

# ***2010 Workforce Profile of Registered Nurses in Canada***

November 2012



[cna-aiic.ca](http://cna-aiic.ca)



This document has been prepared by the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) to provide information and to support CNA in the pursuit of its mission, vision and goals.

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## Message from our Chief Executive Officer

The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) is pleased to present our *Workforce Profile of Registered Nurses in Canada* annual report, which contains demographic, educational and employment data specific to Canadian registered nurses.

This report enables CNA and its members to provide sound workforce information to governments and stakeholders for health human resources planning. It also serves to complement *Regulated Nurses: Canadian Trends, 2006 to 2010*, the annual report from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), from which it directly draws data. To provide additional workforce information, CNA also extracts data from the CIHI registered nurses database.

We look forward to hearing your comments about the report.

Yours sincerely,

Rachel Bard, RN, M.A.Ed.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Canadian Nurses Association

## Demographic Profile

In 2010, there were 287,344 **registered nurses** (RNs), including nurse practitioners (NPs), in Canada; this represents an increase of 4.8% since 2007. Of these:

- **93.4%** (268,512) were **employed in nursing**;
- **1.8%** (5,169) were **employed outside of nursing**;
- **2.7%** (7,787) were **not employed**; and
- **2.0%** (5,879) **did not state** their employment status.

The **ratio of RNs employed in nursing to the Canadian population** in 2010 was one RN for every 127 persons.

The ratio of **RNs employed in nursing** by jurisdiction to the jurisdiction population in 2010 was as follows:

Jurisdiction	Number of RNs employed in nursing <sup>1</sup>	Population <sup>2</sup>	Ratio of RNs to population <sup>3</sup>
Canada	268,512	34,126,200	1:127
Newfoundland and Labrador	6,013	511,300	1:85
Prince Edward Island	1,472	143,400	1:97
Nova Scotia	9,173	944,800	1:103
New Brunswick	8,102	752,800	1:93
Quebec	66,333	7,905,700	1:119
Ontario	95,185	13,227,800	1:139
Manitoba	11,630	1,234,500	1:106
Saskatchewan	9,538	1,044,000	1:109
Alberta	28,681	3,720,900	1:130
British Columbia	30,919	4,529,700	1:147
Yukon	357	34,600	1:97
N.W.T. and Nunavut*	1,109	75,800	1:68

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2012). *Regulated nurses: Canadian trends, 2006 to 2010*. Ottawa: Author.

<sup>2</sup> Population estimates from Statistics Canada: [<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo02a-eng.htm>].

<sup>3</sup> Data produced by CNA.

### Note:

\* Data for Northwest Territories and Nunavut were combined for 2010.

- **Men represented 6.4% (17,163) of RNs** employed in nursing in 2010, with 37.9% practising in Quebec, 27.7% in Ontario, 11.8% in British Columbia and 8% in Alberta, with the rest distributed throughout the remaining provinces and territories.
- **Women represented 93.6% of RNs (251,349)** employed in nursing in 2010.

The **number of RNs** employed in nursing **by sex** by jurisdiction in 2007 and 2010 was as follows:

Jurisdiction	2007			2010		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
Canada	242,959	15,002	257,961	251,349	17,163	268,512
Newfoundland and Labrador	5,311	263	5,574	5,699	314	6,013
Prince Edward Island	1,396	39	1,435	1,436	36	1,472
Nova Scotia	8,513	330	8,843	8,794	379	9,173
New Brunswick	7,392	334	7,726	7,731	371	8,102
Quebec	58,915	6,040	64,955	59,836	6,497	66,333
Ontario	86,854	4,124	90,978	90,438	4,747	95,185
Manitoba	10,209	616	10,825	10,870	760	11,630
Saskatchewan	8,347	322	8,669	9,020	518	9,538
Alberta	26,366	1,161	27,527	27,312	1,369	28,681
British Columbia	28,410	1,649	30,059	28,895	2,024	30,919
Yukon	291	31	322	320	37	357
N.W.T. and Nunavut*	955	93	1,048	998	111	1,109

**Source:**

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2012). *Regulated nurses: Canadian trends, 2006 to 2010*. Ottawa: Author.

