



Physicians in Manitoba (2024)

October 2024



Summary

This report provides a detailed analysis of physician resources in Manitoba, including measuring the shortage, trends, and projections. The report is intended to support physician workforce planning.

WHY IT MATTERS: Manitoba's doctor shortage reached a record high last year, with 445 more doctors required to reach the national average of physicians per capita. This impacts patient care, including over 150,000 Manitobans without a family doctor and unreasonably long wait times for emergency and specialty care, testing, and surgery.

Seeing the shortage improve is a turning point in the province, though Manitoba still ranks second lowest in the country for physicians per capita.

WHAT'S NEW: The latest data shows Manitoba is now short 346 physicians, still a major shortage but a significant improvement from the record high reached last year.

WHAT'S NEXT: Doctors Manitoba continues to offer advice to health system leaders about how to tackle the physician shortage, with attention needed on both recruiting and retaining doctors. See page 16 for more details.

In the meantime, Doctors Manitoba is undertaking its own work to:

- Monitor the shortage and provide necessary projections to support workforce planning
- Offer peer support and mentorship to physicians
- Create a new program to support early career physicians as they transition into practice
- Work to reduce administrative burden for physicians
- Initiate exit interviews to better understand the causes of physician retirements and relocation to other provinces.

Physicians in Manitoba • At-A-Glance

POSITIVE TRENDS

Number of Physicians in Manitoba

3,334

2023/24
Source: CPSM

▲ **133**

Record Net Gain

Physicians Per 100,000 Residents

219

2023
Source: CIHI

▲ **2%**

Nation-Leading Increase

Physician Shortage

346

2023
Source: CIHI

▼ **99**

First decrease in years

CONCERNING RISKS

Rank on Physicians Per Capita

9th / 10

2023
Source: CIHI

No Change

Still 2nd Lowest

Rank on Family Physicians Per Capita

10th / 10

2023
Source: CIHI

No Change

Still the Lowest

Projected Retirements and Relocations

688

Next 3 Years
Source: DRMB Annual Survey

20% of Physicians

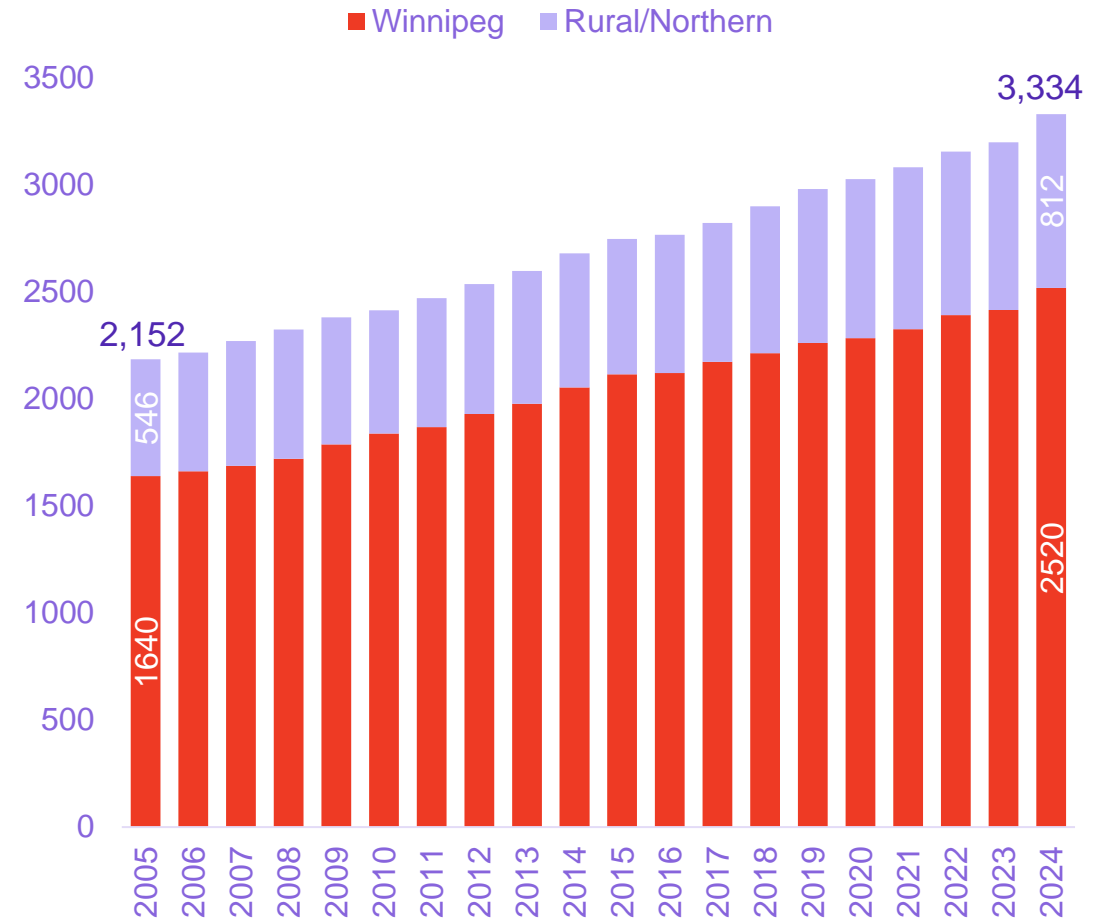
Significant Risk

Physicians in Manitoba

- The number of physicians has **grown every year for over two decades.**
- In 2024, there was a **net increase of 133 physicians.** **This is the largest increase on record,** significantly higher than the previous record of 83 in a single year.

