



HEALTH CARE
AND
LIFE SCIENCES

SECTOR
PROFILES



**Chamber of
Commerce**

GRANDE PRAIRIE & DISTRICT



The Province of Alberta is working in partnership with the Government of Canada to provide employment support programs and services.

The Sector Profile project was led by the Grande Prairie & District Chamber of Commerce in partnership with the City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, MD of Greenview, Northwestern Polytechnic, and Alberta Labour and Immigration.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed their feedback, ideas and expertise to the study.

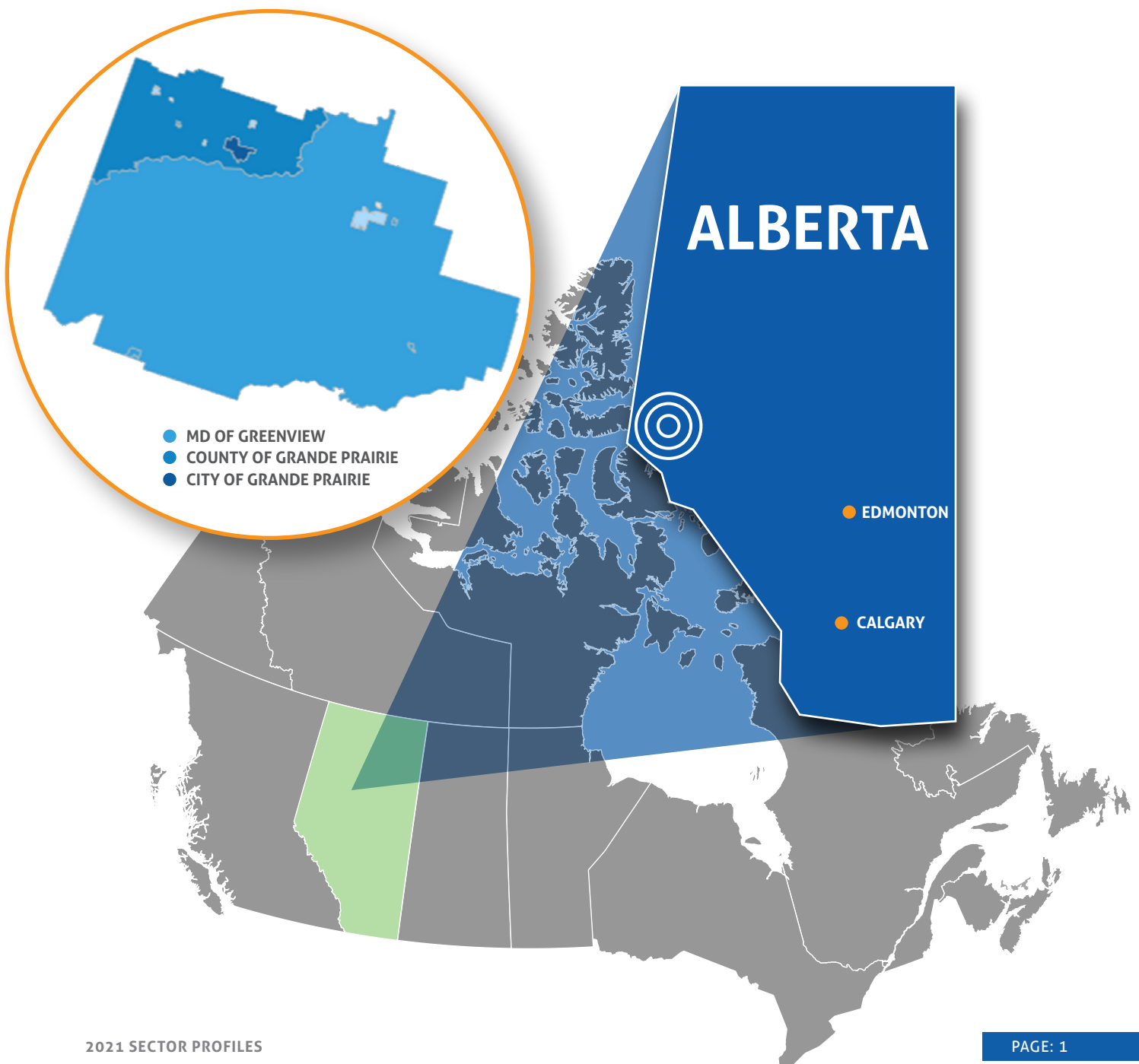
Please note that every effort has been made to use the most current data available. There are four major sources of information for this part of the research.

