



Medical Oncology Profile

Updated
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General information

Medical oncology is a subspecialty of internal medicine, is closely associated with hematology and deals with tumors occurring in all organ systems. It is a varied, multidisciplinary field involving all aspects of internal medicine and requiring clinical knowledge and skills. The discipline treats the “whole” patient. Oncologists maintain close patient contact and their patients are often seriously or terminally ill. Systemic therapy provides curative treatment for a large number of patients. Research and teaching opportunities are plentiful in this field.

The medical oncologist often coordinates the multidisciplinary care of cancer patients, including diagnosis, therapy (e.g., surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and other modalities), physiotherapy, counseling, clinical genetics, palliative care and ethical questions surrounding cancer care. It also involves screening efforts for both populations and of the relatives of patients in types of cancer that are thought to have a hereditary basis such as breast cancer.

General information

A medical oncologist often has to liaise with pathologists on the exact biological nature of the tumor that is being treated.

The medical oncology resident must acquire a high degree of clinical competence in the investigation and management of patients with the spectrum of neoplastic diseases and their complications. They must incorporate an understanding of the basic scientific principles which relate to cancer and its treatment, particularly the chemical, hormonal and immunologic approaches. The resident must develop the ability to function as a specialist consultant in an inpatient and ambulatory setting and as a part of a multidisciplinary team in cancer management. Development of expertise in the relevant investigative methods, technical skills and communicative interpersonal relationships is essential, together with skill in the collection and interpretation of data and decision-making.

Only candidates certified by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in internal medicine may be eligible for the Certificate of Special Competence in medical oncology.

General information

Once certified in internal medicine, there is an additional 2 years of approved residency in medical oncology. This period must include:

- 1 year of approved clinical residency in an accredited residency program in medical oncology;
- 3 months approved residency on a radiation oncology service;
- 3 months approved residency on a hematology service unless equivalent training has been received previously.

It must also include a period of residency approved by the program director on other services which may treat specific tumor types or other aspects not otherwise included in the program.

For further details on training requirements please go to:

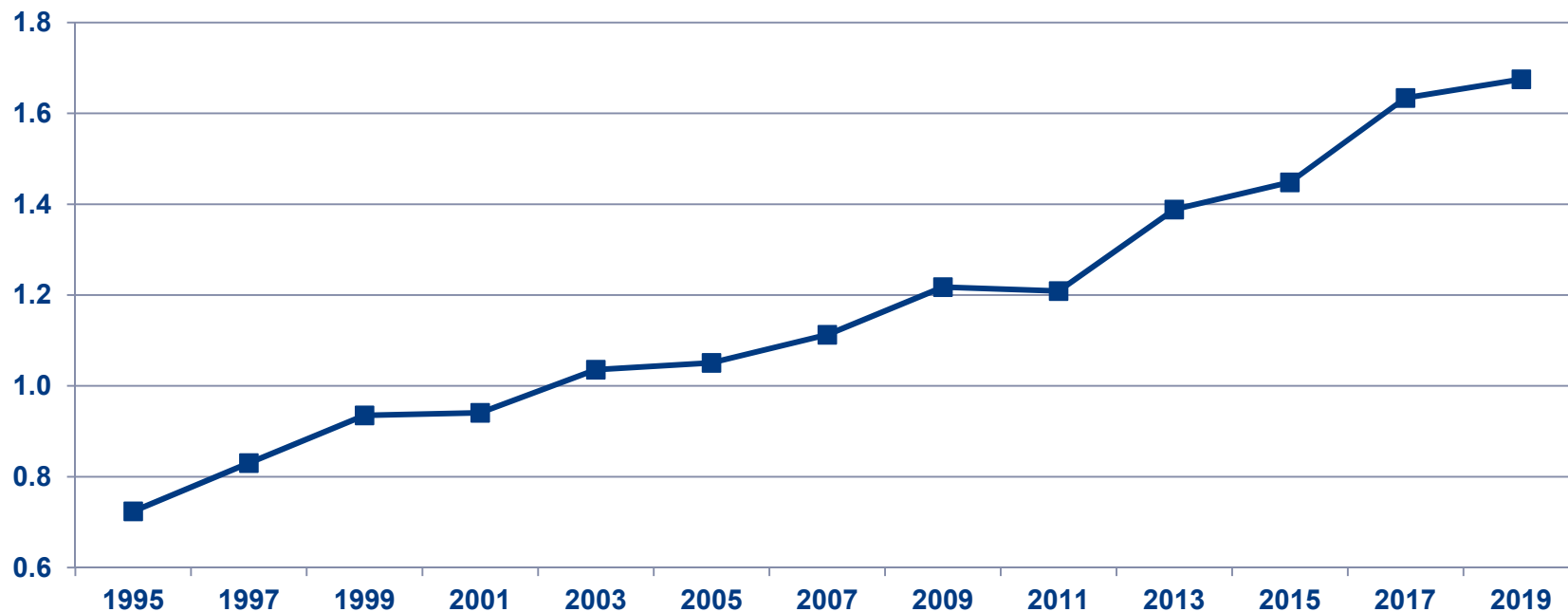
[Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada](#)

