

2008 WORKFORCE PROFILES

of Registered Nurses in Canada

Demographic Profile

- In 2008, there were 279,399 **registered nurses** (RNs), including nurse practitioners (NPs), in Canada, with an average annual growth rate from 2004 to 2008 of approximately 1.5%.
- Of this number:
 - **94%** (261,889) were **employed in nursing**, an increase of 6% since 2004.
 - **2%** (4,896) were **employed outside of nursing**.
 - **3%** (7,911) were **not employed**.
 - **1%** (4,703) **did not state** their employment status.
- The **ratio of RNs employed in nursing to the Canadian population** in 2008 was one RN for every 127 persons.
- The ratio of **RNs employed in nursing** by jurisdiction to the jurisdiction population in 2008 was as follows:

| Jurisdiction | Number of RNs employed in nursing | Population* | Ratio of RNs to population |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Canada | 261,889 | 33,327,337 | 1:127 |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 5,724 | 506,441 | 1:89 |
| Prince Edward Island | 1,479 | 139,451 | 1:94 |
| Nova Scotia | 8,871 | 936,585 | 1:106 |
| New Brunswick | 7,757 | 747,147 | 1:96 |
| Quebec | 65,531 | 7,753,470 | 1:118 |
| Ontario | 92,884 | 12,936,296 | 1:139 |
| Manitoba | 10,902 | 1,206,100 | 1:111 |
| Saskatchewan | 8,823 | 1,013,620 | 1:115 |
| Alberta | 28,501 | 3,595,867 | 1:126 |
| British Columbia | 29,863 | 4,383,845 | 1:147 |
| Yukon | 334 | 33,172 | 1:99 |
| N.W.T. and Nunavut† | 1,220 | 75,343 | 1:62 |

Source: Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

* Population estimates (July 1, 2008), Statistics Canada.

† Northwest Territories and Nunavut data were combined for 2008.

- **Men represented 6% of RNs** (15,621) employed in nursing in 2008, with 40% practising in Quebec, 27.6% in Ontario, 11% in British Columbia, 7.9% in Alberta, and the rest distributed throughout the remaining provinces and territories.
- **Women represented 94% of RNs** (246,268) employed in nursing in 2008.
- The **number of RNs** employed in nursing **by sex** by jurisdiction in 2008 and 2004 was as follows:

| Jurisdiction | 2008 | | | 2004 | | |
|---------------------------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|
| | Women | Men | Total | Women | Men | Total |
| Canada | 246,268 | 15,621 | 261,889 | 233,178 | 13,379 | 246,557 |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 5,445 | 279 | 5,724 | 5,215 | 237 | 5,452 |
| Prince Edward Island | 1,442 | 37 | 1,479 | 1,342 | 35 | 1,377 |
| Nova Scotia | 8,513 | 358 | 8,871 | 8,338 | 264 | 8,602 |
| New Brunswick | 7,418 | 339 | 7,757 | 7,072 | 289 | 7,361 |
| Quebec | 59,321 | 6,210 | 65,531 | 57,673 | 5,782 | 63,455 |
| Ontario | 88,575 | 4,309 | 92,884 | 82,557 | 3,542 | 86,099 |
| Manitoba | 10,266 | 636 | 10,902 | 10,065 | 563 | 10,628 |
| Saskatchewan | 8,473 | 350 | 8,823 | 8,208 | 273 | 8,481 |
| Alberta | 27,268 | 1,233 | 28,501 | 24,678 | 922 | 25,600 |
| British Columbia | 28,146 | 1,717 | 29,863 | 26,938 | 1,351 | 28,289 |
| Yukon | 300 | 34 | 334 | 263 | 20 | 283 |
| N.W.T. and Nunavut* | 1,101 | 119 | 1,220 | 829 | 101 | 930 |

Source: 2008 data adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

2004 data adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2004 (revised)

* Northwest Territories and Nunavut data were combined for 2008.

