

2010 National Physician Survey : Workload patterns of Canadian Family Physicians

Inese Grava-Gubins, Artem Safarov, Jonas Eriksson
College of Family Physicians of Canada
CAHSPR, Montreal, May 30, 2012

Data Collection

- The National Physician Survey (NPS) – conducted every three years
 - Conjoint study by CFPC, CMA and Royal College with support of CIHI
- Largest Canadian physician workforce survey
- Sent to every physician, medical student and resident in Canada
 - 90,079 recipients in 2010
- Response rate in 2010: 18%
 - 12,076 physicians
 - 2,546 residents
 - 3,139 medical students
- NPS data is weighted on several demographic variables to reliably represent the total population of Canadian physicians.

Family Physician Workload in Canada

- In 2010, the average family physician working week was 49.8 hours compared to 36.2 hours for the average Canadian¹.
- The length of a family physician's work week has remained fairly stable since 2004, but the hours worked are going into different activities, revealing trends in physicians' workload.
- 27% of FP/GPs indicated an intent to reduce their clinical hours within 2 years.

Family Physician Work Hours in 2010

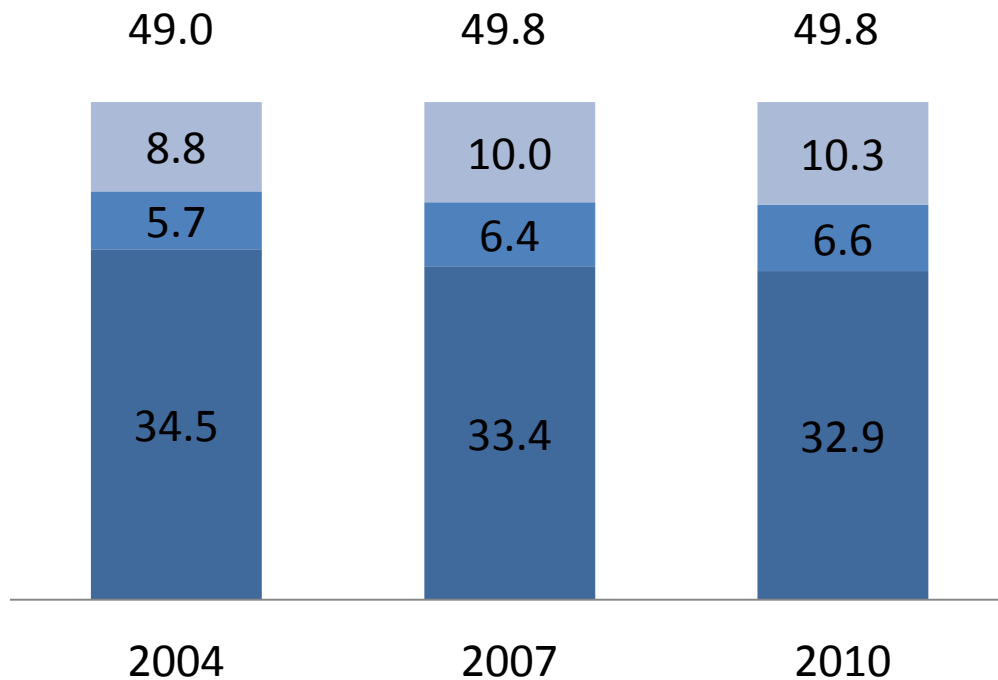
Direct patient care	32.9
Teaching/Education	1.1
Indirect patient care	6.6
Health facility committees	0.6
Administration	2.1
Research	0.7
Managing your practice	1.6
CPD/CME	3.1
Other work	1.2
Total hours	49.8

¹Statistics Canada. *Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by total and average usual and actual hours worked, main or all jobs, type of work, sex and age group, annual* (CANSIM Table 282-0028). Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2012