The 2024 year reflects the CPSM reporting period of May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024.

Physicians in Manitoba



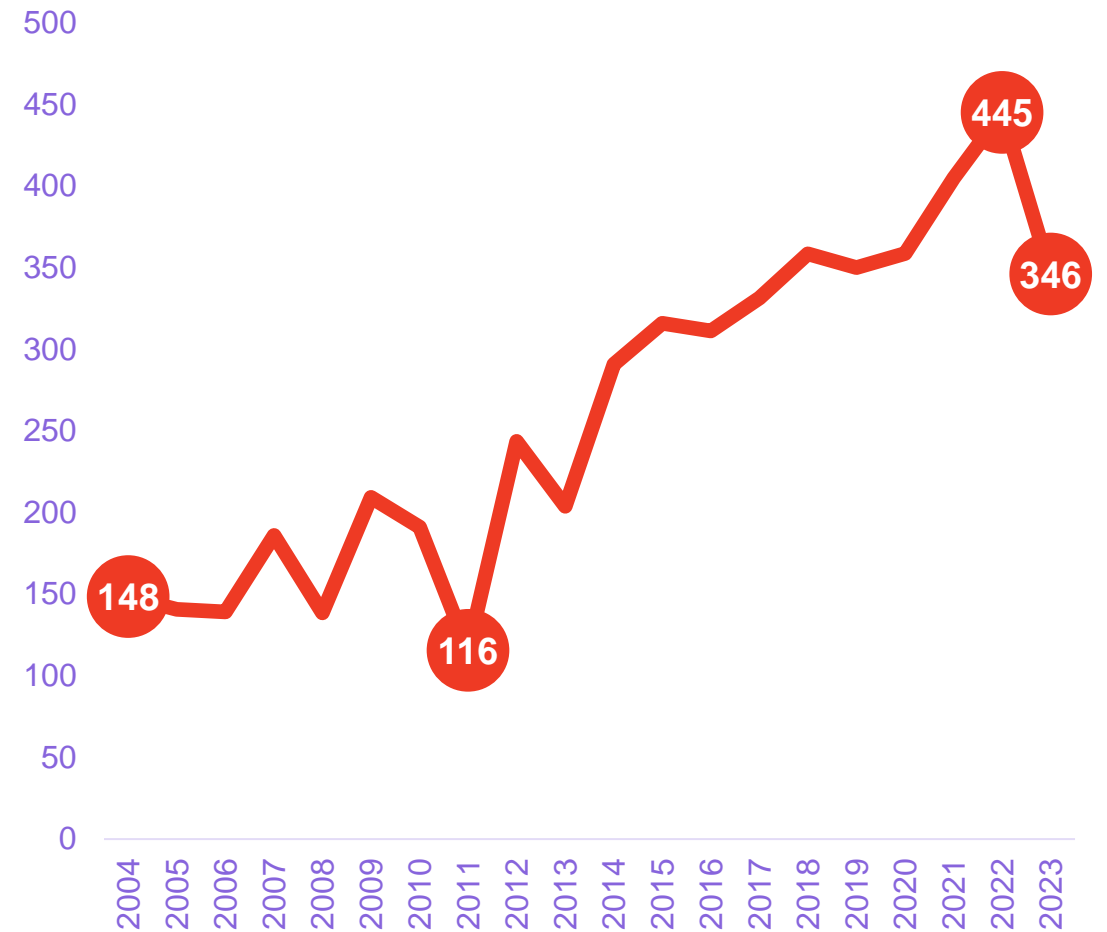
Source: College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba

Physician Shortage

- **Manitoba is short 346 physicians** to reach the national average of doctors per 100,000 residents.
- While this shortage is still significant, **it is a notable improvement from the record shortage of 445 physicians last year.**

This analysis calculates the physician shortage by comparing the number of physicians per 100,000 residents in Manitoba and across Canada, and determining the number needed in Manitoba to reach the national average.

Shortage of Physicians



Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information

Physicians by Province

Updated to 2023 (CIHI)

