



CarriElles Santé: supporting francophone IEHPs

Kim Lehrer et Julie Rodier, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC)

Siham Chakrouni, Société économique de l'Ontario (SÉO)

Why this program?

- Critical health workforce shortages in Canada
 - Job vacancies in health sector nearly doubled: 40,340 (2019) → 91,930 (2023).
 - Declining numbers of nurses, pharmacists, and medical lab technologists despite growing demand.
- Untapped potential of Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHPs)
 - Over 259,000 IEHPs live in Canada; 70% are women.
 - Many are underemployed or working outside their trained profession due to licensing and language barriers.
- Francophone minority communities face challenges
 - Limited access to health services in French outside Quebec.
 - Language discordance negatively impacts care quality and patient safety.

The complex pathways to licensure

Example: dentist in ontario

Step	
Registration	1a) Enroll in an accredited qualification program 1b) Register and complete the equivalency process with the National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB) •Notarized photocopy of an identity document •Canadian citizenship or proof of permanent residency •Information provided by the university •Information from current and previous regulatory bodies •Documents must be in English or French, or translated by a certified translator •Pass the following three exams: • Assessment of Fundamental Knowledge (AFK) • Assessment of Clinical Judgment (ACJ) • NDECC (National Dental Examination Clinical Component)
Examination and Certification	2) Complete the NDEB certification process If the candidate passes the equivalency exams, they can proceed to certification. To be certified, they must submit an identity document and pass the virtual OSCE exam.
Registration with Regulatory Body – College	3) Register with the RCDSO (Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario) Documents must be in English or French, or translated by a certified translator Provide documents and one identity document Proof of professional liability insurance Information from current and previous regulatory bodies Criminal record check Complete the jurisprudence and ethics course Pay application fees
Specialization (Optional)	4) (Optional) The candidate may specialize by taking the National Dental Specialty Examination

Unique barriers for francophone health professionals

■ **Mandatory English proficiency**

- Most licensing exams and regulatory processes require English, even for francophone professionals. Limited availability of preparation materials in French (e.g., NCLEX-RN French version has low success rates).

■ **Scarcity of French-Specific bridging programs**

- Few bridging programs tailored for francophone internationally educated health professionals.
- Existing programs often offered only in English, adding extra complexity.

■ **Cultural and Linguistic Adaptation**

- Need to learn Canadian medical jargon in both English and French.
- Regional accents and vocabulary differences create additional challenges.

How was the program developed?

- Built on previous SRDC research
 - Originates from our work on Career Pathways for Racialized Newcomer Women (CPRNW), a national initiative funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada. CPRNW tested 12 interventions across 4 service delivery models to improve employment outcomes for racialized newcomer women.
- Evidence-based approach
 - SRDC's research highlighted the effectiveness of women-only programming, individualized support, and employer engagement.
- Collaboration with SÉO
 - CarriElles Santé adapts lessons learned from CPRNW to focus on Francophone and bilingual newcomer women in health professions.

CarriElles Santé: Main objective



To provide individualized employment support to assist and strengthen the capacities and goals of:

Internationally Educated Health Professionals (IEHPs) in Canada

Provincial partners: Ontario



British Columbia



Supported Career profiles (health sector)

- Nurses
- Physicians
- Dentists
- Medical laboratory technologists
- Midwives
- Paramedics
- Social workers
- Pharmacists
- Other regulated professions



CarriElles Santé: Eligibility criteria

Internationally Educated Health Professional/
Resident of ON, Francophone and bilingual women

- Canadian citizens
- Permanent residents
- Convention refugees
- Temporary residents with valid open work permit



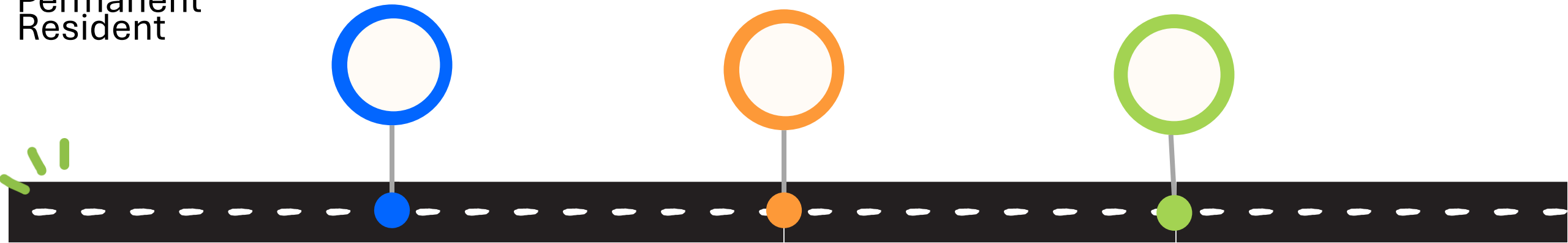
CarriElles Santé: Personalized Support for Health Professionals

- Pilot project
- Not a cohort-based program
- Year round recruitment
- Two provinces involved (ON & BC)



Practical Walkthrough of a Candidate's Path

Internationally
Educated Nurse
Permanent
Resident



April 2025

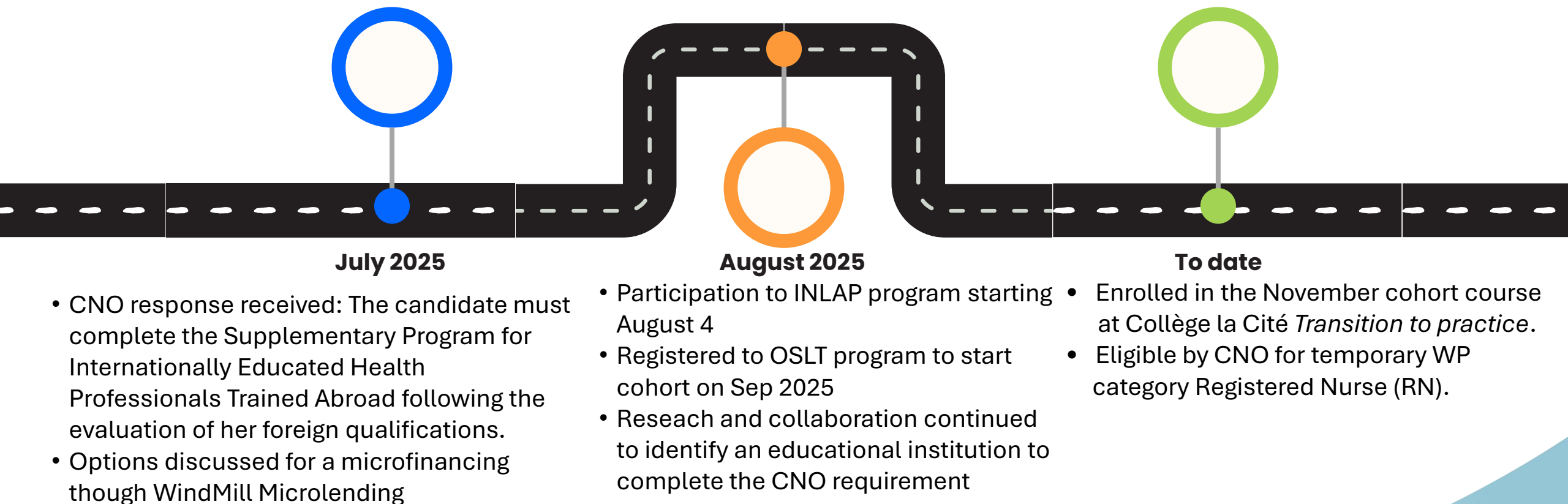
- Candidate IEN joined CarriElles Santé et completed her first 1-on-1 with her employment consultant.
- Discussion on career plans and FCRP status,
- Ressources shared (**Pegasus Institute, INLAP, OSLT, etc**)

