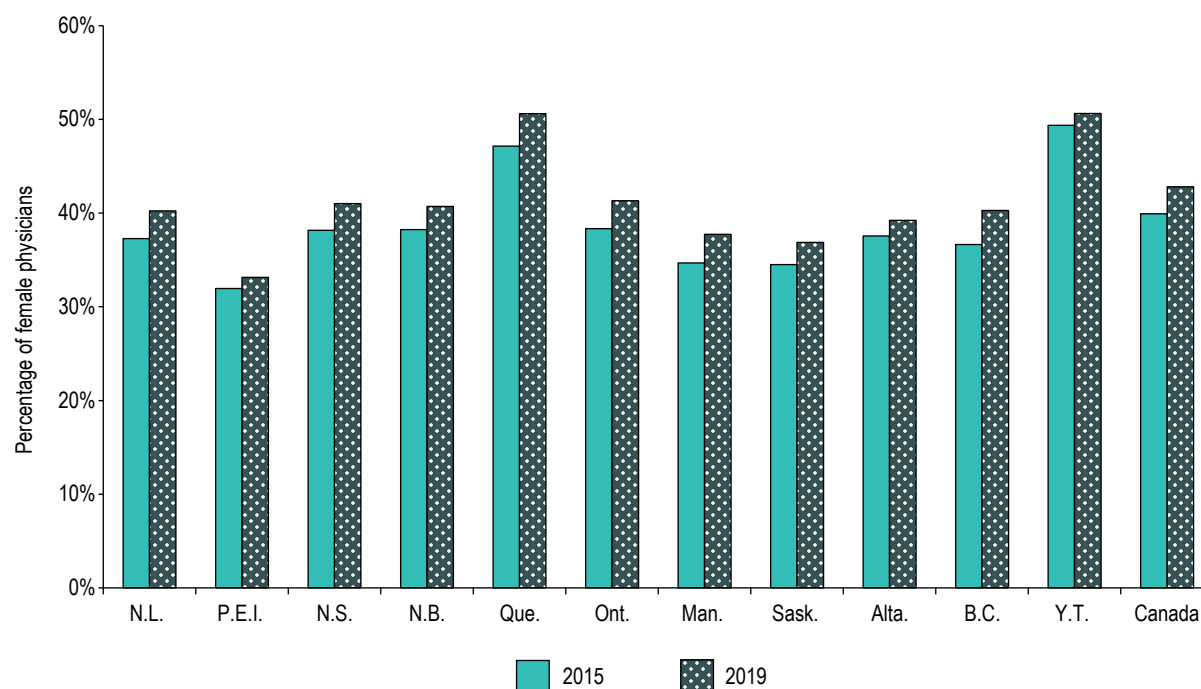


Physician demographics

The proportion of female physicians continued to rise, particularly among family medicine physicians. The average age of physicians was slightly lower in 2019 than it was 5 years ago.

The proportion of female physicians increased across all jurisdictions.

Figure 4 Percentage of female physicians, by jurisdiction, 2015 and 2019



Between 2015 and 2019, the number of female physicians increased by 19.2%, while the number of male physicians increased by 5.8%.

- In 2019, 42.8% of physicians were women, compared with 39.9% in 2015.
- Quebec and Yukon had the highest proportion of female physicians, at 50.6%, while P.E.I. had the lowest, at 33.1%.

Note

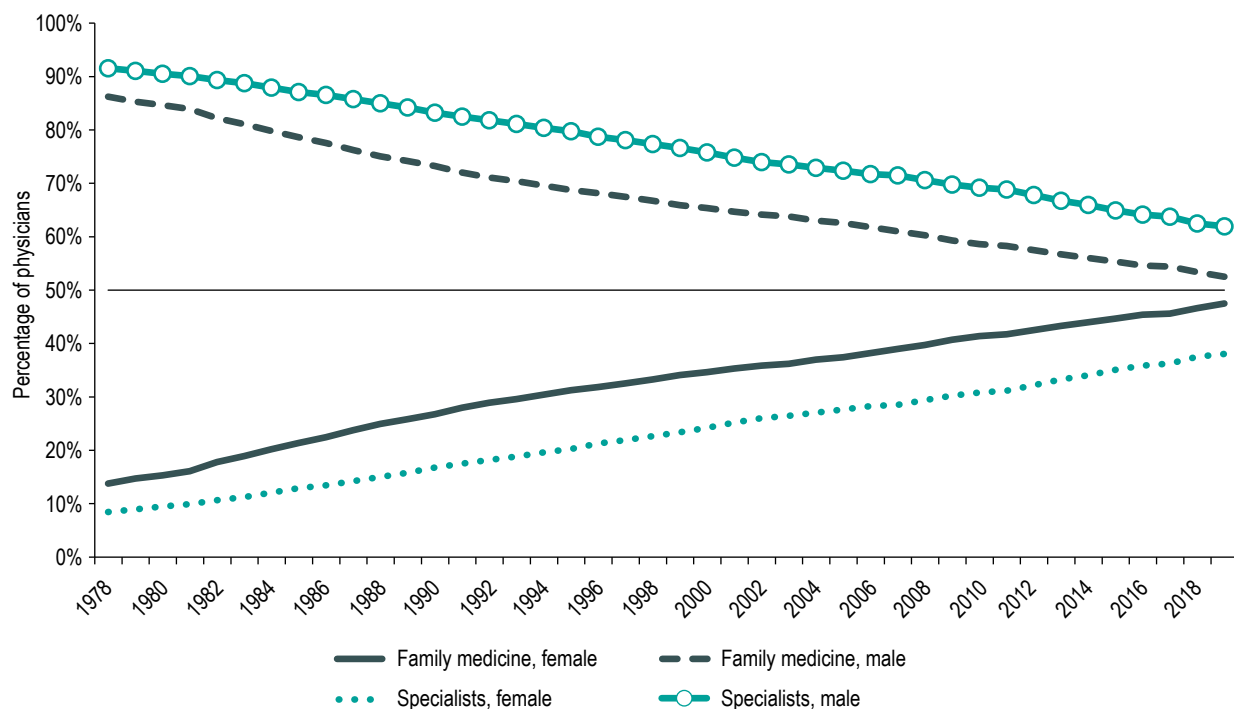
Due to small numbers, data for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is not displayed individually but is included in the Canada totals.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

The proportion of female physicians is greater among family medicine physicians than specialists.

Figure 5 Percentage of physicians, by sex and physician type, Canada, 1978 to 2019



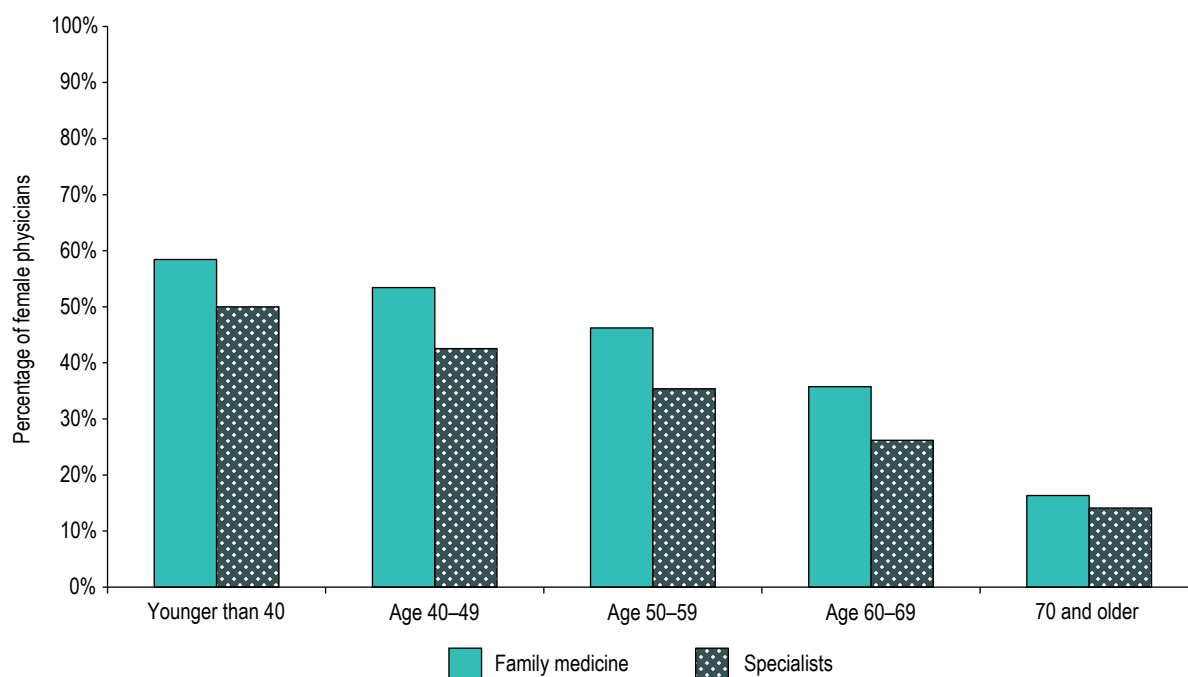
In Canada, females represented a larger proportion of family medicine physicians than specialists.

- In 2019, 47.5% of family medicine physicians and 38.0% of specialist physicians in Canada were female.
- This pattern varies by province. For example, Quebec had the highest proportion of female family medicine physicians (56.6%) and female specialists (44.6%) in Canada in 2019.
- The overall proportion of female physicians in the workforce has grown from 11.1% in 1978 to 42.8% in 2019.

Source
Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

The proportion of female physicians is higher among younger age groups.

Figure 6 Percentage of female physicians, by physician type and age group, Canada, 2019



Across all age groups, the percentage of female physicians was higher among family medicine physicians than specialists.