- SuperDemographics 2020 from Manifold Data Mining Inc.
- EMSI Analyst 2021.Q1
- Statistics Canada - 2001 to 2016 Census Profiles
- IBIS World 2020 and 2021 Industry Profiles

INTRODUCTION

This sector profile focuses on the Region consisting of the City of Grande Prairie, County of Grande Prairie, Municipal District (MD) of Greenview, Town of Beaverlodge, Town of Sexsmith, Town of Wembley, Town of Fox Creek, Town of Valleyview, Greenview Co-ops and Enterprises, Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, and Horse Lake First Nation. Any references to "Region" within this document refer to the custom region above.

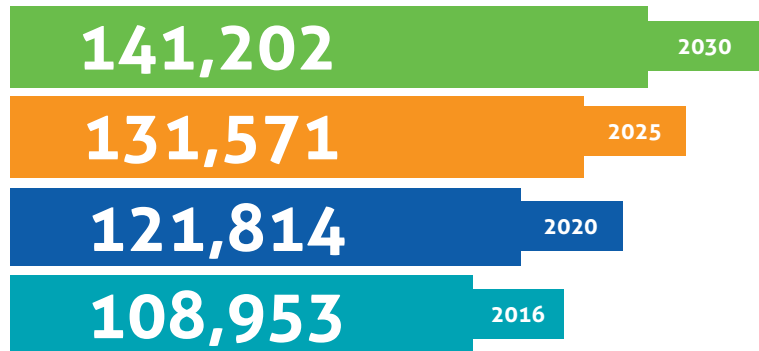
The Region spans nearly 40,000 square kilometres and acts as a gateway and resource hub for northwestern Alberta. Its largest centre, the City of Grande Prairie, is located approximately 450 kilometres northwest of Edmonton. With a strong postsecondary institution, new hospital, skilled labour force, and significant business supports, opportunities abound within the Region.



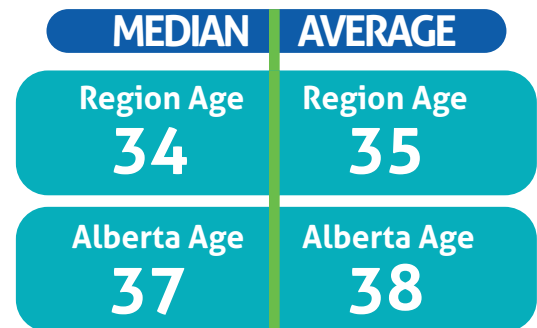
REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN

All data sourced from Manifold SuperDemographics unless otherwise specified.

Population of Region, 2020



Median and Average Age, 2020

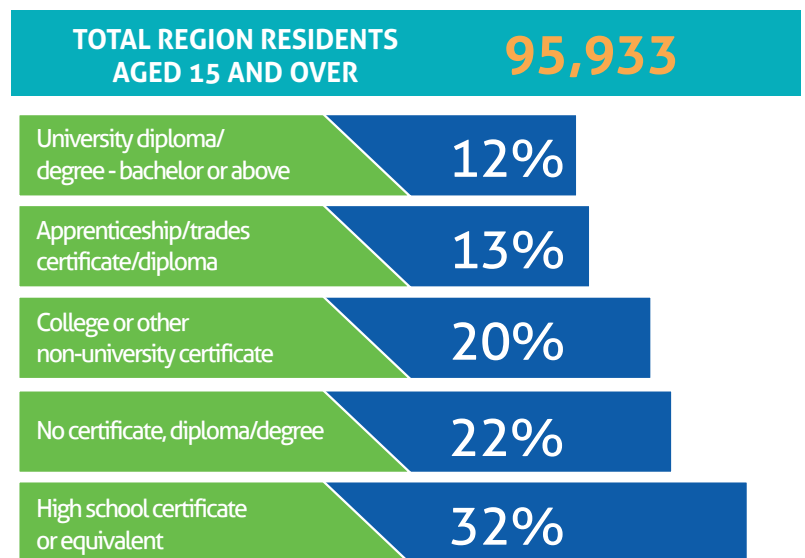


PERCENTILE INCREASE

The 2020 population estimate relies on a different source (Manifold Data Mining) than the 2016 population estimate (Statistics Canada Census) and the numbers are therefore not directly comparable.

