



**Family Physicians in Ontario: Assessing the Who, What and Where
Using the OHIP Billing Database**

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ABSTRACT:

Health human resource planning (HHRP) is one of the greatest challenges facing the Canadian healthcare system. The problem is one of having the right physician, in the right place, at the right time, with the right training. Previous HHRP for family physicians (FP) in Ontario treated them as simple entities and ignored the complexity of their practices and as a result projected that Ontario would have sufficient FPs by 2018, which was not the case. Our objective was to use the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) database to determine the services provided by FPs and the relationship to location or rurality of practice. The OHIP database contains all of the billing codes for physicians across Ontario and was accessed through the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES). We examined data for the year 2017 and used a set of sentinel billing codes to represent ten different services provided including: clinic, emergency department, inpatient care, palliative care, home visits, anaesthesia, mental health, surgical assisting, long-term care and obstetrics. Physicians with a College of Family Physicians Canada (CFPC) certification were extracted from an existing ICES database and their billing codes were examined. Ontario had approximately 14,500 physicians that met criteria. Preliminary results show that the most common services provided were clinic, mental health counselling, home visits, and palliative care. For physicians that provide a single service, clinic, mental health counselling, and emergency medicine are the most common. The preliminary analysis showed that the majority of CFPC physicians in Ontario practice in a clinic setting. Most physicians provide multiple services. This research will provide a comprehensive understanding of what services FPs throughout Ontario are providing and will be used for further HHRP.