[The Canadian Oncology Societies](#)

Total number & number/100,000 population by province, 2019

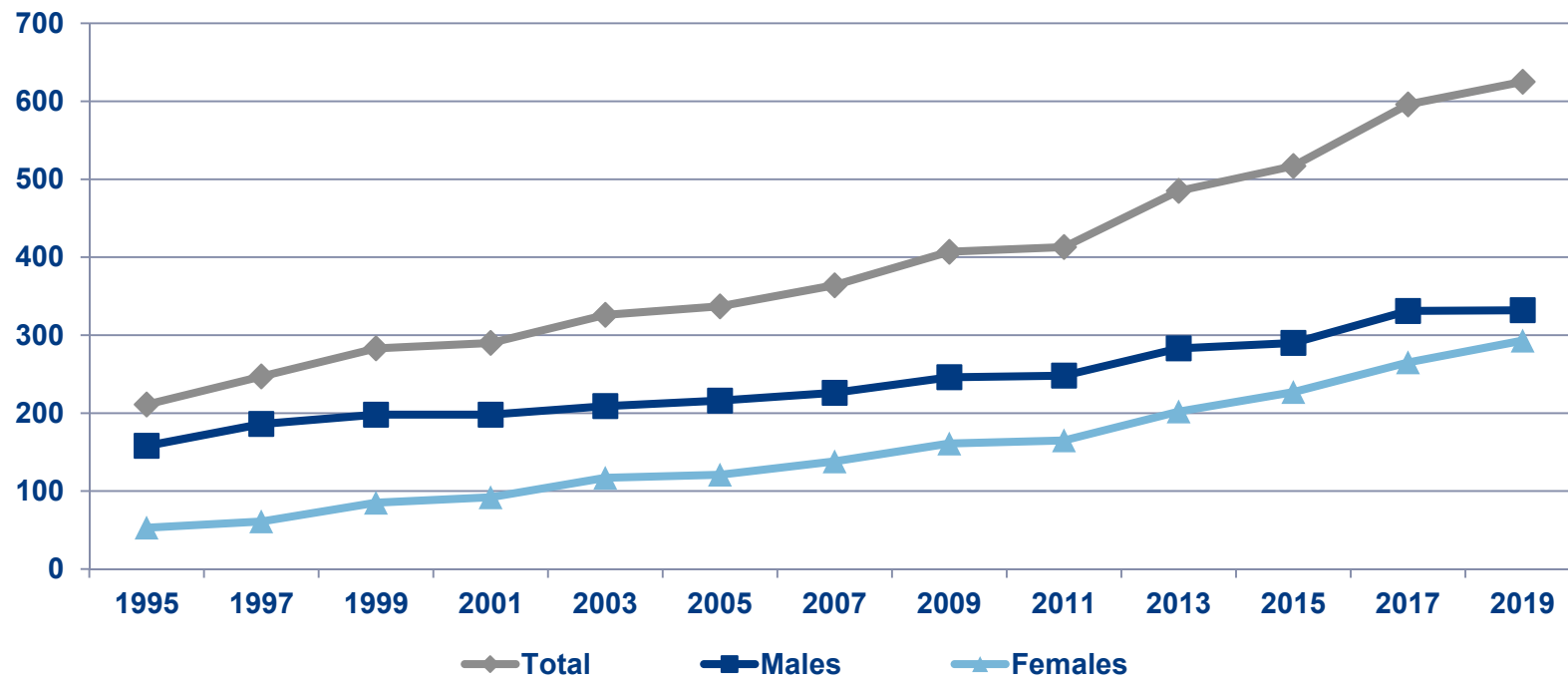
Province/Territory	Physicians	Phys/100k pop'n
Newfoundland/Labrador	12	2.3
Prince Edward Island	3	1.9
Nova Scotia	12	1.2
New Brunswick	8	1.0
Quebec	181	2.1
Ontario	236	1.6
Manitoba	17	1.2
Saskatchewan	5	0.4
Alberta	63	1.5
British Columbia	88	1.7
Territories	0	0.0
CANADA	625	1.7