There is a projected **8%** increase in population from 2020 to 2025, and **7%** increase from 2025 to 2030.

Highest Educational Attainment for Region Residents, aged 15 and over, 2020



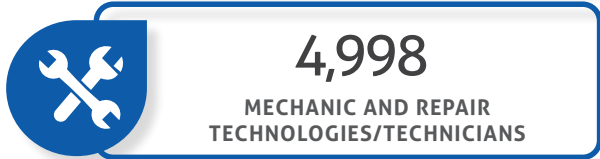
RELATIVE GRADUATES

Of those **12%** with a university degree, **76.4%** hold a bachelor's degree as their highest level of educational attainment, **13.0%** hold a Ph. D, **4.8%** have a degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry, and **3.5%** have a master's degree.





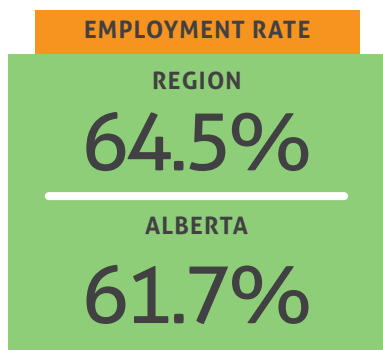
Top 5 Fields of Study for Region Residents, aged 15 and over, 2020



Labour Force Status for Region Residents, 2020

Labour Force Status	Region
Total Population, Residents aged 15 and over	95,933
In the labour force	70,682
Employed	61,956
Unemployed	8,726
Not in the labour force	25,251

Average Labour Force Participation Rates, 2020



ABOUT THE SECTOR

The health care and life sciences sector is comprised of businesses engaged in providing health care to residents through diagnosis and treatment, residential care for medical and social reasons, or social assistance to those requiring such support. This cluster also includes establishments that manufacture pharmaceuticals, medicine and medical supplies.

REGION SPECIFIC

The ambulatory health care service subsector is projected to have the largest employment growth in Alberta over the next five years (2021 to 2026). In the Region, many of the industries in this cluster have been growing in employment over the past five years, a trend that is projected to continue (see table on Pg. 5).

With the opening of the new Grande Prairie Regional Hospital, and increasing demand for health services caused by the pandemic, the Region is well-positioned to increase the supply of health care services and become a health services hub in northwestern Alberta.

The Region is home to 196 businesses in the health care and life sciences sector, with 77 (39.3%) being dental offices.

Health Care and Life Sciences Businesses, 2021

Industries	Businesses
Offices of dentists	77
Out-patient care centres	38
Individual and family services	31
Other ambulatory health care services	18
Residential developmental handicap, mental health and substance abuse facilities	14
Medical and diagnostic laboratories	5
Medical equipment and supplies manufacturing	4
General medical and surgical hospitals	4
Nursing care facilities	3
Specialty (except psychiatric and substance abuse) hospitals	2
Total	196

Source: McSweeney and Associates using data from EMSI Analyst - 2021.Q1

Health care and life sciences businesses in the Region employed 3,316 people in 2021, with most (1,525; 46.0%) of those positions being housed within the general medical and surgical hospitals subsector. The sector saw significant growth between 2019 and 2021, and is projected to continue to grow, rising an additional 196 positions (13%) between 2021 and 2028.

Health Care and Life Sciences Employed and Self-Employed Positions, 2019, 2021 and 2028

Subsector	2019 Positions	2021 Positions	2028 Positions	Change '21-'28	% Change
Medical equipment and supplies manufacturing	20	19	21	2	11%
Offices of dentists	403	382	430	48	13%
Out-patient care centres	164	38	37	-1	-3%
Medical and diagnostic laboratories	57	54	58	4	7%
Other ambulatory health care services	47	40	36	-4	-10%
General medical and surgical hospitals	980	1,526	1,722	196	13%
Specialty (except psychiatric and substance abuse) hospitals	178	205	233	28	14%
Nursing care facilities	285	360	399	39	11%
Residential developmental handicap, mental health and substance abuse facilities	157	148	158	10	7%
Individual and family services	526	546	650	104	19%
Total	2,818	3,316	3,745	429	13%

Source: McSweeney and Associates using data from EMSI Analyst - 2021.Q1

Note: Job totals per subsector may not add up to the total to number of positions within the broader sector due to methodological rounding.

