
Physician Recruitment and Retention for 2008-2012

Health Match BC

A preliminary report comparing Health Match BC physician recruitment outcomes with basic retention information for the province categorized by health authority and by family physicians compared to all other specialists.



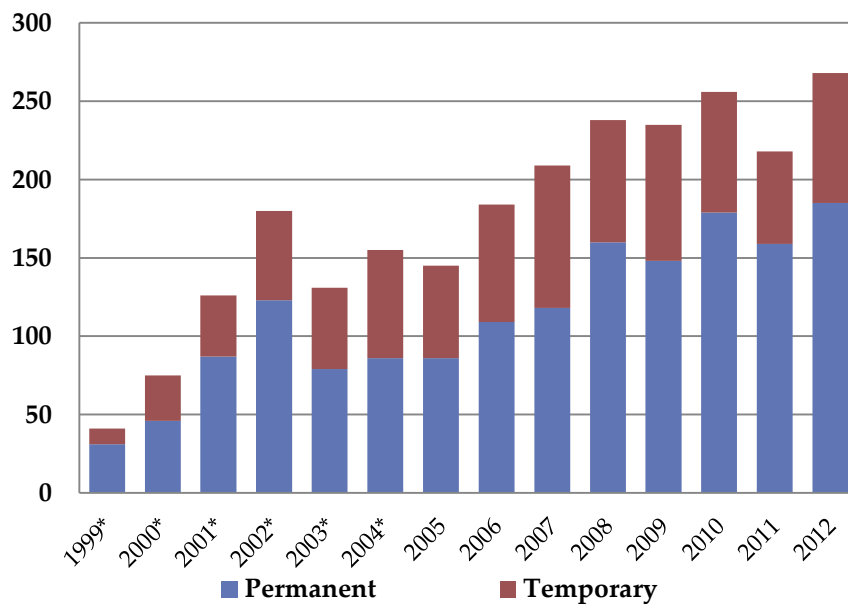
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Background

Over 2,400 physicians were matched to permanent and temporary (longer term, fee-for-service locum) positions between 1999 and 2012. A match is recorded when a formal offer and acceptance of a position has been completed. Matches are reported by health authorities or other approved health employers receiving eligible candidates from Health Match BC.

Figure 1: Annual Permanent and Temporary Matches (1999-2012)



A permanent position is one with no designated end date, while a temporary position is one with a specified start and end date (e.g. locum cover for a physician on an extended leave).

Mandate



Health Match BC is a division of the Health Employers Association of BC supported by the Ministry of Health through a Shared Cost Agreement.

We work closely with all health authorities, professional groups, regulatory bodies, and post-secondary educators, as well as local, provincial, and federal governments to align health system needs with collaborative efforts to supplement the supply of health professionals where there are shortages.

Physician recruitment focuses on family physicians for communities with persistent shortages and other specialists to meet regional and/or province-wide needs.



Family Physicians and Other Specialists

Overall, 57% of matches were completed for family physicians and 43% for a range of other specialists.

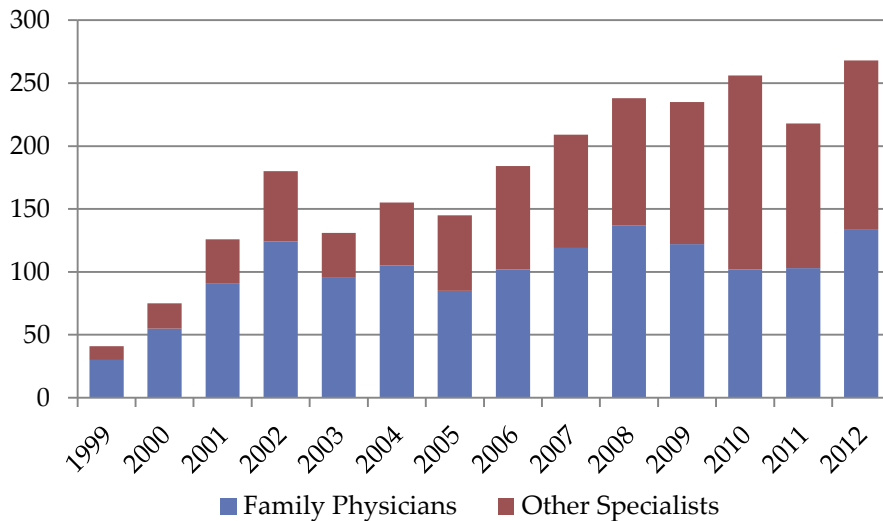
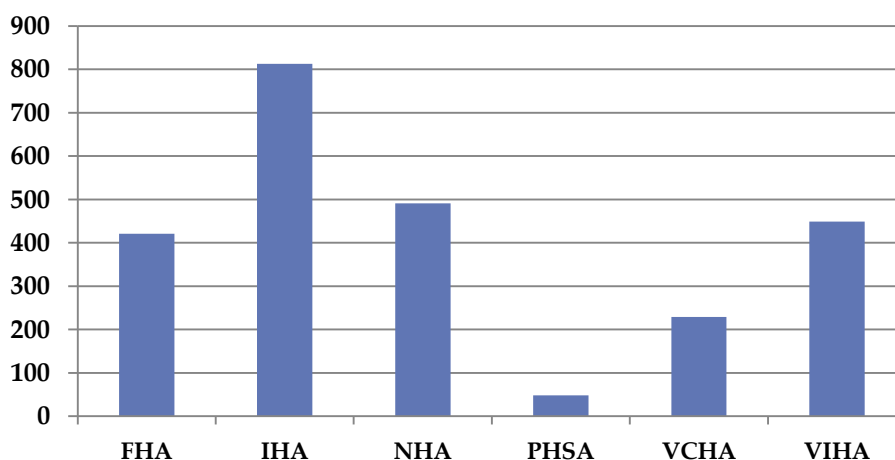