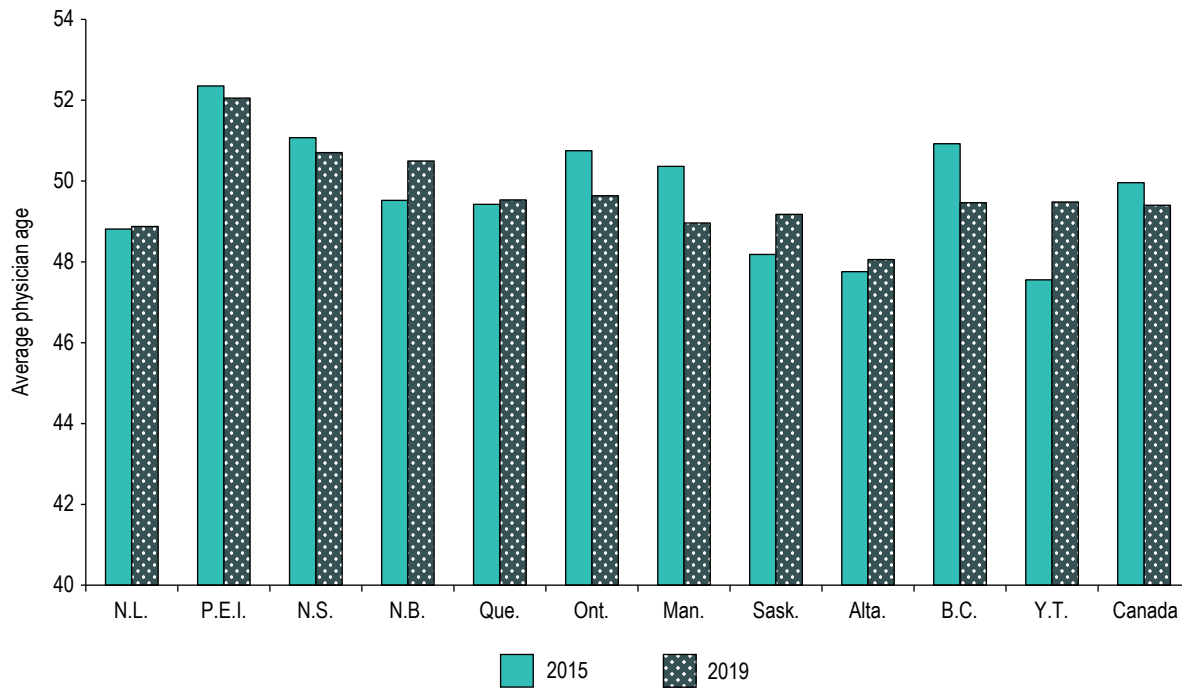
- In Canada in 2019, 58.5% of family medicine physicians and 50.0% of specialist physicians younger than 40 were female.
- Among physicians age 60 to 69, more than two-thirds (68.9%) were male; among physicians over age 70, 84.8% were male.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

The average age of physicians declined slightly over 5 years.

Figure 7 Average age of physicians in Canada, by jurisdiction, 2015 and 2019



The average age of physicians in Canada declined slightly from 50.0 years in 2015 to 49.4 years in 2019.

- Overall in 2019, the jurisdiction with the highest average age of physicians was P.E.I., at 52.1 years, and the jurisdiction with the lowest average age was Alberta, at 48.1.
- Between 2015 and 2019, the average age of physicians decreased in P.E.I., Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia, was virtually stable in Newfoundland and Labrador and Quebec, and increased in all other jurisdictions.

Note
Due to small numbers, data for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is not displayed individually but is included in the Canada totals.

Source
Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

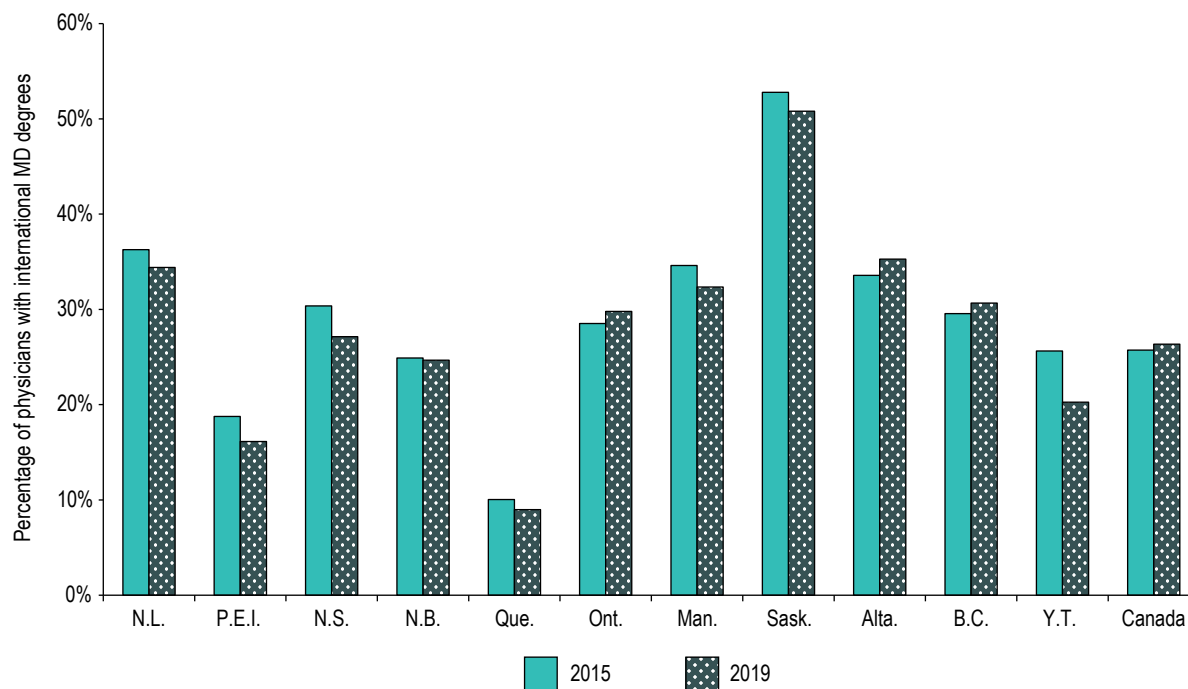


International medical graduates

Canada continues to gain internationally trained physicians. More family medicine physicians than specialists received their MD degree outside of Canada.

More than a quarter of physicians in Canada were internationally trained.

Figure 8 Percentage of physicians with international MD degrees, by jurisdiction, 2015 and 2019



Note

Due to small numbers, data for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is not displayed individually but is included in the Canada totals.

Source

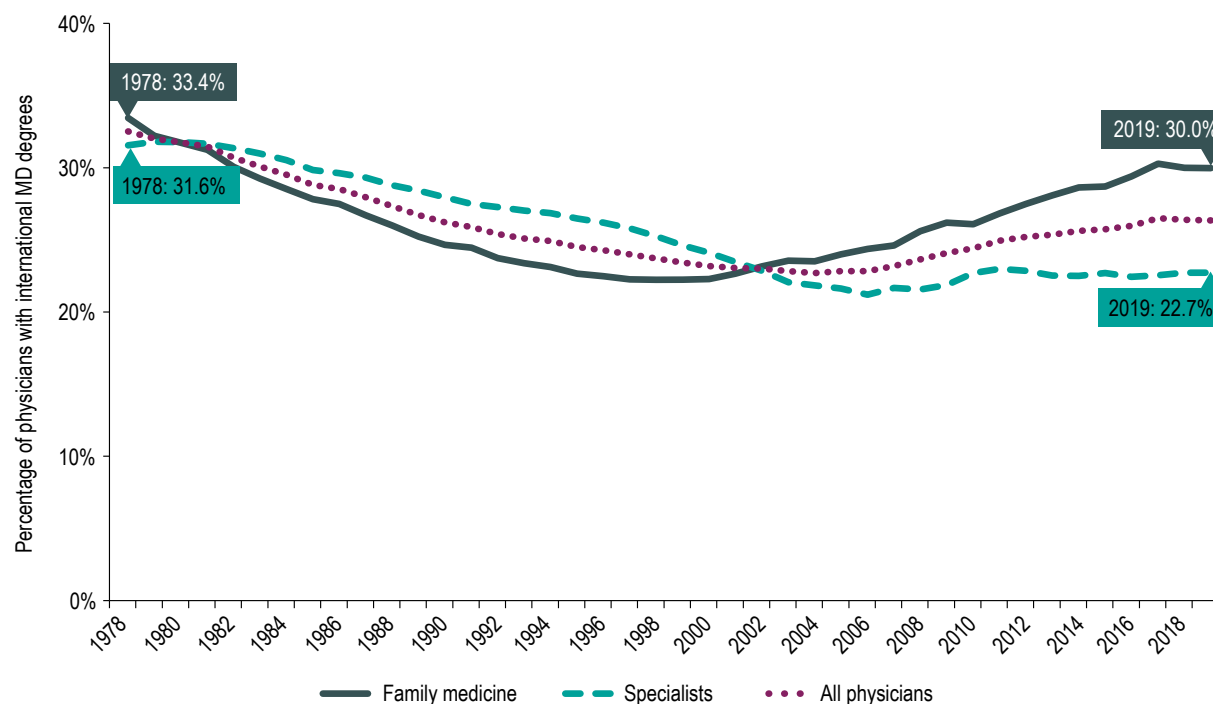
Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

The percentage of physicians who received their MD degree outside of Canada has remained relatively stable since 2015, ranging from 25.7% in 2015 to 26.4% in 2019.

