



# **The Face of Rural Nursing in Canada: A Profile of Aboriginal Nurses**

**2005 Annual Conference  
Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada  
September 15, 2005**



## **Aim of the Overall Study:**

- to examine and articulate the nature of registered nursing practice in primary care, acute care, community health, continuing care (home care) and long term care settings within rural and remote Canada

## **Study Components:**

- **Survey**
- **Registered Nurses Data Base (RNDB)**
- **Narrative Study**
- **Documentary Analysis**



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# Funding Partners

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- **British Columbia Rural and Remote Health Research Institute**
- **Saskatchewan Industry and Resources**
- **Provincial and Territorial Nurses Associations**
- **Government of Nunavut**
- **Canadian Institute for Health Information**



# Methods for the national study

- Analysis of the Registered Nurses Database
- Documentary Analysis
- Survey
- Narratives



# Framework for Knowledge Translation presentations

- Access to Care (supply & distribution; education of nurses)
- Quality of Care (community as shaping practice)
- Sustainability of Care (migration & predictors of intent to leave)





Today we will focus on...

**Aboriginal nurses who responded  
to the survey...**

**With some brief highlights &  
comparisons with the national  
study—please visit our booth!!**

**And our web page  
([ruralnursing.unbc.ca](http://ruralnursing.unbc.ca))**

# Hartley Bay, British Columbia



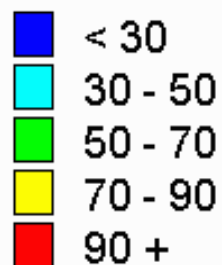


# Educational Preparation of RNs in Rural and Remote Areas

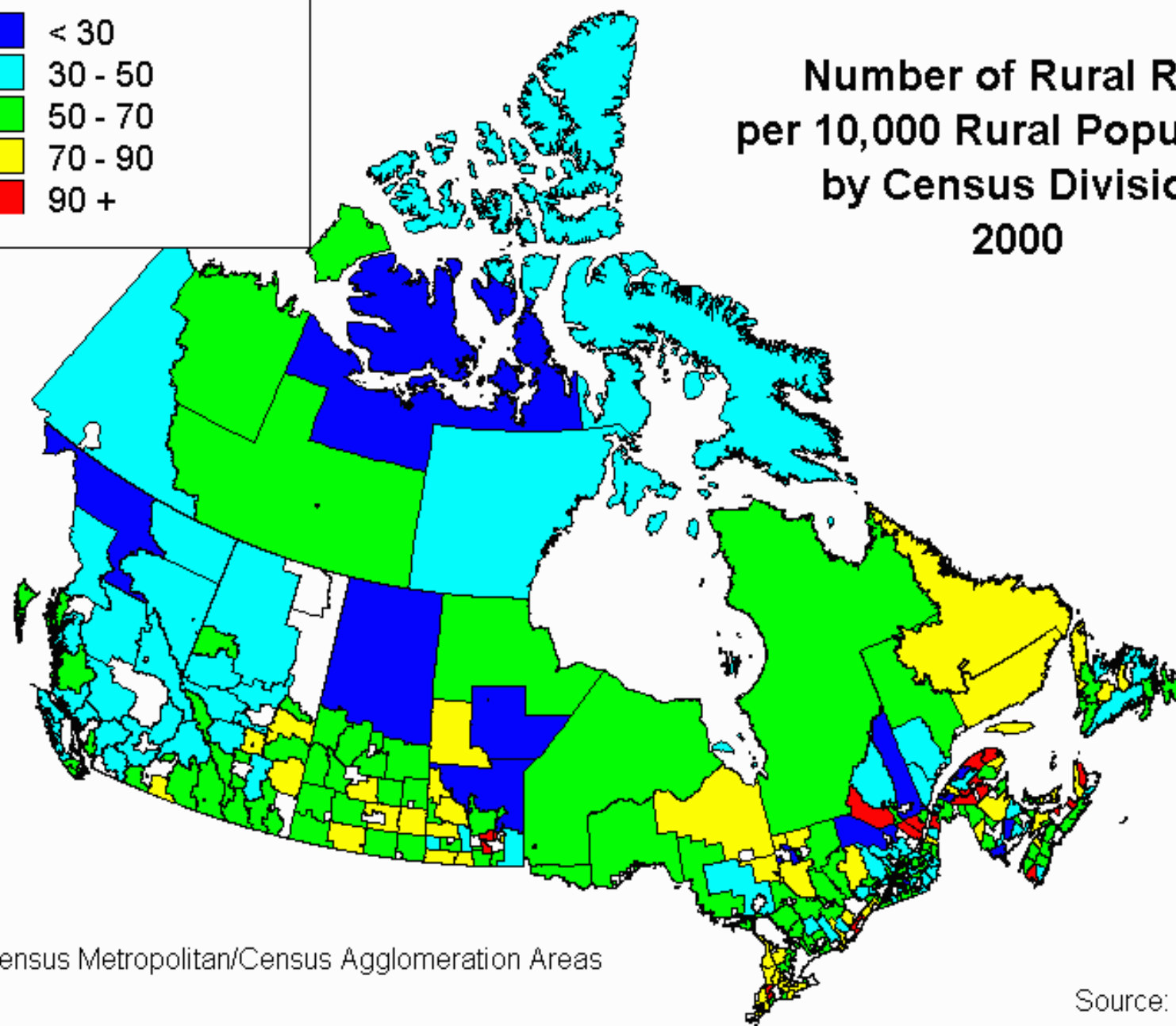
(Source: Doc. Analysis)