Figure 2: Annual Matches by Physician Type (1999-2012)

Distribution

All health authorities have benefited, but not equally. The majority of both family physicians and other specialists have been matched to positions in underserved communities in Interior Health (IHA), Island Health (VIHA) and Northern Health (NHA).

Figure 3: Total Matches by Health Authority (1999-2012)



Key Points



Positions Filled: 65% Permanent and 35% Temporary from 1999-2012

Positions Filled: 57% with Family Physicians and 43% with Other Specialists

Overall: 81% Provincial Retention Rate for 2008-2012

Individual health authority retention rates vary from 62% to 72%

14% of physicians placed, who are still practising in BC, moved to a different health authority

VCHA gained most (+20%) and IHA lost most to other health authorities (-20%)

Further research is underway to determine the length of service provided by those physicians who are not now practicing in BC.



Within Fraser Health (FHA), physicians have been matched to Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Mission, Maple Ridge, Hope, and Surrey among others. These communities have fewer family physicians per 1,000 of population than many rural/remote locations due to rapid population growth in the region. Within Vancouver Coastal Health (VCHA), a significant number of family physicians were matched to underserved rural communities such as Powell River, Sechelt, Pemberton, Squamish, Bella Bella, and Bella Coola as well as the Downtown Eastside Vancouver. Additionally, many specialists have located in the Lower Mainland due to the abundance of tertiary facilities.

Retention

Health Match BC works closely with health authorities and other health employers (e.g. local clinics) to ensure that its referred candidates are suited to positions in each region and community. Once Health Match BC successfully matches a physician to a position, health authorities provide ongoing liaison and support for physicians recruited to their regions. Normally, the corporate office is responsible for assigning hospital privileges, sponsoring foreign physicians, nominating supervisors, and generally facilitating the integration of new physicians into the regional medical community. Clinical departments often share this role – e.g. a department of psychiatry or family medicine.

For this analysis we included physicians placed in permanent positions through Health Match BC. Health authorities often recruit physicians directly and these placements are not included. Also, locums are intended to be temporary; if they subsequently accept a permanent position they are included in the permanent match information.

The provincial retention rate statistics are based on 1) the year a physician was matched to a permanent position, 2) the health authority to which they were originally matched, 3) practising/non-practising status as of November 25, 2013, and 3) their present location (by health authority).

Information regarding permanent physician matches by year and health authority was sourced from the Health Match BC recruitment database. A physician's present status was sourced from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia (CPSBC) website. If a physician, who was recruited and matched through Health Match BC was listed in the directory (i.e., they are registered and licensed), we recorded them as practising and recorded their present location. Physicians not listed in the CPSBC registry were recorded as non-practising.¹

¹ We cannot, at this time, determine if, where, and for how long these individuals practised in BC. For example, it is possible for a physician to have started working in BC in 2008, but left the province or ceased practising in 2011. Though this individual provided service for a three year period, they would not be captured in our present analysis. It is important, then, to note that our results reflect an underestimation of the true provincial retention rate. To provide a more accurate provincial retention rate, further research involving our health sector partners is needed to account for factors such as obstacles/delays to entry into Canada (personal and professional), varying lengths of service, and moves within and out of the province.



