

# An Integrative Review of a Decade of Health Workforce Literature in Canada (2014-2023): An Overview of Key Topics & Preliminary Gap Analysis



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## Key Take Home Messages

- 1 The Canadian health workforce literature focuses predominantly on work environments and models of care, primarily concerned with nurses and physicians.
- 2 Notable gaps are other health workers, particularly with a team-focus, and articles that undertake modelling using health workforce databases.

## Background

- Several challenges face Canada's health workforce, including endemic levels of burnout, unacceptable levels of violence, staffing shortages, heavy workloads leading to high levels of attrition; misaligned scopes of practice leading to siloed and duplicative practices, and a lack of timely, accessible, and accurate data about health workers resulting in ad hoc, suboptimal or absent planning for population health needs now & the future.
- These challenges require dedicated evidence informed policy directions for workforce sustainability.

## Objectives

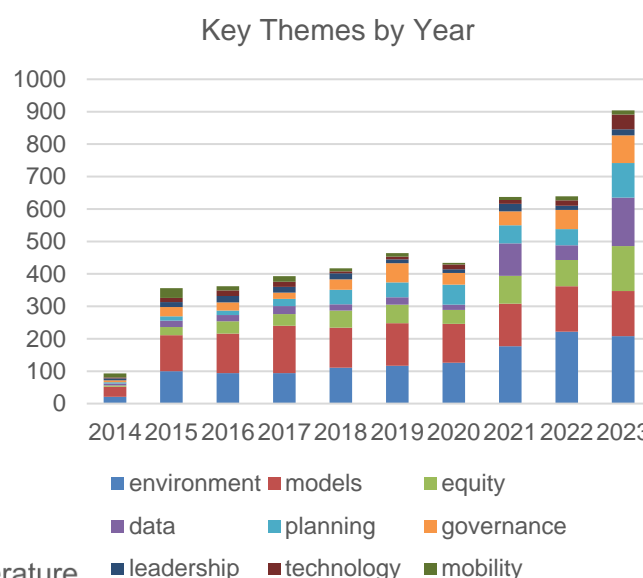
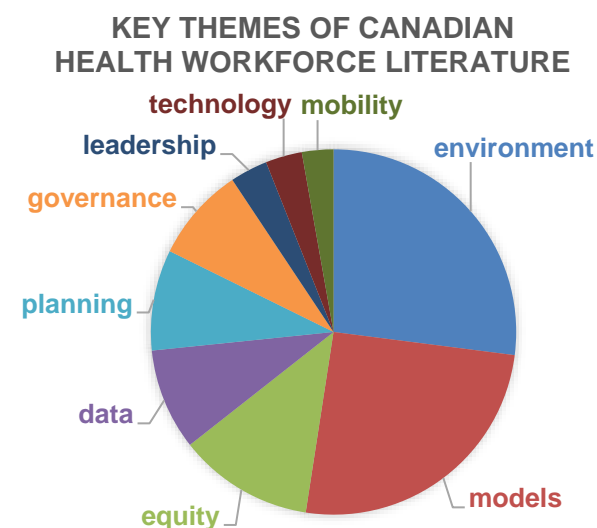
- In this poster, we provide an overview of a decade of health workforce literature in Canada from 2014-2023, highlighting key topics and notable gaps.

## Approach

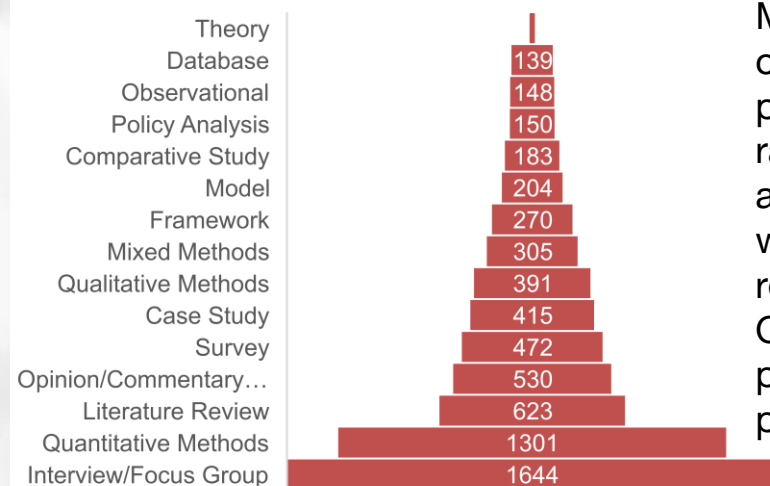
- Three systematic review cycles employing a librarian-developed search strategy of key terms applied to PubMed and CINAHL databases.
- Covidence software was used to screen search results in duplicate for inclusion.
- A librarian developed coding scheme building off MESH integrative keywords were applied through an online template.
- Summary tables were developed across 10 themes, 15 methods for a total of 4638 sources including 4195 articles, 269 reports, 56 book chapters & 15 theses.