**Note:**

\* Data for Northwest Territories and Nunavut were combined for 2007 and 2010.

The **distribution of RNs** employed in nursing in Canada **by age and employment status** in 2010 was as follows:

Age cohort (years)	Numbers of RNs and percentage*	Employment status			
		Full time	Part time	Casual	Employed status unknown
≤ 25	6,013 (2.2%)	3,276	1,816	914	7
25-29	24,614 (9.2%)	15,130	6,743	2,684	57
30-34	25,395 (9.5%)	14,967	7,477	2,892	59
35-39	28,531 (10.6%)	16,851	8,707	2,895	78
40-44	31,785 (11.8%)	18,400	10,240	3,052	93
45-49	37,252 (13.9%)	22,680	11,394	3,076	102
50-54	38,022 (14.2%)	24,787	10,341	2,780	114
55-59	36,112 (13.4%)	22,372	9,711	3,894	135
60-64	20,140 (7.5%)	9,303	5,850	4,901	86
65+	9,015 (3.4%)	2,242	2,978	3,763	32

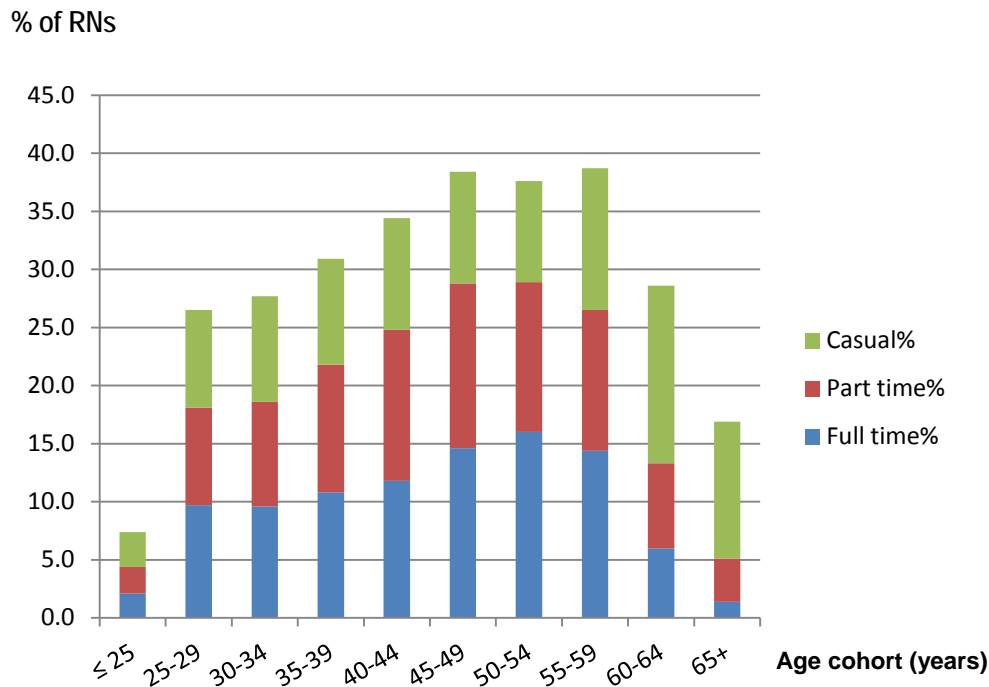
**Source:**

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2010). Registered nurses database.

**Notes:**

\* Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

**Figure A: distribution of RNs by age and employment status**



Four generations are now found in the workplace, as described by the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions:<sup>1</sup>

- **Generation Y (born 1981-2000)** — Self-confident, highly educated and technologically savvy, they value work flexibility and a collaborative team approach with constant positive reinforcement.
- **Generation X (born 1965-1980)** — Because they entered the labour market at a time of significant hospital restructuring and large-scale layoffs of nurses, many were unable to find full-time employment and were forced to take several part-time positions or leave Canada in order to pursue a career in nursing.
- **Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964)** — Prepared to work long hours in return for rewards, they define themselves through their jobs and work performance.
- **Veterans (born 1925-1945)** — They tend to be respectful of authority and disciplined in their work habits; they are averse to risk and less likely to question organizational practices.