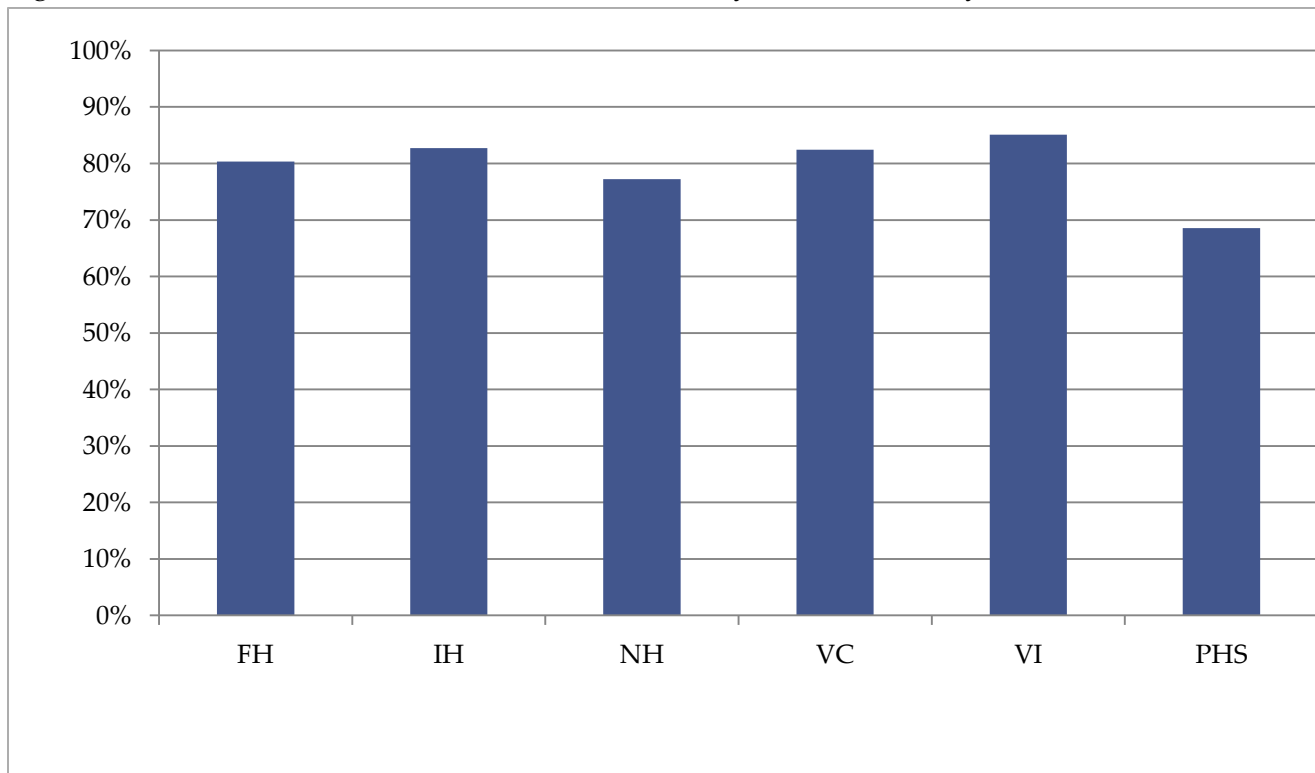
Retention – All Permanent Positions

From 2008 through 2012, 644 of the 793 physicians placed in permanent positions through Health Match BC remain practising in the province for an overall retention rate of 81%. Provincial retention rates attributable to each health authority ranged from 69% to 85%. This refers to the retention of physicians initially matched to a health authority who have remained within the province but not necessarily within that health authority. VIHA has the highest percentage of 85%. The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) has the lowest percentage of 69%. Due to the lower overall placements for PHSA any losses result in a proportionally greater change in their retention rate.

Table 1: BC Retention Rates 2008-2012 by Health Authority

Health Authority	Total Permanent Placements	Still Practising in BC	Non-Practising in BC	Provincial Retention Rate
FH	188	151	37	80%
IH	220	182	38	83%
NH	101	78	23	77%
VCH	108	89	19	82%
VIH	141	120	21	85%
PHS	35	24	11	69%
Provincial Total	793	644	149	81%