- Saskatchewan and Alberta had the largest proportions of internationally trained physicians (50.8% and 35.3%, respectively), while Quebec and P.E.I. had the smallest (9.0% and 16.1%, respectively).
- Between 2015 and 2019, the proportion of internationally trained physicians in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia increased by between 3% and 5%, while it decreased in all other jurisdictions.

In recent years, more family medicine physicians than specialists received their MD degree outside of Canada.

Figure 9 Percentage of physicians with international MD degrees, by physician type, Canada, 1978 to 2019



Over one-quarter (26.4%) of Canada's physicians received their MD degree outside of Canada.

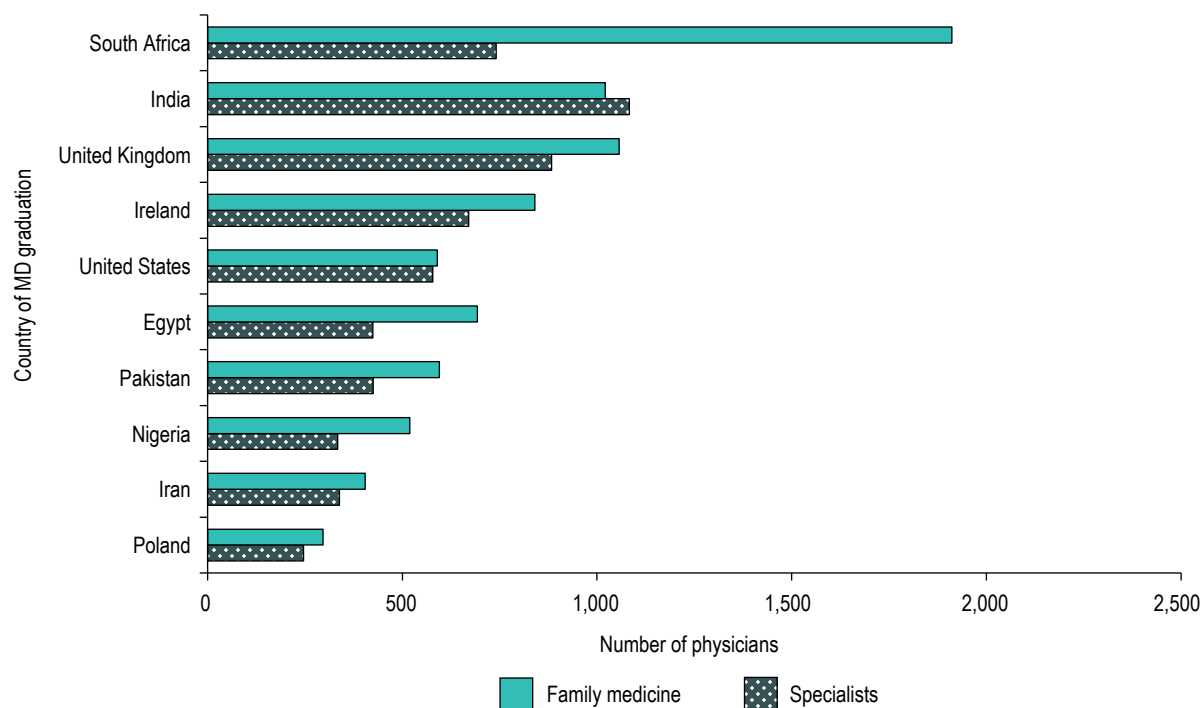
- In each of the last 15 years, more family medicine physicians than specialists received their MD degree outside of Canada.
- The percentage of internationally trained family medicine physicians in Canada increased from 28.7% in 2015 to 30.0% in 2019, while the percentage of specialists remained stable during that period, at 22.7%.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

More internationally trained physicians received their MD degree in South Africa than in any other country.

Figure 10 Top 10 countries of MD graduation for internationally trained physicians licensed in Canada, by physician type, 2019



Physicians from South Africa, India and the United Kingdom made up 28.1% of all internationally trained physicians in Canada in 2019.

- In 2019, family medicine physicians accounted for 56.9% of all internationally trained physicians.
- South Africa was the top country of graduation for internationally trained family medicine physicians, while India was the top country of graduation for internationally trained specialists.

Source
Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.



Physician payments and utilization

This section contains information on physician service utilization and on payments to physicians that are administered through the provincial and territorial medical care plans. This data is for 2018–2019.

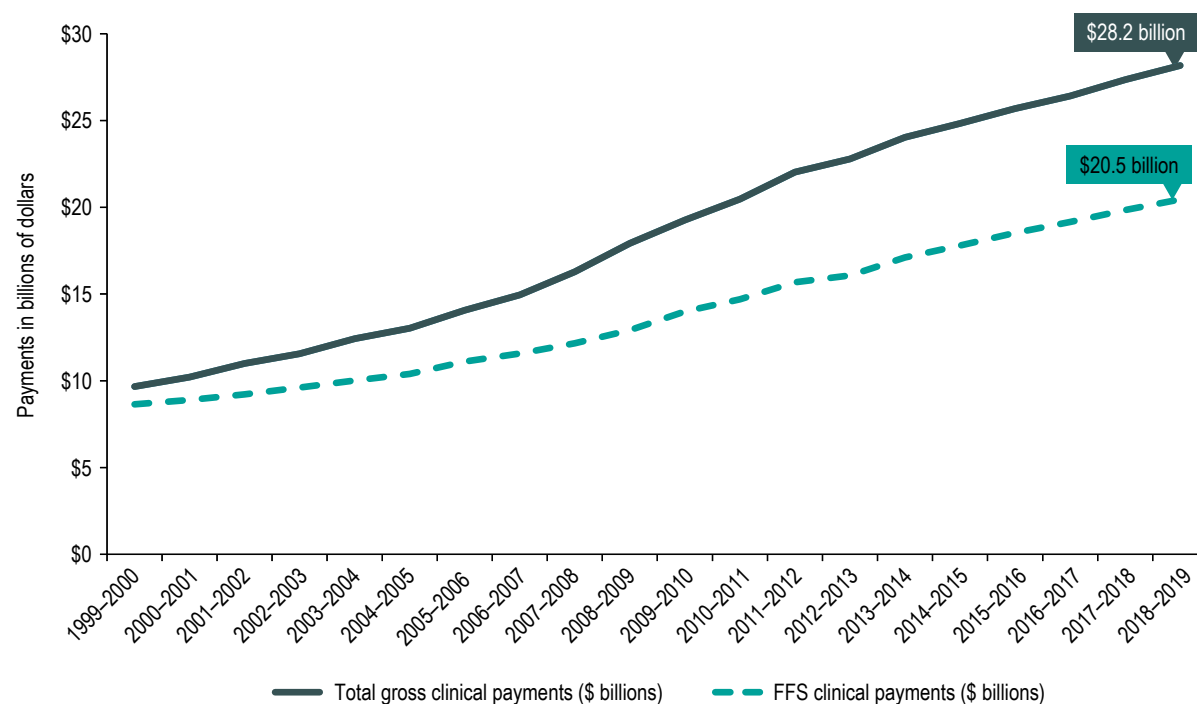
How much are physicians paid?

The cost of physician services in Canada can be understood by examining total and average clinical payments to physicians, the types of services paid for, and information about the providers and recipients of these services.

Since 2009, CIHI has reported average gross clinical payments made to physicians by provincial/territorial medical care plans. These payment amounts are calculated as the sum of all gross clinical payments (fee-for-service [FFS] and alternative payments) divided by the total number of physicians reported to CIHI by the jurisdictions. In addition to total average payments per physician, CIHI publishes a series of specialty-level payment indicators, including distribution of payments, standard deviations and average payments with monetary cut-offs.

Total gross clinical payments to physicians increased to \$28.2 billion in 2018–2019.

Figure 11 Total gross clinical and FFS payments to physicians, Canada, 1999–2000 to 2018–2019



FFS clinical payments to physicians reached \$20.5 billion in 2018–2019, while alternative payments reached \$7.7 billion.

- In 2018–2019, total clinical payments to physicians increased 3.0% over the previous year to \$28.2 billion; this is the second-lowest increase since 1999–2000.
- Total clinical payments to physicians in Canada have increased 13.4% over the past 5 years.

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

Excludes Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

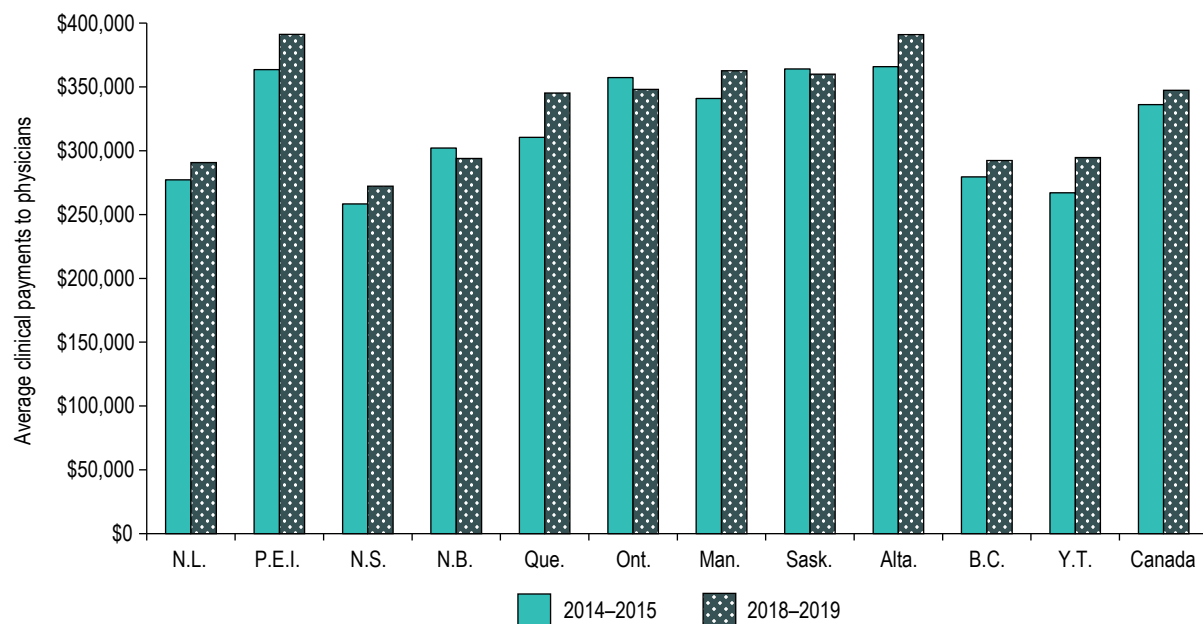
Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Average gross clinical payments to physicians have increased 3.4% over 5 years.