FP/GPs workload trends over time

FP/GPs working hours by year

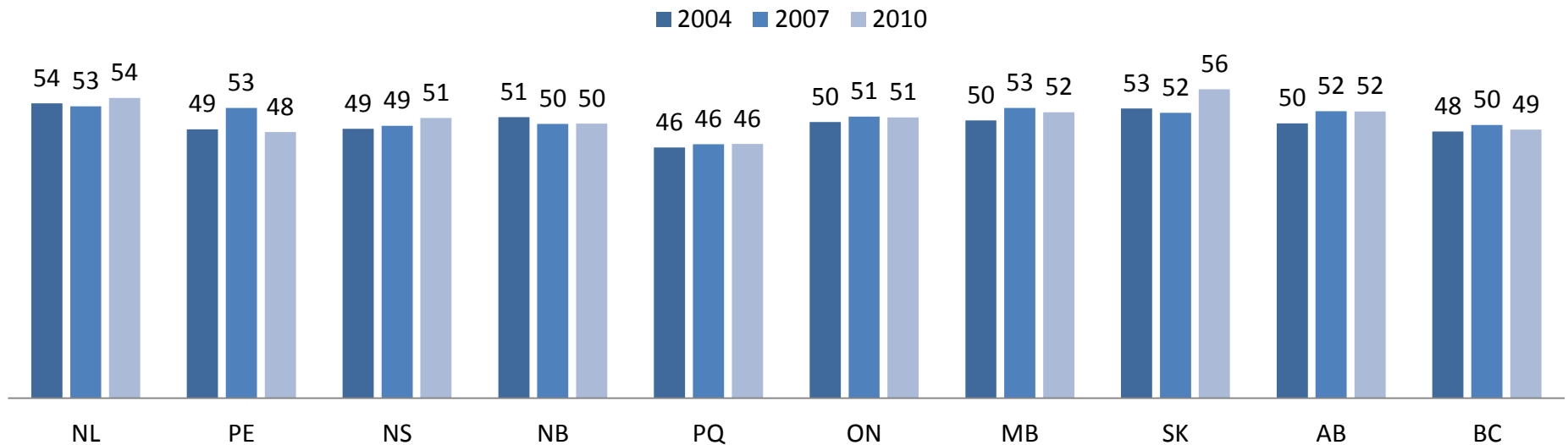
■ Direct patient care ■ Indirect Patient care ■ Other



- Total FP/GPs work week was 49.0 hours in 2004, 49.8 hours in 2007 and in 2010.
- Steady decrease in time spent in direct patient care is contrasted by a rising time commitment to indirect patient care (e.g. charts, reports, phone calls etc.)

Provincial trends in physician workload

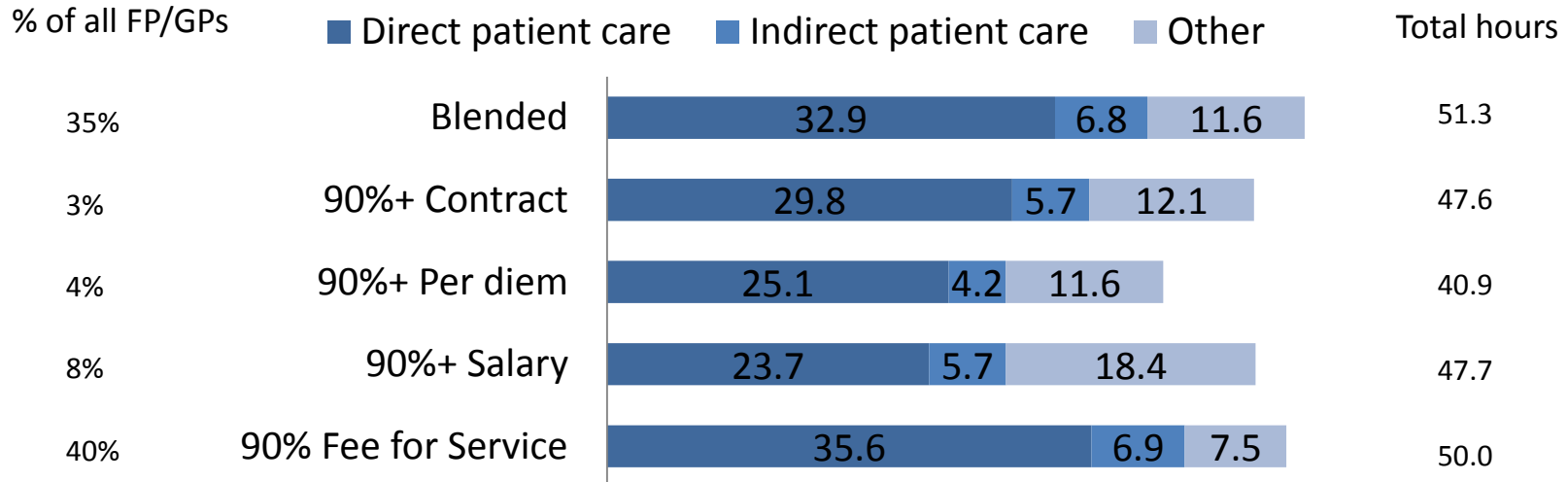
Total FP/GP work hours by province



There are differences across provinces over time:

