



Home Care Expenditure in the NHEX Database

The National Health Expenditure Database (NHEX) aims to capture data on home care spending in Canada. This data is collected annually from both public and private sources (within the limitations described below). Public-sector data is collected from the Public Accounts and Main Estimates of federal, provincial and territorial governments, as well as from public agencies such as workers' compensation boards. Private-sector data is obtained from 2 sources: Statistics Canada's Survey of Household Spending for out-of-pocket expenditures; and the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association and not-for-profit insurance companies for expenditures from insurance companies. The definition of home care spending used in NHEX is consistent with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's international standard, *A System of Health Accounts*.

The health professional component of the home care spending data is included in the residual Other Health Spending category in NHEX.ⁱ In Canada, unlike hospital or physician services, home care is not an insured service legislated by the *Canada Health Act*. Each jurisdiction (federal, provincial and territorial government) has developed its own unique way of delivering home care. Home nursing and other health professional servicesⁱⁱ provided through public home care programs are usually fully covered by public funds. Home support services such as assistance in eating, bathing, cooking and performing housework may be covered by a mix of public and private sources and can involve user fees. Additionally, home care services may be purchased privately. Not all home care expenditures are captured or identified in the current NHEX data sources. Therefore, data included in the database may only partially represent this category of spending.

The variation in the mix of services and funding sources across jurisdictions creates challenges when explicitly identifying home care spending in NHEX. For both the public and private sectors, the definition of home care and the boundaries of what is included in the basket of home care services differ across jurisdictions. Moreover, some home care services may be part of the community-based services provided by social service ministries; in these cases, the health-related components cannot be separated out. Due to these limitations in the quality of the data, home care spending is not separated out from the residual Other Health Spending category at this time.

i. Home care services provided by hospitals and other institutions are currently not separated out from their categories. These institution-based home care expenditures are included in the corresponding categories in NHEX.

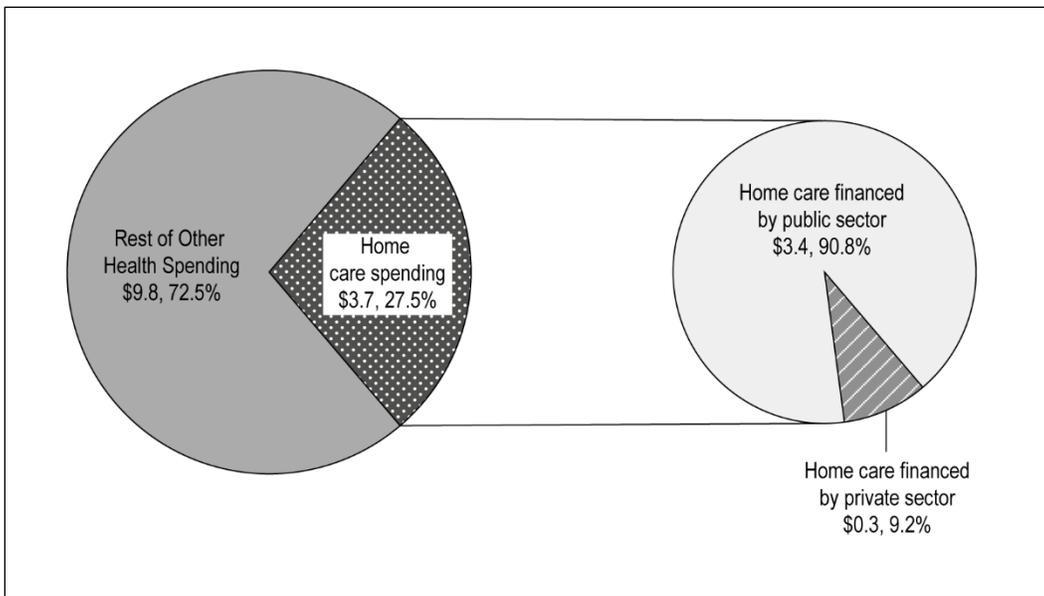
ii. Types of other health professional services provided through public home care programs may differ from one jurisdiction to another.



Technical Note

Regardless of the data limitations, home care spending is included in NHEX expenditure totals, if identified. When home support services are blended with home health services and cannot be explicitly separated, the spending on these services is included as well. In 2014, the latest year for which home care data is available from all jurisdictions, home care spending accounted for \$3.7 billion (27.5%) of the total Other Health Spending (\$13.5 billion) category. This total home care spending is composed of \$3.4 billion from the public sector and \$0.3 billion from the private sector.

Figure Home care health spending as a proportion of the Other Health Spending category and by source of funds, Canada, 2014



Note

Billions of current dollars.

Source

National Health Expenditure Database, 2017, Canadian Institute for Health Information.

As part of an ongoing effort to fill data gaps, work is under way to explore the feasibility of reporting estimates of home care spending in NHEX in the future. This work includes exploring additional sources of information, acquiring new data and comparing the definitions of home care used across jurisdictions.