Figure 12 Average gross clinical payments to physicians, by jurisdiction, 2014–2015 and 2018–2019



The average gross clinical payment per physician in Canada was \$347,000 in 2018–2019, a 3.4% increase over 2014–2015. Some jurisdictions saw increases, while others saw decreases.

- Quebec saw the greatest 5-year increase in average gross payment, from \$310,000 to \$345,000 (11.2%).
- New Brunswick saw the largest 5-year decrease in average gross payment, from \$302,000 to \$294,000 (-2.7%).

Notes

Due to the greater proportion of short-term, visiting and locum physicians and their lower associated payments in certain smaller jurisdictions relative to larger ones, in an attempt to improve comparability, CIHI has agreed to calculate the average payment per physician for P.E.I. using only permanent in-province physicians, and for Yukon using only physicians whose total gross payments are at least \$60,000.

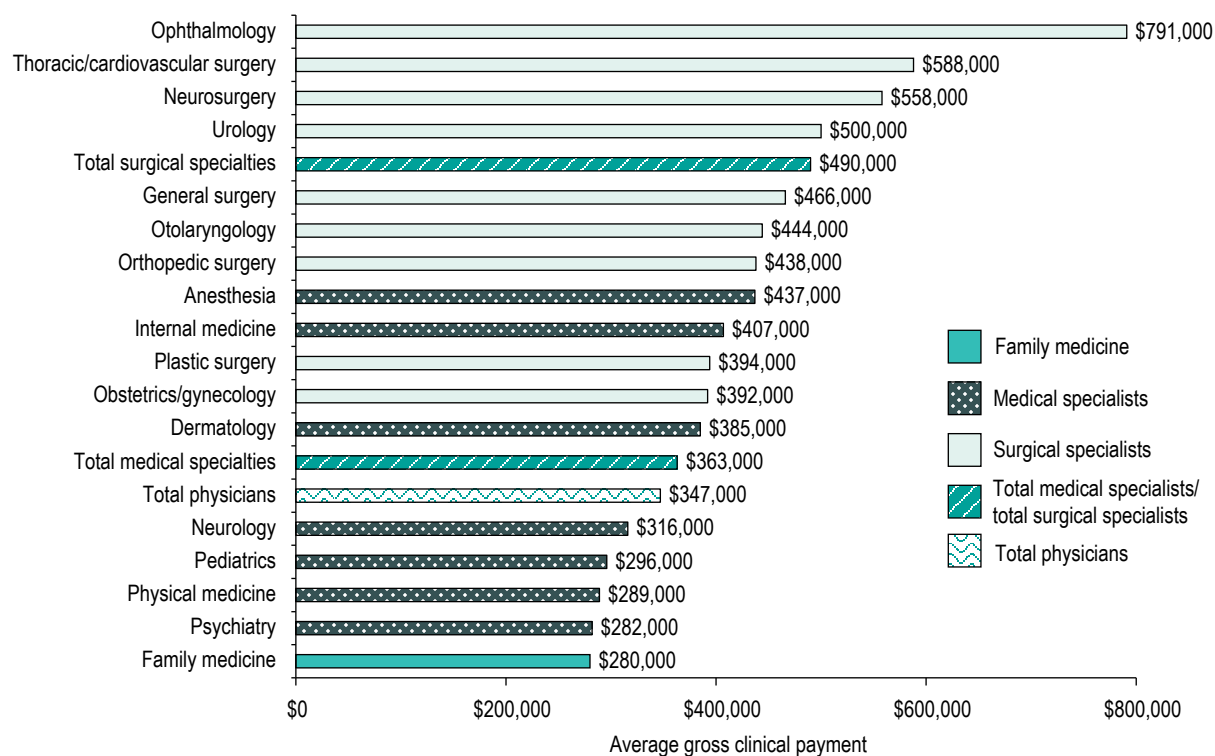
Data is not available for the Northwest Territories or Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database. Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

The average gross clinical payment per surgical specialist was higher than that per medical specialist and per family medicine physician.

Figure 13 Average gross clinical payments, by physician specialty, Canada, 2018–2019



By combining FFS data with physician-level alternative payment data, CIHI is able to report comprehensive average payments per physician by specialty.

- The average gross clinical payment per family medicine physician was \$280,000.
- The average gross clinical payment per medical specialist was \$363,000.
- The average gross clinical payment per surgical specialist was \$490,000.

Note

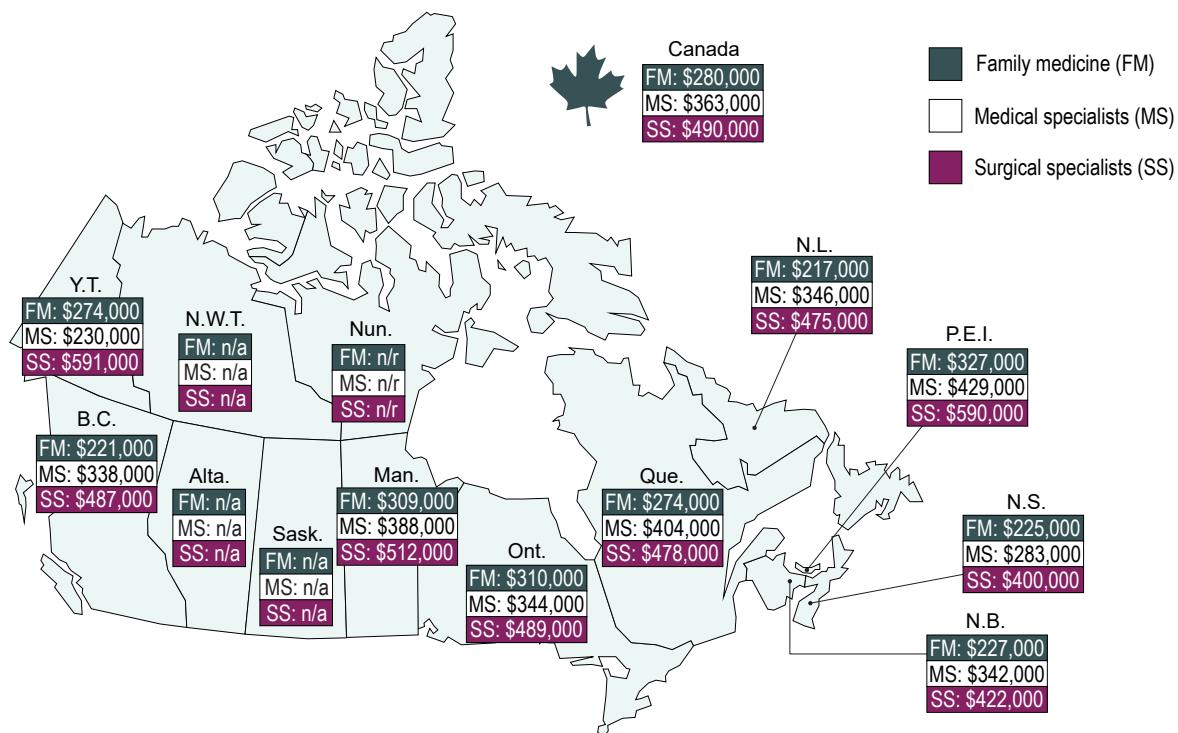
Specialty-level information for Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories at the level needed for this analysis was not available. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

The average gross clinical payment varies across Canada.

Figure 14 Average gross clinical payments, by physician type and jurisdiction, 2018–2019



- The average gross clinical payment per family medicine physician ranged from \$217,000 in Newfoundland and Labrador to \$310,000 in Ontario.
- The average gross clinical payment per medical specialist ranged from \$283,000 in Nova Scotia to \$404,000 in Quebec.
- The average gross clinical payment per surgical specialist ranged from \$400,000 in Nova Scotia to \$512,000 in Manitoba.

Notes
 n/a: Specialty-level information for Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories at the level needed for this analysis was not available.
 n/r: Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.
 Due to cell suppression at the specialty level, the average payment for medical specialists in Yukon includes only payments to pediatric specialists.
 Due to the greater proportion of short-term, visiting and locum physicians and their lower associated payments in certain smaller jurisdictions relative to larger ones, in an attempt to improve comparability, CIHI has agreed to calculate the average payment per physician for P.E.I. using only permanent in-province physicians, and for Yukon using only physicians whose total gross payments are at least \$60,000.
 Canada figures exclude Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Source
 National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.



Physician full-time equivalents

Another metric that can be used to analyze physician payments and supply is the full-time equivalent (FTE). The FTE is used to adjust the total count of physicians to reflect their activity based on their clinical payments.