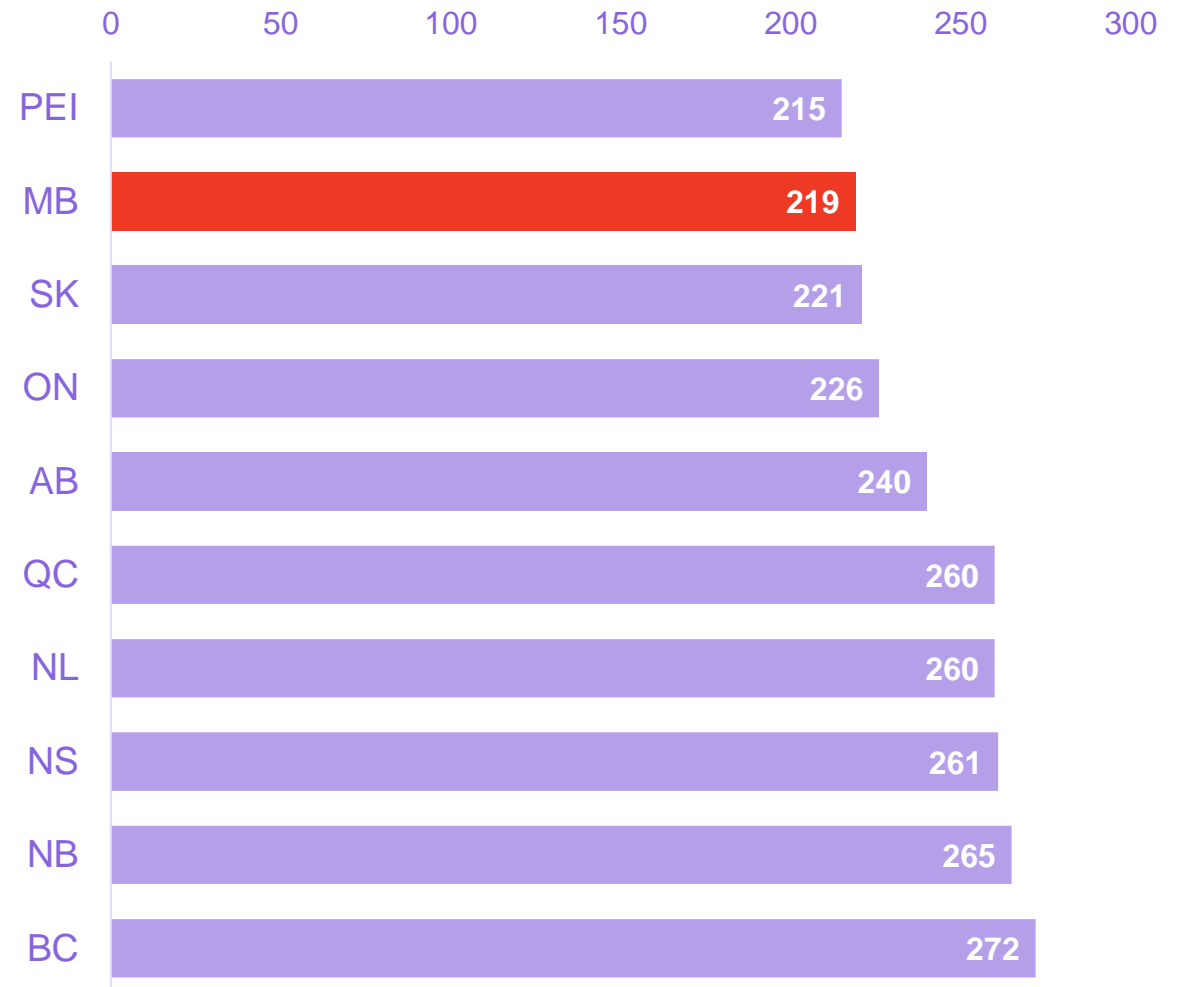
Overall, Manitoba has the 2nd lowest number of physicians per capita in Canada.

Manitoba has 219 physicians per 100,000 residents, a 2% increase over the previous year.

In contrast, the national average is 243 physicians per 100,000 residents.

It would take 346 more physicians to reach the national average, and 773 more to become the best in Canada.

