

Executive Summary

Findings from the New Brunswick Pharmacy Workforce Planning Study reveal the potential for a significant shortage of pharmacy professionals in the province over the next ten years. The forecast model projects that the province will need 940 pharmacists and 496 pharmacy technicians to replace those who will leave the profession, meet the increasing health needs of the growing and aging New Brunswick population, and account for changes in scope of practice and an increasing role for pharmacists in the delivery of primary care.

The supply of pharmacy professionals in New Brunswick over the same period is projected to be just 510 pharmacists and 260 pharmacy technicians. This means that unless specific interventions are made to increase supply, there will be a deficit 429 pharmacists and 236 pharmacy technicians, about half of the total labour market need, over the 10-year forecast period.

Introduction

Pharmacy workforce planning in Canada has lagged behind other health care professions. To date, there has been little consideration by governments of how to plan for the supply and distribution of key health workers outside of publicly funded physician and nursing services. As pharmacists are increasingly considered integral to primary health care delivery, including pharmacy professionals in system-wide workforce planning models is critical.

Through a partnership between the Canadian Pharmacists Association and the New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association, New Brunswick is the first Canadian jurisdiction to undertake a detailed workforce analysis of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians with respect to the current and changing needs of the province's patient population as well as expanded scopes of practice and primary care transformation. This work was conducted by Health Intelligence inc. and associates, utilizing an adjusted population needs-based methodology.

Key Findings

- To replace the current supply of pharmacy professionals who will leave the profession through aging, retirement, and other attrition factors, the forecast model's base case scenario predicts that 270 pharmacists and 58 pharmacy technicians will be needed over the next 10 years, or 27 pharmacists and 6 pharmacy technicians per year.
- To meet the increasing health care needs of the New Brunswick population and to account for changes in pharmacy professionals' scope of practice and the expectation that their role in primary care delivery, the forecast model predicts the province will need to recruit an additional 670 pharmacists and 439 pharmacy technicians over 10 years, or 67 and 44 per year, respectively.
- The supply of pharmacy professionals to New Brunswick over the next 10 years is projected to be 510 pharmacists and 260 pharmacy technicians, or 51 and 26 per year, respectively. This represents only about half of the total projected need of 940 pharmacists and 496 pharmacy technicians, or 94 and 50 per year, respectively, to account for both replacement and growth needs.

Forecast need, supply and deficit (in FTEs)

Position	Forecast Annual Need	Forecast Total Need	Forecast Annual Supply	Forecast Total Supply	Annual Deficit	Total Deficit
Pharmacists	93.9	940	51	510	42.9	429
Pharmacy Technicians	49.6	496	26	260	23.6	236

The Model

An Adjusted Population Needs-Based Model was used to predict the need for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in New Brunswick over a 10-year period. The 10-year rolling model is progressive and includes inputs such as current supply of pharmacy professionals, future supply adjustment, benchmarking, age- and gender-weighted population forecasts, relative burden of illness in New Brunswick, aggregated pharmacy prescription claims and payments, development and uptake of collaborative and/or alternative models of care, and the impact of an increasing scope of practice.

The forecast assumes continued support for and uptake of expanded scope of practice, pharmacist-led delivery of primary care as well as the growth of primary care collaborative teams. The resulting forecast scenarios include a base case scenario of the most likely assumptions and variables, as well as low case and high case scenarios.

Key Recommendations

- Key stakeholders should be brought together to discuss and identify solutions to pharmacy labour market challenges in New Brunswick. This should include participation from the New Brunswick government, Vitalité Health Network, Horizon Health Network, New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association, College of Pharmacists, and faculties of pharmacy.
- The New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association, the Government of New Brunswick, and universities with pharmacy seats funded by the provincial government should work together to identify opportunities to attract students from New Brunswick, dedicate more seats to New Brunswick students or expand seats in pharmacy programs as needed.
- The New Brunswick Pharmacists' Association should bring together stakeholders to explore the potential of a satellite pharmacy program within the province. These stakeholders should include the New Brunswick College of Pharmacists, faculties of pharmacy, the Government of New Brunswick, Vitalité Health Network and Horizon Health Network.
- The Government of New Brunswick should identify and enact policies to assist in attracting and retaining pharmacy professionals, such as through education grants, assistance and support for internationally educated pharmacists (IPGs).
- The Government of New Brunswick should provide funding to pharmacy to secure competitive wages.
- The Government of New Brunswick should provide New Brunswickers with coverage for all services within pharmacists' scope of practice.

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Canadian
Pharmacists
Association

Association des
pharmaciens
du Canada



Association des Pharmaciens
du Nouveau-Brunswick
New Brunswick
Pharmacists' Association