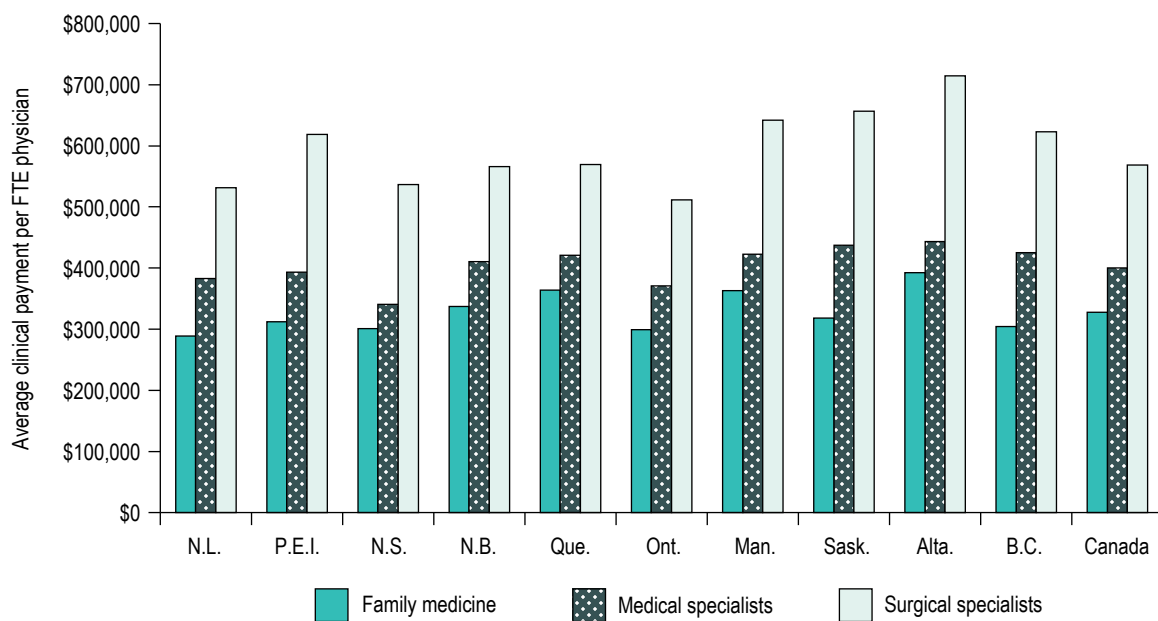
Historically, CIHI published an FTE indicator based on FFS payments only. Since the late 1990s, there has been considerable migration from FFS to alternative payments. As a result, CIHI has developed an enhanced FTE indicator that focuses on a physician's full clinical payments by including both FFS and alternative payments to physicians and replaces the former FTE indicator that used only FFS payment data.

The aim of the FTE indicator remains the same: to produce statistics that are comparable in 3 dimensions — over time, across jurisdictions and across specialties.

A full description of the FTE indicator methodologies is provided in the National Physician Database Methodology Notes document in appendices C and G.

Average gross clinical payment per FTE physician includes both fee-for-service and alternative payments.

Figure 15 Average gross clinical payment per FTE physician, by physician type and jurisdiction, 2018–2019



The FTE methodology uses payments as a proxy for activity and computes FTEs that reflect clinical activity for each given specialty.

- The average payment per family medicine FTE in Canada in 2018–2019 was \$327,000.
- The average payment per medical specialist FTE in Canada in 2018–2019 was \$400,000, and the average payment per surgical specialist FTE was \$568,000.

Notes

FTE: Full-time equivalent.

Saskatchewan and Alberta FTEs are based on fee-for-service payments only.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Data is not available for Yukon, the Northwest Territories or Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.



Types of physician remuneration

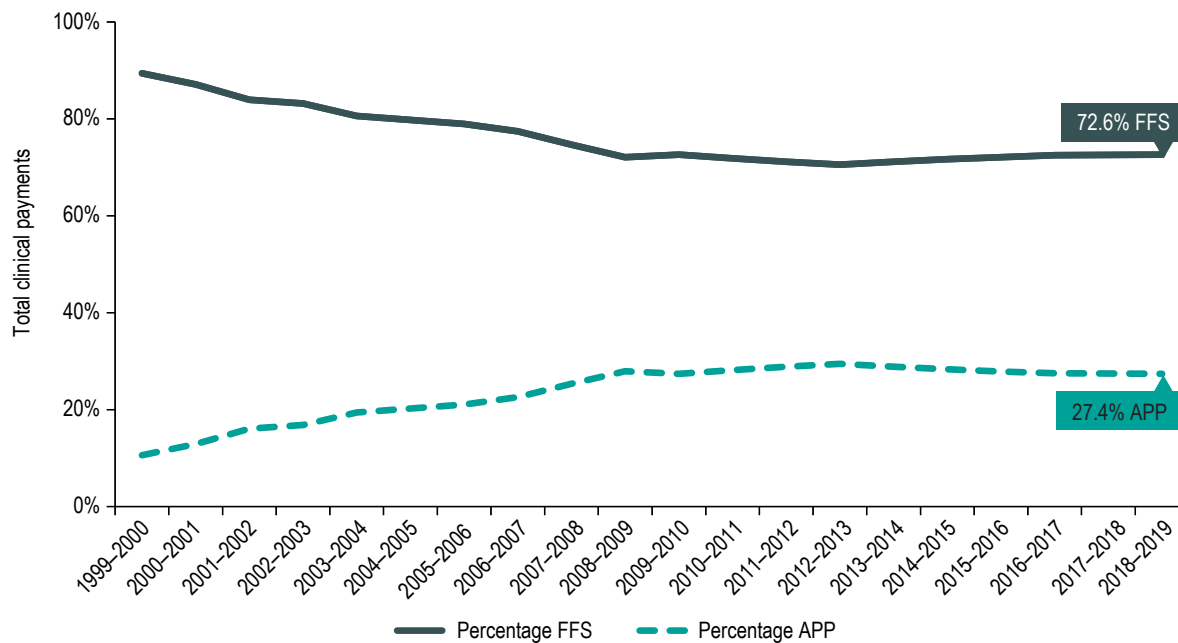
Since the introduction of the public medical care system in the 1960s, most physicians in Canada have been compensated through FFS payments. Alternative payment plan (APP) programs first became prevalent in the mid-1990s and have become an increasingly popular method of remuneration to physicians in the last 2 decades. Payments through alternative methods have shown a slight decrease from nearly 30% of total clinical payments in 2012–2013 to 27.4% in 2018–2019.

Alternative methods of paying physicians include salaries, sessional and hourly rates, capitation models and contract-based payments.

Many physicians receive compensation through multiple models, which could include both FFS and alternative payments; however, funding through the different payment models varies significantly across jurisdictions.

The proportion of APP clinical payments stabilized between 2008–2009 and 2018–2019.

Figure 16 FFS and alternative payments as a percentage of total clinical payments to physicians, Canada, 1999–2000 to 2018–2019



Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

APP: Alternative payment plan.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Excludes Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

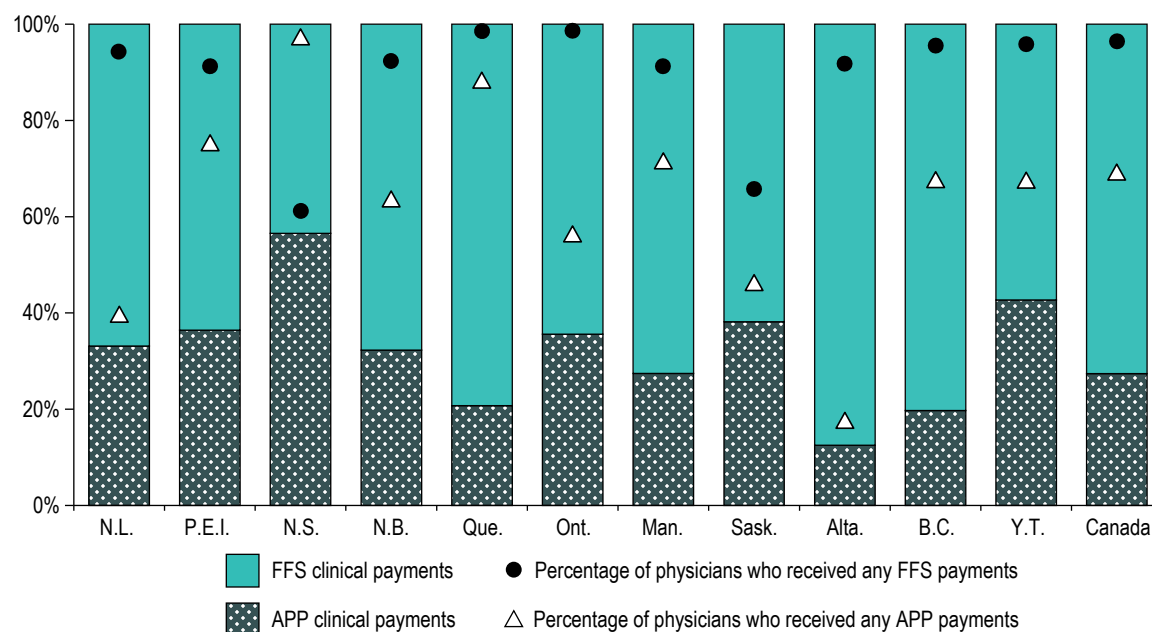
National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

A shift toward APPs in place of FFS payments has been stable for 10 years; since 2008–2009, FFS payments have made up between 71% and 73% of total clinical payments.

- In 2018–2019, alternative payments accounted for 27.4% of all gross clinical payments, compared with 10.6% in 1999–2000.
- For the sixth consecutive year, alternative payments as a proportion of total clinical payments decreased slightly.