Physicians per 100,000 Residents



Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information

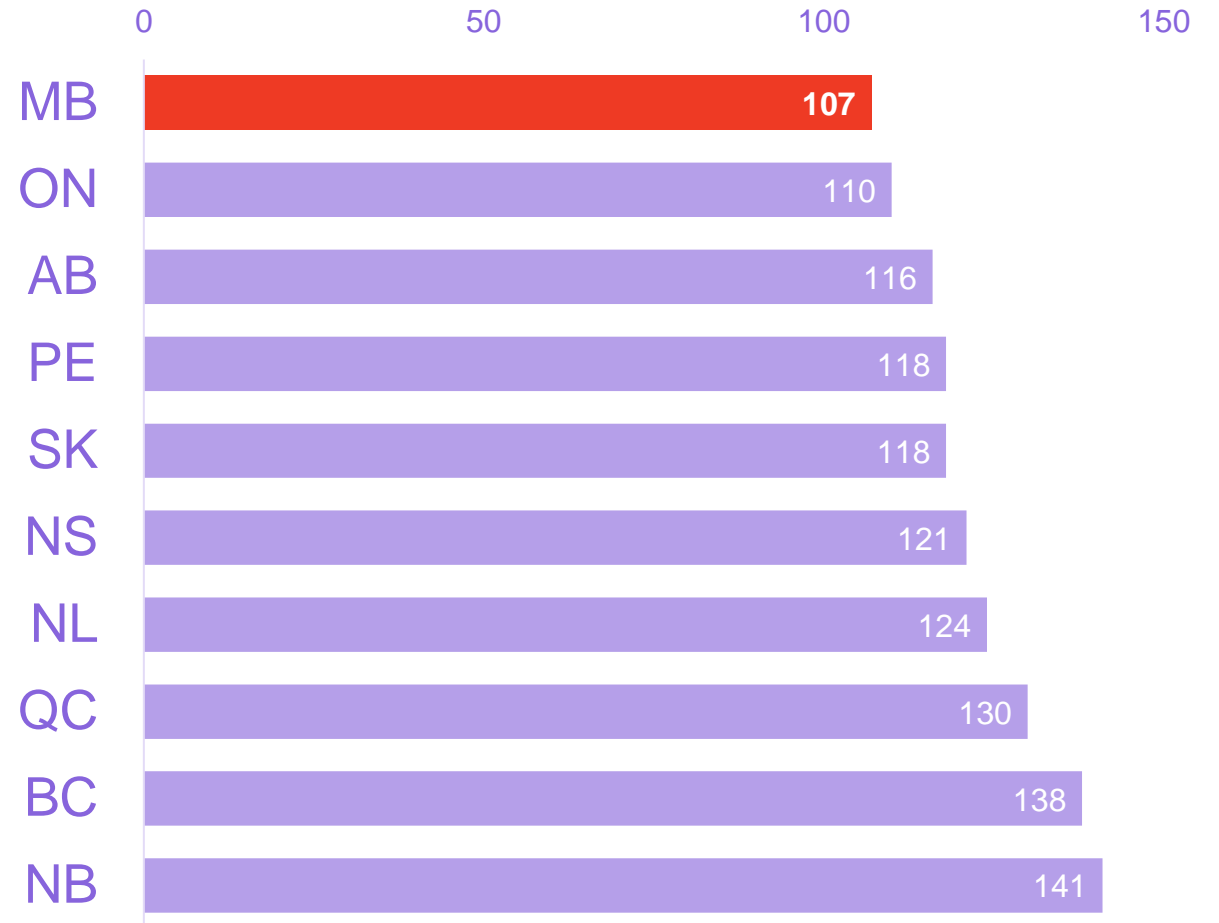
Family Physicians

Updated to 2023 (CIHI)

With 107 Family Physicians per 100,000 residents, Manitoba has the lowest number per capita in Canada.

It would take 189 more family physicians to reach the national average of 120 per 100,000 residents.

Family Physicians per 100,000 Residents



Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information

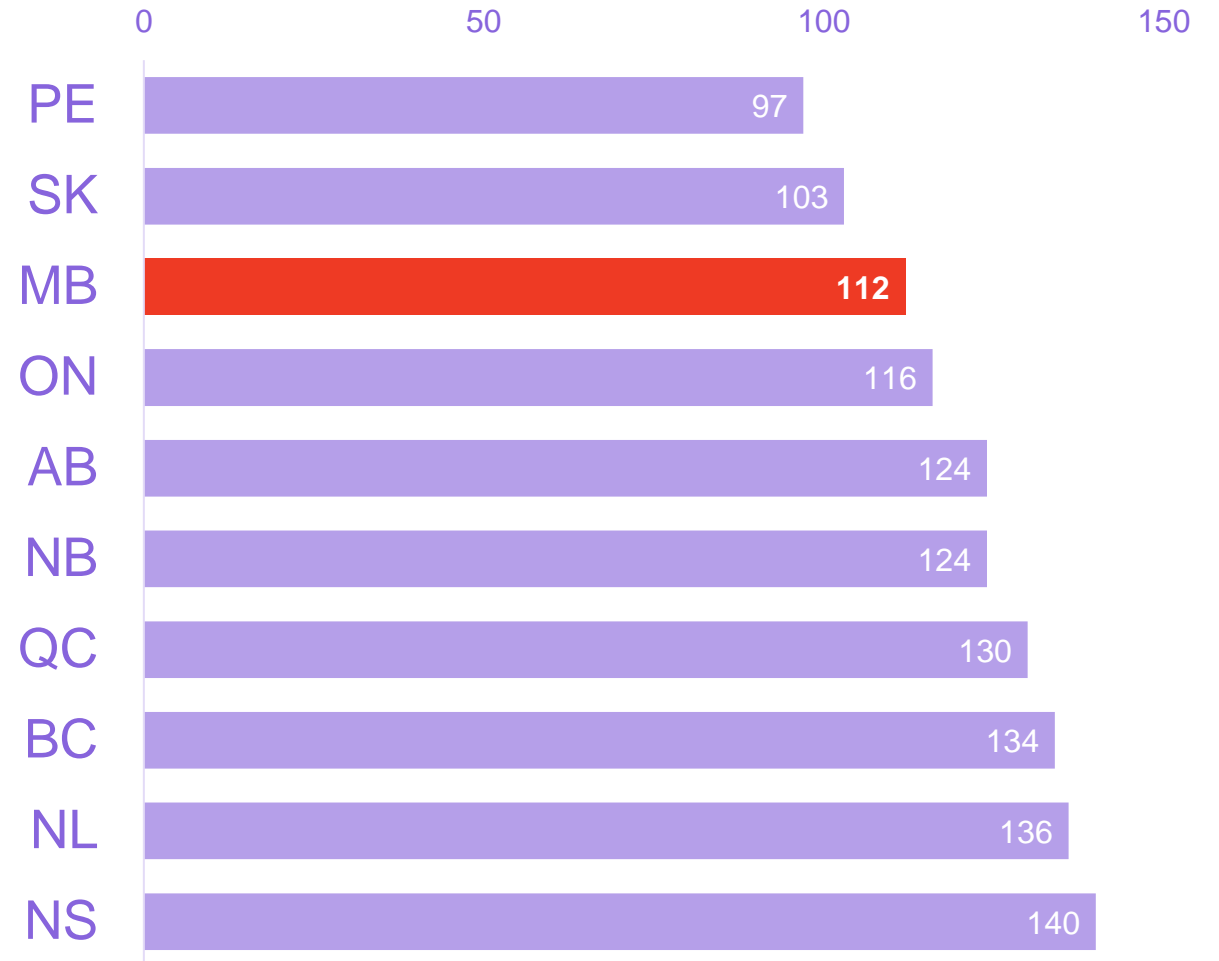
Specialists

Updated to 2023 (CIHI)

With 112 Specialists per 100,000 residents, Manitoba has the third lowest number per capita in Canada.