Figure 4: BC Retention Rates for 2008-2012: Attributed by Health Authority

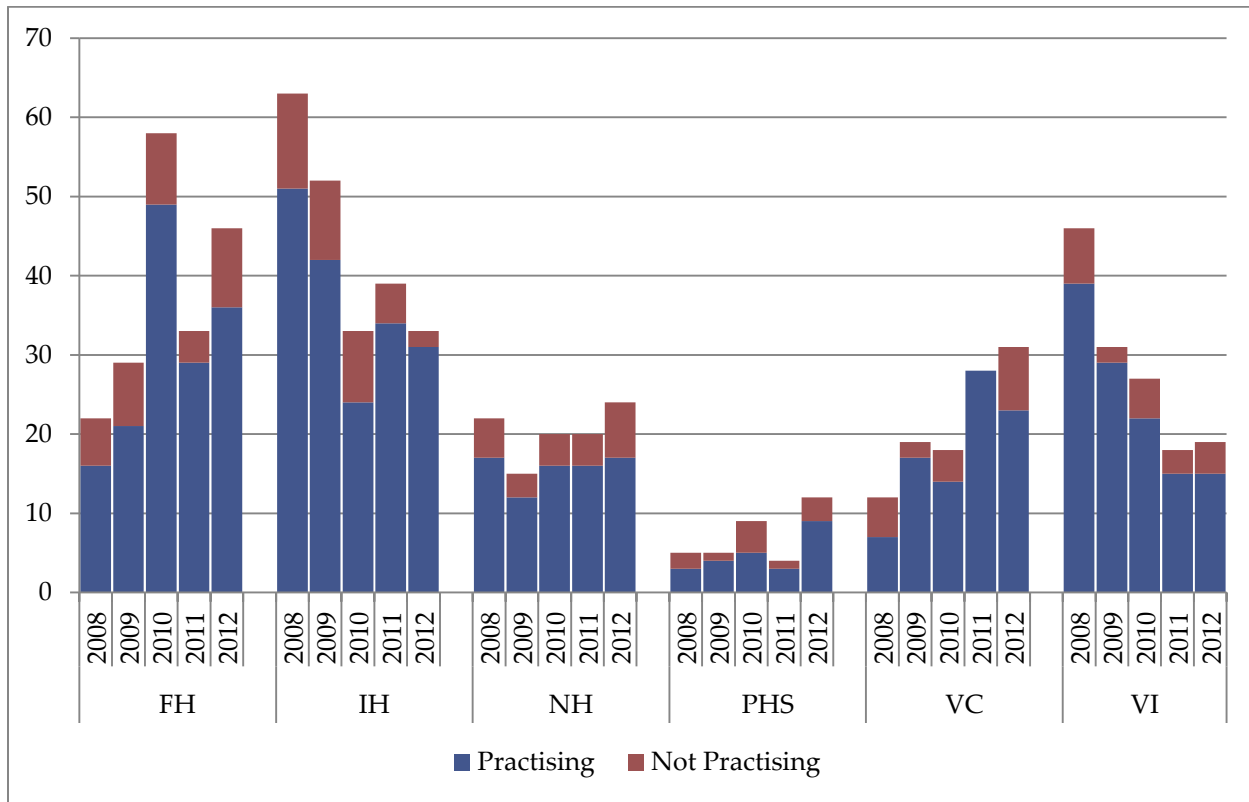




Practising and Non-Practising Physicians

Figure 5 below shows the number of practising and non-practising physicians placed in each health authority in each year from 2008 thru 2012.

Figure 5: Physician Placements per Health Authority by Year

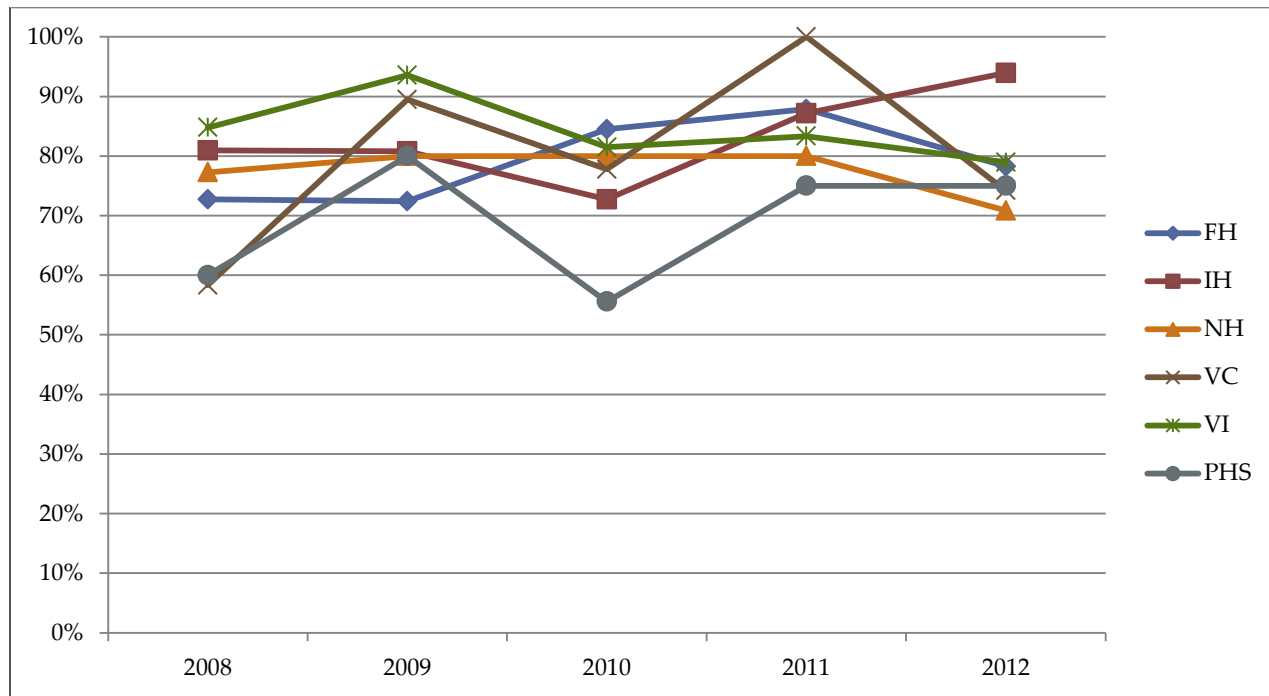


Over time, FHA and VCHA had a larger share of placements, partially due to the increased number of specialists recruited (e.g. FHA psychiatrists). On the other hand, IHA and VIHA had a declining share. NHA and PHSA had a relatively constant share.

Figure 6 below shows the provincial retention rates for each health authority for physicians placed for each year. Overall they are high and relatively stable across time with rates ranging from of 70%-100%. PHSA retention rates are lower, but again this is probably due to the lower number of placements for that health authority.



Fig 6: BC Retention Rate of Physicians per Health Authority by Year



Family Physicians

Currently, about half of all vacancies registered with Health Match BC are for family physicians. The demand for family physicians is high for all health authorities.

Figure 7 below shows the breakdown of practising and non-practising family physicians placed in each health authority by year. FHA has increasingly attracted family physicians due to its growing population and urban/suburban practise environment. IHA previously attracted more family physicians, particularly during 2008-2009, but Health Match BC increased its recruitment levels from a low point in 2010. NHA attracted a consistent and relatively high number of family physicians, while recruitment levels for VIHA have decreased. VCHA has attracted a varying level of family physicians to the Sunshine Coast, Sea to Sky corridor, Downtown Eastside, Bella Bella and Bella Coola. Placements for PHSA are low as it does not have a need for many family physicians.