May 2025

Through our partnership with Hospice Care Ottawa, the candidate began a six-month volunteer placement in the reception department

June 2025

- NNAS report received
- CNO account created
- Registered INLAP cohort for August 2025 ([International Nurses Licensure Assistance Pathway](#))
- Claim for reimbursement of expenses submitted to CNO



Examples of success stories: Dentist

IEHP candidate from Ottawa,
internationally trained
dentist.



She completed the dental training program,
also traveled to North Bay for the practical
portion.



She has now completed
the training and earned
the **Level 1 Dental
Assistant** designation.



She discovered the Dental
Support Worker program
at Dental Training Canada
during a CarriElles Santé
networking event.

She obtained the **HARP certification** (Healing
Arts Radiation Protection), which is required
to work with dental radiography in Canada.



We are continuing to
support the
candidate to secure a
placement in a dental
clinic.

Examples of success stories: Doctor

Internationally trained physician living in Richmond Hill (ON).



We referred the candidate to our partner PEGASUS Institute for an observership position in Caledonia (ON), which will provide significant clinical experience to the candidate.

 After discussing with the candidate, she registered for the Occupation Specific Language Training (OLST) for health sciences at Collège Boréal for the Fall 2025 cohort.

✓ Nov 2025: She relocated temporarily to Caledonia in order to complete the observership in a private walk-in medical clinic.

✓ In the meantime, she is preparing for the MCCQ1 exam scheduled for February 2026.

How is this program evidence-informed?

- **Designed** based on best practices
- **Market research** to:
 - understand the current situation (FCR process, barriers, successes, existing programs)
 - inform the program's immediate and intermediate outcomes and structural and individual factors influencing the program's success
- **Evaluation** to assess the design, implementation, and outcomes of the *CarriElles Santé* project.

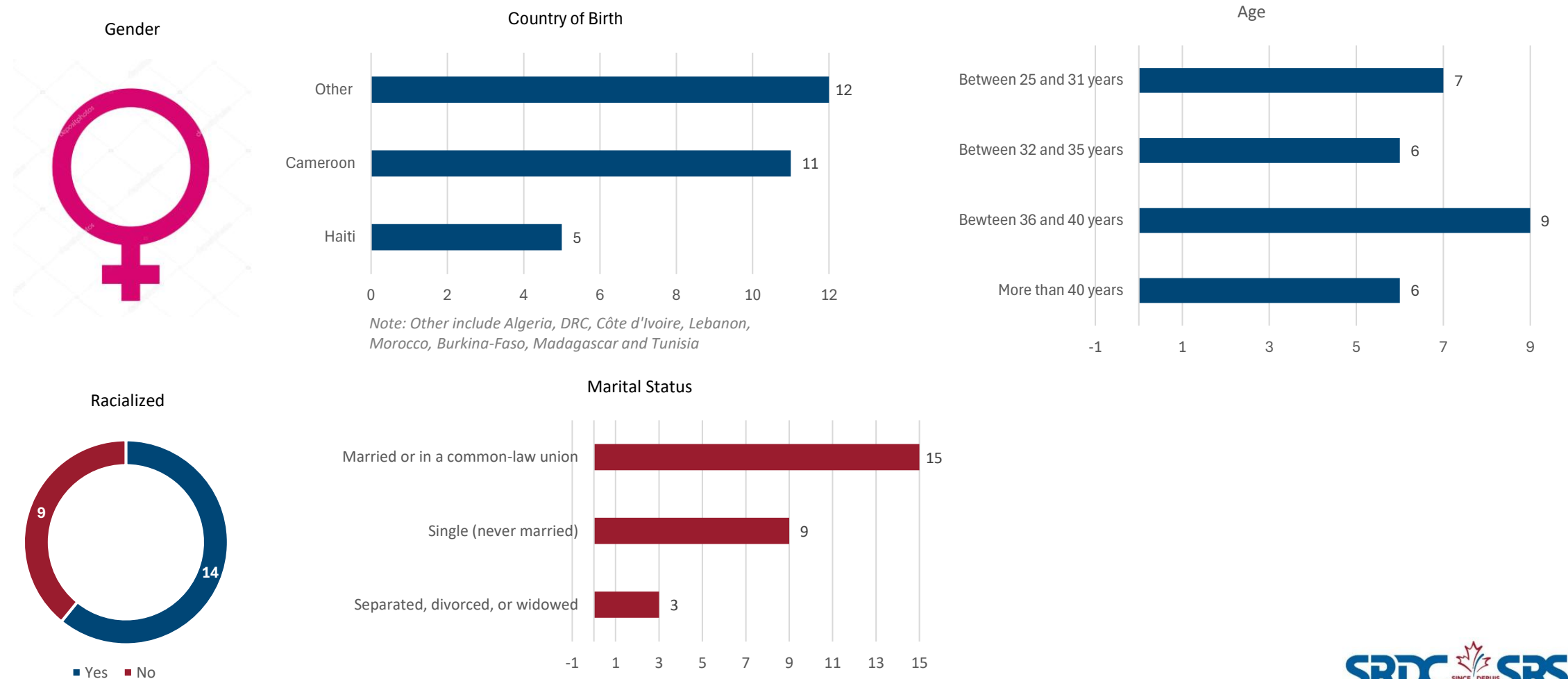
What is the evaluation focused on?

- Implementation
- Outcomes for participants
 - Pre-post surveys
- Lessons learned

Who are CarriElles Santé participants?

