

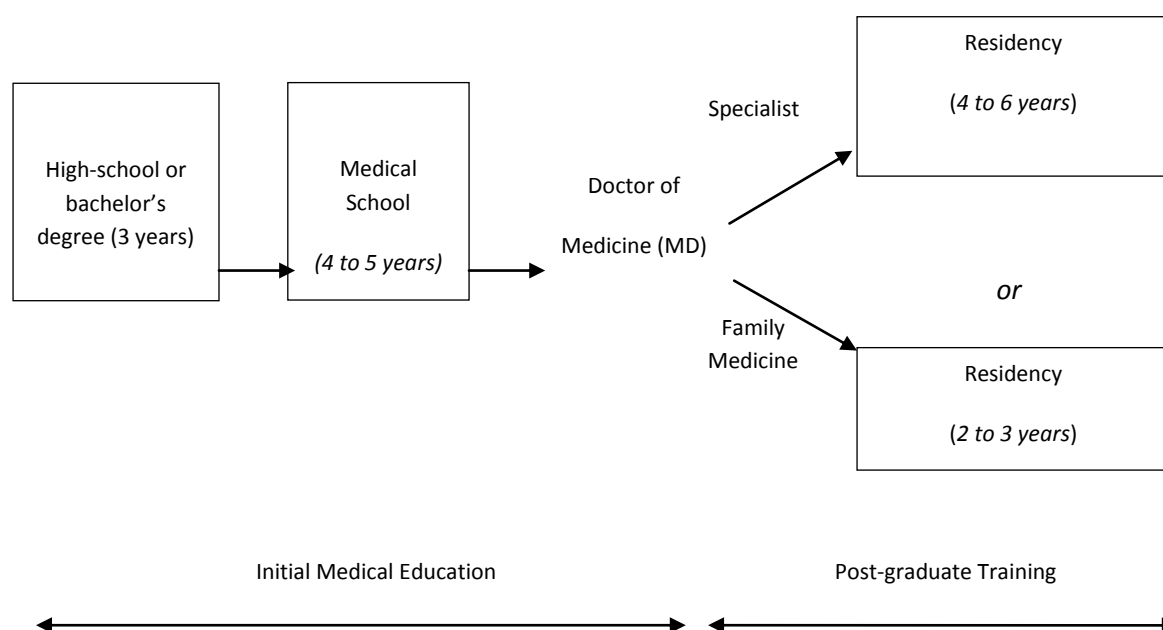


Trends in Medical Education and Training in Canada

1. Brief Overview of Medical Education and Training Pathways

- Some students in Canada can try to access medical education after having successfully completed their high-school education, although most of them begin their medical studies after receiving a bachelor's degree in another field (often related to biological sciences). Medical education generally lasts 4 to 5 years. The first half of medical studies consists mainly of preclinical and basic sciences education, whereas the second half involves more clinical and practical training.
- In the final year of their medical degree, students enter into the *Canadian Resident Match Service* where they rank their preferences of hospitals and specialties for post-graduate clinical training. The program to which they apply also rank each student. A computerized matching system determines placement for residency positions after completion of their degree.
- The length of post-graduate training varies by area of specialisation, ranging from 2 to 3 years for family medicine to 4 to 6 years for other medical or surgical specialties. Following completion of the training, residents have to pass some exams to become register with the College of Family Physicians of Canada (for family physicians), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (for specialists) or the Collège des Médecins (for all physicians in the province of Québec).
- To become a doctor in Canada, a student can therefore expect 9 to 13 years of university education and post-graduate training, depending on the area of specialisation (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Medical Education and Training Pathways, Canada