- Little information re: rural nursing available in reports
- Most nursing associations equate rural with accessibility issues regarding education
- Education documents discuss programs with rural focus at locations such as UNBC, University of Saskatchewan, First Nations University of Canada
- Education for remote practice links it with First Nations health issues

RNs per 10,000 Population



## Number of Rural RNs per 10,000 Rural Population by Census Division 2000



 Census Metropolitan/Census Agglomeration Areas

Source: RNDB/CIHI



## RNDB Highlights: National

- 41,502 registered nurses were located in rural and small town Canada in 2000, a 2% decrease since 1994
- In 2000, 17.9% of the total RN workforce were in rural Canada where 21.7% of the total population live
- 62.3 RNs/10,000 population in rural compared to 78.0/10,000 population in urban Canada
- More rural (12.7%) than urban (7.8%) nurses work in community settings



# Highest Education Level of RNs in Canada, 2000

(Source: RNDB)

	<b>Rural</b> <b>(RNDB)</b>	<b>Urban</b> <b>(RNDB)</b>	<b>Aboriginal</b> <b>(SURVEY)</b> n = 210
Diploma	81%	76%	68%
Bachelor's	18%	23%	29%
Master/PhD	0.6%	2%	<b>1.9%</b>



# **.. an aging workforce**

**(Source: RNDB)**

## **Source: RNDB**

- **Rural RNs-Canada**
  - **2000 average age: 42.9 years**
- **Urban RNs**
  - **2000 average age: 43.5 years**
- **All RNs**
  - **2000 average age: 43.4 years**
  - **2002 average age: 44.2 years**

## **Source: Survey n = 210**

- **39 years old or younger**
  - **Aboriginal Nurses: 40%**
  - **Non-Aboriginal Nurses: 30%**



# Aboriginal Nurses

n = 210

- Most are female (93%), diploma prepared (68%), employed in nursing (98%), with 20% working in communities accessible only by plane and working full-time (65%)
- Workplaces:
  - Provincial/territorial government—33%
  - Tribal council/band—16.7%
  - Local health board—16.2%
  - Federal government—15.2%



# Fox Lake, Alberta





# Aboriginal Nurses

(Source: Survey)

- Predominant Provinces of residence:  
Manitoba (19.6%), Saskatchewan (14%),  
NWT(11%)
- Initial registration:
  - 20.5% of respondents in Manitoba
  - 15.7% of respondents in Saskatchewan
  - 12.4% of respondents in Ontario



# Aboriginal Nurses con't

- 59% work in communities where family physicians reside
- 63% work in communities where nurses are first health care services contact
- Find medicine a less supportive colleague (67%)
- Have access to the internet at work (66%)



# Aboriginal Nurses con't

- 25% work in communities with 1001-2500 population and 16% work in communities with 2501-5000 population
- 22% are from communities with 1001-2500 and 16% from communities with 2501-5000 population
- BUT fewer work in remote (55%) compared to rural (69%)



# Advanced Practice

(Source: Survey)

<b>Scope of Practice</b>	<b>Aboriginal RNs (%)</b>	<b>All of Canada (%)</b>
Perform advanced decisions or practice	<b>37.3</b>	<b>40.5</b>
<b>Total n</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>3493</b>



# What do they do on their jobs? Maternity Care

(Source:Survey)

