



PHYSICIAN SCOPE OF PRACTICE: A STATISTICAL APPROACH TO PROFILING PRACTICE PATTERNS

Authors: Marc Comeau, Canadian Institute for Health Information

Optimization of the Canadian health workforce is a process that is informed by several factors, including physicians' scope of practice. Establishing a mathematical foundation for this workforce measure could lead to an improved understanding of physicians' interaction with the health system and help with the goal of optimization.

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PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

To present a statistical approach to defining physician scope of practice and give a quantitative description supported by intuitive visualizations.

FINDINGS/IMPACT/OUTCOMES

Examining the distribution of payments across the service clusters showed that each specialty yields a characteristic distribution that can be used to define an associated scope of practice. As an application of this work, the methodology can be used to convincingly identify the scope of practice of individual physicians and move beyond physician specialty to understand practice patterns.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the preliminary results of this exploration, additional dimensions of a physician's scope of practice need to be considered for further refinement of the methodology.