Demographic characteristics

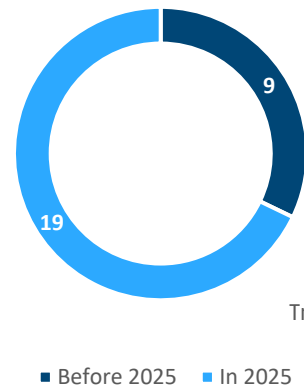
- Based on data collected up to and including November 18, 2025



Who are CarriElles Santé participants?

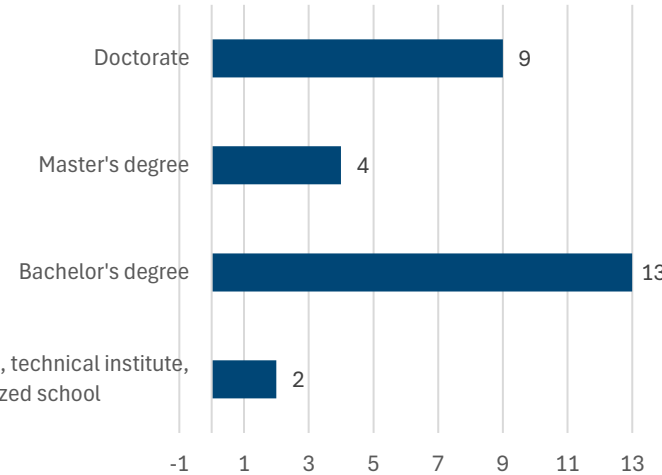
Background Snapshot

Year of Arrival in Canada

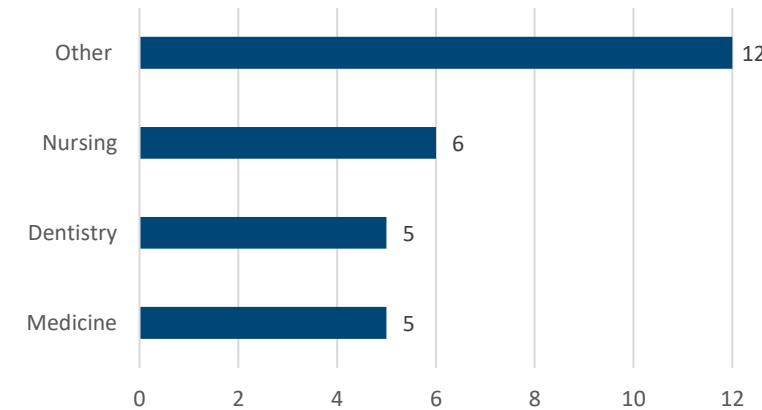


Training at a college, technical institute, or specialized school

Education

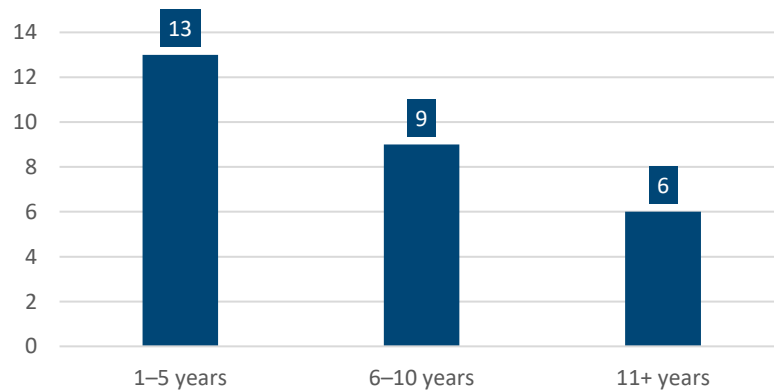


Profession

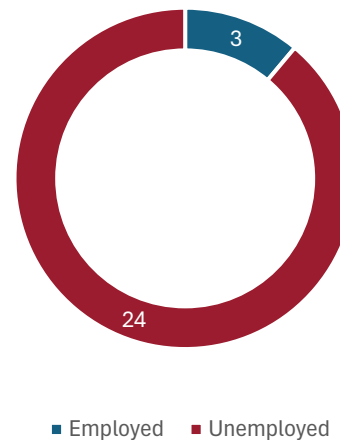


Note: Other include Pharmacy, Medical Laboratory Technology, Midwifery, Nutrition, Personal care/social services worker, Psychology, Radio diagnostics, Medical Radiation Technologist, Medical Imaging Technician.

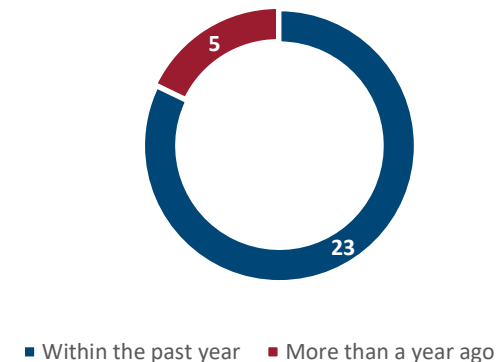
Professional Experience (Outside Canada)