Fig. 7 –Family Physician Placements per Health Authority by Year

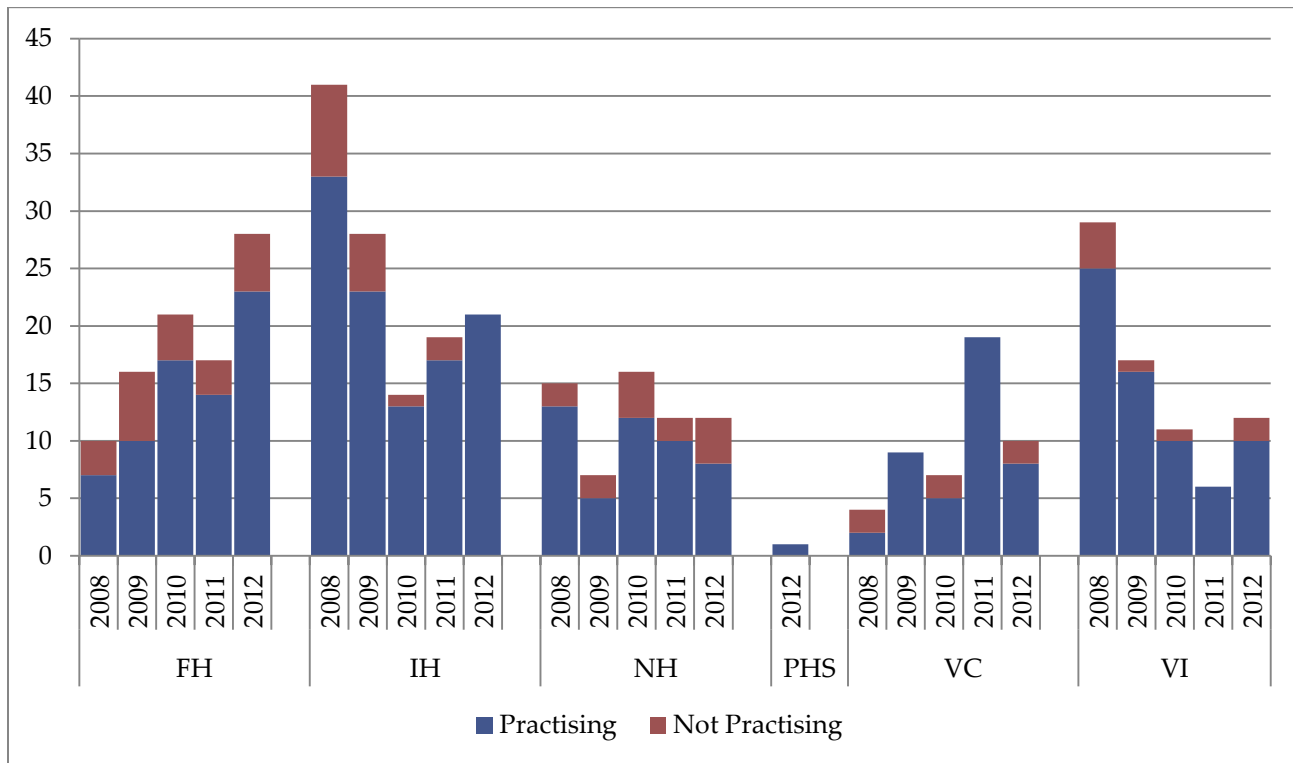
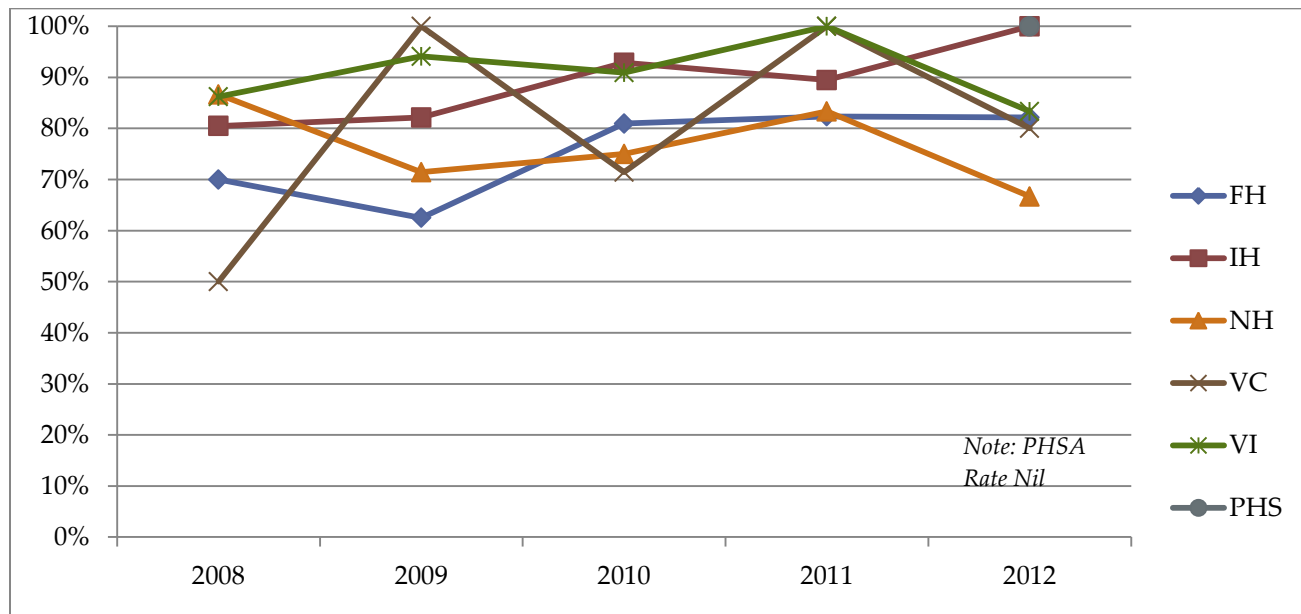