Photo Credit: Rural Health Professions Action Plan (RhPAP)



Average wages for the Region's health care and life sciences sector are strong, with the average earner across the sector seeing wages of \$56,527 in 2021.

Health Care and Life Sciences Average Wages Per Subsector, 2021

Subsector	Average Wages
General medical and surgical hospitals	\$62,001
Specialty (except psychiatric and substance abuse) hospitals	\$59,689
Other ambulatory health care services	\$58,392
Individual and family services	\$55,450
Offices of dentists	\$52,352
Medical and diagnostic laboratories	\$48,210
Nursing care facilities	\$47,357
Out-patient care centres	\$43,611
Residential developmental handicap, mental health and substance abuse facilities	\$41,400
Medical equipment and supplies manufacturing	\$37,003
Average salary	\$56,527

Source: McSweeney and Associates using data from EMSI Analyst - 2021.Q1

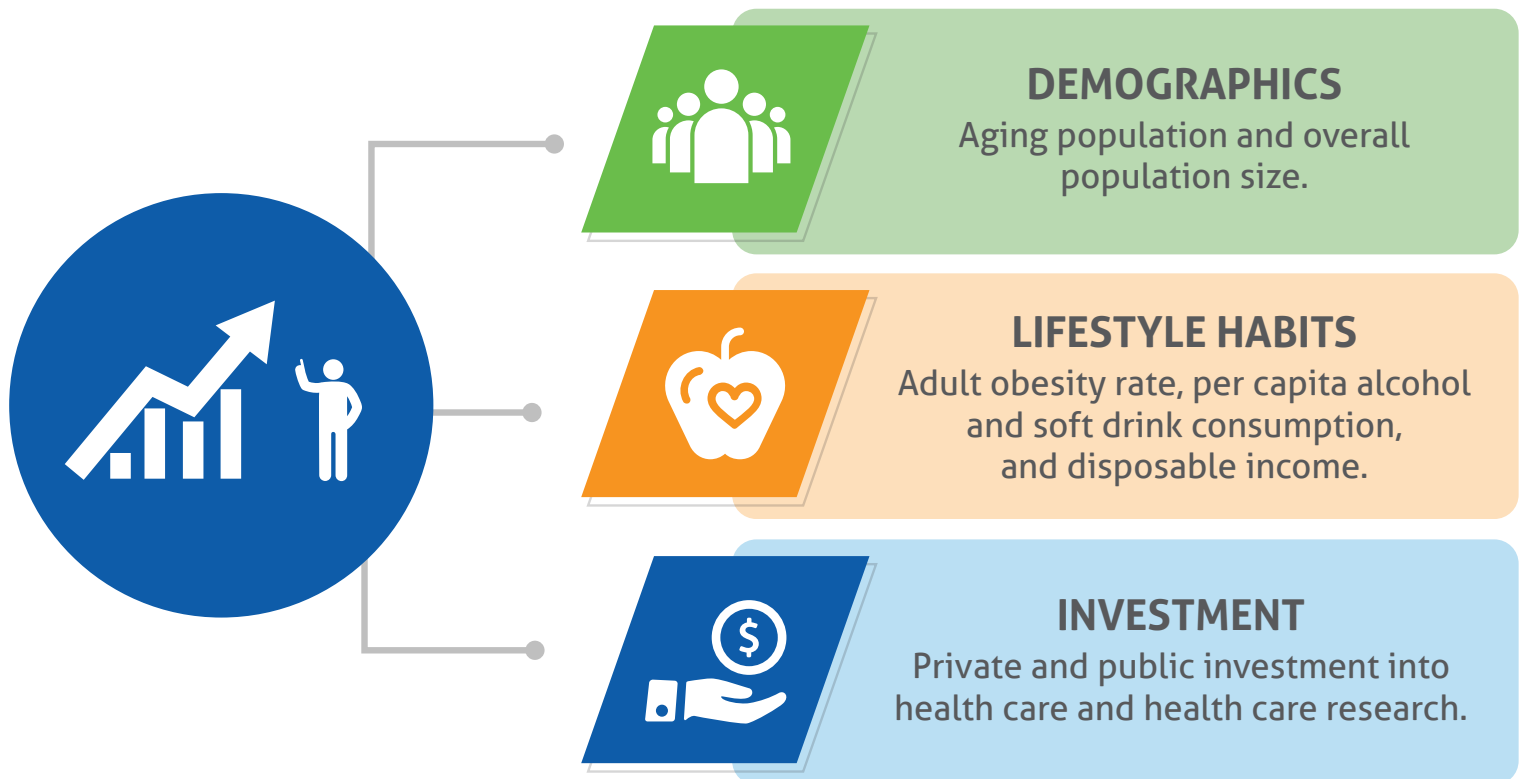
SECTOR DATA

FUTURE OUTLOOK OF THE SECTOR