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions. (2009). *From textbooks to texting: Addressing issues of intergenerational diversity in the nursing workplace* (pp. 7-8). Ottawa: Author.

The **average age** of an RN employed in nursing in 2010 was **45.4 years**; the average age in 2007 was **45 years**. The **average age of RNs** employed in nursing by jurisdiction for 2010 was as follows:

Jurisdiction	Average age (years)*	Minimum age	Maximum age*	Difference from Cdn. average (years)
Canada	45.4	21	75	--
Newfoundland and Labrador	43.0	21	73	-2.4
Prince Edward Island	47.2	22	75	1.8
Nova Scotia	46.8	23	75	1.4
New Brunswick	45.2	22	75	-0.2
Quebec	43.5	21	75	-1.9
Ontario	46.5	21	75	1.1
Manitoba**	46.3	-	-	0.9
Saskatchewan	45.3	22	75	-0.1
Alberta	45.0	21	75	-0.4
British Columbia	46.2	22	75	0.8
Yukon	45.1	23	67	-0.3
N.W.T. and Nunavut***	45.3	22	74	-0.1

**Source:**

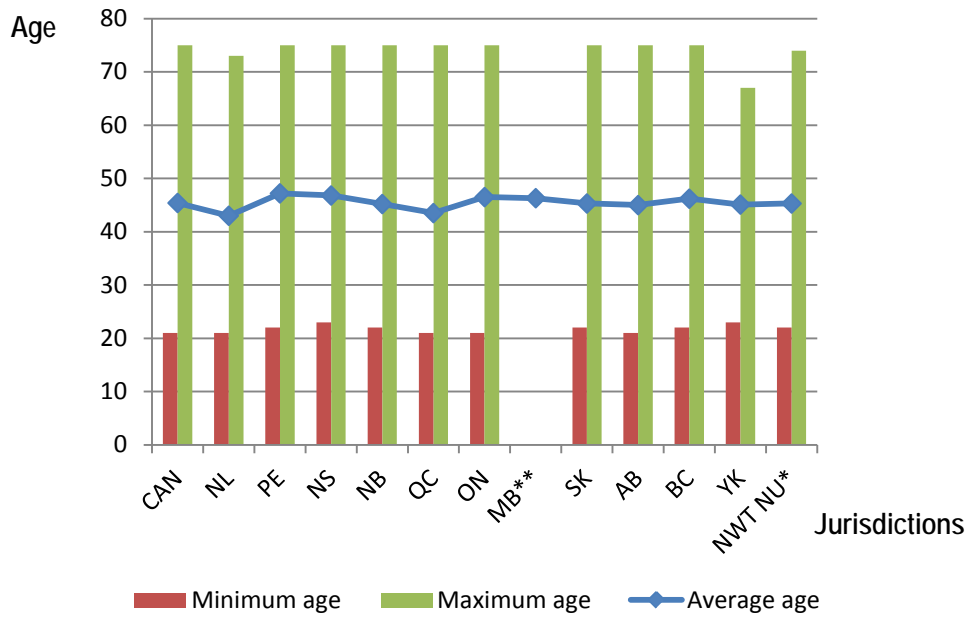
Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2010). Registered nurses database.

**Notes:**

- \* For the purpose mean-age calculation, the workforce is restricted to those under 76 years.
- \*\* Data pertaining to Manitoba average age (in years) are taken directly from: Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2012). *Regulated nurses: Canadian trends, 2006 to 2010*. Ottawa: Author. No maximum and minimum ages for Manitoba are given, as age data for Manitoba was not provided to CNA.
- \*\*\* Data for Northwest Territories and Nunavut were combined for 2010.



**Figure B: distribution of RNs according to their minimum, maximum and average age by jurisdiction in comparison to Canada**



\* Data for Northwest Territories and Nunavut were combined for 2010.

