

2009 Workforce Profile of Nurse Practitioners in Canada

May 2011



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Foreword

The statistics presented in this document are taken directly from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) *Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2005 to 2009* report or are derived from the Registered Nurses (RN) database, which is also managed by CIHI. Information for the RN database is provided to CIHI by the RN regulatory bodies based on the self-reported data collected on annual licensure/registration forms. The specialties listed in this document have been agreed on by all RN regulatory bodies across Canada and are reviewed regularly. These specialties reflect the areas of responsibility as reported by RNs, including nurse practitioners (NP). Additional information, such as the definitions of the specialties, can be found in the [Registered Nurses System Data Dictionary and Processing Manual \(Version 10.0\)](#).

Message from the CEO

The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) is pleased to present its first-ever *2009 Workforce Profile of Nurse Practitioners in Canada*. This new report contains demographic, educational and employment data specific to Canadian nurse practitioners. This report enables CNA and its members to provide sound workforce information to governments and stakeholders for health human resources planning. It also serves to complement the information found in the nurse practitioner sections of *Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2005 to 2009* – the annual report from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) – and it draws data directly from the CIHI report. Furthermore, CNA extracts data from the CIHI Registered Nurses database to provide additional workforce information.

We look forward to hearing your comments about the report.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Bard, RN, M.A.Ed.
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Nurses Association

Demographic Profile

In 2009, there were 2,048 **nurse practitioners** (NPs) in Canada, representing 0.7% of the total number of registered nurses (284,690). Therefore, the percentages must be interpreted with caution given the small number of NPs.

Of this number:

- **97.1%** (1,990) were **employed in nursing**, an increase of 52% since 2005;
- **0.6%** (12) were **employed outside of nursing**;
- **1.6%** (32) were **not employed**; and
- **0.7%** (14) **did not state** their employment status.

Men represented 6.0% (119) of NPs employed in nursing in 2009.

The **ratio of NPs employed in nursing to the Canadian population** in 2009 was one NP for every 16,945 persons.

The ratio of **NPs employed in nursing** by jurisdiction to the jurisdiction population in 2009 was as follows:

Jurisdiction	Number of NPs employed in nursing ¹	Population ²	Ratio of NPs to population ³
Canada	1,990	33,720,184	1:16,945
Newfoundland and Labrador	94	508,143	1:5,406
Prince Edward Island	*	141,097	-
Nova Scotia	85	939,124	1:11,048
New Brunswick	55	749,324	1:13,624
Quebec	38	7,828,357	1:206,009
Ontario	1,124	13,064,900	1:11,624
Manitoba	6†	1,219,562	1:20,326‡
Saskatchewan	111	1,029,124	1:9,271
Alberta	251	3,670,742	1:14,624
British Columbia	119	4,460,292	1:37,481
Yukon	-	33,652	-
N.W.T. and Nunavut [∞]	46	75,867	1:1,649

Source:

¹ Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). (2010). *Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2005 to 2009*.

² Population estimates (July 1, 2009), Statistics Canada.

³ Data produced by CNA.

Notes:

* Value suppressed in accordance with CNA privacy policy; cell value is from 1 to 4.

- Data are not applicable or do not exist.

†Digit in this two-digit value suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

‡The ratio was calculated on the low end of the data range presented as a result of the need for data suppression.

[∞] Northwest Territories and Nunavut data were combined for 2009.

Four generations are now found in the workplace, as described by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions:¹

- **Generation Y (born 1981-2000)** – Self confident, highly educated and technologically savvy, they value work flexibility and collaborative team approach with constant positive reinforcement.

¹ Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions. (2009). *From textbooks to texting: Addressing issues of intergenerational diversity in the nursing workplace*. Ottawa: Author.

- **Generation X (born 1965-1980)** – Because they entered the labour market at a time of significant hospital restructuring and large-scale layoffs of nurses, many were unable to find full-time employment, and were forced to take several part-time positions or leave Canada in order to pursue a career in nursing.
- **Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964)** – Prepared to work long hours in return for rewards, they define themselves through their jobs and work performance.
- **Veterans (born 1925-1945)** – They tend to be respectful of authority and disciplined in their work habits; they are averse to risk and less likely to question organizational practices.

In 2009, 16% of NPs employed in nursing were 55 years or older. More specifically, the **distribution of NPs employed in nursing in Canada by age and employment status** in 2009 was as follows:

Age cohort (years)	Numbers of NPs and percentage	Employment status	
		Full-time	Part-time/casual
≤ 24	0	0	0
25-29	38 (1.9%)	29 (1.5%)	9 (0.4%)
30-34	193 (9.7%)	156 (7.8%)	37 (1.9%)
35-39	261 (13.1%)	206 (10.3%)	55 (2.8%)
40-44	355 (17.8%)	286 (14.4%)	69 (3.5%)
45-49	451 (22.7%)	366 (18.4%)	85 (4.3%)
50-54	322 (16.2%)	282 (14.1%)	40 (2.0%)
55-59	225 (11.3%)	185 (9.3%)	40 (2.0%)
60-64	63 (3.2%)	37 (1.9%)	26 (1.3%)
65+	1†	9 (0.4%)	† (-)

Source:
Canadian Institute for Health Information (2009). Registered Nurses database.

Notes:

In 2009, distribution of NPs by age is missing for all NPs registered in Manitoba (n=6†, digit suppressed to ensure confidentiality), for whom date of birth was not provided to CNA.