The health care and life sciences sector saw significant declines in funding and revenue due to COVID-19, as a result of decreases in elective surgeries and in-office visits. However, the underlying industry data suggest this is a short term challenge and revenues will surge post-COVID-19. To that end, prior to COVID-19, national health care expenditures had consistently risen, up from \$47 billion in 1980 (adjusted to 1997 dollars) to \$162 billion in 2019 (1997 adjusted).

KEY DRIVERS OF DEMAND

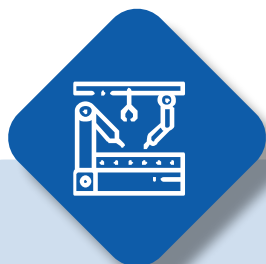
Factors determining national demand for the health care sector can be broken into three categories.



Source: IBISWorld 2021



KEY SUPPLIERS TO THE HEALTH CARE AND LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR



Wholesalers and manufacturers of medical supplies, devices, pharmaceuticals or niche medical needs
(e.g., contact lenses)



Secondary and postsecondary schools

KEY BUYERS TO THE HEALTH CARE AND LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR



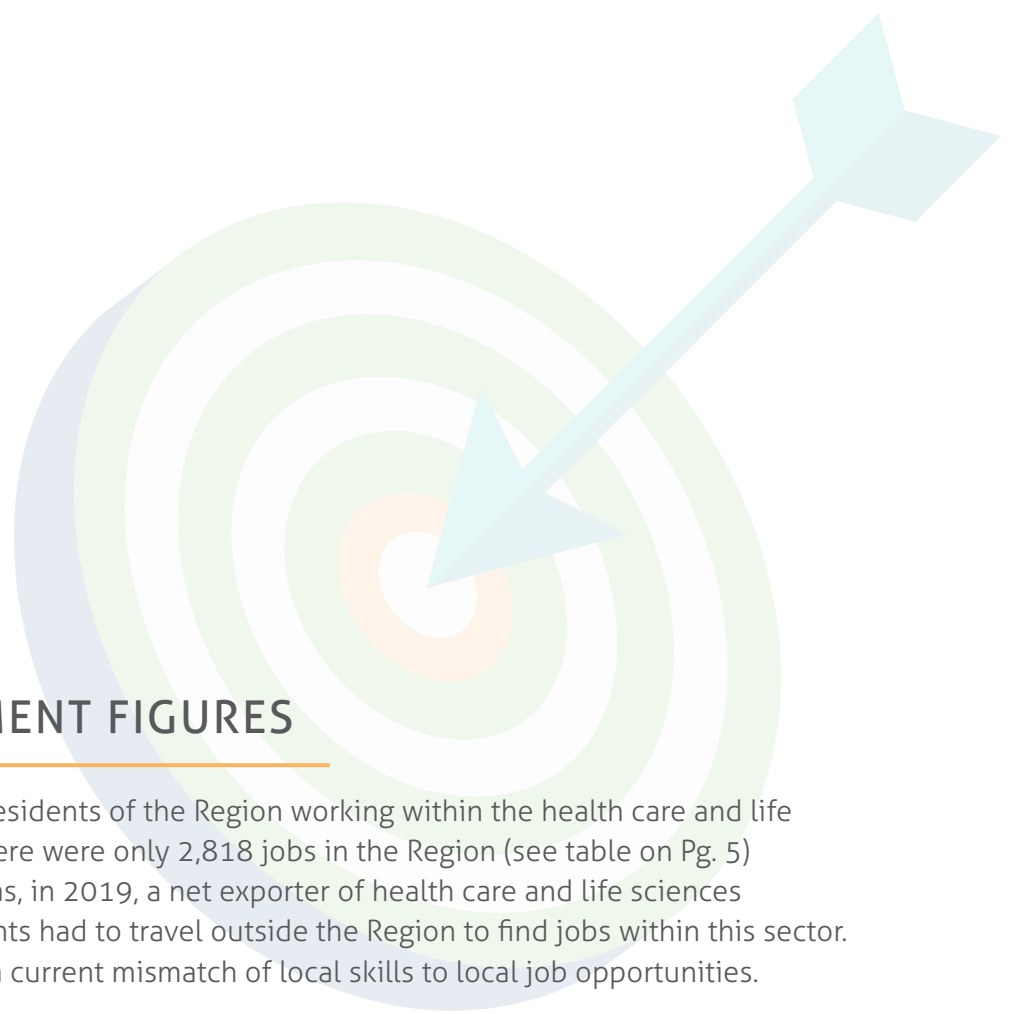
Other internal health care services
(e.g., primary care doctors referring patients to specialists)