Number/100,000 population, 1995 to 2019



Source: 1995-2019 CMA Masterfiles

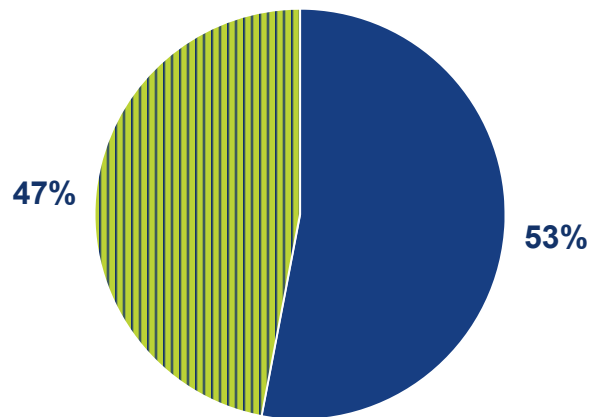
Number by gender & year, 1995 to 2019



Source: 1995-2019 CMA Masterfiles

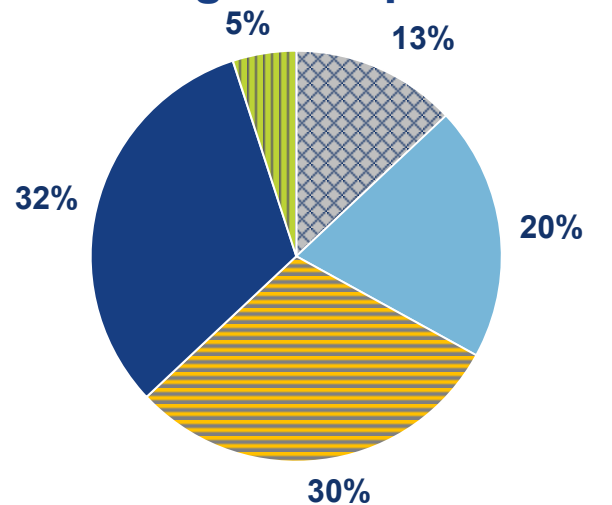
Percentage by gender & age, 2019

Gender



■ Male ■ Female