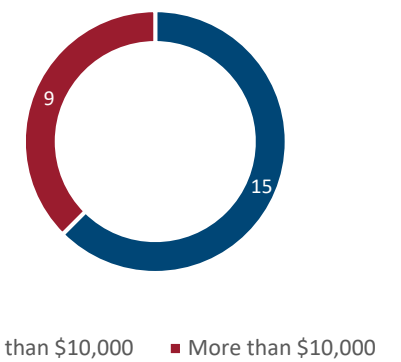
Employment Situation



Last Time Worked in Field

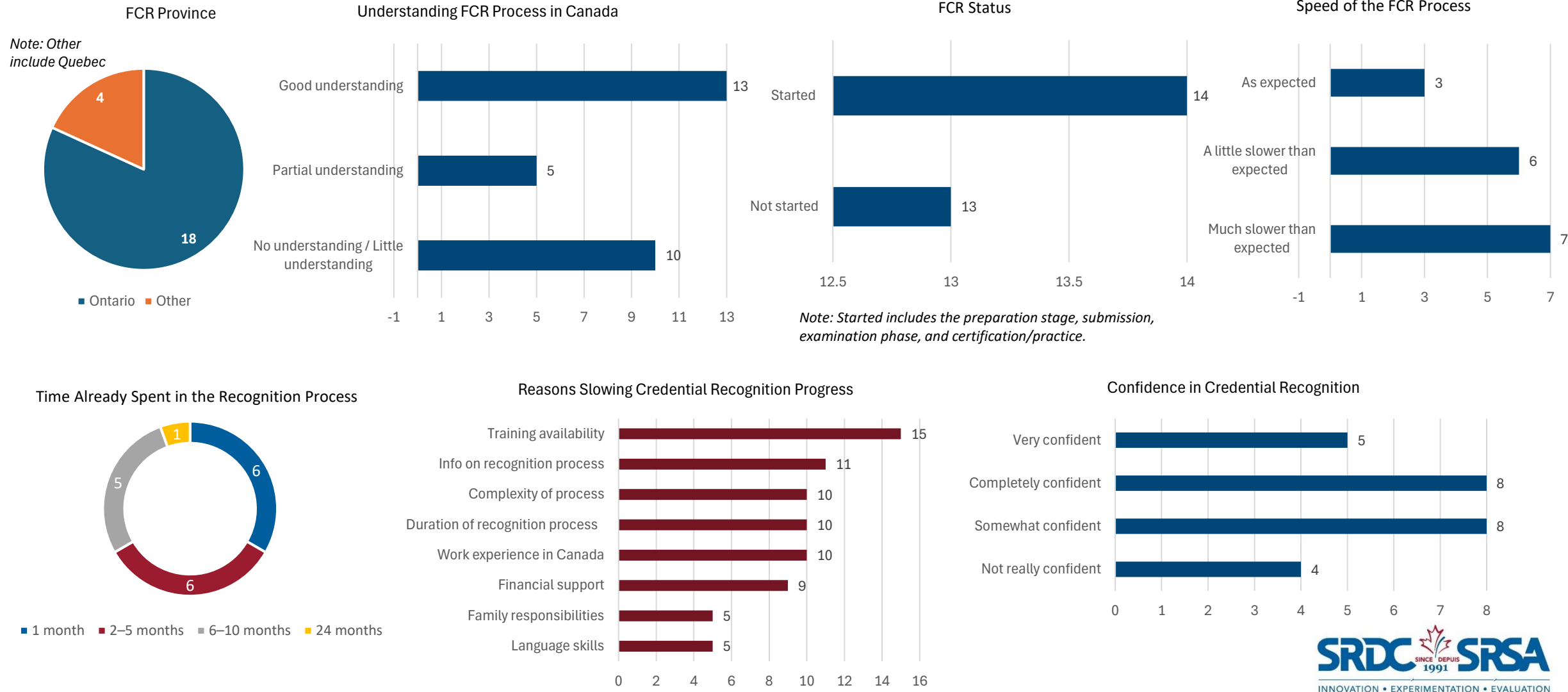


Income



Who are CarriElles Santé participants?

The Credentialing Process



More to come

- Follow-up survey 9 months after intake
- Interviews and focus groups with participants
- Interviews with staff



Designing and Evaluating Employment Pathways in Canada – Health Careers (EPIC-HC)

Designing EPIC-HC

- Understanding the context
- Who are potential clients?
 - What are their needs?
- What has been tried before?
 - What has worked well?
 - What challenges remain?
- Targeted literature review and environmental scan to understand the current landscape (FCR processes, barriers, successes, existing programming):
 - To inform the program's theory of change:
 - Immediate and intermediate outcomes for participants and employers.
 - Structural, individual, and employer-related factors influencing the success of the program.
 - To inform the evaluation questions.

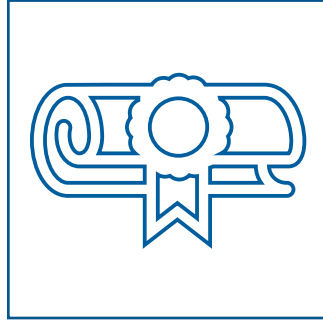
The Context

- Significant changes and major staffing shortages in the Canadian health sector, heightened by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Although the supply of health professionals in Canada is growing...
 - More nurses are leaving the health sector than are joining
 - Decline in the average annual growth rate of pharmacists between 2018 and 2022
- Need for internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs) to strengthen the workforce
- ... However, many IEHPs are not employed in the profession for which they were trained
 - Only 34% of internationally educated nurses (IENs) who studied nursing are employed as registered nurses (RNs) or registered practical nurses (RPNs)
 - Only 46% of international pharmacy graduates (IPGs) were employed as pharmacists in Canada

Profile of IEHPs in Canada

- In 2021, an estimated 259,695 IEHPs aged 18 to 64 resided in Canada:
 - 44.8% in Ontario, 17.4% in British Columbia, and 16.1% in Alberta
 - Most IEHPs are women
 - Nearly one-third migrated to Canada between 2016 and 2021
 - Majority have completed their education in Asia
- Division of occupations amongst IEHPs:
 - Nurses (33%), physicians (15.2%), pharmacy (8.3%), and other health fields (35.7%)
- Comparing Canadian educated health professionals (CEHPs) to IEHPs:
 - 68% of IEHPs versus 97% of CEHPs working in the health sector
 - 63% of IEHPs versus 86% of CEHPs working as pharmacists

Facilitators to Workforce Integration



Professional experience, opportunities to improve skills, and a positive work environment

- IENs with 3–5 years' experience pass the licensure exam more often than those with under 3 years
- IENs who have extensive experience and clinical expertise
- Good relationships with co-workers & support from managers



Support from family & friends

- Receiving help with finding a job or preparing for the English-language proficiency exam
- More recently arrived IEHPs more likely to receive help
- More likely to pass the licensure exam on first attempt