Figure 8 below shows the provincial retention rates for family physicians per health authority by year. Rates for FHA and IHA were relatively stable and increased overall. Rates for NHA dropped from 85% in 2008 to 71% in 2009, increased to 75% in 2010 and 83% in 2011, and then dropped to 67% in 2012. Rates for VCHA ranged from 50% in 2008, spiking at 100% in 2009 and 2011, before declining to 80% in 2012. VIHA was the most stable increasing from 2008 (86%) to 2011 (100%), then dropping to 83% in 2012. Worth noting is the drop in retention rates among most health authorities in 2012: VIHA (100% to 83%), VCHA (100% to 80%), and NHA (83% to 67%). This drop rates for 2012 is an area that needs further exploration.



Figure 8: Provincial Retention Rates for Family Physicians per Health Authority by Year



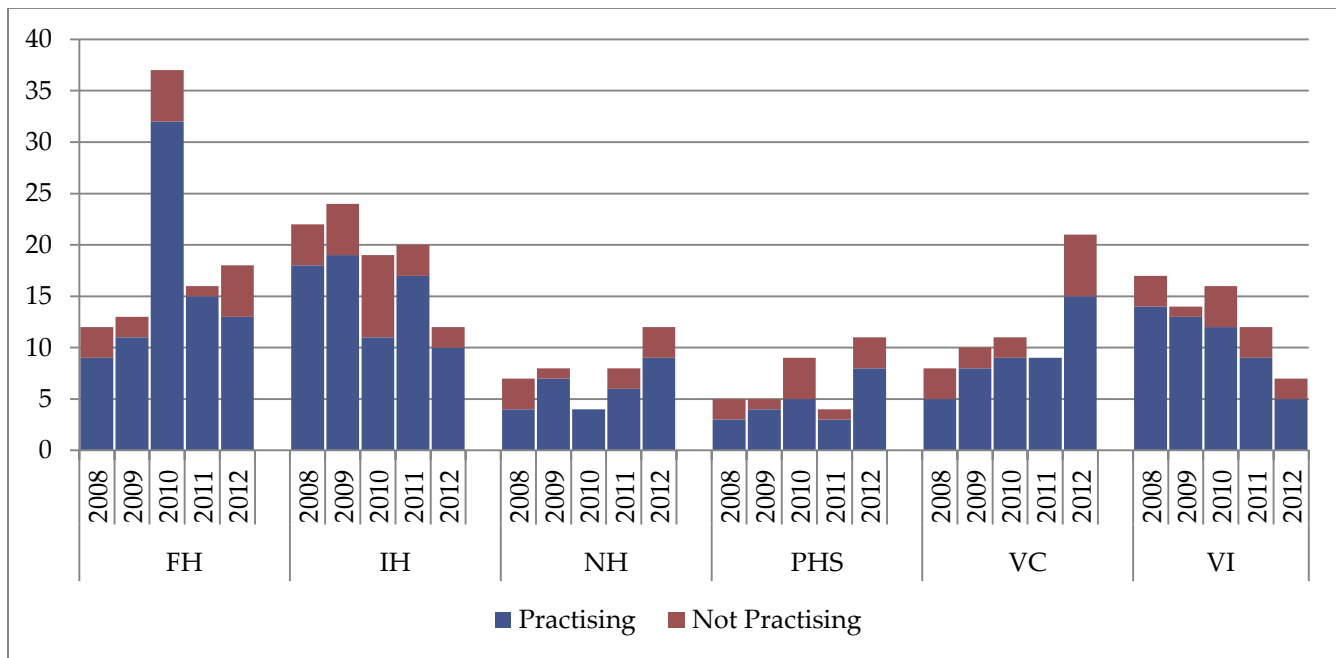


Specialists

Figure 9 below shows the breakdown of practising and non-practising specialists placed in each health authority in each year from 2008-2012. For this analysis all specialists (e.g. psychiatrists, pediatricians, oncologists, etc.) were collapsed into a single category.

Over the 2008-2012 period the number of specialist placements increased for FHA and VCHA and decreased for IHA and VIHA. NHA and PHSA recruitment numbers increased slightly.

