

Proportion of Physicians in Rural Areas

Name	Proportion of Physicians in Rural Areas
Short/Other Names	Not applicable
Description	This indicator measures the proportion of active physicians in rural areas.
Interpretation	This indicator can be used to measure the distribution of physicians in rural areas and to monitor changes over time.
HSP Framework Dimension	Health System Inputs and Characteristics: Health system resources
Areas of Need	Not applicable
Geographic Coverage	All provinces/territories
Reporting Level/Disaggregation	National, Province/Territory
Indicator Results	https://secure.cihi.ca/estore/productSeries.htm?locale=en&pc=PCC34
Identifying Information	
Name	Proportion of Physicians in Rural Areas
Short/Other Names	Not applicable
Indicator Description and Calculation	
Description	This indicator measures the proportion of active physicians in rural areas.
Calculation: Description	Number of active physicians in rural areas divided by the number of total active physicians in rural and urban areas
Calculation: Geographic Assignment	Place of residence or service
Calculation: Type of Measurement	Percentage or proportion
Calculation: Adjustment Applied	None
Calculation: Method of Adjustment	Not applicable
Denominator	<p>Description: The number of total active physicians in rural and urban areas</p> <p>Inclusions: 1. Active physicians in clinical and non-clinical practice (for example, research and academia) who have an MD degree and a valid mailing address</p> <p>Exclusions: 1. Residents, physicians in the military, and semi-retired and retired physicians</p> <p>2. Non-registered physicians who requested that their information not be published as of December 31 of the reference year</p> <p>3. Physicians whose urban/rural status is unknown</p> <p>Description: The number of active physicians in rural areas. Rural status is derived using the postal code associated with the physician's primary mailing address. Based on Statistics Canada's methodology, postal codes outside of census metropolitan areas (CMAs) or census agglomerations (CAs) were coded as rural.</p> <p>Inclusions: 1. Active physicians in clinical and non-clinical practice (for example, research and academia) who have an MD degree and a valid mailing address</p> <p>Exclusions: 1. Residents, physicians in the military, and semi-retired and retired physicians</p> <p>2. Non-registered physicians who requested that their information not be published as of December 31 of the reference year</p>
Numerator	<p>Description: The number of active physicians in rural areas. Rural status is derived using the postal code associated with the physician's primary mailing address. Based on Statistics Canada's methodology, postal codes outside of census metropolitan areas (CMAs) or census agglomerations (CAs) were coded as rural.</p> <p>Inclusions: 1. Active physicians in clinical and non-clinical practice (for example, research and academia) who have an MD degree and a valid mailing address</p> <p>Exclusions: 1. Residents, physicians in the military, and semi-retired and retired physicians</p> <p>2. Non-registered physicians who requested that their information not be published as of December 31 of the reference year</p>
Background, Interpretation and Benchmarks	
Rationale	The geographic distribution of physicians is a major health care issue. There is a general belief that there is an uneven distribution of physicians, which means rural areas may have an inadequate supply. This indicator can be used to measure the distribution of physicians in rural areas and to monitor changes over time.
Interpretation	This indicator can be used to measure the distribution of physicians in rural areas and to monitor changes over time.
HSP Framework Dimension	Health System Inputs and Characteristics: Health system resources
Areas of Need	Not applicable
Targets/Benchmarks	Not applicable

References
Availability of Data Sources and Results
Data Sources

Not applicable

Available Data Years

SMDB
Type of Year:
Calendar
First Available Year:
2011
Last Available Year:
2017

Geographic Coverage
Reporting Level/Disaggregation
Result Updates
Update Frequency

All provinces/territories
National, Province/Territory

Indicator Results

Every year
Web Tool:
CIHI's eStore: Supply, Distribution and Migration of Physicians in
Canada, 2017

Updates
Quality Statement

URL: [https://secure.cihi.ca/estore/productSeries.htm?
locale=en&pc=PCC34](https://secure.cihi.ca/estore/productSeries.htm?locale=en&pc=PCC34)

Not applicable

Caveats and Limitations

The accuracy of the number of active physicians depends greatly on the validity of physicians' mailing addresses. Under-coverage issues may occur when physicians work in locum positions, since they may change locations frequently. Scott's Directories cannot add locum physicians to its "active" physicians group if there is insufficient information on them. Therefore, these physicians will be absent from the Scott's Medical Database (SMDB) counts. When sufficient address information is available, locum physicians are assigned to just one province or territory within the SMDB, even if they do locum work in multiple jurisdictions.

Trending Issues
Comments

Not applicable
Not applicable