- Increases in work week length in Newfoundland and Saskatchewan
- Several provinces saw a rise in work hours in 2007 that came back down in 2010 (Prince Edward Island, Manitoba, British Columbia).

FP/GP work hours by remuneration model

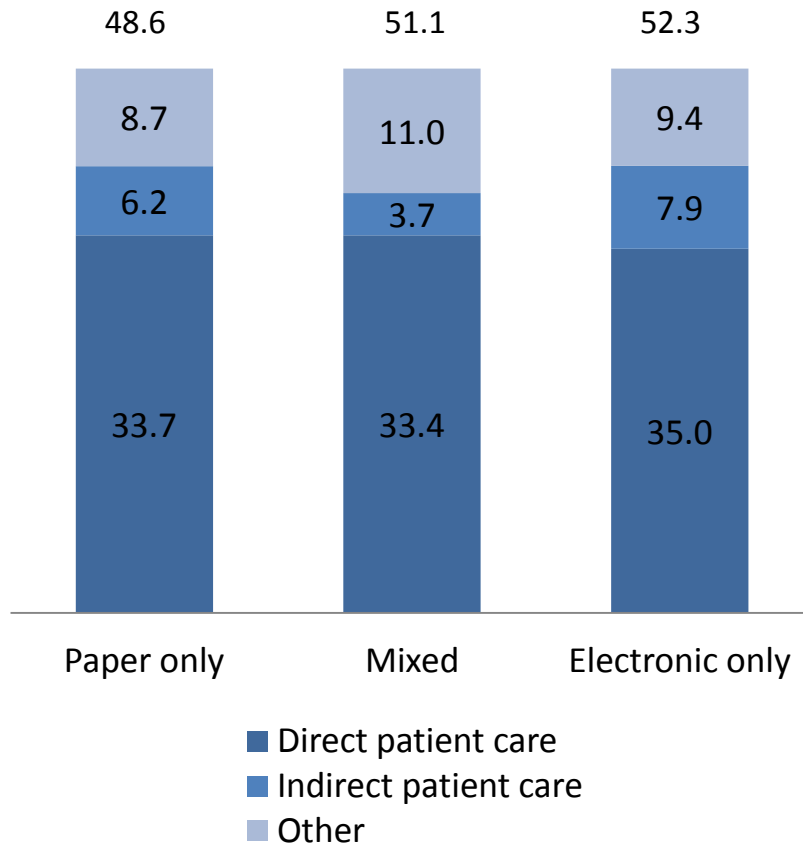


“Blended” denotes physicians who do not receive 90% of their income through any one method of remuneration.

- **FP/GPs paid through Fee-For-Service and Blended methods provided the most direct patient care, while those under salary and per diem arrangements reported significantly less direct patient care time.**