\*\* Data pertaining to Manitoba average age (in years) are taken directly from: Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2012). *Regulated nurses: Canadian trends, 2006 to 2010*. Ottawa: Author. No maximum and minimum ages for Manitoba are given, as age data for Manitoba was not provided to CNA.

## Educational Profile

The **highest level of nursing education** reported by RNs employed in nursing in Canada in 2007 and 2010 was as follows:

Education level	2007		2010	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Diploma	158,943	61.9%	154,750	57.6%
Baccalaureate	90,777	35.4%	104,105	38.8%
Master's	6,447	2.5%	8,922	3.3%
Doctorate	423	0.2%	586	0.2%
Not stated	25	0.0%	149	0.1%

### Sources:

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2010). Registered nurses database.  
Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2007). Registered nurses database.

### Note:

Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

The **location of graduation** reported by RNs employed in nursing in 2010<sup>2</sup> was:

- **91.4%** (244,206) **educated in Canada**
- **8.6%** (23,076) **educated internationally**

## Employment Profile

The **distribution of RNs** employed in nursing **by primary area of responsibility** in 2007 and 2010 was as follows:

Area of responsibility	2007		2010	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Direct patient care	223,771	87.2%	235,012	87.5%
Administration	16,988	6.6%	17,047	6.3%
Education	8,752	3.4%	9,373	3.5%
Research	1,932	0.8%	1,837	0.7%
Not stated	5,172	2.0%	5,243	2.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>256,615</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>268,512</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Sources:

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2010). Registered nurses database.  
 Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2007). Registered nurses database.

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2012). *Regulated nurses: Canadian trends, 2006 to 2010*. Ottawa: Author.

The **distribution of RNs** employed in direct care nursing **by area of responsibility in 2010** was as follows:

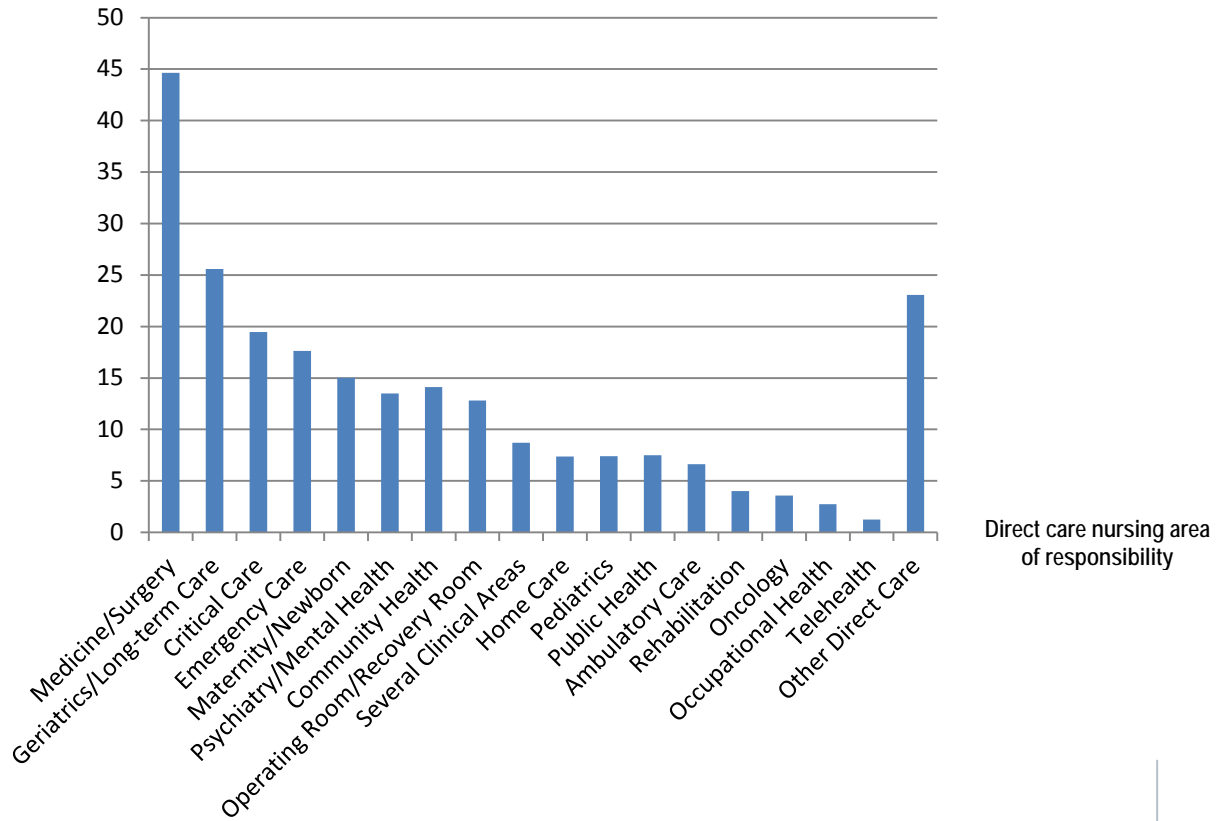
Direct care nursing area of responsibility	Number	(%)
Medicine/Surgery	44,646	19.0%
Geriatrics/Long-Term Care	25,591	10.9%
Critical Care	19,472	8.3%
Emergency Care	17,645	7.5%
Maternity/Newborn	15,010	6.4%
Psychiatry/Mental Health	13,503	5.7%
Community Health	14,133	6.0%
Operating Room/Recovery Room	12,797	5.4%
Several Clinical Areas	8,705	3.7%
Home Care	7,362	3.1%
Pediatrics	7,402	3.1%
Public Health	7,482	3.2%
Ambulatory Care	6,614	2.8%
Rehabilitation	4,019	1.7%
Oncology	3,593	1.5%
Occupational Health	2,746	1.2%
Telehealth	1,236	0.5%
Other Direct Care	23,056	9.8%
<b>Total Direct Care</b>	<b>235,012</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:**