The number of NPs by age cohort do not sum to the total number of NPs shown for Canada due to the need for data suppression (MB and PEI).

† Digit this two-digit suppressed to ensure confidentiality

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding and data suppression.

The **average age** of an NP employed in nursing in 2009 was **45.5 years**.

Jurisdiction	Average age (years)	Minimum age	Maximum age	Difference from Cdn. average (years)
Canada	45.5	26	72	-
Newfoundland and Labrador	44.9	29	71	-0.6
Prince Edward Island	†	†	†	-
Nova Scotia	46.1	30	62	+0.6
New Brunswick	44.8	29	66	-0.7
Quebec	38.4	28	56	-7.1
Ontario	45.8	26	72	+0.3
Manitoba				
Saskatchewan	48.5	28	69	+3.0
Alberta	44.2	28	70	-1.3
British Columbia	44.1	29	64	-1.4
Yukon	-	-	-	-
N.W.T. and Nunavut [∞]	49.3	32	66	+3.8

Source:

Canadian Institute for Health Information (2009). Registered Nurses database.

Notes:

Numbers must be interpreted with caution given the small number of NPs.

Age data do not include Manitoba as breakdown by age for Manitoba not provided to CNA.

† Average age suppressed for P.E.I. as number of NPs too small.

- Data are not applicable or do not exist.

[∞] Northwest Territories and Nunavut data were combined for 2009.

Educational Profile

The **highest level of nursing education** reported by NPs employed in nursing in Canada in 2009 was as follows:

Education level	Number	(%)
Diploma	216	10.8%
Baccalaureate	926	46.5%
Master's	834	41.9%
Doctorate	14	0.7%

Source:

Canadian Institute for Health Information (2009). Registered Nurses database.

Notes:

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

The **location of graduation** reported by NPs employed in nursing in 2009 was:

- **95.9% (1,900) educated in Canada**
- **4.1% (81) educated internationally**

Note:

Non response for location of graduation (% of NP workforce): n=9 (0.4%)

Employment Profile

The **distribution of NPs** employed in direct care nursing **by area of responsibility in 2009** was as follows:

Direct care nursing area of responsibility	Number	(%)
Medical/Surgical	137	7.1%
Community Health	137	7.1%
Geriatric/Long-Term Care	93	4.8%
Ambulatory Care	89	4.6%
Emergency Room	87	4.5%
Pediatrics	86	4.4%
Nursing in Several Clinical Areas	74	3.8%
Critical Care (Burn)	57	2.9%
Public Health	32	1.6%
Psychiatry/Mental Health	21	1.1%
Maternal/Newborn	21	1.1%
Oncology	19	1.0%
Occupational Health	15	0.8%
Rehabilitation	†	†
Home Care	7	0.4%
Operating Room	*	*
Telehealth	*	*
Other Patient Care	932	48.0%
Total Direct Care	1,817	93.7%

Source:

Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). (2010). *Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2005 to 2009*.

Notes:

† Digit suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

* Value suppressed in accordance with CNA privacy policy; cell value is from 1 to 4.

The **distribution of NPs** employed in nursing by **primary area of responsibility** in 2009 was as follows:

Area of responsibility	Number	(%)
Direct patient care	1,817	93.7%
Administration	45	2.3%
Education	71	3.7%
Research	7	0.4%
Total	1,940	100%

Source:

Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). (2010). *Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2005 to 2009*.

Note:

Non-response for area of responsibility (% of all NPs): n=50 (2.5%).

A total of 1,990 NPs were employed in nursing in Canada in 2009. Canadian NPs employed in nursing in 2009 reported their **employment status** as follows:

- **80.3%** (1,599) worked **full time**;
- **15.0%** (298) worked **part time**; and
- **4.7%** (93) worked on a **casual** basis.

The **distribution of NPs** employed in nursing **by employment status** in 2009 was as follows:

Jurisdiction	Total	Full-time		Part-time/Casual	
	Number	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Canada	1,990	1,599	80.3%	391	19.7%
Newfoundland and Labrador	94	82	87.2%	12	12.8%
Prince Edward Island	*	*	-	*	-
Nova Scotia	85	76	89.4%	9	10.6%
New Brunswick	55	50	90.9%	5	9.1%
Quebec	38	3†	-	*	-
Ontario	1,124	925	82.3%	199	17.7%
Manitoba	6†	43	-	2†	-
Saskatchewan	111	98	88.3%	13	11.7%
Alberta	251	170	67.7%	81	32.3%
British Columbia	119	86	72.3%	33	27.7%
Yukon	-	-	-	-	-
N.W.T. and Nunavut ^o	46	33	71.7%	13	28.3%

Source:

Canadian Institute for Health Information (2009). Registered Nurses database.

Notes:

* Value suppressed in accordance with CNA privacy policy; cell value is from 1 to 4.

- Data is not applicable or does not exist.

† Digit suppressed to ensure confidentiality.

^o Northwest Territories and Nunavut data were combined for 2009.

Multiple Employers

The distribution of NPs by **multiple employment status** in Canada for 2009 was as follows:

Multiple employment status	Full time		Part-time/casual	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Single employer in registered nursing	1,262	(63.4%)	242	(12.2%)
Multiple employers in registered nursing	311	(15.6%)	133	(6.7%)
Not stated	26	(1.3%)	16	(0.8%)
Total	1,599		391	

Source:

Canadian Institute for Health Information (2009). Registered Nurses database.

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