

## The Health Professions Database: Questions & Answers



1. **What is the Health Professions Database?**

The Health Professions Database will include demographic, geographic, educational and employment information on these professions: Audiologists, Chiropodists, Chiropractors, Dental Hygienists, Dental Surgeons, Dental Technologists, Denturists, Dietitians, Massage Therapists, Medical Laboratory Technologists, Medical Radiation Technologists, Midwives, Occupational Therapists, Opticians, Optometrists, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists, Psychologists, Respiratory Therapists and Speech-Language Pathologists. The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Ministry), Local Health Integration Networks, researchers, your professional association and your regulatory College will be able to use the information we gather to shape research, policies and programs that will ensure we have the right number and mix of health professionals in Ontario.

2. **Why now?**

With an aging population and increasingly complex technologies, Ontario's health care needs are growing. However, there's a gap in the information available on health professionals. We need to fill this vital gap so we can all work together to build evidence informed programs and policies. We need evidence to support planning for you, the healthcare system and those the system serves. That's why we're collecting this information from you.

3. **Who is developing the Health Professions Database?**

The Ministry is collaborating with regulatory Colleges to collect information for the Health Professions Database. The project is part of the HealthForceOntario strategy, the province's strategy to ensure that Ontarians have access to the right number and mix of qualified health care providers.

4. **How will this information be collected?**

The Ministry will collect the information from the participating regulatory Colleges on an annual basis. The Colleges will collect the information from their respective members through their registration and annual renewal forms. The Colleges will prepare and submit the information to the Ministry each year. The information will be made anonymous, without names or contact information, before it is passed on to the Ministry.

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continued from page 1



5. **How will this help me/my profession?**

As part of the HealthForceOntario strategy, the Ministry is working with its partners in the health care sector to better understand the health care workforce. By finding out more about the demographics, education and employment of our health professionals, we'll all be able to answer questions such as: Do we need more health professionals? Are there enough jobs? Are there the right kinds of jobs? Where is there a shortage of these health professionals? These answers will offer a foundation to learning about the basic, and then more complex, issues. Once the questions are answered, solutions can be designed through policy and program development.
6. **Do I need to fill out the entire form?**

By law, you are required to provide the information requested on the form under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*. All Ontario regulated health professionals are filling out a form similar to the one you will be filling out. It is important to fill out the form carefully and completely. The more accurate the information you provide, the more effective the resulting human resource planning will be.
7. **Will I receive a similar form every year?**

Yes. Some of the questions may change, some may be added and some may be removed, but you will receive a similar form to complete every year as part of the registration and renewal process for your profession.
8. **Will my name and contact information be released to the Ministry?**

Your College will send the Ministry anonymous answers to these questions without including your name and contact information.
9. **What information will be released to the public?**

In the future, Ministry researchers will pool information from the database to create reports profiling your profession that will be available to the public, your association and your regulatory College. These reports will help build knowledge and awareness of your profession among the public, researchers and policymakers.
10. **Has the Ministry conducted a Privacy Impact Assessment?**

A Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) determines if there are privacy risks with the information collected and recommends mitigation techniques. The Ministry hired an independent consultant to conduct a PIA on the database, which resulted in minimal risks. The PIA findings will help guide the Ministry's development of the database.
11. **Where will the information be stored?**

The information will be stored at the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in a securely hosted server environment protected by firewalls and authentication procedures.

**Produced by:**

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For more information, please go to [www.healthforceontario.ca](http://www.healthforceontario.ca)