Most physicians receive compensation through multiple models, including both FFS and alternative payments.

Figure 17 Distribution of physicians and clinical payments, by payment type and jurisdiction, 2018–2019



Over 96% of all physicians in 2018–2019 were paid a portion of their total payments via FFS, and 69% were paid a portion via APPs.

- In Ontario and Quebec, almost all physicians (99%) received some FFS payments. The proportion receiving APP payments in those provinces differed: 56% in Ontario and 88% in Quebec.
- Alberta had the lowest proportion of physicians receiving some payments through APPs, at 17%, and Nova Scotia had the highest proportion, at 97%.

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

APP: Alternative payment plan.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

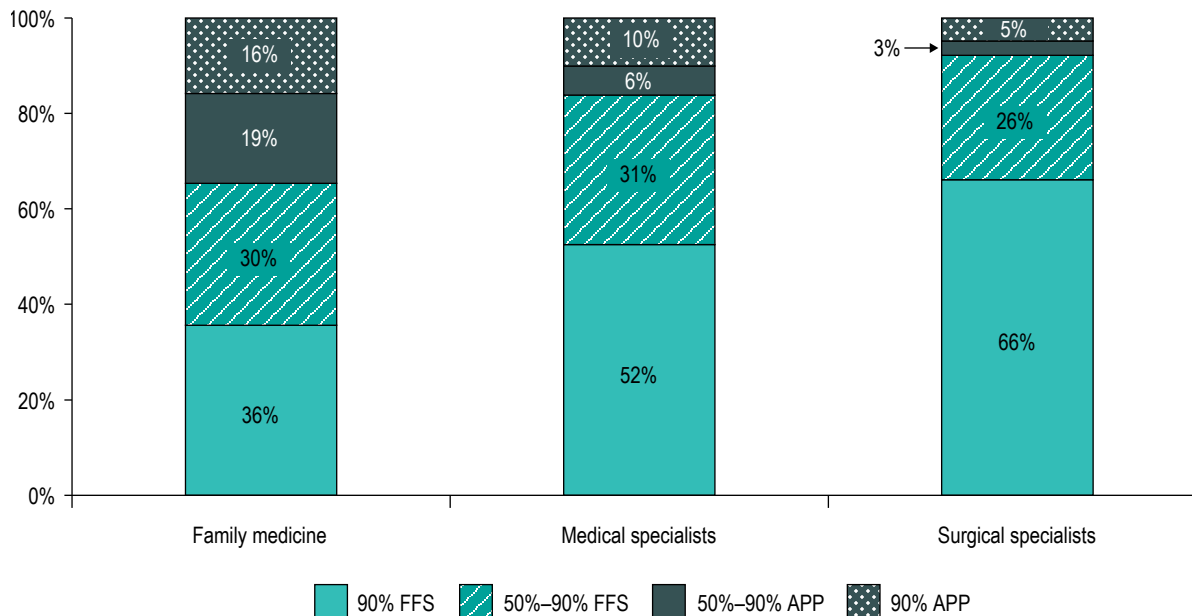
Data is not available for the Northwest Territories or Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Family medicine physicians are more likely to be paid through alternative methods than medical specialists and surgical specialists.

Figure 18 Distribution of physicians, by payment type and physician type, Canada, 2018–2019



Alternative methods of paying physicians include salaries, sessional and hourly rates, capitation models and contract-based payments.

- In Canada, 34% of family medicine physicians, 16% of medical specialists and 8% of surgical specialists received more than half of their total clinical payments through alternative methods in 2018–2019.

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

APP: Alternative payment plan.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Excludes Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.



Fee-for-service utilization

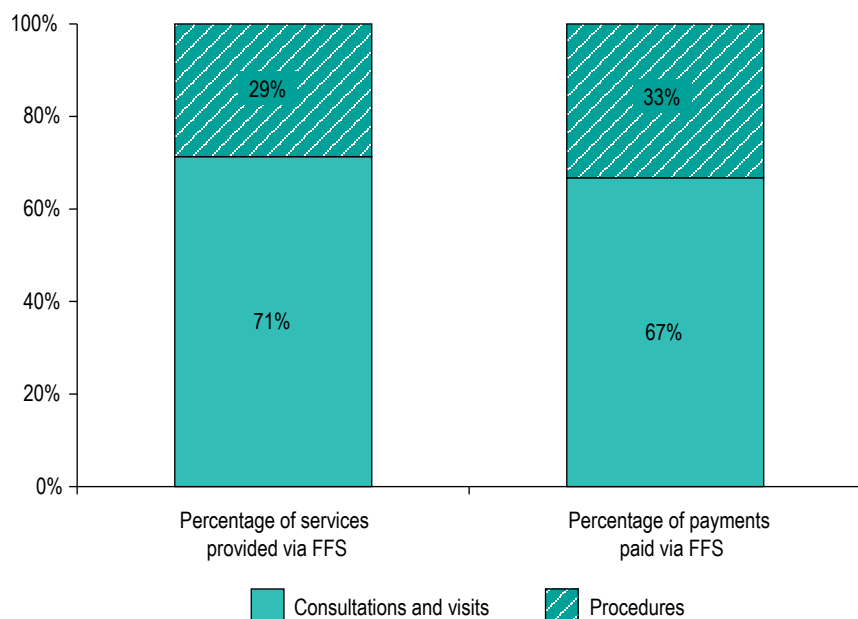
The largest payment program as a proportion of total gross clinical payments to physicians in Canada is still FFS, at about 73% of total payments in 2018–2019. FFS services provided by physicians can be split into 2 broad types: consultations/visits and procedures.

The cost and amount of physician services can be analyzed to determine which types of services physicians who are paid under FFS are providing and which types of physicians are providing the FFS services, as well as information on patients who are receiving these services.

Although family medicine physicians perform the greatest number of services and receive the largest proportion of payments, medical and surgical specialists are paid more per service on average. Services may not always be comparable, as the amount of work required differs depending on the type of service.

The types of services provided by physicians under the FFS model can be grouped into 2 broad categories: consultations/visits and procedures.

Figure 19 FFS services and payments, Canada, 2018–2019



Although the majority of services provided by a physician are consultations and visits, procedures cost more.

- In 2018–2019, consultations and visits made up 71% of services delivered and accounted for 67% of payments.
- Procedures made up 29% of services delivered and accounted for 33% of payments.

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

Excludes reciprocal billing, imaging and laboratory services, anesthesia services and anesthesiology specialists, and unclassified physicians.

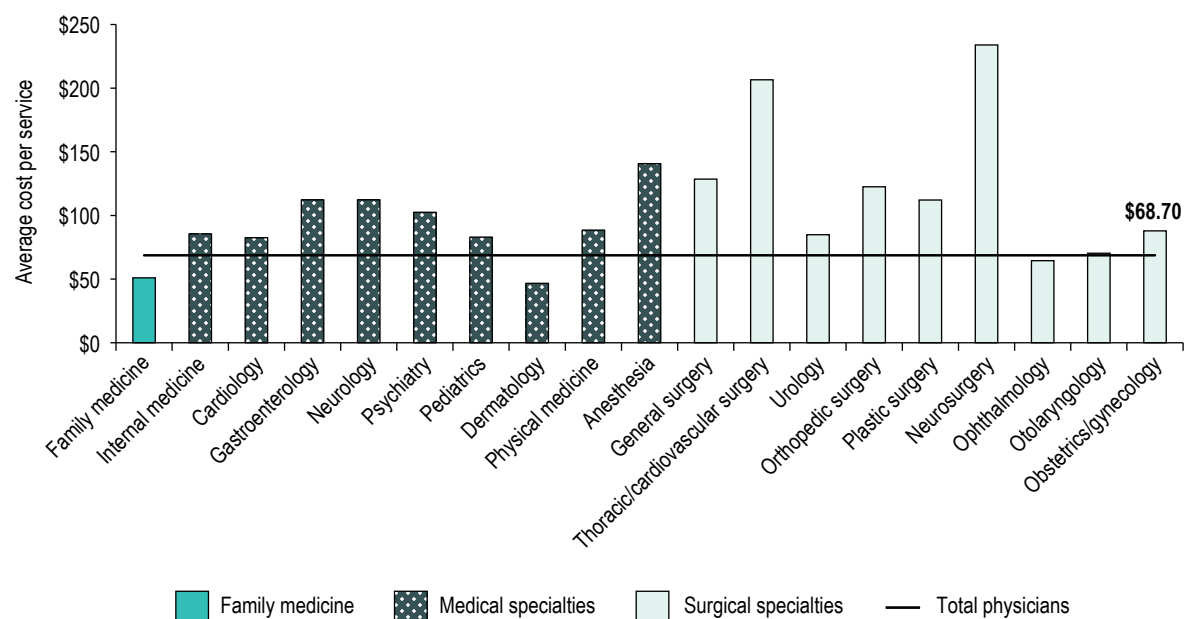
Excludes the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Medical and surgical specialists paid through FFS receive more per service on average than family medicine physicians.

Figure 20 Average cost per service, by physician specialty, Canada, 2018–2019



- In 2018–2019, the average cost per service was \$68.70.
- Family medicine physicians billed an average cost per service of \$51.01, while medical and surgical specialists billed an average of \$87.60 and \$91.88 per service, respectively.

Notes

Includes fee-for-service payments only.