Health and medical insurers



Canadian consumers



TOTAL EMPLOYMENT FIGURES

In 2019 there were 3,415 residents of the Region working within the health care and life sciences sector. Notably, there were only 2,818 jobs in the Region (see table on Pg. 5) meaning that the Region was, in 2019, a net exporter of health care and life sciences employees, as many residents had to travel outside the Region to find jobs within this sector. As such, this may speak to a current mismatch of local skills to local job opportunities.

Employment Totals within Health Care and Life Sciences, Region Residents 2019

Industries	Workforce
Hospitals	1,639
Nursing and residential care facilities	621
Individual and family services	452
Offices of dentists	356
Out-patient care centres	111
Medical and diagnostic laboratories	99
Other ambulatory health care services	86
Pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing	49
Medical equipment and supplies manufacturing	2
Total	3,415

Source: Manifold 2020 SuperDemographics
Photo Credit: NWP

RELEVANT LEVELS OF EDUCATION⁺

Region residents are well suited to pursue jobs within the health care and life sciences sector. Over 7,500 residents, in 2019, had a degree within a major field of study directly related to this sector, with the majority of those being in health professions and related programs.

Fields of Study Within the Health Care and Life Sciences Sector for Region Residents

Field of Study	Total Residents
Health professions and related programs	6,016
Psychology	438
Biological and biomedical sciences	407
Biological and physical sciences	217
Physical sciences	195
Science technologies/technicians	149
Dental, medical and veterinary residency programs	113
Other interdisciplinary physical and life sciences	12
Total residents with degrees in health-related fields of study	7,547

Source: Manifold 2020 SuperDemographics

PERCENTAGE OF OVERALL LABOUR FORCE AND LOCATION QUOTIENT

Location quotient is a calculation that assesses which industries are more likely to be represented locally, compared to benchmark areas. A location quotient above 1.00 suggests that industry is more heavily concentrated as a percentage of the total jobs available locally, while a location quotient below 1.00 suggests it is less heavily concentrated.