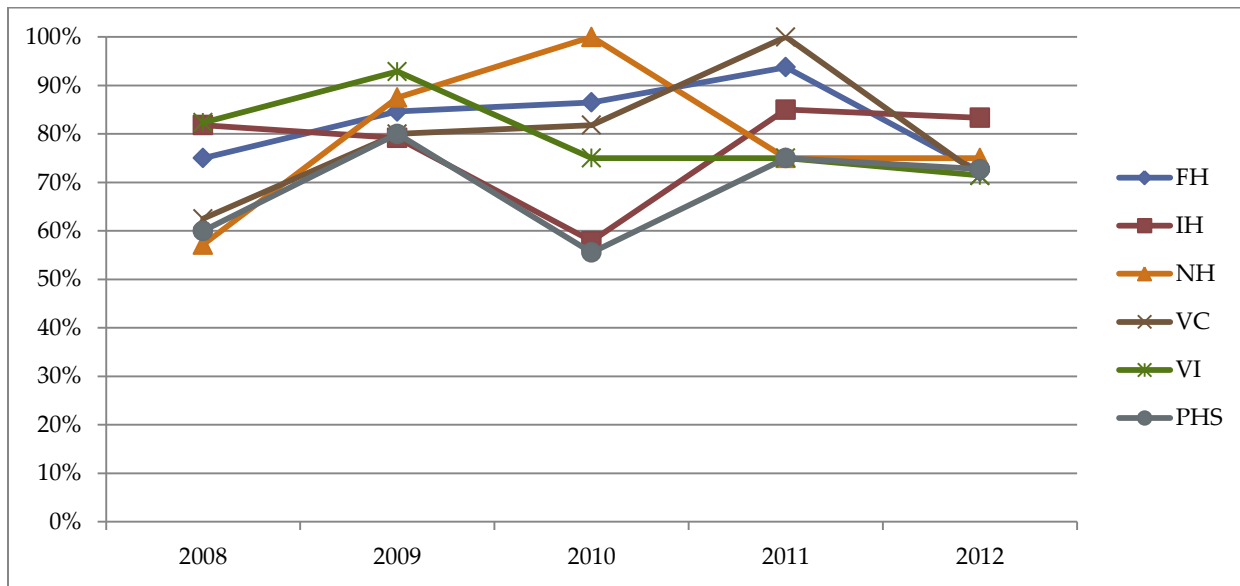
Figure 9: Specialist Placements per Heath Authority by Year



For specialists there is greater variability in provincial retention rates [Figure 10 below]. NHA retention rates increased from 57% in 2008 to 100% 2010 (a significant 43% increase), and then dropped and leveled off at 75% for 2011 and 2012. IHA rates dropped from 82% in 2008 to 58% in 2010 and then increased and remained stable for 2011 (85%) to 2012 (83%). VIHA rates dropped from 93% in 2009 to 75% in 2010, and remained at this level thru 2012. Retention rates for both VCHA and FHA steadily increased from 2008 thru 2011, but dropped significantly in 2012. PHS rates fluctuated greatly, leveling off in 2011 and 2012 at 75% and 73% respectively.



Figure 10: Provincial Retention Rates for Specialists per Health Authority by Year



Health Authority Retention Rate and Gain/Loss Analysis

Between 2008 and 2012, 81% of all doctors recruited by Health Match BC remain working in the province. Less is known about physicians relocating to different regions throughout the province during that time period. Did they remain working within the health authority they were originally placed in, and, if not, where did they go?

Of the 644 physicians who were recruited by Health Match BC and remain practicing in the province, 94 (14%) left the health authority they were originally placed in. Table 2 below presents each health authority’s contribution to the provincial retention rate. It also includes a further breakdown of physicians still practicing in their original health authorities and those who have moved to other regions. After accounting for the outflow of physicians, individual health authority retention rates ranged from 62% - 72%. FHA, VIHA, and VCHA retained 71-72% of their recruited physicians, IHA retained 69% and PHSA and NHA retained 63% and 62% respectively.

Table 2: Provincial and Health Authority Retention Rates

Health Authority	Total Recruited	Non-practising	Still Practising	BC Retention Rate	Moved to New HA	Remain in Original HA	HA Retention Rate
FH	188	37	151	80%	15	136	72%
IH	220	38	182	83%	31	151	69%
NH	101	23	78	77%	15	63	62%
VCH	108	19	89	82%	12	77	71%
VIH	141	21	120	85%	19	101	72%
PHS	35	11	24	69%	2	22	63%



For those 94 physicians who moved to new regions/health authorities, Table 3 below indicates where they are presently practicing. It also shows the net gains and losses achieved by each health authority after accounting for physicians relocating within the province. Of those who moved, the largest proportion (33%) moved to VCHA, 29% to FHA, 17% to VIHA, 13% to IHA and 10% to NHA. PHSA gained no physicians, but lost one to FHA and another to VCHA. Of those health authorities that lost physicians, IHA lost the largest proportion (33%), FHA and NHA both lost equal proportions (16%), while VCHA lost 13% and PHSA 2%. VCHA and FHA were the only net gainers from the other health authorities.