Age Group

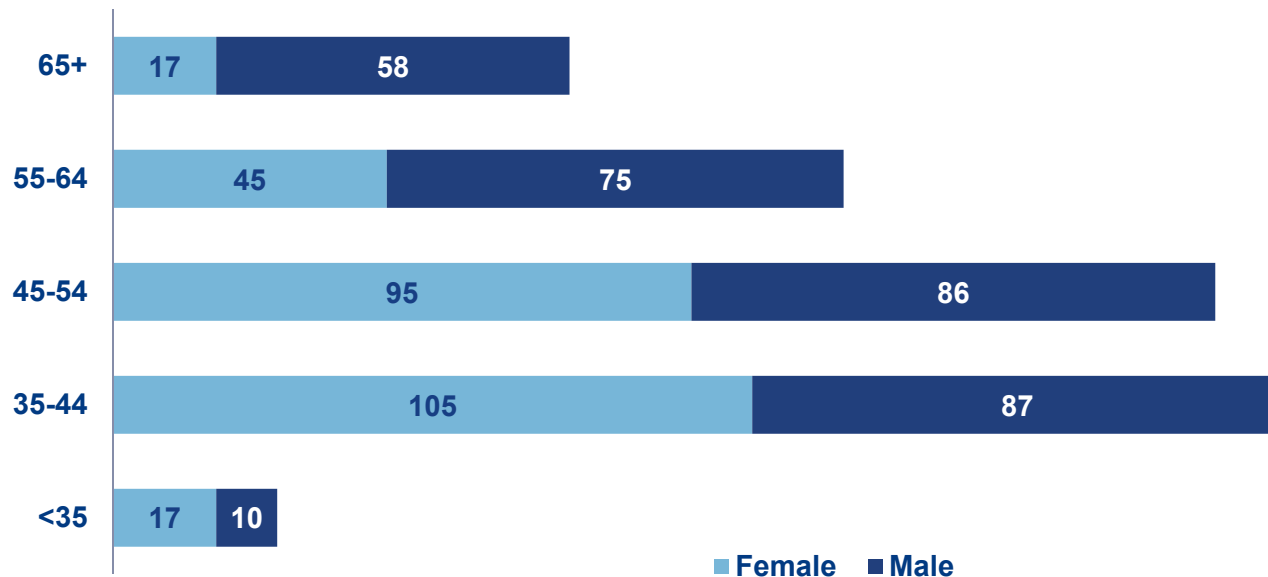


■ 65+ ■ 55 - 64 ■ 45 - 54 ■ 35 - 44 ■ < 35

Excludes those where gender or age is unknown.

Source: 2019 CMA Masterfile

Number by gender & age, 2019

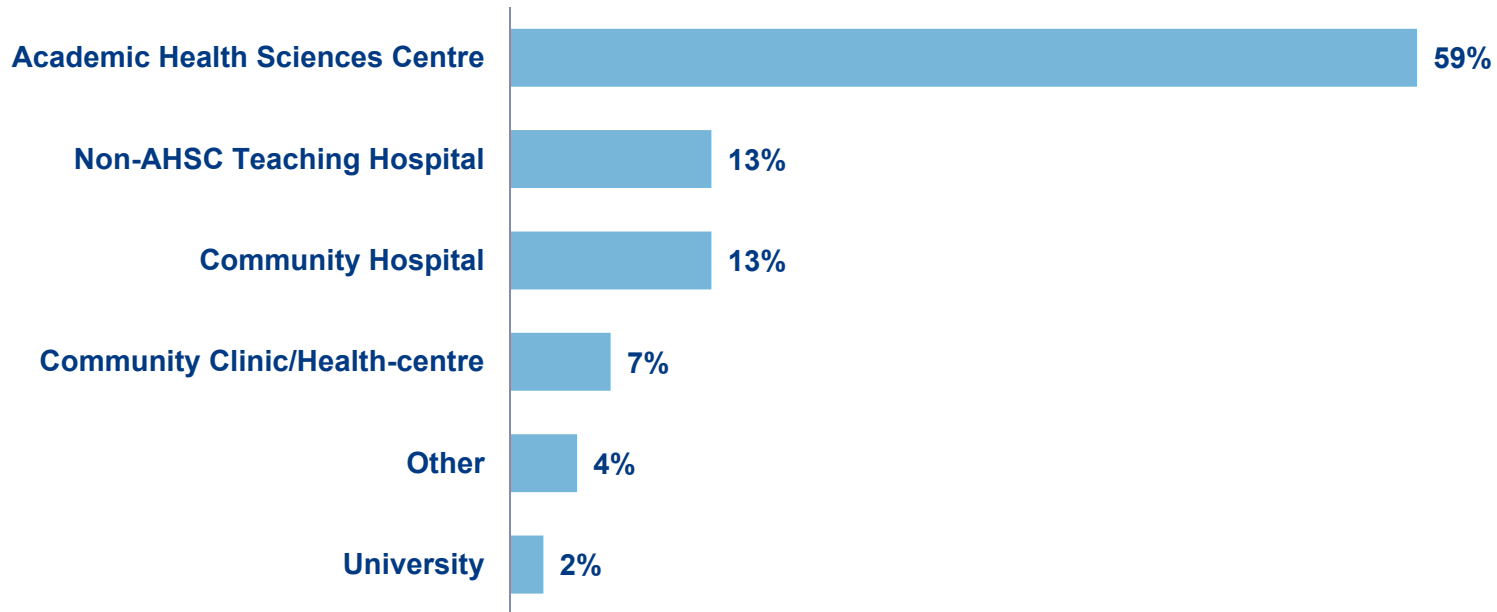


Excludes those where gender or age is unknown.