## Key Themes

Work environment and occupational health followed by models of care and scopes of practice were by far the most frequent themes in the literature. The growth in the health workforce literature is notable post pandemic with work environments and equity themes figuring prominently.



Methods in Canadian Health Workforce Literature, 2014-2023



Methodologically, interviews or focus groups were predominant followed by a range of quantitative methods and literature reviews, of which some included scoping reviews. Opinion/commentary/editorial pieces also figured prominently.

## Key Cadres

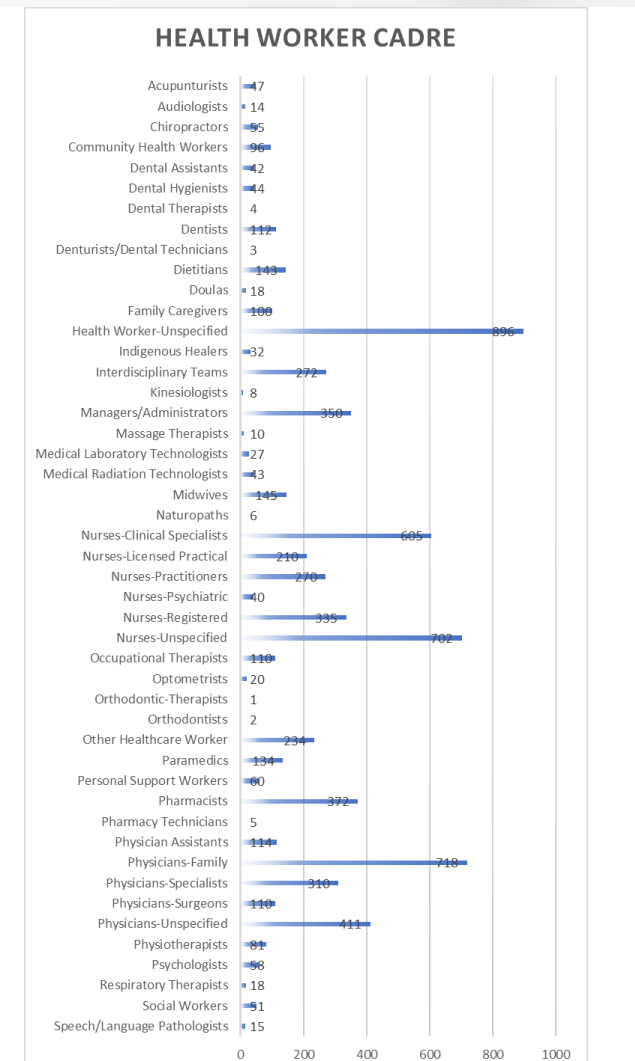
Most of the Canadian health workforce literature focused on health workers as a collective category (896 sources).

When different categories are considered, a focus on nurses and physicians predominates, and within those categories a focus on nurses in general (702) and family physicians (718) in particular.

Pharmacists were the focus of 372 sources. Midwives (145), Dietitians (143), Paramedics (134), Physician Assistants 114, Dentists (112) and Occupational Therapists (110) figured within the top 20.

Interdisciplinary teams were the focus of 272 sources.

This distribution only partially reflects the numerical predominance of these cadres in the Canadian health workforce landscape.



## Notable gaps

Gaps in the Canadian health workforce literature are notable, thematically, methodologically and by cadre of focus. **Thematically**, issues of mobility, technology and leadership are promising areas of exploration. **Methodologically**, greater utilization of databases for health workforce modelling and planning are promising.