Excludes the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Appendix: Text alternatives for figures

Figure 1 Number and percentage growth in the supply of physicians, Canada, 1978 to 2019

Year	Number of physicians	Percentage change
1978	35,400	1.6%
1979	36,413	2.9%
1980	37,252	2.3%
1981	38,280	2.8%
1982	40,046	4.6%
1983	41,401	3.4%
1984	42,364	2.3%
1985	44,194	4.3%
1986	45,560	3.1%
1987	47,536	4.3%
1988	49,649	4.4%
1989	51,251	3.2%
1990	51,759	1.0%
1991	52,726	1.9%
1992	53,698	1.8%
1993	55,035	2.5%
1994	54,944	-0.2%
1995	54,940	0.0%
1996	54,918	0.0%

Year	Number of physicians	Percentage change
1997	55,207	0.5%
1998	56,163	1.7%
1999	56,914	1.3%
2000	57,803	1.6%
2001	58,546	1.3%
2002	59,412	1.5%
2003	59,454	0.1%
2004	60,612	1.9%
2005	61,622	1.7%
2006	62,307	1.1%
2007	63,682	2.2%
2008	65,440	2.8%
2009	68,101	4.1%
2010	69,699	2.3%
2011	72,529	4.1%
2012	75,142	3.6%
2013	77,674	3.4%
2014	79,905	2.9%
2015	82,198	2.9%
2016	84,063	2.3%
2017	86,643	3.1%
2018	89,772	3.6%
2019	91,375	1.8%

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 2 Number of physicians per 100,000 population, by physician type, Canada, 1978 to 2019

Year	Physicians per 100,000 population	Family medicine physicians per 100,000 population	Specialist physicians per 100,000 population
1978	147.1	74.3	72.7
1979	149.6	75.8	73.8
1980	151.0	76.4	74.7
1981	153.2	76.9	76.3
1982	158.6	80.6	78.1
1983	162.5	82.9	79.6
1984	164.7	83.9	80.8
1985	170.2	87.7	82.5
1986	173.5	89.6	84.0
1987	178.7	93.0	85.7
1988	183.7	96.4	87.3
1989	186.6	98.8	87.8
1990	185.8	98.0	87.8
1991	187.1	98.9	88.2
1992	188.2	99.6	88.6
1993	190.9	101.6	89.2
1994	188.5	98.4	90.2
1995	186.6	97.1	89.5
1996	184.6	94.8	89.8
1997	183.8	93.6	90.3

Year	Physicians per 100,000 population	Family medicine physicians per 100,000 population	Specialist physicians per 100,000 population
1998	185.6	94.2	91.4
1999	186.4	94.3	92.2
2000	187.5	94.4	93.1
2001	187.8	95.1	92.8
2002	188.7	96.1	92.6
2003	187.1	96.5	90.6
2004	189.0	96.9	92.0
2005	190.2	97.6	92.6
2006	190.4	97.8	92.7
2007	192.7	98.6	94.0
2008	195.8	100.9	94.9
2009	201.4	102.9	98.5
2010	204.0	103.5	100.5
2011	210.1	106.5	103.6
2012	215.4	109.4	106.0
2013	220.4	111.8	108.6
2014	224.6	114.6	110.0
2015	229.1	115.8	113.3
2016	231.5	117.1	114.4
2017	235.5	120.1	115.4
2018	240.6	121.8	118.8
2019	241.1	121.7	119.4

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 3 Number of physicians per 100,000 population, by jurisdiction, 2015 and 2019

Year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	Canada
2015	242	183	263	220	245	221	204	199	240	227	209	229
2019	260	204	268	247	252	232	216	210	254	250	192	241

Notes

Due to small numbers, data for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is not displayed individually but is included in the Canada totals. The number of physicians per 100,000 population in Yukon includes only those who reside in the territory. If itinerant physicians were also included, this would provide a more comprehensive estimate of the total physician supply. CIHI has been working with the Yukon government to this end.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 4 Percentage of female physicians, by jurisdiction, 2015 and 2019

Year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	Canada
2015	37.3%	32.0%	38.2%	38.2%	47.1%	38.3%	34.7%	34.5%	37.6%	36.6%	49.4%	39.9%
2019	40.2%	33.1%	41.0%	40.7%	50.6%	41.3%	37.7%	36.9%	39.2%	40.3%	50.6%	42.8%

Note

Due to small numbers, data for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is not displayed individually but is included in the Canada totals.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 5 Percentage of physicians, by sex and physician type, Canada, 1978 to 2019

Year	Family medicine, female	Family medicine, male	Specialists, female	Specialists, male
1978	13.8%	86.2%	8.4%	91.6%
1979	14.7%	85.3%	8.9%	91.1%
1980	15.3%	84.7%	9.5%	90.5%
1981	16.1%	83.9%	9.9%	90.1%
1982	17.8%	82.2%	10.7%	89.3%
1983	18.9%	81.1%	11.3%	88.7%
1984	20.2%	79.8%	12.1%	87.9%
1985	21.4%	78.6%	12.9%	87.1%
1986	22.4%	77.6%	13.5%	86.5%
1987	23.8%	76.2%	14.2%	85.8%
1988	24.9%	75.1%	15.0%	85.0%
1989	25.8%	74.2%	15.8%	84.2%
1990	26.8%	73.2%	16.8%	83.2%
1991	28.0%	72.0%	17.5%	82.5%
1992	28.9%	71.1%	18.2%	81.8%
1993	29.6%	70.4%	18.9%	81.1%
1994	30.4%	69.6%	19.6%	80.4%
1995	31.2%	68.8%	20.3%	79.7%
1996	31.9%	68.1%	21.3%	78.7%
1997	32.6%	67.4%	21.9%	78.1%
1998	33.3%	66.7%	22.7%	77.3%

Year	Family medicine, female	Family medicine, male	Specialists, female	Specialists, male
1999	34.1%	65.9%	23.4%	76.6%
2000	34.6%	65.4%	24.2%	75.8%
2001	35.3%	64.7%	25.2%	74.8%
2002	35.9%	64.1%	26.0%	74.0%
2003	36.2%	63.8%	26.5%	73.5%
2004	37.0%	63.0%	27.1%	72.9%
2005	37.4%	62.6%	27.6%	72.4%
2006	38.2%	61.8%	28.3%	71.7%
2007	39.0%	61.0%	28.5%	71.5%
2008	39.7%	60.3%	29.4%	70.6%
2009	40.7%	59.3%	30.2%	69.8%
2010	41.4%	58.6%	30.8%	69.2%
2011	41.7%	58.3%	31.2%	68.8%
2012	42.5%	57.5%	32.2%	67.8%
2013	43.3%	56.7%	33.3%	66.7%
2014	44.0%	56.0%	34.0%	66.0%
2015	44.7%	55.3%	35.1%	64.9%
2016	45.4%	54.6%	35.9%	64.1%
2017	45.6%	54.4%	36.3%	63.7%
2018	46.6%	53.4%	37.5%	62.5%
2019	47.5%	52.5%	38.0%	62.0%

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 6 Percentage of female physicians, by physician type and age group, Canada, 2019

Specialty	Younger than 40	Age 40–49	Age 50–59	Age 60–69	70 and older
Family medicine	58.5%	53.4%	46.2%	35.8%	16.3%
Specialists	50.0%	42.5%	35.4%	26.2%	14.1%

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 7 Average age of physicians in Canada, by jurisdiction, 2015 and 2019

Year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	Canada
2015	48.8	52.4	51.1	49.5	49.4	50.7	50.4	48.2	47.8	50.9	47.6	50.0
2019	48.9	52.1	50.7	50.5	49.5	49.6	49.0	49.2	48.1	49.5	49.5	49.4

Note

Due to small numbers, data for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is not displayed individually but is included in the Canada totals.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 8 Percentage of physicians with international MD degrees, by jurisdiction, 2015 and 2019

Year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	Canada
2015	36.3%	18.8%	30.4%	24.9%	10.0%	28.5%	34.6%	52.8%	33.6%	29.6%	25.6%	25.7%
2019	34.4%	16.1%	27.1%	24.7%	9.0%	29.8%	32.4%	50.8%	35.3%	30.7%	20.3%	26.4%

Note

Due to small numbers, data for the Northwest Territories and Nunavut is not displayed individually but is included in the Canada totals.

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 9 Percentage of physicians with international MD degrees, by physician type, Canada, 1978 to 2019

Year	Family medicine	Specialists	All physicians
1978	33.4%	31.6%	32.5%
1979	32.2%	31.8%	32.0%
1980	31.7%	31.8%	31.7%
1981	31.2%	31.7%	31.5%
1982	30.0%	31.4%	30.7%
1983	29.2%	31.0%	30.1%
1984	28.5%	30.5%	29.5%
1985	27.8%	29.8%	28.8%
1986	27.5%	29.6%	28.5%
1987	26.7%	29.3%	27.9%
1988	26.0%	28.8%	27.3%
1989	25.2%	28.4%	26.7%
1990	24.7%	27.9%	26.2%
1991	24.5%	27.5%	25.9%
1992	23.7%	27.3%	25.4%
1993	23.4%	27.0%	25.1%
1994	23.1%	26.9%	24.9%
1995	22.7%	26.5%	24.5%
1996	22.5%	26.2%	24.3%
1997	22.3%	25.8%	24.0%
1998	22.2%	25.2%	23.7%

Year	Family medicine	Specialists	All physicians
1999	22.2%	24.6%	23.4%
2000	22.3%	24.1%	23.2%
2001	22.6%	23.5%	23.1%
2002	23.2%	22.9%	23.0%
2003	23.6%	22.1%	22.8%
2004	23.5%	21.8%	22.7%
2005	24.0%	21.6%	22.8%
2006	24.4%	21.2%	22.8%
2007	24.6%	21.7%	23.2%
2008	25.6%	21.6%	23.6%
2009	26.2%	21.9%	24.1%
2010	26.1%	22.7%	24.4%
2011	26.8%	23.0%	24.9%
2012	27.5%	22.9%	25.2%
2013	28.1%	22.5%	25.3%
2014	28.6%	22.5%	25.6%
2015	28.7%	22.7%	25.7%
2016	29.4%	22.4%	26.0%
2017	30.3%	22.6%	26.5%
2018	30.0%	22.7%	26.4%
2019	30.0%	22.7%	26.4%