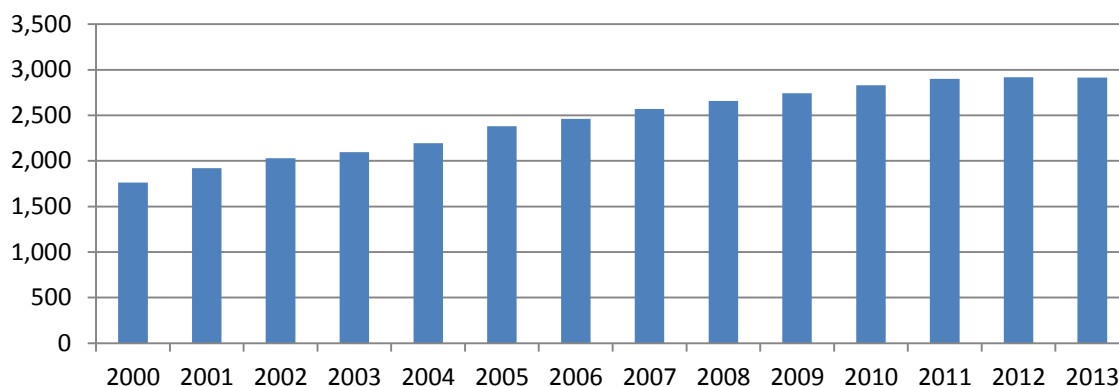


Source: Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (2014), available at http://www.afmc.ca/pdf/ADMISSION_REQUIREMENTS_EN.pdf.

2. Trends in Admissions to Medical Schools

- The number of admissions to medical faculties is determined by provincial governments. Contributing to this decision making are educational and financial resources and an estimate of Canada's future physician workforce requirement.
- In the 1990s, after the release of the Barer-Stoddart report (Barer and Stoddart, 1991), the number of students admitted was reduced by about 10%. Subsequent concerns about physician shortages resulted in a reversal of this previous decision, which the number of medical students steadily increasing since 2000. From 2000 to 2013, the number of students admitted to medical schools in Canada increased from 1 763 in 2000 to 2 915 in 2013, a rise of 66%.

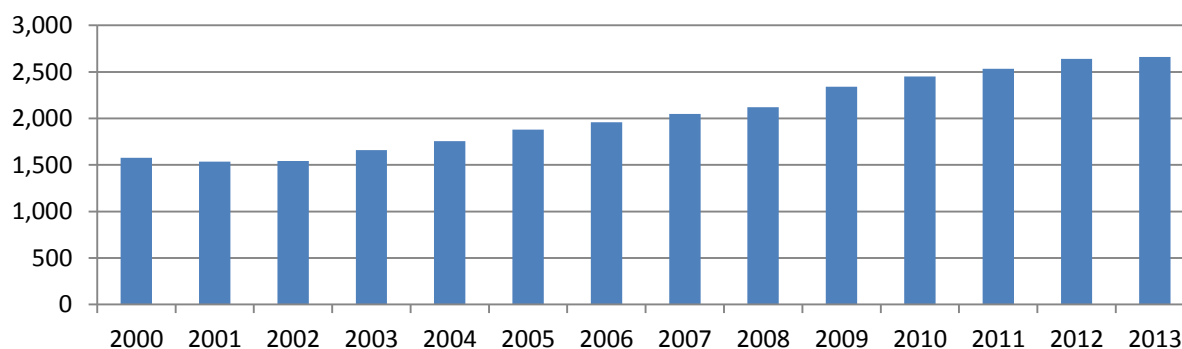
Figure 2. Admissions to Medical Education, Canada, 2000-2013



Source: Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, Canadian Medical Education Statistics.

- In 2013, about 300 non-Canadians were enrolled in medical faculties in Canada (all years of studies), representing 3% of the total number of enrolled students. This number has remained stable since 2008 (Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, 2013).
- Figure 3 shows trends in the number of medical graduates in Canada from 2000 to 2013. Consistent with the trend in admission rates, the number of graduates in Canada has increased sharply, rising from 1 578 in 2000 to 2 662 in 2013, an increase of 69%.