CHALLENGES TO WORKFORCE INTEGRATION

Barriers obtaining
credential
recognition and
licensing

Challenges of
proving English-
language
proficiency

Downward
occupational
mobility and
unemployment

Lack of
recognition

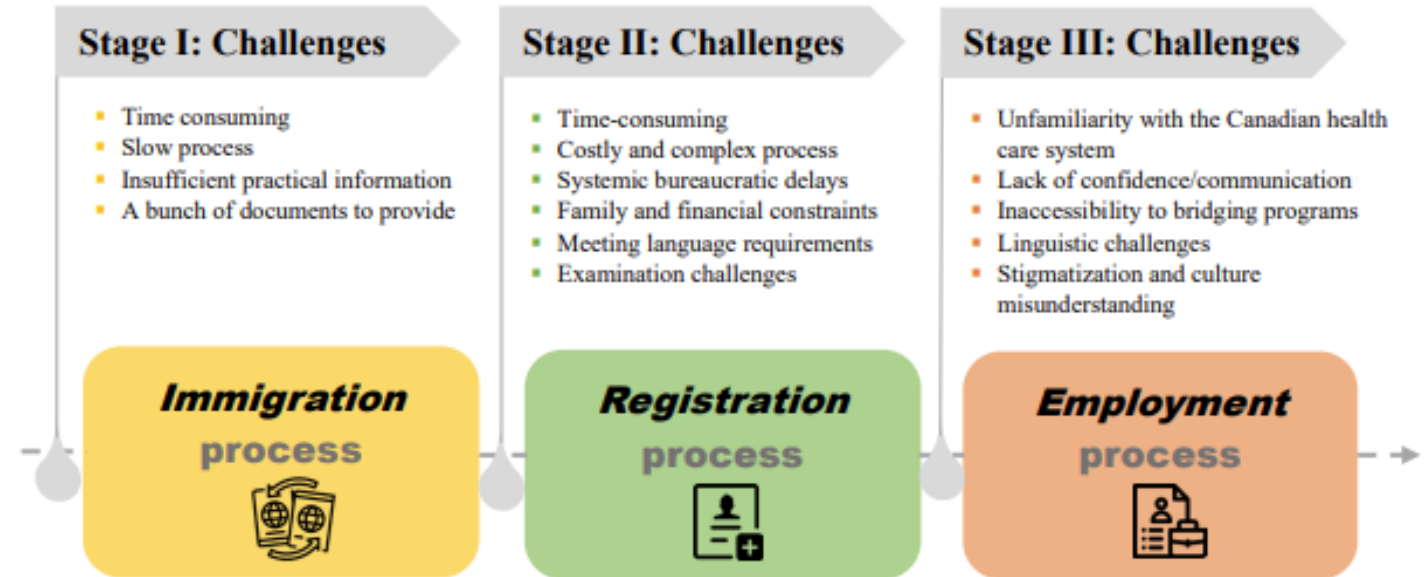
Need for
educational
upgrading

Racism and
discrimination

Unfamiliarity with
Canadian health
profession culture

CHALLENGES IN THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

- Information gaps and misinformation
- Financial barriers
- Immigration status and provincial registration requirements



INITIATIVES AND EXISTING PROGRAMS



Internationally Educated
Nurses: An Employer's Guide

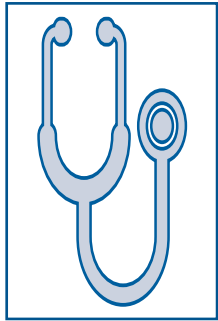


Pilot project designed to
match IENs them with
healthcare employers



Assessing bridging programs
re-designed to meet the
unique needs of IENs

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUPPORTING THE INTEGRATION OF IEHPS IN THE WORKFORCE



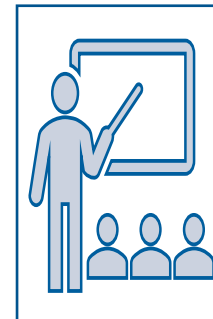
Flexible and tailored programs for employed IEHPs



Centralized registration and licensing processes for IEHPs



Job search supports



Skills development opportunities



Social and professional networks

Nursing: Training, Wages, and Job Prospects

	Nurse Assistant	Licensed Practical Nurse Registered Practical Nurse (ON)	Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse	Nurse Practitioner
NOC code	NOC 33102	NOC 32101	NOC 31301	NOC 31302
Training requirements	✓ Some secondary school education and on-the-job training, or ✓ A personal support worker, nursing aide or health care aide college or private institutional program, or ✓ A college nursing orderly program and supervised practical training	✓ Completion of a vocational, college or other approved program for licensed practical nurses, and ✓ Completion of a registration examination, and ✓ Registration with a regulatory body in all provinces and territories – regulatory bodies are specific to each province or territory	✓ Completion of a college, university or other approved registered nursing program, and ✓ Additional academic training or experience to specialize in a specific area of nursing, and ✓ Registration with a regulatory body in all provinces and territories – regulatory bodies are specific to each province or territory ✓ <i>A master's or doctoral degree in nursing is usually required for clinical nurse specialists, clinical nurses, nursing consultants and nursing researchers</i>	✓ Completion of a master's degree in nursing, or ✓ Completion of a nursing program with additional advanced or extended primary health care nursing education, and ✓ Several years of practice as a registered nurse, and ✓ Registration with a regulatory body in all provinces and territories - regulatory bodies are specific to each province or territory
Training duration after High School	6-8 months	2-3 years	3-4 years	6+ years, not including years of practice as a registered nurse
Median wage (/hour)	\$17.35 (NL) - \$35 (NT) Canada: \$22	\$26 (NB) - \$43.71 (NT) Canada: \$29	\$38.05 (ON) - \$64.69 (NU) Canada: \$40.39	\$46 (QC) - \$57.69 (NS) Canada: \$54
Registration with a regulatory body	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

	Nurse Assistant	Licensed Practical Nurse Registered Practical Nurse (ON)	Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse	Nurse Practitioner
Number employed (2021)	347,400	71,600	327,000	42,000
Median age of workers (2021)	42	40	40	44
Expected labour shortage in 2022-2031?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Related job titles with the same NOC code	<u>Common alternative job titles:</u> Patient support worker Patient service associate Nurse aide Orderly <u>Other alternative job titles:</u> Health care aide Hospital attendant Long term care aide Nursing attendant Patient care aide Personal care attendant - medical Psychiatric aide Resident care aide - medical	Graduate nursing assistant Licensed practical nurse (LPN) Operating room technician Registered nursing assistant (RNA) Registered practical nurse (RPN)	Clinical nurse Community health nurse Critical care nurse Emergency care nurse Intensive care nurse Nurse researcher Nursing consultant Occupational health nurse Private duty nurse Public health nurse Registered nurse (RN) Registered psychiatric nurse (RPN)	Advanced practice nurse Extended class registered nurse