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2010). Registered nurses database.

**Figure C: Distribution of RNs by area of responsibility**

Number of RNs by 1000



The **distribution of RNs** employed in nursing **by position** in 2007 and 2010 was as follows:

Position	2007		2010	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Staff or community health nurse	199,662	77.8%	205,471	76.5%
Manager or assistant manager	13,490	5.3%	13,481	5.0%
Instructor/professor/educator	9,070	3.5%	10,062	3.7%
Consultant	8,048	3.1%	7,622	2.8%
Director or assistant director	3,470	1.4%	3,810	1.4%
Clinical specialist	2,354	0.9%	2,197	0.8%
Researcher	1,577	0.6%	1,380	0.5%
Nurse practitioner	100	0.0%	2,224	0.8%
Chief nursing officer or CEO	1,301	0.5%	837	0.3%
Nurse midwife	14	0.0%	20	0.0%
Other	14,587	5.7%	16,805	6.3%
Not stated	2,942	1.2%	4,603	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>256,615</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>268,512</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Sources:**

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2010). Registered nurses database.  
 Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2007). Registered nurses database.

Canadian RNs employed in nursing in 2007 and 2010 reported their **employment status** as follows:

- **58.0%** (155,355) worked **full time** in 2010 versus 57.2% (146,052) in 2007.
- **30.0%** (80,331) worked **part time** in 2010 versus 32.1% (81,929) in 2007.
- **11.9%** (31,937) worked on a **casual** basis in 2010 versus 10.7% (27,197) in 2007.

**Source:**

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2012). *Regulated nurses: Canadian trends, 2006 to 2010*. Ottawa: Author.