<b>Components of Practice</b>	<b>Aboriginal RNs (%)</b>	<b>All of Canada (%)</b>
Performing pap smears	32.9	15.9
Pre-natal Care	53.8	35.1
Management of labor	31.9	22.8
Management of delivery	28.6	20.8
Post-natal care	56.7	40.5
<b>Total n</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>3493</b>



# General Diagnostic Tests

(Source: Survey)

<b>Components of Practice</b>	<b>Aboriginal RNs (%)</b>	<b>All of Canada (%)</b>
Ordering diagnostic tests	41.4	28.5
Performing diagnostic tests	41.1	32.5
Interpreting diagnostic tests	45.7	35.0
<b>Total n</b>	210	3493



# Medication and Referrals

(Source: Survey)

Scope of Practice	Aboriginal RNs (%)	All of Canada (%)
Prescribing medication	34.8	17.8
Dispensing (not administering) medication	57.1	46.7
Direct referral to an <i>allied health professional</i>	54.8	49.3
Direct referral to a <i>medical specialist</i>	33.3	21.9
<b>Total n</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>3493</b>





# Emergency/Acute Care

(Source: Survey)

<b>Scope of Practice</b>	<b>Aboriginal RNs (%)</b>	<b>All of Canada (%)</b>
Suturing	37.1	20.2
Taking X-rays	16.2	8.2
Casting/Splinting	37.1	25.4
Evacuating patients	51.9	37.0
Pronouncing death	46.2	41.8
<b>Total n</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>3493</b>



# Learning Issues...

## Aboriginal nurses (n = 210)

(Source: Survey)

<b>Adequacy of agency to meet learning needs</b>	
•Somewhat adequate	<b>38.6</b>
•Mostly adequate	<b>31.4</b>
•Very adequate	<b>15.5</b>
<b>Employer encourages CE attendance</b>	
•Agree	<b>26.8</b>
•Somewhat agree	<b>27.8</b>
•Disagree somewhat	<b>22.4</b>
•disagree	<b>22.9</b>



# Aboriginal nurses (n = 210)

(Source: Survey)

## Adequate orientation available

Agree

**19.5**

Agree somewhat

**34.1**

Disagree somewhat

**27**

Disagree

**19.5**

## Opportunities to share CE knowledge

Agree

**26.1**

Agree somewhat

**34.7**

Disagree somewhat

**22.6**

Disagree

**16.6**



<b>Personal nursing knowledge is current</b>	
•Agree	<b>37.8</b>
•Somewhat agree	<b>49.3</b>
•Disagree somewhat	<b>10.5</b>
•disagree	<b>2.4</b>
<b>Enough opportunities to attend CE</b>	
•Agree	<b>19.4</b>
•Somewhat agree	<b>30.1</b>
•Disagree somewhat	<b>23.8</b>
•disagree	<b>26.7</b>



## **In last 12 months:**

<b>Subscribed to a journal</b>	<b>27.3</b>
<b>Read a journal article</b>	<b>92.8</b>
<b>Read a professional text</b>	<b>75.1</b>
<b>Participated in a telehealth conference</b>	<b>23.9</b>
<b>Did a computer-based lit search</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Enrolled in/completed a university course</b>	<b>16.7</b>
<b>Enrolled in/completed a college course</b>	<b>11.5</b>



# Aboriginal Nurses

(Source: Survey)

- Years employed by primary agency:
  - Less than 2 years: **20%**
  - 2-5 years: **27%**
  - 6-9 years: **18%**
  - 10-14 years: **17%**
- Years held current primary position:
  - Less than 2 years: **32%**
  - 2-5 years: **32%**
  - 6-9 years: **13%**
  - 10-14 years: **12.9%**



# Aboriginal Nurses

(Source: Survey)

- Plans to stay in the next 5 years: 56%  
(Non-Aboriginal 63%)
- Plans to leave current position-  
in 6 months: 11% (Non-Aboriginal 8%)  
In 12 months: 23% (Non-Aboriginal 18%)
- Stay in province: 21% (12%)
- Move to another province: 21% (12%)
- Work Internationally: 8% (7%)







# Implications

- Aboriginal nurses are “newer” members of the nursing profession—need for orientation, support and continuing education particularly because they work in isolated areas with less professional contact



# Implications

- Perform a number of advanced practice skills—need for CE and support in adequately performing them
- Find out why telehealth conferences are not accessed by this group
- Low rates of intention to leave current positions—great, but what are all the reasons why?



# Implications

- What kinds of programs can we use to assist Aboriginal nurses become degree prepared while working?





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