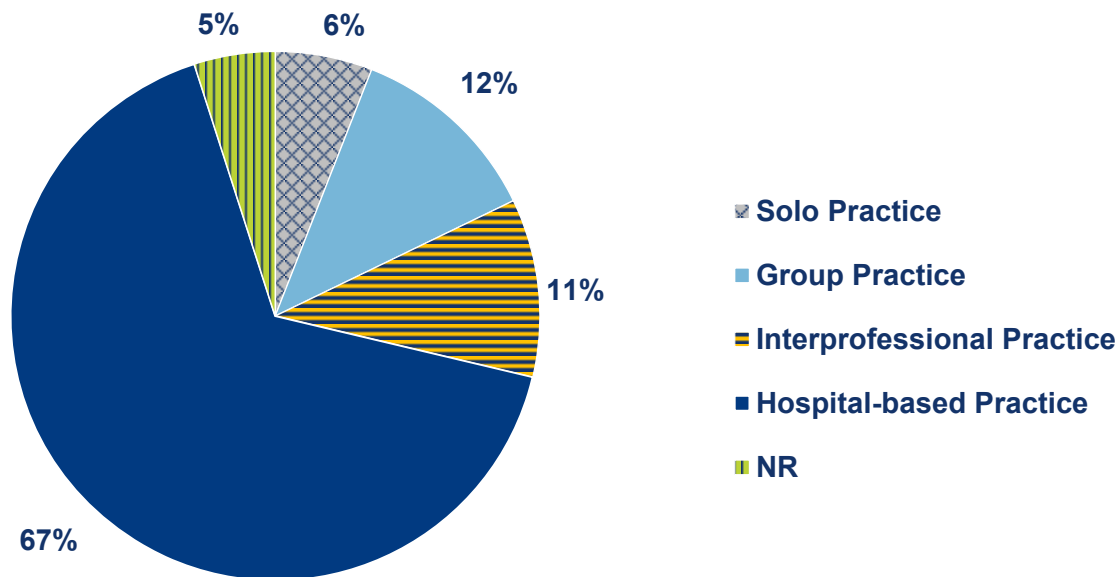
Source: 2019 CMA Masterfile



Percentage by main work setting, 2019



Percentage by practice organization, 2017*



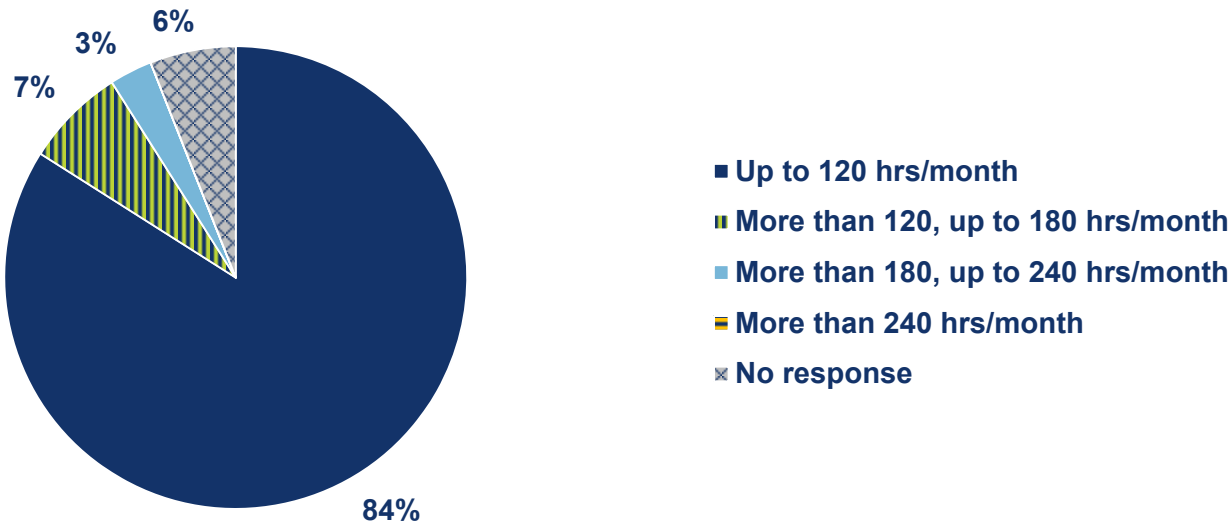
*Most recent available data for this specialty

Source: 2017 CMA Workforce Survey. Canadian Medical Association

Hours worked per week (excluding on-call), 2019

Activity	Hours worked per week
Direct patient care without teaching component	19.9
Direct patient care with teaching component	7.6
Teaching without patient care	1.7
Indirect patient care	9.5
Health facility committees	1.9
Administration	4.4
Research	4.4
Managing practice	1.0
Continued professional development	3.1
Other	0.5
TOTAL HOURS PER WEEK	54.0