- The **distribution of RNs** employed in nursing in Canada **by age** in 2008 was as follows:

| Age cohort (yr) | Percentage | Total % per generation | Generation |
|-----------------|------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| ≤ 24 | 2.5% | 11.4% | Generation Y (born 1981-2000) |
| 25-29 | 8.9% | | |
| 30-34 | 9.6% | 34.4% | Generation X (born 1965-1980) |
| 35-39 | 11.3% | | |
| 40-44 | 13.5% | | |
| 45-49 | 14.8% | 51.5% | Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964) |
| 50-54 | 16.1% | | |
| 55-59 | 13.6% | | |
| 60-64 | 7.0% | | |
| 65+ | 2.7% | 2.7% | Veterans (born 1925-1945) |

Source: Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

- The **average age** of an RN employed in nursing in 2008 was **45.1 years**; the average age in 2004 was 44.6 years.

| Jurisdiction | Average age (years) | Difference from Cdn average (years) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Canada | 45.1 | - |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 42.7 | - 2.4 |
| Prince Edward Island | 46.3 | + 1.2 |
| Nova Scotia | 46.6 | + 1.5 |
| New Brunswick | 44.7 | - 0.4 |
| Quebec | 43.3 | - 1.8 |
| Ontario | 46.1 | + 1.0 |
| Manitoba | 46.1 | + 1.0 |
| Saskatchewan | 45.9 | + 0.8 |
| Alberta | 44.6 | - 0.5 |
| British Columbia | 46.5 | + 1.4 |
| Yukon | 45.3 | + 0.2 |
| N.W.T. and Nunavut* | 44.5 | - 0.6 |

Source: Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

* Northwest Territories and Nunavut data were combined for 2008.

Educational Profile

- The **highest level of nursing education** reported by RNs employed in nursing in Canada in 2008 and 2004 was as follows:

| Education level | 2008* | | 2004** | |
|-----------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| | Number | (%) | Number | (%) |
| Diploma | 162,979 | 62.2% | 167,407 | 67.9% |
| Baccalaureate | 90,965 | 34.7% | 73,399 | 29.8% |
| Master's | 7,463 | 2.8% | 5,425 | 2.2% |
| Doctorate | 482 | 0.2% | 311 | 0.13% |

Source:

*2008 Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

** 2004 Adapted from Registered Nurses Database, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2004 (revised)

Note: Non-response for Highest Education in Nursing for 2004, n=15 (<0.1%)

- The percentages of RNs employed in nursing in Canada by location of graduation in 2008 were:
 - **91.6%** (239,460) **educated in Canada**
 - **8.4%** (21,980) **educated internationally**

Employment Profile

- The **distribution of RNs** employed in direct care nursing **by area of responsibility in 2008** was as follows:

| Direct care nursing area of responsibility | Number | (%) |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| Medicine/Surgery | 44,068 | 17.2% |
| Geriatrics/Long-Term Care | 25,413 | 9.9% |
| Critical Care (Burn) | 18,440 | 7.2% |
| Emergency Room | 16,640 | 6.5% |
| Maternal/Newborn | 14,463 | 5.6% |
| Psychiatry/Mental Health | 13,220 | 5.1% |
| Community Health | 13,151 | 5.1% |
| Operating Room | 12,583 | 4.9% |
| Nursing in Several Clinical Areas | 9,298 | 3.6% |
| Home Care | 7,351 | 2.9% |
| Pediatric | 7,234 | 2.8% |
| Public Health | 6,488 | 2.5% |
| Ambulatory Care | 5,948 | 2.3% |
| Rehabilitation | 3,956 | 1.5% |
| Oncology | 3,351 | 1.3% |
| Occupational Health | 2,952 | 1.1% |
| Telehealth | 1,074 | 0.4% |
| Other Patient Care | 23,210 | 9.0% |
| Total Direct Care | 228,840 | 89.1% |

Source: Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

- The **distribution of RNs** employed in nursing **by primary area of responsibility** in 2008 and 2004 was as follows:

| Area of responsibility | 2008* | | 2004** | |
|------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| | Number | (%) | Number | (%) |
| Direct patient care | 228,840 | 87.4% | 185,386 | 75.2% |
| Administration | 16,972 | 6.5% | 8,590 | 3.5% |
| Education | 9,147 | 3.5% | 5,730 | 2.3% |
| Research | 1,940 | 0.7% | 1,485 | 0.6% |
| Not stated | 4,990 | 1.9% | 31,341 | 12.7% |
| Missing | - | - | 14,025 | 5.7% |
| Total | 261,889 | 100% | 246,557 | 100% |

Source:

*2008 Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

** 2004 Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2004 (revised)

Missing for Area of responsibility for 2004, n=14 025 (%)

