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Fact Sheet

Health Human Resources and Education in Canada

Retention of Health Graduates in Health Occupations

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Note of appreciation

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Retention of Health Graduates in Health Occupations

Health graduates represent the major source of entrants into health occupations. Measuring the capacity of the system to keep recent graduates is an important indicator for health human-resources planning.

The labour market outcomes of health graduates show that, at least in the early part of the decade, there was a clear demand for their skills: almost all health graduates from the class of 2000 who had not pursued additional studies were employed two years after graduation, most of them in health occupations.

High retention in health occupations

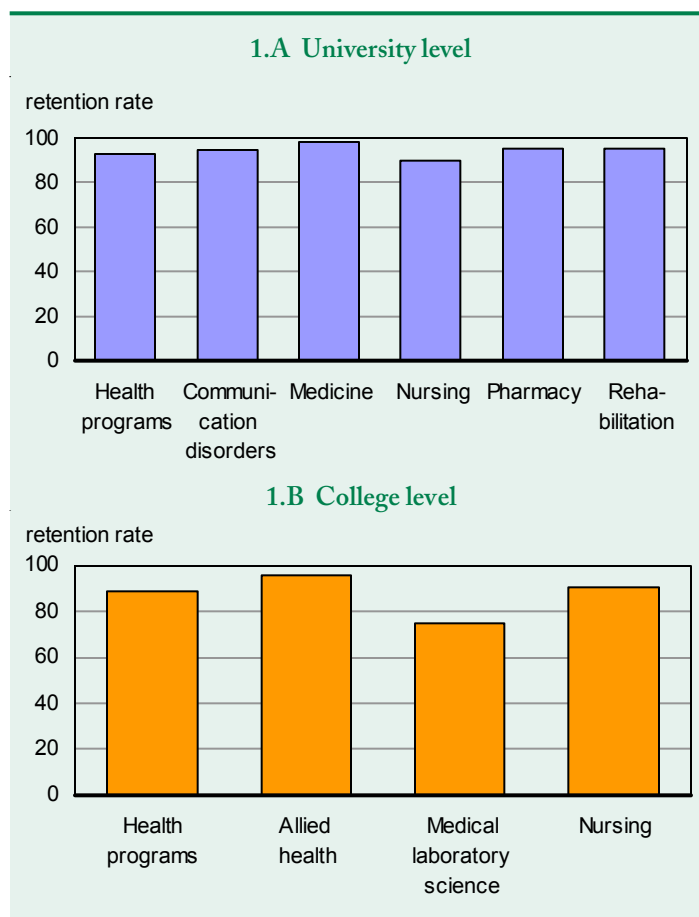
Results from Statistics Canada’s Follow-up Survey of Graduates, Class of 2000, show a high retention rate in health occupations among health graduates (Chart 1.A). Of the 5,500 university health graduates employed in health occupations in 2002 who did not pursue further education after graduation, about 99% were still in the labour market (i.e. employed) three years later, with a majority in health occupations (93%).

At the university level, graduates from medicine showed the highest retention rate with about 98% of them remaining in health occupations between 2002 and 2005. This was followed by graduates from rehabilitation (96%), pharmacy and communication disorders (both at 95%) and nursing programs (90%).

Although still very high, retention in health occupations for health graduates at the college level was slightly lower: about 89% of the class 2000 reported still working in a health occupation in 2005. At more than 95%, the highest rate of retention was observed for college graduates from allied health programs (Chart 1.B).

Charts 1.A and 1.B

High retention in health occupations among health graduates between 2002 and 2005



Source: Follow-up Survey of Graduates (FOG) (Class of 2000), Statistics Canada.

Health human-resource planning information needs

Information on retention and attrition in health occupations is important for human-resource planning as the health sector seeks to meet service-delivery requirements. While variations in retention and attrition may be largely attributable to working conditions and earnings, further research is needed to fully understand the factors that affect the decision to remain in a given health occupation or to find employment in another field.