CANADIAN PHYSICIAN RESOURCES – 2013 BASIC FACTS

PHYSICIAN SUPPLY
• Number of active physicians (excluding residents) as of January, 2013 = 74,526.
• There are 2.14 physicians per 1,000 population.

PHYSICIAN MIX
• 51% are family physicians; 49% are specialists of other disciplines.
• 41% (30,795) are aged 55 or older.
• 37% are female; 63% are male. Two thirds of family physicians under age 35 are female.
• 75% graduated from a Canadian medical school; 24% graduated from a foreign medical school.

PHYSICIAN DISTRIBUTION
• Less than 10% of physicians practise in rural areas whereas about 18% of Canadians live in rural areas. The figure for family physicians is 15% compared to 2% of specialists.
• There is a higher concentration of foreign medical graduates in Saskatchewan (54% of all physicians) and Newfoundland (41%) than in provinces such as Quebec where only 11% graduated outside Canada.
• 73% of Canadian graduates practise in the province where they graduated. Graduate retention figures range from 40% in Newfoundland to 80% in Ontario and B.C. and 84% in Quebec.

PHYSICIANS IN TRAINING
• First year enrolment in undergraduate medical schools in 2011/12 was 2,902. This includes about 50 foreign students. This is an 84% increase since 1997/98.
• 54% of first year medical students in 2011/12 were female; 46% were male.
• Total enrolment in 2011/12 was 11,142; number of graduates in 2012 was estimated at 2,647.
• Number of residents in postgraduate programs in 2012/13 was 14,982. Of these, 11,931 were Ministry-funded positions (3,195 at R-1); 1,862 were International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and 10,069 were Graduates of Canadian Medical Schools (GCMSs).
• The practice entry cohort in 2012 was 2,771. This excludes visa trainees and re-entry.

CARMS MATCH
• In 2013 there were 2,695 GCMS matched to residency positions. 91% got one of their first choices of discipline.
• 36% of Canadian grads made family medicine their first choice. Highest proportion in two decades.
• There were 1,707 IMGs participating in the match (mostly in a parallel process). By the end of second round, 499 had Ministry funded residency positions.

PHYSICIAN MIGRATION
• 152 physicians moved abroad in 2012. In the same year, 229 returned from abroad for a net gain of 77. Net gains have occurred for the past 9 years.
• 743 physicians moved to another province/territory in 2012 (excl. residents). Net gains occurred in QC (31), AB (4) and BC (95).

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON
• Canada has 2.4 physicians per 1,000 population (including residents) compared to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average of 3.2.
• Canada’s phys/pop ratio ranks 28 out of 34 nations ahead of Japan, Poland, Mexico, Korea, Turkey and Chile.
• US Council on Graduate Medical Education has projected a shortage of at least 80,000 physicians by 2020.

Sources:
CMA Masterfile; AFMC Canadian Medical Education Statistics; CAPER Annual Census of Post-MD Trainees; CARMS Match Results; CIHI Scotts Medical Database; and OECD Health Data.

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