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 10 Top 10 countries of MD graduation for internationally trained physicians licensed in Canada, by physician type, 2019

Country	Family medicine	Specialists
South Africa	1,911	741
India	1,021	1,083
United Kingdom	1,057	883
Ireland	840	670
United States	590	578
Egypt	693	424
Pakistan	595	425
Nigeria	519	334
Iran	405	338
Poland	296	246

Source

Scott's Medical Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 11 Total gross clinical and FFS payments to physicians, Canada, 1999–2000 to 2018–2019

Fiscal year	Total gross clinical payments (billions of dollars)	FFS clinical payments (billions of dollars)
1999–2000	\$9.7	\$8.6
2000–2001	\$10.2	\$8.9
2001–2002	\$11.0	\$9.2
2002–2003	\$11.6	\$9.6
2003–2004	\$12.4	\$10.0
2004–2005	\$13.0	\$10.4
2005–2006	\$14.1	\$11.1
2006–2007	\$14.9	\$11.6
2007–2008	\$16.3	\$12.2
2008–2009	\$17.9	\$12.9
2009–2010	\$19.3	\$14.0
2010–2011	\$20.5	\$14.7
2011–2012	\$22.0	\$15.7
2012–2013	\$22.8	\$16.1
2013–2014	\$24.0	\$17.1
2014–2015	\$24.8	\$17.8
2015–2016	\$25.7	\$18.5
2016–2017	\$26.4	\$19.2
2017–2018	\$27.3	\$19.8
2018–2019	\$28.2	\$20.5

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

Excludes Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 12 Average gross clinical payments to physicians, by jurisdiction, 2014–2015 and 2018–2019

Fiscal year	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	Canada
2014–2015	\$277,124	\$363,464	\$258,264	\$302,123	\$310,438	\$357,271	\$340,900	\$363,999	\$365,765	\$279,437	\$266,956	\$336,043
2018–2019	\$290,748	\$391,162	\$272,238	\$293,862	\$345,250	\$347,966	\$362,596	\$359,933	\$390,899	\$292,397	\$294,711	\$347,353

Notes

Due to the greater proportion of short-term, visiting and locum physicians and their lower associated payments in certain smaller jurisdictions relative to larger ones, in an attempt to improve comparability, CIHI has agreed to calculate the average payment per physician for P.E.I. using only permanent in-province physicians, and for Yukon using only physicians whose total gross payments are at least \$60,000.

Data is not available for the Northwest Territories or Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 13 Average gross clinical payments, by physician specialty, Canada, 2018–2019

Specialty	Average gross clinical payment
Family medicine	\$280,000
Psychiatry	\$282,000
Physical medicine	\$289,000
Pediatrics	\$296,000
Neurology	\$316,000
Total physicians	\$347,000
Total medical specialists	\$363,000
Dermatology	\$385,000
Obstetrics/gynecology	\$392,000
Plastic surgery	\$394,000
Internal medicine	\$407,000
Anesthesia	\$437,000
Orthopedic surgery	\$438,000
Otolaryngology	\$444,000
General surgery	\$466,000
Total surgical specialists	\$490,000
Urology	\$500,000
Neurosurgery	\$558,000
Thoracic/cardiovascular surgery	\$588,000
Ophthalmology	\$791,000

Note

Specialty-level information for Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories at the level needed for this analysis was not available. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 14 Average gross clinical payments, by physician type and jurisdiction, 2018–2019

Jurisdiction	Family medicine	Medical specialists	Surgical specialists
N.L.	\$217,000	\$346,000	\$475,000
P.E.I.	\$327,000	\$429,000	\$590,000
N.S.	\$225,000	\$283,000	\$400,000
N.B.	\$227,000	\$342,000	\$422,000
Que.	\$274,000	\$404,000	\$478,000
Ont.	\$310,000	\$344,000	\$489,000
Man.	\$309,000	\$388,000	\$512,000
Sask.	n/a	n/a	n/a
Alta.	n/a	n/a	n/a
B.C.	\$221,000	\$338,000	\$487,000
Y.T.	\$274,000	\$230,000	\$591,000
N.W.T.	n/a	n/a	n/a
Nun.	n/r	n/r	n/r
Canada	\$280,000	\$363,000	\$490,000

Notes

n/a: Specialty-level information for Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories at the level needed for this analysis was not available.

n/r: Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Due to cell suppression at the specialty level, the average payment for medical specialists in Yukon includes only payments to pediatric specialists.

Due to the greater proportion of short-term, visiting and locum physicians and their lower associated payments in certain smaller jurisdictions relative to larger ones, in an attempt to improve comparability, CIHI has agreed to calculate the average payment per physician for P.E.I. using only permanent in-province physicians, and for Yukon using only physicians whose total gross payments are at least \$60,000. Canada figures exclude Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 15 Average gross clinical payment per FTE physician, by physician type and jurisdiction, 2018–2019

Physician specialty	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Canada
Family medicine	\$288,406	\$312,368	\$301,296	\$337,382	\$363,927	\$299,288	\$362,666	\$318,152	\$392,180	\$304,398	\$327,502
Medical specialists	\$383,077	\$393,538	\$340,309	\$410,142	\$420,933	\$371,231	\$422,401	\$437,072	\$443,587	\$425,322	\$400,181
Surgical specialists	\$531,702	\$618,451	\$536,921	\$566,065	\$569,350	\$511,635	\$641,511	\$656,644	\$714,335	\$622,958	\$568,439

Notes

FTE: Full-time equivalent.

Saskatchewan and Alberta FTEs are based on fee-for-service payments only.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Data is not available for Yukon, the Northwest Territories or Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 16 FFS and alternative payments as a percentage of total clinical payments to physicians, Canada, 1999–2000 to 2018–2019

Fiscal year	Percentage FFS clinical payments	Percentage APP clinical payments
1999–2000	89.4%	10.6%
2000–2001	87.1%	12.9%
2001–2002	83.9%	16.1%
2002–2003	83.2%	16.8%
2003–2004	80.6%	19.4%
2004–2005	79.7%	20.3%
2005–2006	79.0%	21.0%
2006–2007	77.4%	22.6%
2007–2008	74.7%	25.3%
2008–2009	72.1%	27.9%
2009–2010	72.6%	27.4%
2010–2011	71.8%	28.2%
2011–2012	71.2%	28.8%
2012–2013	70.6%	29.4%
2013–2014	71.2%	28.8%
2014–2015	71.7%	28.3%
2015–2016	72.1%	27.9%
2016–2017	72.5%	27.5%
2017–2018	72.5%	27.5%
2018–2019	72.6%	27.4%

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

APP: Alternative payment plan.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Excludes Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 17 Distribution of physicians and clinical payments, by payment type and jurisdiction, 2018–2019

Jurisdiction	APP clinical payments	FFS clinical payments	Percentage of physicians who received any FFS payments	Percentage of physicians who received any APP payments
N.L.	33.1%	66.9%	94%	39%
P.E.I.	36.4%	63.6%	91%	75%
N.S.	56.5%	43.5%	61%	97%
N.B.	32.3%	67.7%	92%	63%
Que.	20.7%	79.3%	99%	88%
Ont.	35.6%	64.4%	99%	56%
Man.	27.4%	72.6%	91%	71%
Sask.	38.2%	61.8%	66%	46%
Alta.	12.5%	87.5%	92%	17%
B.C.	19.7%	80.3%	96%	67%
Y.T.	42.7%	57.3%	96%	67%
Canada	27.4%	72.6%	96%	69%

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

APP: Alternative payment plan.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Data is not available for the Northwest Territories or Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 18 Distribution of physicians, by payment type and physician type, Canada, 2018–2019

Physician specialty	90% APP	50%–90% APP	90% FFS	50%–90% FFS
Family medicine	16%	19%	36%	30%
Medical specialists	10%	6%	52%	31%
Surgical specialists	5%	3%	66%	26%

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

APP: Alternative payment plan.

Imaging and laboratory specialists are not included.

Excludes Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 19 FFS services and payments, Canada, 2018–2019

Percentage via FFS	Consultations and visits	Procedures
Services provided	71%	29%
Payments paid	67%	33%

Notes

FFS: Fee for service.

Excludes reciprocal billing, imaging and laboratory services, anesthesia services and anesthesiology specialists, and unclassified physicians.

Excludes the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

Figure 20 Average cost per service, by physician specialty, Canada, 2018–2019

Group	Physician specialty	Average cost per service
Family medicine	Family medicine	\$51.01
Medical specialties	Internal medicine	\$85.50
	Cardiology	\$82.51
	Gastroenterology	\$112.27
	Neurology	\$112.30
	Psychiatry	\$102.49
	Pediatrics	\$82.98
	Dermatology	\$46.70
	Physical medicine	\$88.50
	Anesthesia	\$140.71
Surgical specialties	General surgery	\$128.55
	Thoracic/cardiovascular surgery	\$206.56
	Urology	\$84.87
	Orthopedic surgery	\$122.52
	Plastic surgery	\$112.13
	Neurosurgery	\$233.92
	Ophthalmology	\$64.48
	Otolaryngology	\$70.32
	Obstetrics/gynecology	\$87.89
Total physicians	Total physicians	\$68.70

Notes

Includes fee-for-service payments only.

Excludes the Northwest Territories and Nunavut. Nunavut does not report to the National Physician Database.

Source

National Physician Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information.



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