PHARMACY: REGISTRATION PATHWAY FOR IEHPS IN SELECTED PROVINCES

	Alberta		Ontario	
	Alberta College of Pharmacy		Ontario College of Pharmacists	
	Pharmacy Technician	Pharmacist	Pharmacy Technician	Pharmacist
Costs	English proficiency test: ~\$300 Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) exam: \$825 Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) bridging program: \$495 Registration with Alberta College of Pharmacy (ACP): \$678.30 Annual registration: \$600.60 Ethics & Jurisprudence exam: free for first attempt, \$189 after If taken > 3 years - re-take MCQ exam: \$825 Observed Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE): \$1,855 Professional liability insurance: ~\$150 Total: \$4,904 - \$5,918* *All official documents must be notarized - expect additional fees	Pharmacist Gateway Canada: \$380 English proficiency test: ~\$300 MCQ exam: \$825 OSCE exam: \$1,855 University of Alberta bridging program: \$13,600 Registration with ACP: \$678.30 Annual registration (pro-rated/ 6 months): \$1,017.45 Ethics & Jurisprudence exam: free for first attempt, \$189 after If taken > 3 years - re-take MCQ exam: \$825 If taken > 3 years - re-take OSCE exam: \$1,855 Professional liability insurance: ~\$200 Total (US Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE)-accredited program graduate, no exams to re-take): \$4,956* Total (Internationally educated health professional (IEHP) from another country, passed MCQ and OSCE on 1st attempt, no exams to retake): \$5,256* Total (IEHP from another country, failed MCQ/OSCE, needs to re-take exams): \$21,725* *All official documents must be notarized - expect additional fees	<i>Estimated fees paid to Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP) are \$691 plus the annual fee (\$657.26).</i> <i>Estimated fees paid to third parties are \$6,675 plus the annual liability insurance premium (~\$150).</i> Total: \$8,173	MCQ and OSCE passed on first attempt: <i>Estimated fees paid to the College are \$364 plus the annual fee (\$985.87).</i> <i>Estimated fees paid to third parties are \$5,116 plus the annual liability insurance premium (~\$200). The estimated fees paid to third parties may be higher if the panel decides courses are required.</i> Total: \$6,666 MCQ and OSCE not passed on first attempt: <i>Estimated fees paid to the College are \$364 plus the annual fee (\$985.87).</i> <i>Estimated fees paid to third parties are \$19,296 plus the annual liability insurance premium (~\$200). The estimated fees paid to third parties may be higher if the panel decides courses are required.</i> Total: \$20,846
Funding and other supports available?	-	Scholarships and loans are available to support the costs of the bridging program Funding Options <u>Bursaries and Scholarships</u> ▪ Alberta Pharmacists' Association (RxA) New Horizons Scholarship (\$1,000 scholarship) ▪ Maria Eriksen Memorial Bursary (\$2,000 bursary) ▪ Ann Falk Memorial Education Fund (\$750 bursary) <u>Loans</u> The Certificate to Canadian Pharmacy Practice (CCPP) program does not qualify for Alberta Student Aid. However, other private loan options are available: ▪ Servus-Bredin Microloans for Newcomer Professionals (loans of up to \$15,000) ▪ Windmill Microlending for skilled immigrants and refugees (loans of up to \$15,000)	-	-

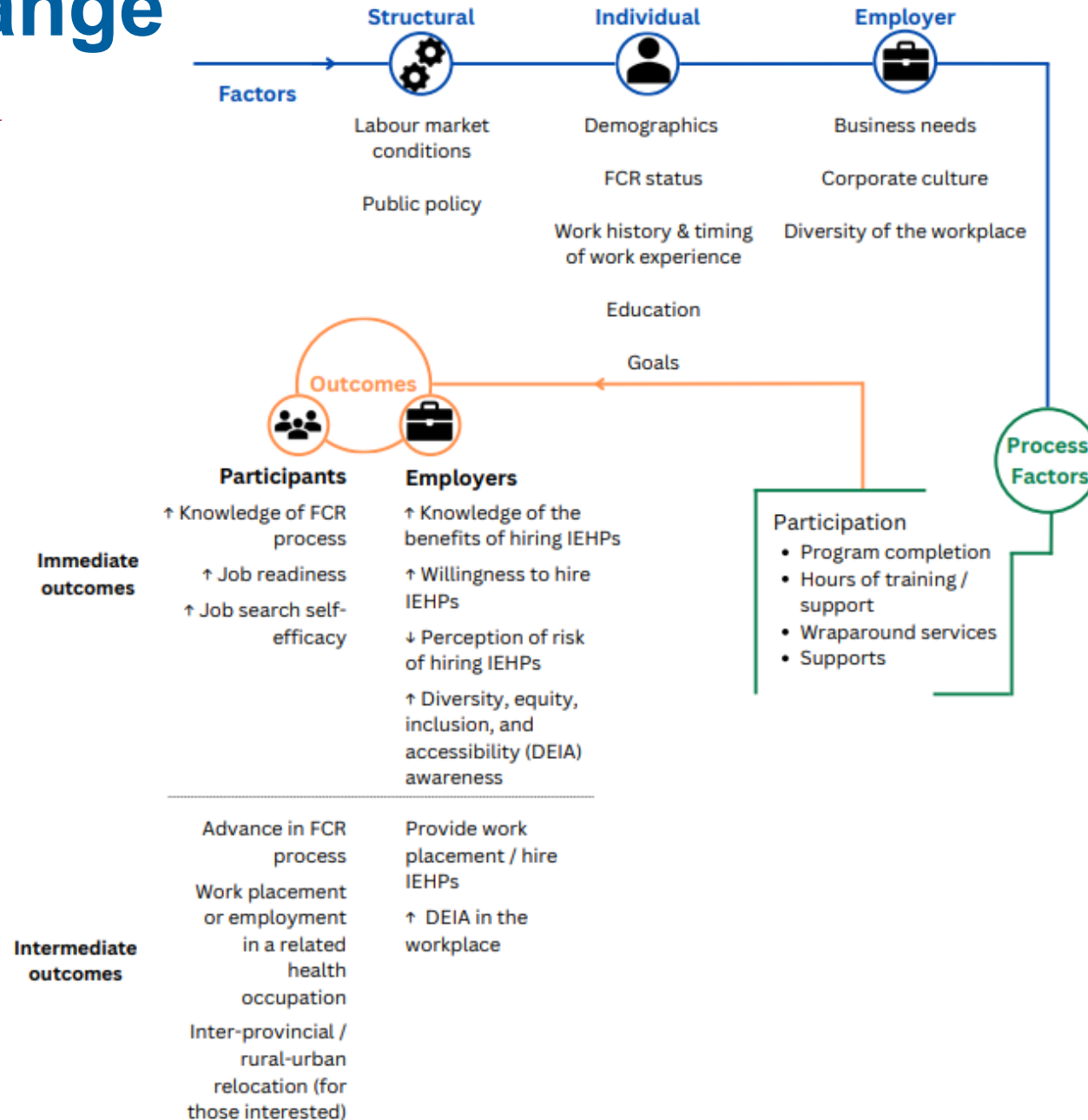
	Alberta		Ontario	
	Alberta College of Pharmacy		Ontario College of Pharmacists	
	Pharmacy Technician	Pharmacist	Pharmacy Technician	Pharmacist
Possibility to work with a temporary registration while completing full registration?	Yes - Part of the regular process	Yes - Part of the regular process	Yes - Part of the regular process (Structured Practical Training (SPT) requirements)	IEHP may register as an intern if: Their student status expires while they are waiting to meet any other pharmacist registration requirements (e.g., Qualifying Exam) and they wish to continue practising in the scope of the profession, or They would like to practise in the scope of the profession while registered as an intern
Alternative ways or relaxed requirements to demonstrate credentials based on current registration jurisdiction	-	Applicants from the US who completed a Doctor of Pharmacy program accredited by the ACPE are exempted from: language proficiency test; CCPP bridging program	-	-
Citizenship requirements for registration	-	-	Canadian citizens, permanent residents of Canada, temporary foreign workers with a valid work permit, and refugees with a valid work permit are eligible	Canadian citizens, permanent residents of Canada, temporary foreign workers with a valid work permit, and refugees with a valid work permit are eligible