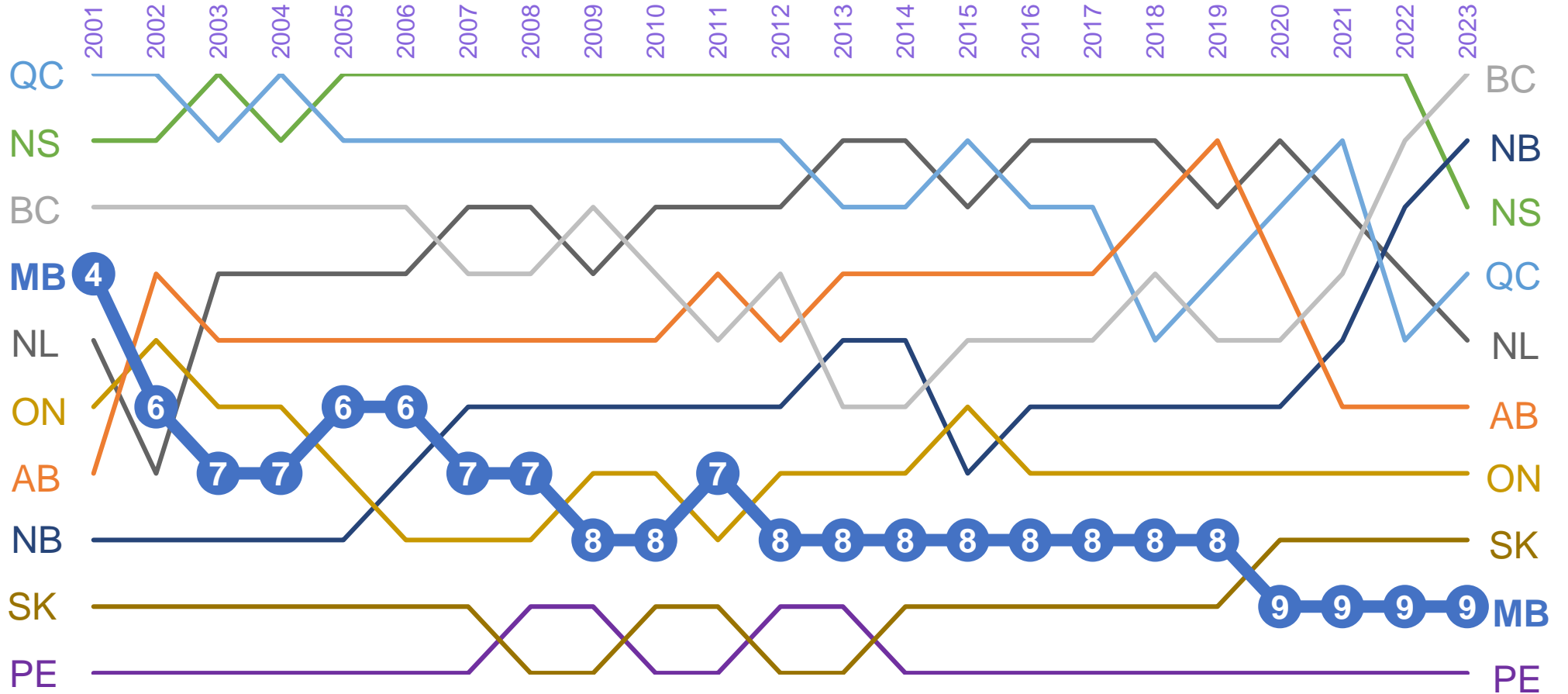
It would take 157 more specialist physicians to reach the national average of 123 per 100,000 residents.

Specialist Physicians per 100,000 Residents



Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information

Physicians Per Capita: Ranking by Province



Manitoba's rank on physicians per capita has declined over the last two decades, from fourth highest to second lowest.