FP/GP Work hours by record keeping system

FP/GP work hours by record keeping system

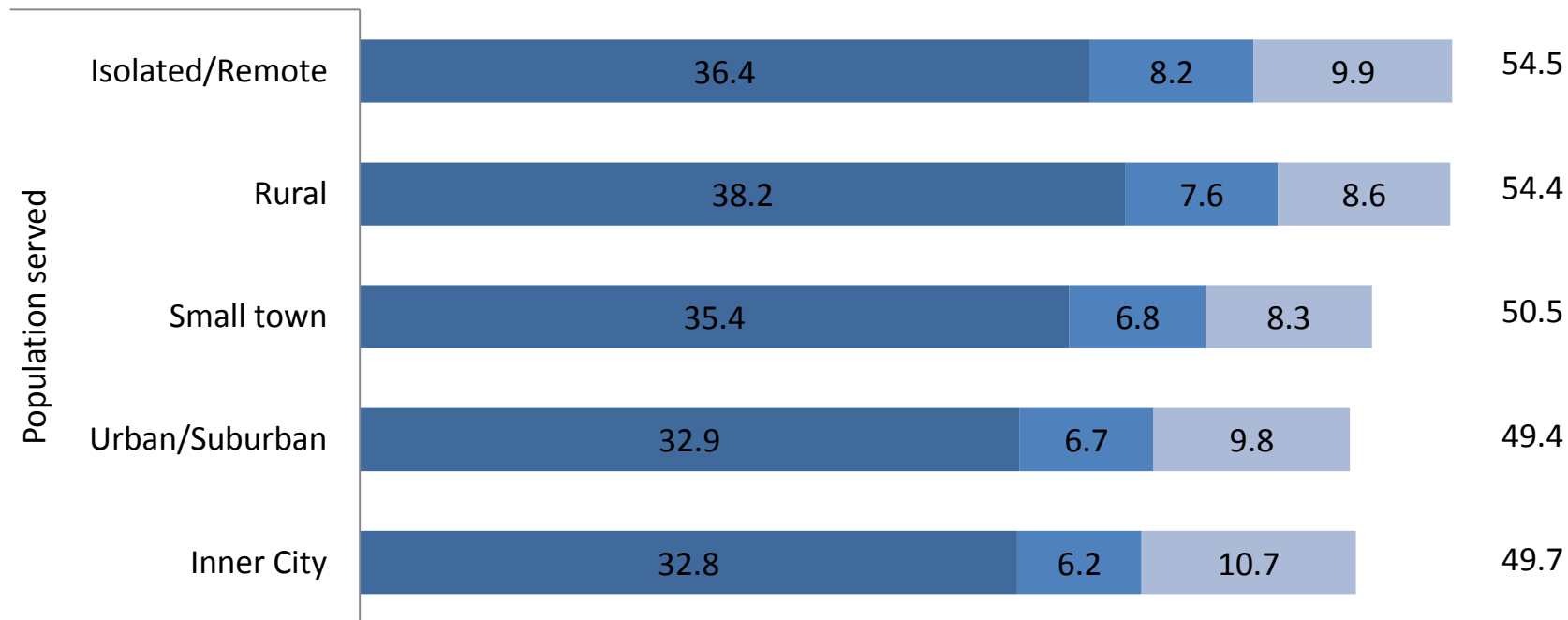


- Physicians who use electronic records either solely or in combination with paper records, reported working longer hours compared with those who used paper records only.
- Physicians who used electronic records exclusively reported providing more direct patient care when compared to those who use mixed record-keeping system or paper records only.

FP/GP work hours by population served

FP/GP work hours by population served

■ Direct Patient Care ■ Indirect Patient Care ■ Other



- FP/GPs in remote and rural locations work longer hours compared to those in more urban environments.

Take home messages from our look at FP/GP workload patterns

- Canada's family physicians work long hours – a mean of 49.8 per week, 14 hours more per week than the average Canadian.
- The amount of time FP/GPs spend in indirect patient care (phone calls, charts, reports, family meetings) is increasing, while the amount of time spent providing direct patient care (either with or without a teaching component) is slowly decreasing.
 - This shift is evident across all Canadian provinces.
 - 27% of FP/GPs reported the intention to reduce their clinical hours within 2 years.
- FP/GPs who reported using exclusively electronic patient records system indicated providing more direct patient care hours than FP/GPs using paper only or those who have a mixed record-keeping system.
- Family physicians and general practitioners using electronic medical records either exclusively or mixed with paper records work longer hours than physicians using only paper records.

Thank You!

www.nationalphysiciansurvey.ca

**National
Physician
Survey**



**Sondage
national des
médecins**

Would you like to use the NPS data in your research?

We can help!

Contact us at info@nationalphysiciansurvey.ca



Data Use Disclaimer

- This presentation was created utilizing original data collected for the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada's (Royal College) National Physician Survey Database. The study was also supported by the Canadian Institute for Health Information and Health Canada. The study and all of the data contained therein are the copyright protected works of the CFPC, CMA, and Royal College and cannot be copied or reproduced in whole or in part without permission of the CFPC, CMA, Royal College.