	Alberta		Ontario	
	Alberta College of Pharmacy		Ontario College of Pharmacists	
	Pharmacy Technician	Pharmacist	Pharmacy Technician	Pharmacist
Registration steps	1) Meet English requirements 2) Complete the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC) Qualifying Exam Part 1 (MCQ) 3) Complete the bridging program NAIT IPHE101 – Orientation to Canadian Healthcare 4) Gather official documents Diploma, language proficiency results, successful completion of MCQ exam, successful completion of bridging program, identification form, two pieces of government ID, statutory declaration, background record check, evidence of name change (if needed). 5) Submit application to ACP 6) ACP reviews application: decision 7) Provide payment 8) Access temporary permit to practice Provisional pharmacy technician Valid two years 9) Complete Jurisprudence Learning Module 10) Complete Ethics & Jurisprudence exam 11) Complete ACP's SPT program Minimum of 800 hours supervised practicum 12) Successfully complete the Pharmacy Examining Board of Canada (PEBC) Qualifying Exams 13) Obtain professional liability insurance 14) Apply for full registration	1) Enroll in National Association of Pharmacy Regulatory Authorities (NAPRA) Pharmacists' Gateway Canada 2) Meet English language requirements 3) Complete one of the following to be eligible for the <u>provisional</u> pharmacist register: a. PEBC Part I (MCQ) and II (OSCE), <u>or</u> b. University of Alberta's Certificate to CCPP program All requirements must be met for full registration. <u>06-01-24: If successfully complete MCQ and OSCE on first attempt: do not need to do the CCPP program.</u> 4) Gather official documents Exams (MCQ, OSCE, CCPP), identification form, two pieces of government ID, statutory declaration, Enhanced Police Information Check, evidence of name change (if needed). 5) Submit application to ACP 6) ACP reviews application: decision 7) Provide payment 8) Access temporary permit to practice 9) Complete Jurisprudence Learning Module 10) Complete Ethics & Jurisprudence exam 11) Complete ACP's SPT program Minimum of 1,000 hours supervised practicum 12) Successfully complete the PEBC Qualifying Exams 13) Obtain professional liability insurance 14) Apply for full registration	1) Complete PEBC Pharmacy Technician International Evaluation Education, credentials, and evaluating exam 2) Complete bridging programs a. University of Toronto: Canadian Health Care System, Culture and Context for Internationally Educated Healthcare Professionals course, <u>and</u> b. College Technology Services (CTS) Canadian Career College: Internationally Educated Pharmacy Technician Bridging Program <i>Alternatively, complete a Canadian Council for Accreditation of Pharmacy Programs (CCAPP)-accredited Canadian pharmacy technician program (i.e., re-train in Canada).</i> 3) Pre-register with OCP - Online account, registration fee, official documents - Structured Practical Training: 35h/week x 12 weeks - Jurisprudence, ethics, and professionalism exam 4) PEBC Part I (MCQ) and II (OSCE) exams 5) Final application for Certificate of Registration as a Pharmacy Technician - Professional liability insurance - Police background check - Evidence of language proficiency - Application fees - Declaration of Good Character	1) Enroll in Pharmacists' Gateway Canada 2) Apply for PEBC document evaluation and successfully complete PEBC evaluating exam - OCP confirms results and creates OCP account (no fees) - Evidence of Identity and Citizenship or Status in Canada 3) Enroll in bridging program <i>Candidates who successfully completed the MCQ and OSCE on the first attempt do not need to enroll in the bridging program. They can register to OCP as a student and complete steps 4 and 6 below.</i> University of Toronto: International Pharmacy Graduate Program - Professional liability insurance - Police background record check - Evidence of language proficiency - Student application fee - Declaration of good character 4) Practice Assessment of Competence at Entry (PACE) - Demonstrate entry to practice competencies - Jurisprudence, Ethics and Professionalism Exam - Register as an intern (optional): requirements from step 3 need to be met and current. 5) PEBC Part I (MCQ) and II (OSCE) exams 6) Final application for Certificate of Registration as a Pharmacist Requirements from step 3 need to be met and current

EVALUATING EPIC-HC

- Theory of change
- Evaluation Design
 - To evaluate the design, implementation, and outcomes of EPIC-HC.
- Evaluation questions
 - Design and implementation
 - Participant outcomes: Immediate, intermediate, & longer term
 - Employer outcomes: Immediate, intermediate, & longer term
 - Value-for-money analysis
 - Overall analysis

Theory of Change

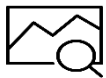


DATA COLLECTION

Background research

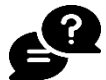


Literature review



Environmental scan

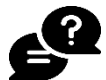
Other stakeholders



Interviews with BlueBranch



Interviews with EPIC-HC staff



Interviews with employers, if possible

Participant-level



Administrative data, collected by Achev



Baseline survey



Follow-up survey at 6 months



Follow-up survey at 12 months



Follow-up survey at 18 months



Focus groups with selected participants

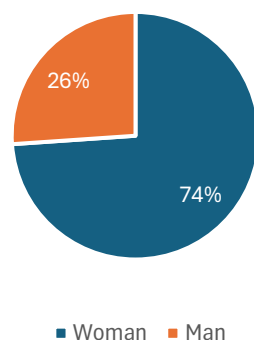


Journey mapping with selected participants, if possible

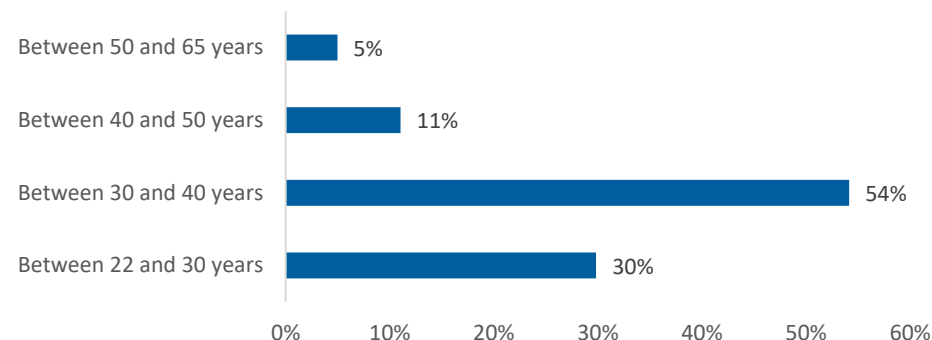
PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

- Based on data collected up to and including September 5, 2025.