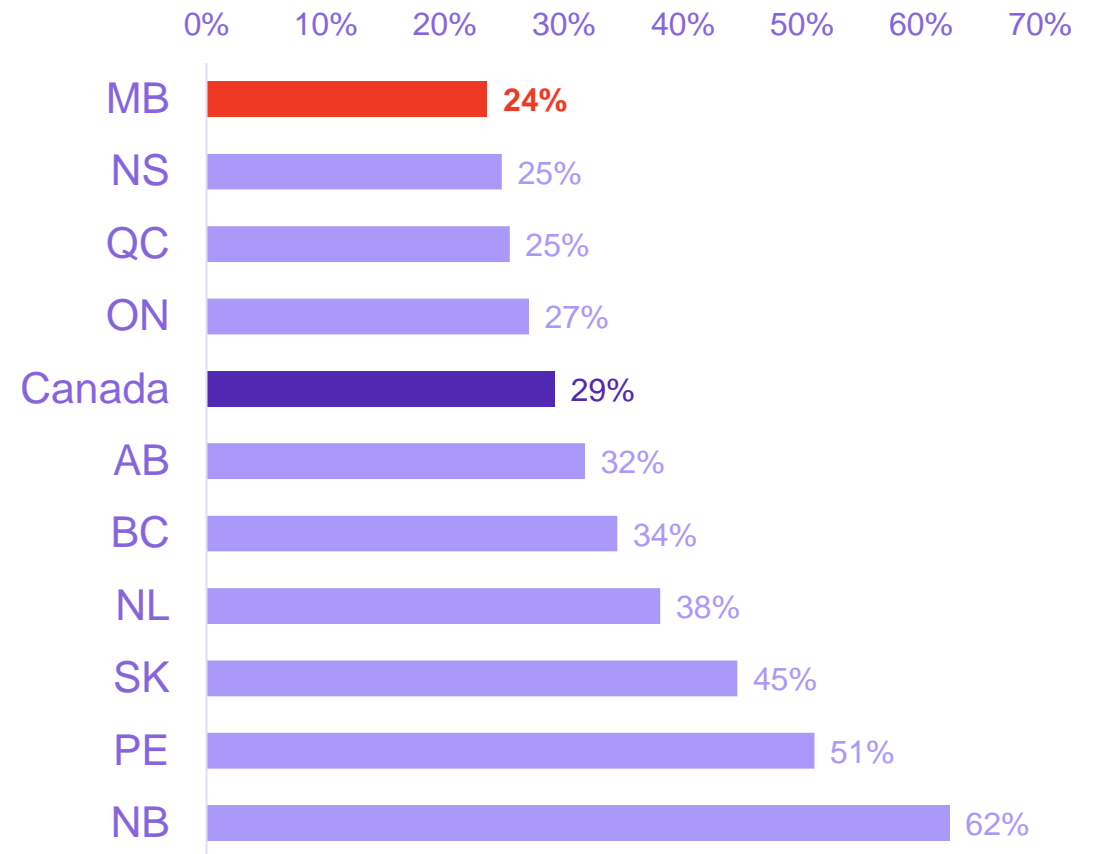
Physician Growth by Province

Last year, Manitoba and BC led the nation with a 2% increase in the number of physicians per capita.

One year of strong performance, however, does not make up for the longer trend. Over the last two decades, Manitoba had the lowest growth in physicians per capita in Canada:

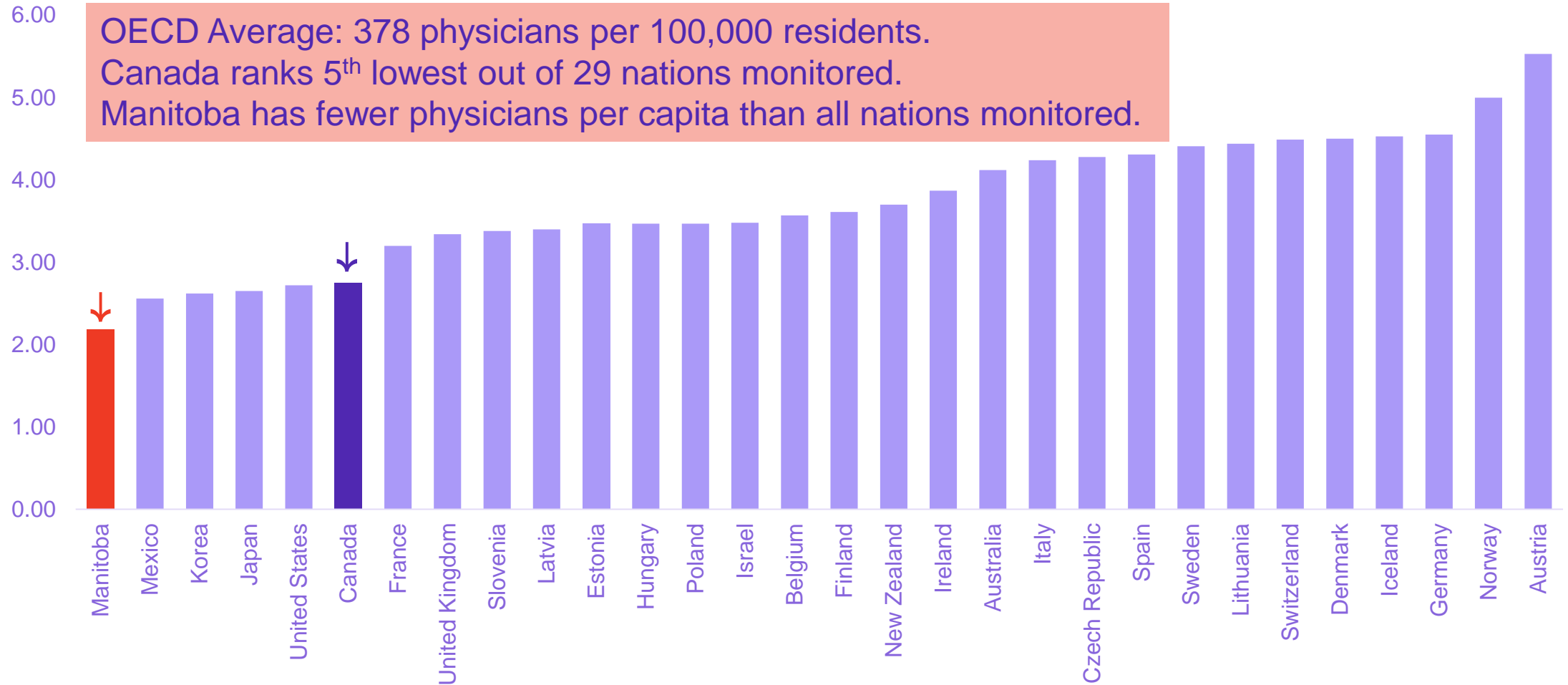
- Manitoba: 24%
- Canadian average: 29%

**Growth in Physicians Per 100,000 Residents
2003 to 2023**



Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information

International Comparison: Physicians Per Capita



Source: OECD, physicians per 1,000 citizens

Looking Ahead



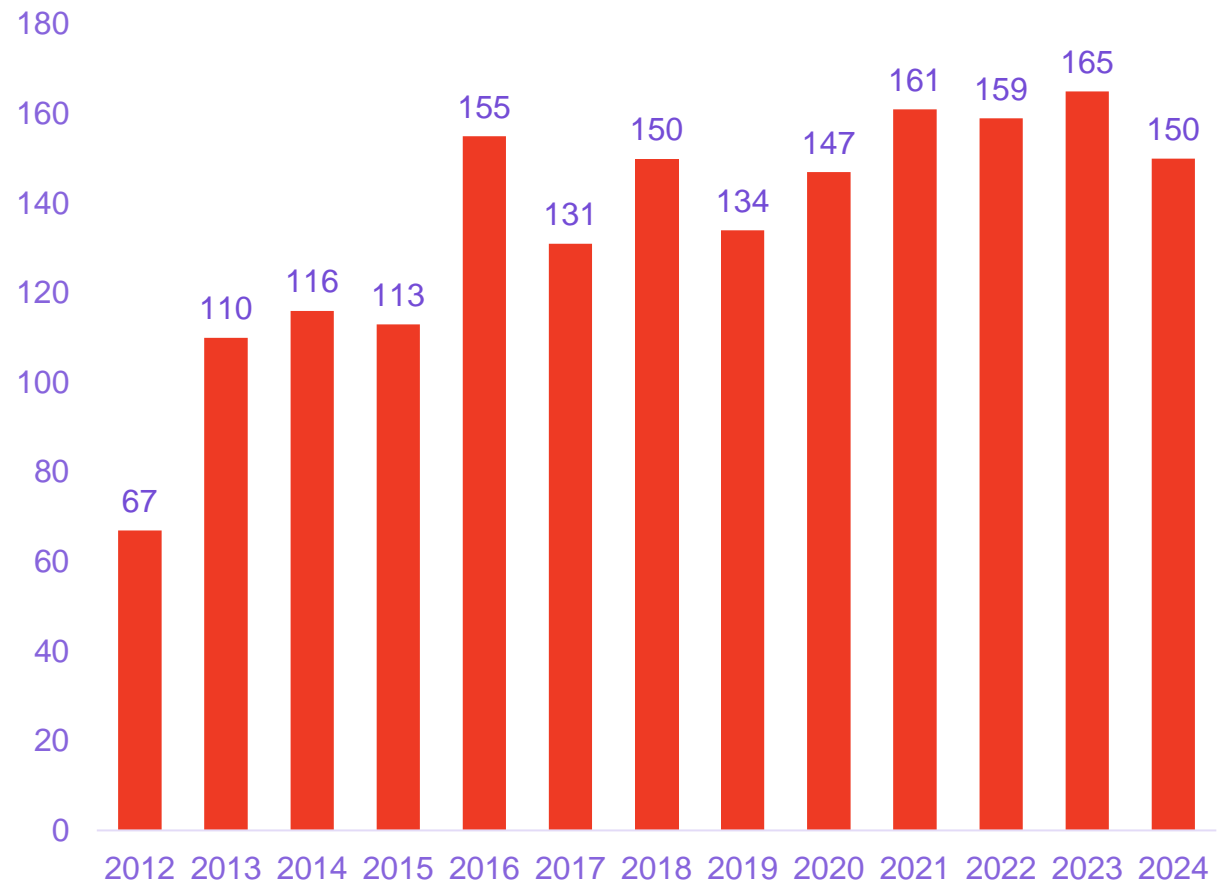
Focusing on Retaining Physicians Longer

Over the last five years, an average of 227 doctors start practicing in Manitoba annually, but we lose 156 doctors to other jurisdictions or to retirement.

While recruitment is an important component of any plan to address Manitoba's physician shortage, retaining the doctors we have is an essential foundation.

Last year saw a decrease in the number of physicians leaving practice, which is a positive step forward. However, further work is needed to retain more physicians.