On-call duty hours per month, 2014*



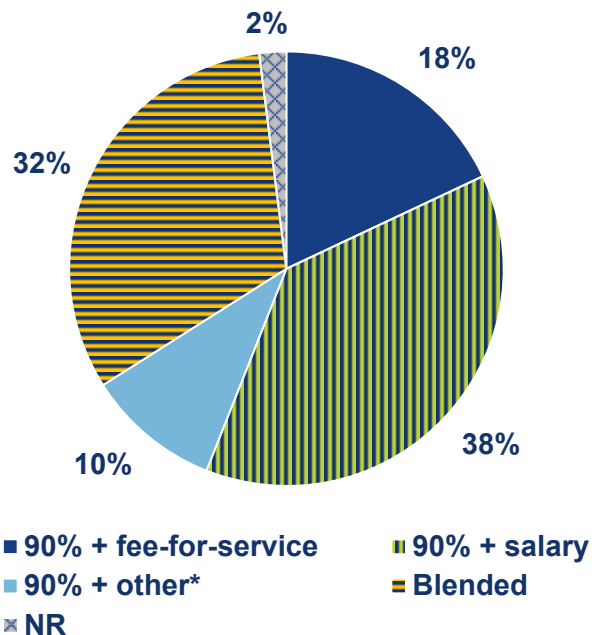
Time spent on call in direct patient care = 17 hrs./month

*Most recent available data for this specialty

Source: 2014 National Physician Survey. CFPC, CMA, Royal College

Percentage by remuneration method

Primary payment method¹ in 2013**



Average gross payment per physician for Internal Medicine & subspecialties in 2017/18 (those earning at least \$60,000) = \$437,000²

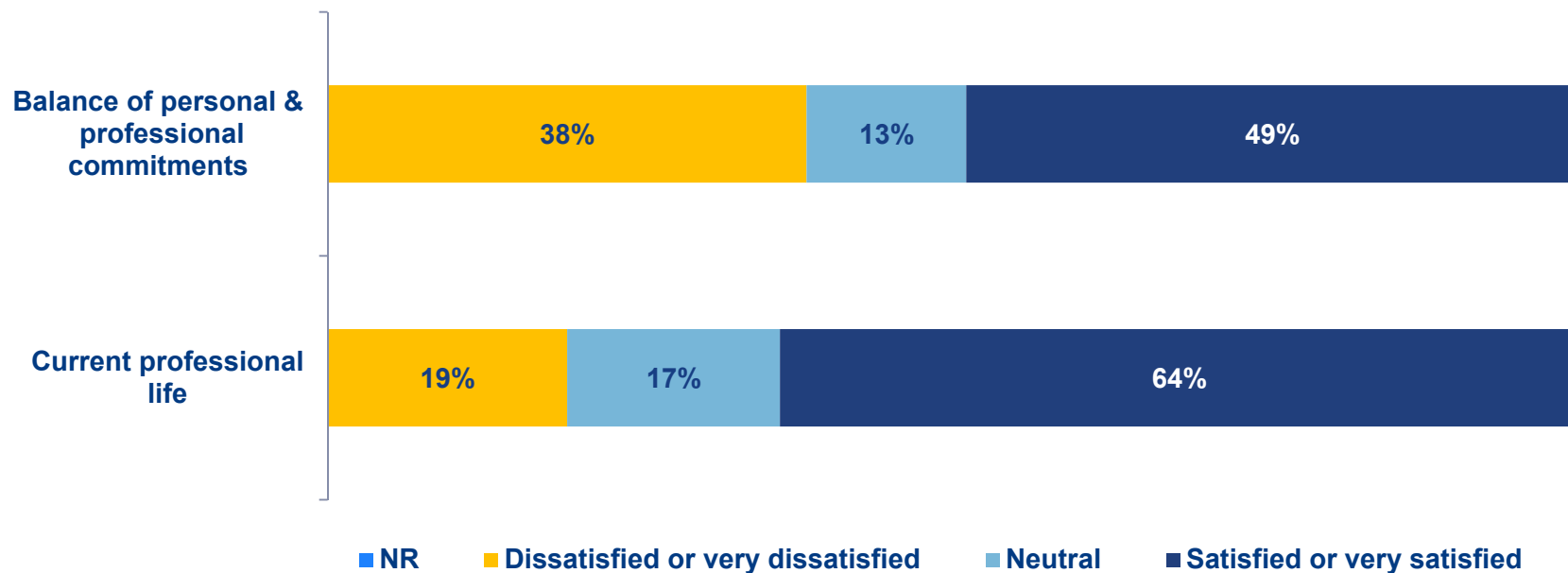
*Other includes capitation, sessional, contract and other methods