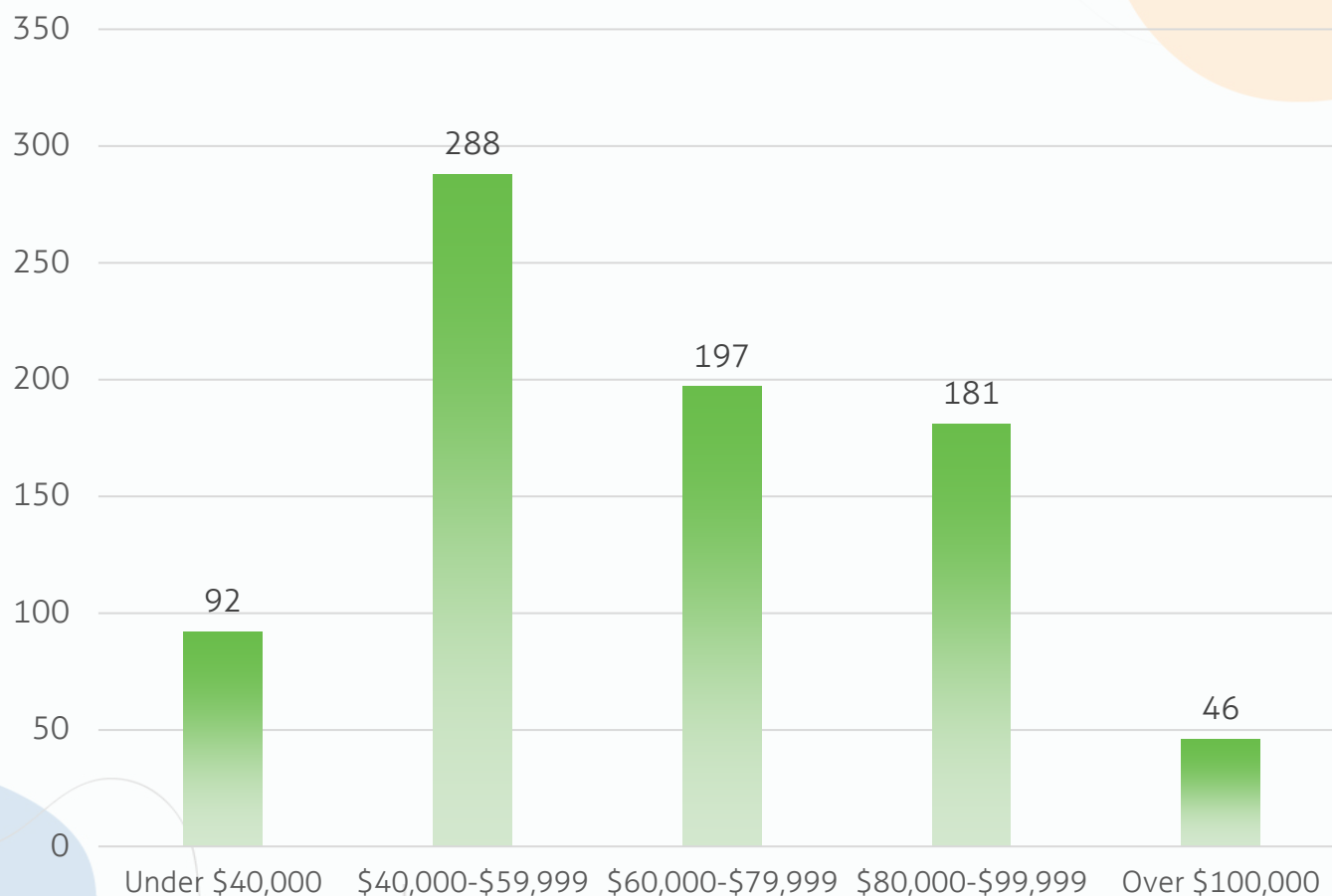
In 2019, the health care and life sciences sector had a location quotient of 0.70 relative to Alberta, meaning that jobs within this sector made up a slightly smaller percentage of the local workforce than they did at the provincial level. Specifically, jobs in this sector represented 4.3% of the Region's total jobs, compared to 6.1% of provincial jobs. Given that this sector has been identified as one of the fastest growing local industries, it is likely to see an increase in local representation over the next decade.

JOB POSTING DATA

Between March 2019 and March 2020, the Region saw 1,316 unique job postings within the health care and life sciences sector. Of the jobs posted during this period, 804 had advertised salaries. Those 804 postings had a median advertised salary of \$62,848, with 28.2% offering a salary above \$80,000.

The median posting duration (i.e., how long each job was posted before being taken down) for job postings in this sector was 23 days, compared to the regional average of 31 days for all job postings.

Job Postings by Salary, March 2019-March 2020, Region



Source: EMSI Analyst



**MEDIAN SECTOR
JOB POSTING
DURATION**

23 days

**REGIONAL
AVERAGE
FOR ALL JOB POSTINGS**

31 days

COMMUNITY ASSETS SUPPORTING THE SECTOR/CLUSTER

Northwestern Polytechnic (NWP) offers a variety of educational options and has developed local partnerships to provide programming that rapidly and effectively meets the needs of their learners and the broader community.

nwpolytech.ca

Grande Prairie Regional Innovation Network (GPRIN) helps innovators, entrepreneurs and companies move their ideas forward by offering access to a variety of services and professionals throughout the Alberta innovation ecosystem.

gprin.ca

Community Futures Grande Prairie and Region offers businesses support from first steps through to growth stages. This includes information on how to start a business, developing business plans, financing loans, marketing and feasibility studies.

grandeprairie.albertacf.com

ATB Entrepreneur Centre supports businesses through business-to-business networking, connections and workshops.

atbentrepreneurcentre.com

For information on other Community and Training Assets, please contact the project partners.