The **distribution of RNs** employed in nursing **by employment status** in 2010 was as follows:

Jurisdiction	Total	Full time		Part time		Casual	
	Number	Number	(%)	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
<b>Canada</b>	268,512	155,355	58.0%	80,331	30.0%	31,937	11.9%
Newfoundland and Labrador	6,013	4,494	74.7%	842	14.0%	677	11.3%
Prince Edward Island	1,472	744	50.5%	538	36.5%	190	12.9%
Nova Scotia	9,173	6,001	65.4%	2,228	24.3%	943	10.3%
New Brunswick	8,102	5,225	64.5%	2,093	25.8%	784	9.7%
Quebec	66,333	37,675	56.9%	21,588	32.6%	6,925	10.5%
Ontario	95,185	62,602	65.8%	24,742	26.0%	7,841	8.2%
Manitoba	11,630	5,344	46.5%	5,074	44.1%	1,086	9.4%
Saskatchewan	9,538	5,753	60.3%	2,612	27.4%	1,173	12.3%
Alberta	28,681	11,593	40.4%	13,247	46.2%	3,841	13.4%
British Columbia	30,919	15,123	49.9%	7,253	23.9%	7,926	26.2%
Yukon	357	176	49.3%	114	31.9%	67	18.8%
N.W.T. and Nunavut*	1,109	625	56.4%	†	†	484	43.6%

**Source:**

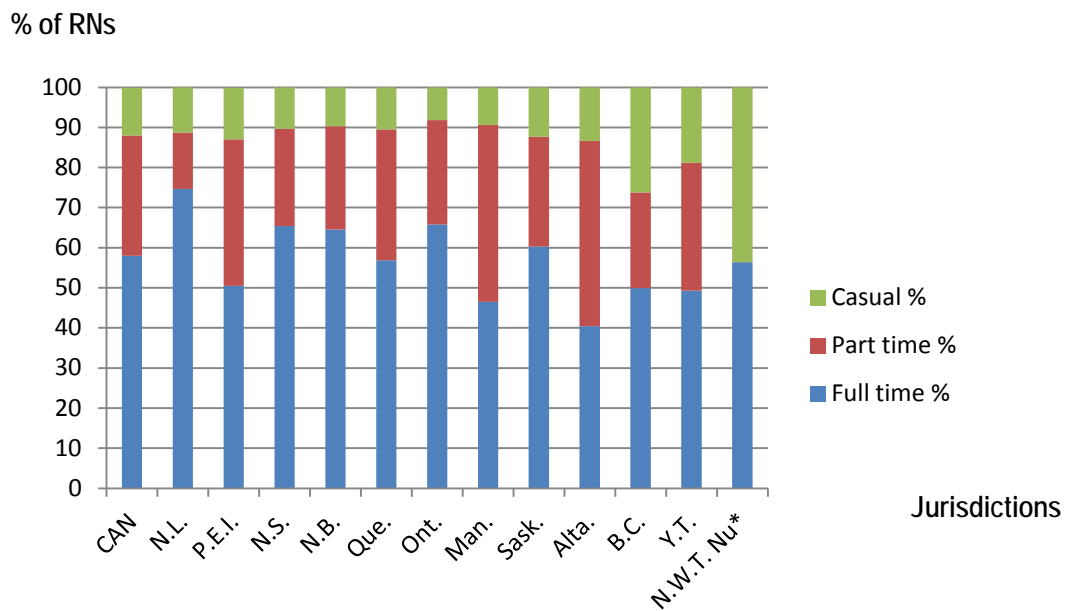
Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2012). *Regulated nurses: Canadian trends, 2006 to 2010*. Ottawa: Author.

**Notes:**

\* Data for Northwest Territories and Nunavut were combined for 2010.

† Data are not applicable or do not exist.

**Figure D: Distribution of RNs employed in nursing by employment status**



\* Data for Northwest Territories and Nunavut were combined for 2010.



## Multiple Employers

The **distribution of RNs by multiple employment status** in Canada for 2010 and 2007 was as follows:

Multiple employment status	2007		2010	
	Number	(%)	Number	(%)
Single employer in registered nursing	221,140	86.2%	221,697	82.6%
Multiple employers in registered nursing	34,637	13.5%	34,401	12.8%
Not stated	838	0.3%	12,414	4.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>256,615</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>268,512</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Sources:

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2010). Registered nurses database.

Canadian Institute for Health Information. (2007). Registered nurses database.

Prepared by the Policy and Leadership Division,  
Canadian Nurses Association



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