**Most recent available data for this specialty

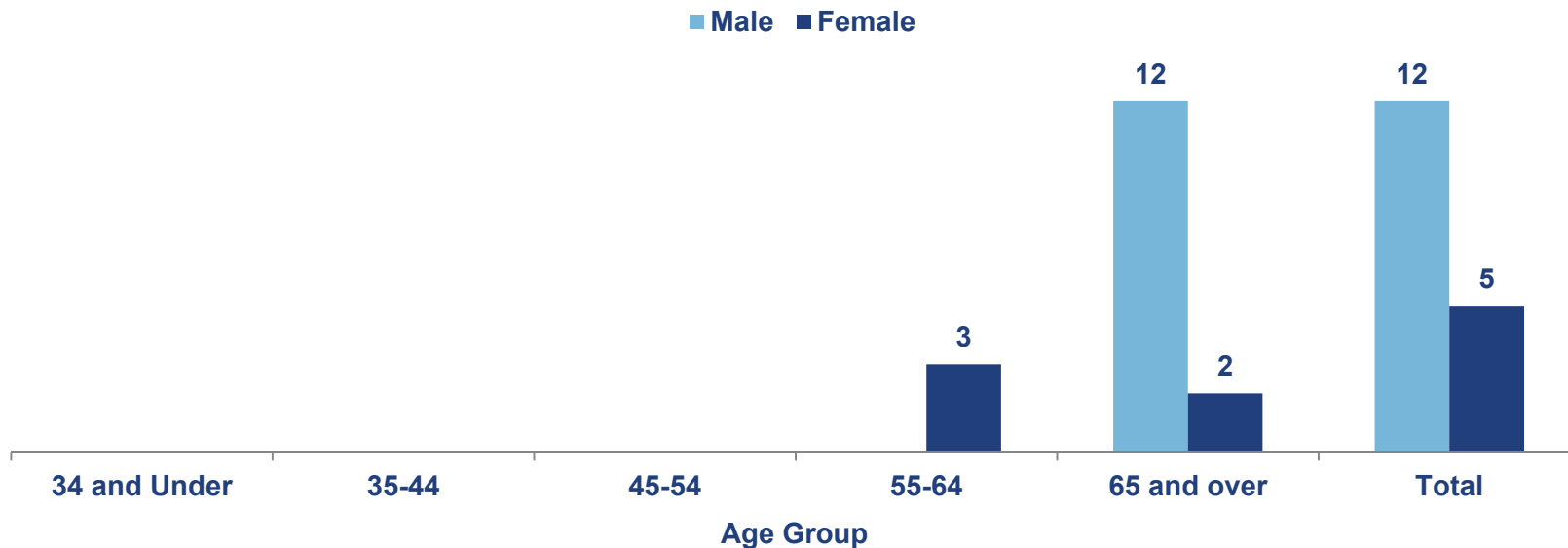
¹ National Physician Survey, 2013, CFPC, CMA, Royal College

² National Physician Database, 2017/18, CIHI

Professional & work-life balance satisfaction, 2019



Number of retirees during the three year period of 2016-2018

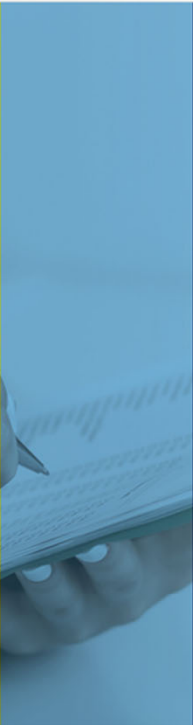


Source: CMA Masterfile – year over year comparisons

Note: “Retired” is based on giving up licence and therefore excludes those who have retired from clinical practice but are still licensed; those younger than 45 may include physicians who have temporarily given up their licence but return to practice at a later date.

Links to additional resources

- [Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada](#)
- [Canadian Institute for Health Information](#)
- [Canadian Medical Association's Physician Data Centre](#)
- [Canadian Post-MD Education Registry \(CAPER\)](#)
- [College of Family Physicians of Canada](#)
- [National Physician Survey \(2004-2014\)](#)
- [Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada](#)



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