Physicians Leaving Practice in Manitoba



Practice Intentions Next Three Years

In the next three years, 46% of physicians are planning to:

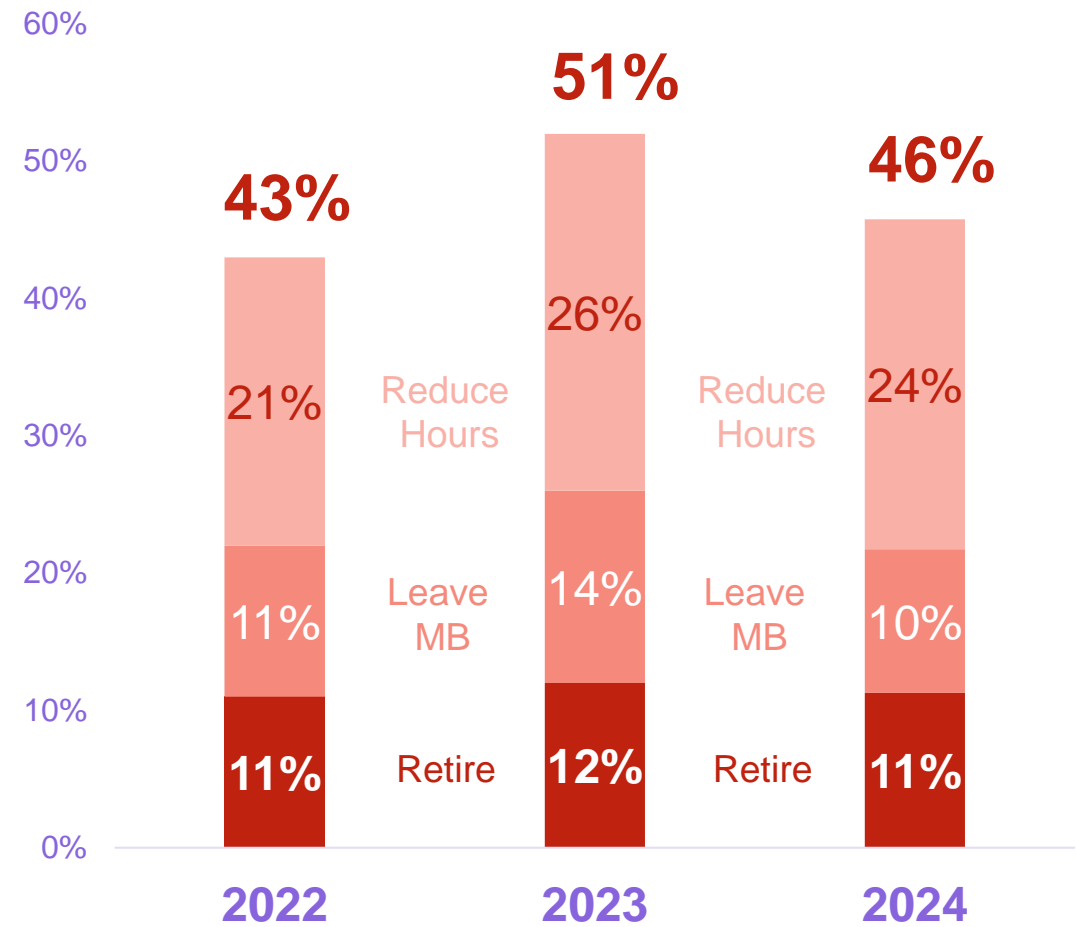
- Retire (11%),
- Leave Manitoba (10%), or
- Reduce their clinical hours (24%).

This has decreased from last year, but it is still higher than in 2022.

Based on the current intentions, Manitoba is at risk of losing 688 physicians, to retirement and relocation over the next three years.

Learn more about physician practice intentions and retention in [this recent report](#).

Practice Plans for Next 3 Years



2022 n=1,294 2023 n=1,121 2024 n=1,145
Source: DRMB Member Survey

Making Further Progress



Addressing the Physician Shortage

Significant progress has been made to address the physician shortage in recent years, including:

- ✓ Expanding medical school (announced Feb 2023)
- ✓ Increasing licensure program for international medical graduates (IMGs) (announced Feb 2023)
- ✓ Initial steps to reduce administrative burden (announced spring 2023)
- ✓ New funding for physician services (agreement signed summer 2023)
- ✓ Expanding residency spaces (announced May 2024)
- ✓ Health Recruitment and Retention Office established (2024)
- ✓ Physician peer support expanded (announced 2024)
- ✓ Rural Physician Recruitment Fund Expanded (2024)

Several recommendations still need attention and action, to make sustained progress in reducing the shortage:

- Expanding medical training to Brandon
- Supporting local physicians with recruitment efforts
- Offering competitive, diverse recruitment incentives.
- Continuing focus on reducing unnecessary paperwork and administrative burden.
- Implementing truly integrated electronic medical records.
- Targeted attention to specialties and specific communities with significant shortages.
- Creating guidelines for the health system to engage physicians about changes to their work.
- Implementing outstanding portions of the Physician Services Agreement.

Sources

This report draws on several resources, including:

- Annual Physician Survey, Doctors Manitoba (2024). The survey included responses from 1,145 fully licensed physicians in Manitoba, a 35% response rate. This is equivalent to a +/- 2% margin of error, 19 times out of 20.
- [Physicians in Canada reports](#), Canadian Institute for Health Information (2023)
- [Annual Reports](#), College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba (2023-24)
- [National Physician Health Survey](#), Canadian Medical Association (2022)
- [Doctors Per Capita](#), OECD Data Explorer (2023)
- [Physician Resources: Focus on Retention](#), Doctors Manitoba (2024)
- [Prescription to Improve Health Care](#), Doctors Manitoba (2023)
- [Physician Recruitment and Retention Recommendations from the Rural & Northern Health Summit](#), Doctors Manitoba and the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce (2022)

Additional analysis can be requested by contacting Doctors Manitoba at general@doctorsmanitoba.ca.