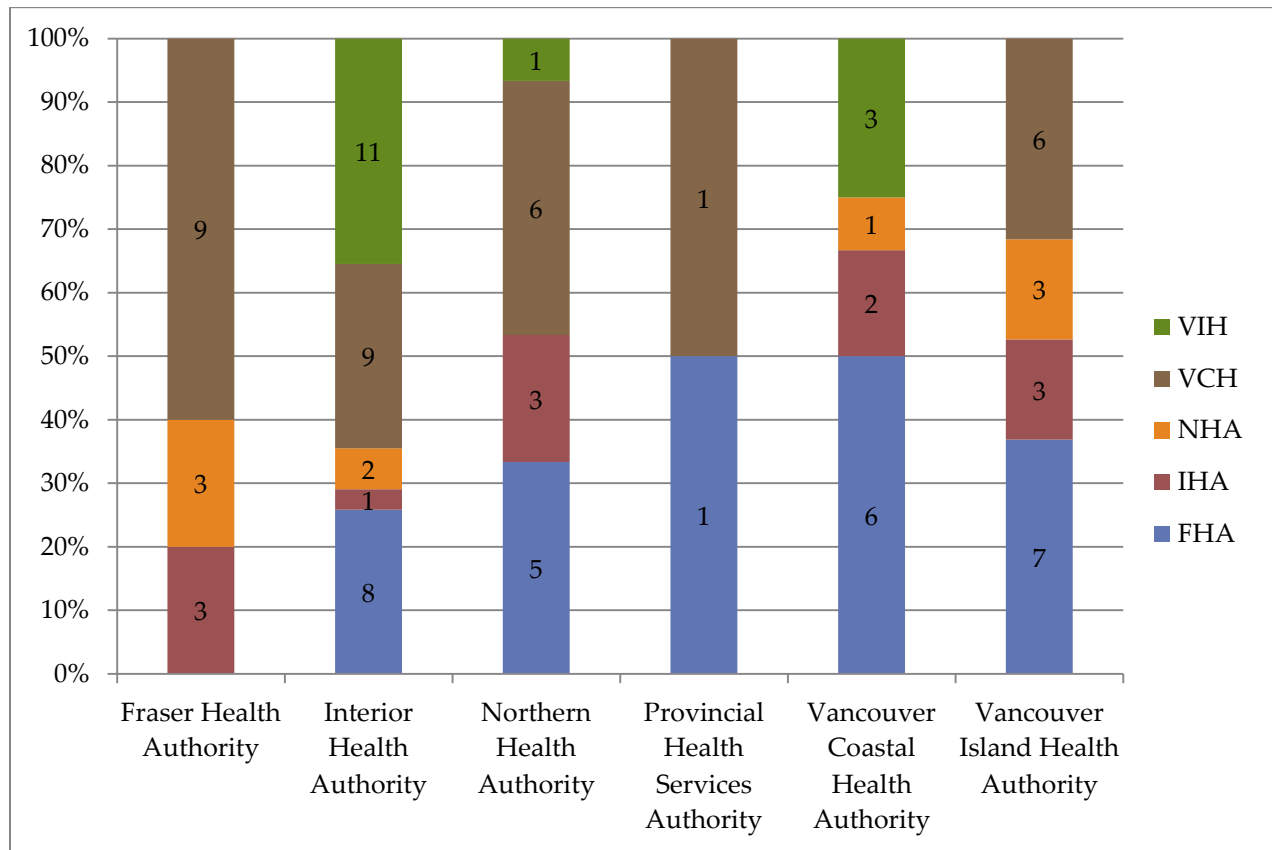
Table 3: Flow of Physicians Across Health Authorities

HA Moved From		HA Moved To						% Loss	Net % Gain/Loss
Health Authority	# of Physicians	FH	IH	NH	PHS	VC	VI		
FH	15	-	3	3	-	9	-	16%	13%
IH	31	8	-	2	-	9	12	33%	-21%
NH	15	5	3	-	-	6	1	16%	-6%
PHS	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	2%	-2%
VC	12	6	2	1	-	-	3	13%	20%
VI	19	7	3	3	-	6	-	20%	-4%
Total	94	27	11	9	-	31	16		
% Gain	-	29%	12%	10%	0%	33%	17%		

Figure 10 below shows the number and proportion of physicians who moved from one health authority to another. Of all health authorities, IHA lost the greatest number of physicians and the majority of these practitioners relocated to VIHA. VCHA gained the greatest number of physicians and the majority of these practitioners came predominantly from FHA and IHA.



Figure 10: Number and Proportion of Physician Losses By Health Authority



Key Points:

- 81% of physicians placed during 2008-2012 remain practising in BC.
- Provincial retention rates are relatively high for all health authorities.
- Retention rates for family physicians are high and stable for all health authorities, meaning these physicians are largely staying within the region where they were initially placed.
- Specialists also tend to stay in the regions where they are initially placed, but there is greater variation between health authorities than with family practitioners.
- 14% of physicians still practising in BC moved between health authorities, the largest proportion relocated to VCHA and FHA. IHA and VIHA lost the greatest number of physicians to other health authorities.
- Further research is underway to determine actual length of service provided by physicians who were matched, but are not now practising in BC, and of their moves within or out of the province.

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