

# 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	High proportions are desirable, all else being equal.
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	<a href="https://secure.cihi.ca/estore/productSeries.htm?locale=en&amp;pc=PCC34">https://secure.cihi.ca/estore/productSeries.htm?locale=en&amp;pc=PCC34</a>

## 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: Number of active physicians in rural areas divided by the number of total active physicians in rural and urban areas

Description:

Calculation: Place of residence or service  
Geographic Assignment

Calculation: Percentage or proportion  
Type of Measurement

Calculation: None  
Adjustment Applied

Calculation: Not applicable  
Method of Adjustment

### Description:

The number of total active physicians in rural and urban areas

### 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

Denominator

### Exclusions:

1. Residents, physicians in the military, and semi-retired and retired physicians
2. Non-registered physicians who requested that their information not be published as of December 31 of the reference year
3. Physicians whose urban/rural status is unknown

### 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.

### Inclusions:

Numerator 1. Active physicians in clinical and non-clinical practice (for example, research and academia) who have an MD degree and a valid mailing address

### Exclusions:

1. Residents, physicians in the military, and semi-retired and retired physicians
2. Non-registered physicians who requested that their information not be published as of December 31 of the reference year

## 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 High proportions are desirable, all else being equal.

## HSP

Framework Health System Inputs and Characteristics: Health system resources  
Dimension

Areas of Need Not applicable

Targets /Benchmarks Not applicable

References Not applicable

## Availability of Data Sources and Results

Data Sources SMDB

**Type of Year:**

Calendar

Available Data Years

**First Available Year:**

2011

**Last Available Year:**

2018

Geographic Coverage

All provinces/territories

Reporting Level/Disaggregation National, Province/Territory

Result Updates

Update Frequency Every year

**Web Tool:**

Indicator Results

CIHI's eStore: Supply, Distribution and Migration of Physicians in Canada,  
2018

**URL:** <https://secure.cihi.ca/estore/productSeries.htm?locale=en&pc=PCC34>

Updates

Not applicable

Quality Statement

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

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