Figure 3. Graduates from Medical Education, Canada, 2000-2013

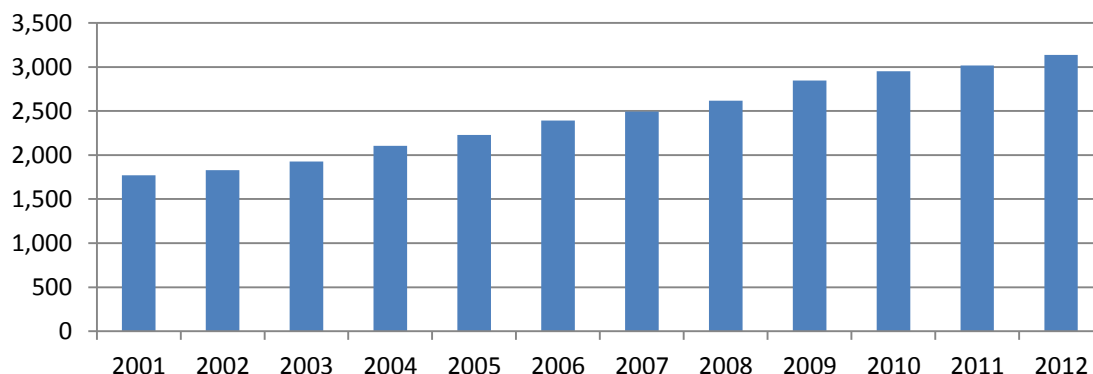


Source: Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, Canadian Medical Education Statistics.

3. Trends in Admissions to Post-graduate Training

- After having completed their medical degree, new medical graduates can pursue their post-graduate training in a wide range of medical specialties and subspecialties. Figure 4 depicts trends in admissions to post-graduate training programs in Canada from 2001 to 2012. Consistent with the rise in the number of medical students, the number of admissions to post-graduate training programs has increased steadily over the past decade, growing from 1 770 residency posts in 2001 to 3 136 in 2012, a rise of 77% during this period.

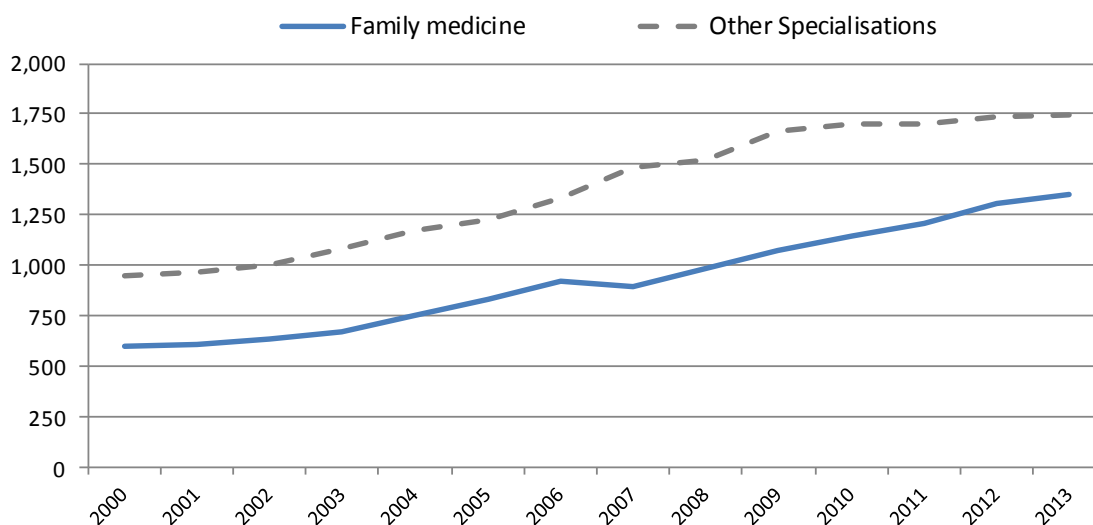
Figure 4. Admissions to post-graduate training programs, Canada, 2001-2012



Source: Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada, Canadian Medical Education Statistics.

- The number of post-graduate training places in family medicine (i.e., general practice) increased particularly strongly in Canada, more than doubling between 2000 and 2013 (rising from around 600 in 2000 to over 1 350 posts in 2013). This was part of a national effort to strengthen access to family doctors for the whole population. But the number of places in other medical and surgical specialties also grew quickly, so the share of all post-graduate training places in family medicine only increased moderately from 39% in 2000 to 44% in 2013.

Figure 5. Admissions in post-graduate training, family medicine and other specialisations, Canada, 2000-13



Source: Canadian Post-M.D Education Registry (2015), Data Tables

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Read the report online:

<http://www.oecd.org/health/health-workforce-policies-in-oecd-countries-9789264239517-en.htm>

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