

Aboriginal Nursing in Canada



There are 7,945 Aboriginal nurses in Canada. Aboriginal people make up 2.9% of the Registered Nursing workforce, but form 4.3% of the overall Canadian population.

	Total Number of Nurses	Total Number of Aboriginal Nurses	Overall %	First Nations	Métis	Inuit
Canada	332,680	7,945	2.9	3,630	3,815	145
NU	165	40	24.2	–	–	35
NT	380	90	23.7	45	25	10
YK	270	30	11.1	20	–	–
MB	14,440	1,040	7.2	320	700	–
SK	12,535	760	6.1	270	485	–
NL	6,740	340	5.0	190	100	25
NS	11,050	290	2.6	100	190	–
BC	44,100	1,150	2.6	530	525	–
AB	39,195	970	2.5	440	500	–
ON	120,010	2,315	1.9	1,195	960	30
PEI	1,960	35	1.8	–	–	–
NB	9,045	145	1.6	100	35	–
QC	72,785	745	1.0	415	265	25

It is common knowledge that an increase in the number of Aboriginal health professionals is needed to improve the future health outcomes for Aboriginal people in Canada. The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples famously called for the training and education of 10,000 Aboriginal people for careers in the health and social services over the next decade. Although there has been good progress in improving the number and proportion of Aboriginal health professionals, the country still has far to go to achieve representation.

Registered Nurses are the backbone of the health care system and are central to First Nations, Métis and Inuit health care delivery. This factsheet provides the most current and comprehensive information available on the status of the Aboriginal Registered Nursing workforce in Canada, based on 2011 National Household Survey data.

The territories had the highest percentage of Aboriginal nurses, with Nunavut at 24.2%, North West Territories at 23.7% and Yukon at 11.1%. Amongst the provinces, Manitoba and Saskatchewan had the highest proportions, at 7.2% and 6.1% respectively, while Quebec had the lowest at 1.0%. Ontario had the largest number of Aboriginal Registered Nurses at 2,315.

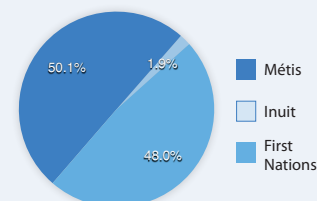
77% of Aboriginal health professionals are Registered Nurses.

Aboriginal health professionals include physicians, dentists, veterinarians, pharmacists, occupational therapists, optometrists, chiropractors, speech pathologists, dietitians, nutritionists, physiotherapists, audiologists and registered nurses, etc. There are 10,260 health professionals identifying as Aboriginal; of which 7,945 are nurses.

59% of all Canadian health professionals are Registered Nurses (RN) (332,680 out of 562,930).

6.0% of Aboriginal Registered Nurses are male (480 out of 7,945). 7.3% of all Canadian RN's are male (24,295 out of 332,680).

Self-Identification of Aboriginal RNs



In Canada, 60.8% of the overall Aboriginal population identified as First Nations, 32.3% as Métis and 4.2% as Inuit.

Aboriginal Registered Nurses are younger than the average Canadian nurse.

	25 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64
All Nurses	21.9% (67,440)	22.6% (69,770)	26.6% (82,025)	20.1% (63,770)
Aboriginal Nurses	23.6% (1,760)	27.2% (2,035)	24.2% (1,810)	17.1% (1,280)