



SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN NORTHERN MEDICINE

Abstract

A quantitative look at the supply of each specialty provided by the Northern Consultation Clinic, at Thompson General Hospital, the demand which Thompson and surrounding Northern Manitoban communities have on the NCC and the effect on wait times.

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Supply and demand in Northern Medicine; A quantitative look at the wait times at the Northern Consultation Clinic and its capacity to serve Thompson and surrounding communities.

Report

Access to health care is a reflection of Canada's strong social value in equality through the distribution of services to those in need for the common good and health of all residents. This access, however, is often argued not to be the same for residents who reside in remote or Northern regions compared to those who reside in southern and more urban regions. Barriers such as geographic distance, limited access to resources, lack of range of services offered and cultural differences are often prevalent in health care provided in Northern and remote regions.

Thompson, serves much of Northern Manitoba's health care needs, however because of its Northern location, the NRHA suffers from many of social barriers that Northern and remote regions across Canada do. The Northern Consultation Clinic serves to counteract some of these social barriers; geographic distance, limited access to resources and services, by providing access to specialists in a variety of specialists that fill a gap in service that would exist without the NCC.

The NRHA consists of four distinct sets of communities (Figure 1) (a) cities; including Thompson and Flin Flon and towns; including The Pas, Gillam, Grand Rapids etc. (b) twenty-five first nation communities (c) Northern Affairs communities and (d) unorganized territories. Thompson, located approximately 740km North of Winnipeg, serves its population of approximately 14,000 as well as a surrounding population of 65 000. Thompson is home to one of the five hospitals in the NRHA; the remaining existing in The Pas, Flin Flon, Gillam and Lynn Lake. It also consists of a clinic, addictions services, long term care sites and cancer care.

Due to the large population that Thompson serves, the NCC's presence acts to counteract many of the social barriers that would arise for patients who need to access specialist care. Some of the specialists that the NCC supplies includes: ENT, general surgery, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, ophthalmology and pediatric clinics. Because of the large number of patients that are referred to the NCC, one of the largest barriers encountered is wait times.

This project focused on a quantitative look at the number of specialist appointments available for each specialty (supply) and compared it to the number of request specialist appointments for each specialty (demand), as part of a larger, long-term project that focuses on eliminating and alleviating some of the wait times for some of the specialties at the NCC.

Following this analysis, the number of available appointments and the number of requested appointments were compiled. These tables (See Below) are part of a larger project examining the effect of demand on wait times present at the NCC.

Table 1: NCC Supply and Demand - Pediatrics

Supply (New)	1320(60min)	Demand (New)	508
Supply (FU)	3168 (45min)	Demand (FU)	2608

Table 2: NCC Supply and Demand – Obstetrics and Gynecology

Supply (Gyn New)	240 (45min)	Demand (Gyn New)	272
Supply (Gyn FU)	432 (30min)	Demand (Gyn fu)	570
Supply (Obs New)	576 (30 min)	Demand (Obs New)	425
Supply (Obs FU)	1536 (15min)	Demand (Obs FU)	3157
Supply (Colp New)	480 (30 min)	Demand (Colp New)	137
Supply (Colp FU)	576 (30 min)	Demand (Colp FU)	457

Table 3: NCC Supply and Demand - Internal Medicine

Supply (New)	1152 (45min)	Demand (New)	650
Supply (FU)	1440 (30 min)	Demand (FU)	740
Supply (Stress test)	288 (45 min)	Demand (stress test)	175

Table 4: NCC Supply and Demand -ENT

Supply (New)	194 (20min)	Demand (New)	728
		Coordinated new	26
		Flexible laryngology	69
		Minor procedure	7
		New	626
Supply (FU)	64 (20min)	Demand (FU)	428
		Coordinated FU	15
		Coordinated apt	2
		Follow up	411