CONSULTATION RESPONSES



Employers rated **communication** and **literacy** as the two strongest skills among the Region's workforce.



30% of businesses saw a growth in employment in the last two years, including during COVID-19.

Note: Based on a 2020 survey of over 700 regional stakeholders.

REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

In December 2021, the new **Grande Prairie Regional Hospital (GPRH)** opened. The 64,000 square metre facility is designed to be the health care hub for northwestern Alberta. The Grande Prairie Regional Hospital will increase access to health care services for residents of northern communities that previously may have had to travel extensive distances to receive certain treatments.

The new 243-bed GPRH hosts 11 operating rooms (ORs), including a dedicated obstetrics OR in the maternity unit. The hospital's state-of-the-art cancer centre includes two new radiation vaults, becoming the fifth Alberta hospital to offer radiation therapy, allowing for individuals to be treated locally rather than having to travel to Edmonton. Other services include psychiatric and mental health spaces; diagnostic imaging, including MRI; and laboratory. The building also includes a 4,000 square metre education facility, in partnership with Northwestern Polytechnic, for the training of nurses and other health care professionals.

With the well-being of residents in the Region a priority, health and wellness services also extend beyond the major centre of Grande Prairie. Hospitals and health facilities located in communities across the Region offer services and care to residents close to home.

Photo Credit: Matthew Dettling



TRAINING ASSETS AND INSTITUTIONS THAT SUPPORT THE SECTOR/CLUSTER

CONSULTATION RESPONSES



The Region's workforce is invested in skills development, with 85% of survey respondents indicating they would like to gain new skills or re-train.

- Health related skills were the second most highly sought skills to train. This includes training in physiotherapy, psychology, lab technology, mental health/counselling, occupational therapy and ALS treatment.



The top three reasons residents would look to remain at a job were:

1. A supportive manager
2. Fair pay
3. Career growth, and learning and development opportunities

Note: Based on a 2020 survey of over 700 regional stakeholders.

TRAINING ASSETS SPECIFIC TO REGION

NORTHWESTERN POLYTECHNIC

NWP has a wide array of health care sector-related degrees, diplomas or certificate programs. Students can develop skills and knowledge in various healthcare pathways including the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) program in collaboration with University of Alberta, Practical Nurse Diploma program, Kinesiology Diploma program, Health Care Aide Certificate program, and Business Administration diploma programs. NWP also offers Collaborative University transfer programs in Sciences, Arts (Psychology and Social Work), and Kinesiology.

nwpolytech.ca



Health

(Health Care Aide Certificate, Kinesiology Diploma, and Business Administration Diplomas)



Nursing

(BScN and PN)



University Transfer

(Sciences, Arts, and Kinesiology)

TRAINING ASSETS SPECIFIC TO REGION CONT.

CAREERS: The Next Generation is a non-profit organization that works with schools to connect high school students to employers for paid internships. Youth get the opportunity to test drive in-demand occupations in skilled trades, forestry, information and communications technology, agriculture and healthcare. Companies benefit by attracting local talent and bringing youthful energy to their industry. There are also financial incentives to help employers provide opportunities during tough economic times.

careersnextgen.ca

The Rupertsland Institute supports the well-being of Métis in Alberta through job matching, training partnerships with NWP, access to technology and internet, online counselling tools, information on local services, employers and careers, and self-employment workshops.

rupertsland.org

Western Cree Tribal Council

The **Indigenous Skills Employment and Training (ISET) Program** is designed to help Indigenous people improve their skills and find employment through training and skills development. The program helps the community members find employment and polish employment skills. Funded through Service Canada, it gives members the skills required to find employment and fill job gaps.

westerncree.ca

Northern Lakes College (NLC) provides a supported distance learning environment with two locations in the Region. NLC health programs include Health Care Aide, Paramedic, and Practical Nurse.

northernlakescollege.ca

For information on other Community and Training Assets, please contact the project partners.



Alberta Labour and Immigration

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Northwestern Polytechnic

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10726 - 106 Avenue
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