- The **distribution of RNs** employed in nursing **by position** in 2008 and 2004 was as follows:

| Position | 2008* | | 2004** | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| | Number | (%) | Number | (%) |
| Staff or community health nurse | 202,258 | 77.2% | 185,750 | 75.3% |
| Manager or assistant manager | 13,550 | 0.5% | 12,915 | 5.2% |
| Instructor/professor/educator | 9,619 | 3.7% | 8,217 | 3.3% |
| Consultant | 7,907 | 3.0% | 7,008 | 2.8% |
| Director or assistant director | 3,960 | 1.5% | 3,400 | 1.4% |
| Clinical specialist | 2,222 | 0.9% | 2,747 | 1.1% |
| Researcher | 1,588 | 0.6% | 1,620 | 0.7% |
| Nurse practitioner | 1,391 | 4.3% | 728 | 0.3% |
| Chief nursing officer or CEO | 844 | 0.3% | 1,332 | 0.5% |
| Nurse midwife | 18 | 0.01% | 28 | 0.01% |
| Other | 15,461 | 5.9% | 8,927 | 3.6% |
| Not stated | 3,071 | 1.2% | 13,885 | 5.6% |
| Total | 261,889 | 100% | 246,557 | 100% |

Source: *2008 Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

**2004 Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2004 (revised)

Note: The percentage (%) columns were rounded to 100%.

- A total of 261,889 RNs were employed in Canada in 2008. Canadian RNs employed in nursing in 2008 and 2004 reported their **employment status** as follows:
 - **57.8%** (151,420) worked **full-time** in 2008 versus 47.8% (125,791) in 2004.
 - **30.9%** (80,879) worked **part-time** in 2008 versus 30.1% (79,252) in 2004.
 - **10.8%** (28,219) worked on a **casual** basis in 2008 versus 9.4% (24,818) in 2004.
 - **0.5%** (1,371) did not report their status in 2008 versus 6.3% (16,710) in 2004.

- The **distribution of RNs** employed in nursing **by employment status** in 2008 was as follows:

| Jurisdiction | Total | Full-time | | Part-time | | Casual | |
|---------------------------|---------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|--------|-------|
| | Number | Number | (%) | Number | (%) | Number | (%) |
| Canada* | 261,889 | 151,420 | 57.8% | 80,879 | 30.9% | 28,219 | 10.8% |
| Newfoundland and Labrador | 5,724 | 4,229 | 73.9% | 876 | 15.3% | 619 | 10.8% |
| Prince Edward Island | 1,479 | 779 | 52.7% | 547 | 37.0% | 153 | 10.3% |
| Nova Scotia | 8,871 | 5,685 | 64.1% | 2,290 | 25.8% | 895 | 10.1% |
| New Brunswick | 7,757 | 4,987 | 64.3% | 2,222 | 28.6% | 548 | 7.1% |
| Quebec | 65,531 | 36,755 | 56.4% | 20,948 | 32.1% | 7,459 | 11.4% |
| Ontario | 92,884 | 60,236 | 64.9% | 25,208 | 27.1% | 7,440 | 8.0% |
| Manitoba | 10,902 | 5,190 | 47.6% | 4,850 | 44.5% | 862 | 7.9% |
| Saskatchewan | 8,823 | 5,054 | 57.3% | 2,649 | 30.0% | 1,119 | 12.7% |
| Alberta | 28,501 | 11,196 | 40.7% | 12,582 | 45.7% | 3,725 | 13.5% |
| British Columbia | 29,863 | 16,531 | 55.4% | 8,609 | 28.8% | 4,723 | 15.8% |
| Yukon | 334 | 160 | 48.2% | 98 | 29.5% | 74 | 22.3% |
| N.W.T. and Nunavut** | 1,220 | 618 | 50.7% | – | – | 602 | 49.3% |

Source: Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

Note:

*0.5% (1,371) of Registered Nurses did not report their employment status in 2008

**Northwest Territories and Nunavut data were combined for 2008.

Multiple Employers

- The **distribution of RNs by multiple employment status** in Canada for 2008 and 2004 was as follows:

| Multiple employment status | 2008* | | 2004** | |
|--|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Number | (%) | Number | (%) |
| Single employer in registered nursing | 225,183 | 86.0% | 215,112 | 87.25% |
| Multiple employers in registered nursing | 34,873 | 13.3% | 30,765 | 12.48% |
| Not stated | 1833 | 0.7% | 680 | 0.28% |
| Total | 261,889 | 100.0% | 246,557 | 100.0% |

Source: *2008 Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

**2004 Adapted from *Registered Nurses Database*, Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2004 (revised)



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