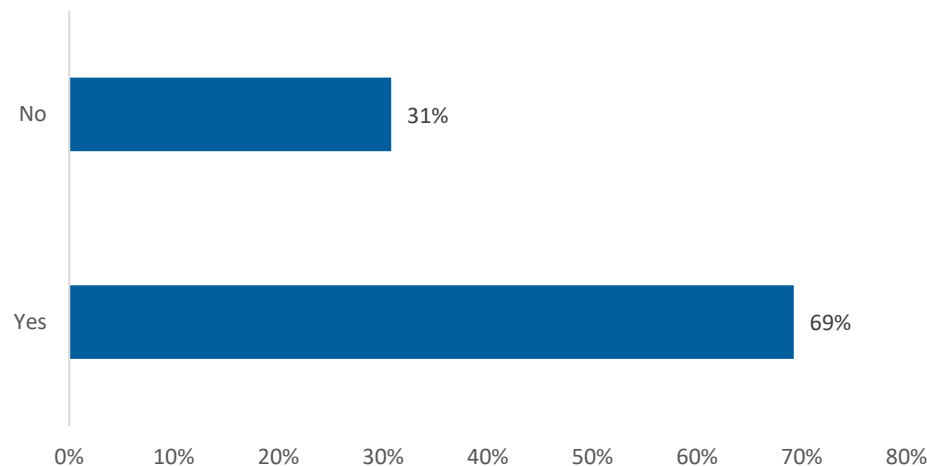
Gender



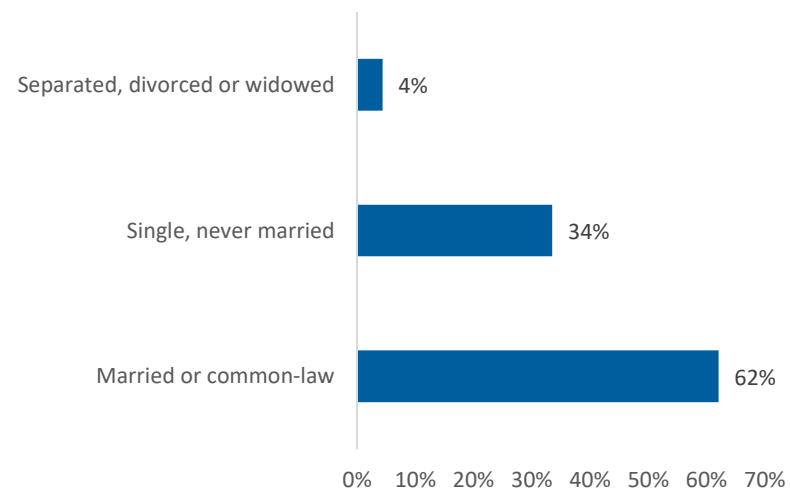
Age



Racialized

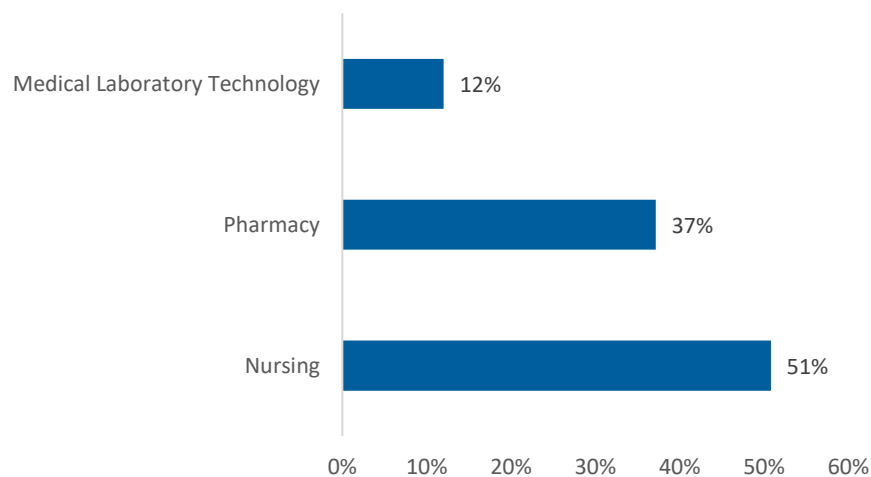


Marital status

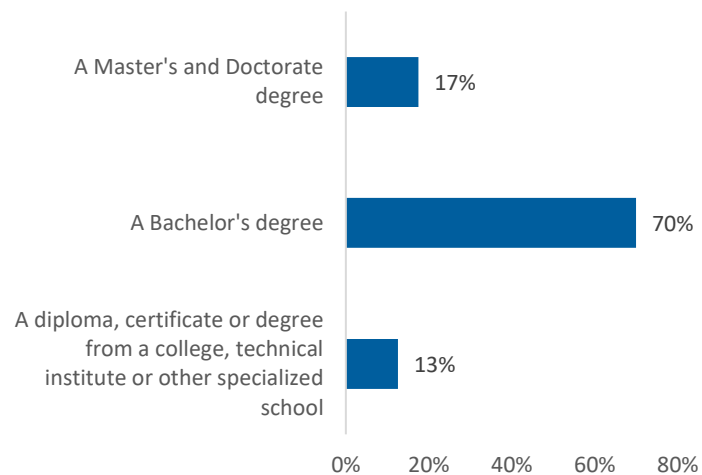


BACKGROUND SNAPSHOT

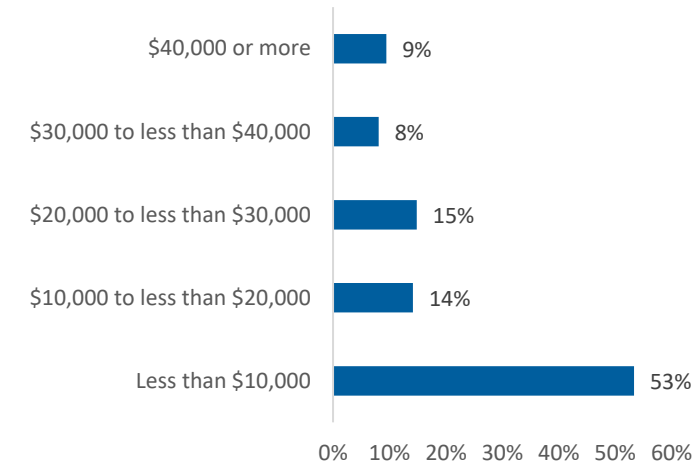
Profession



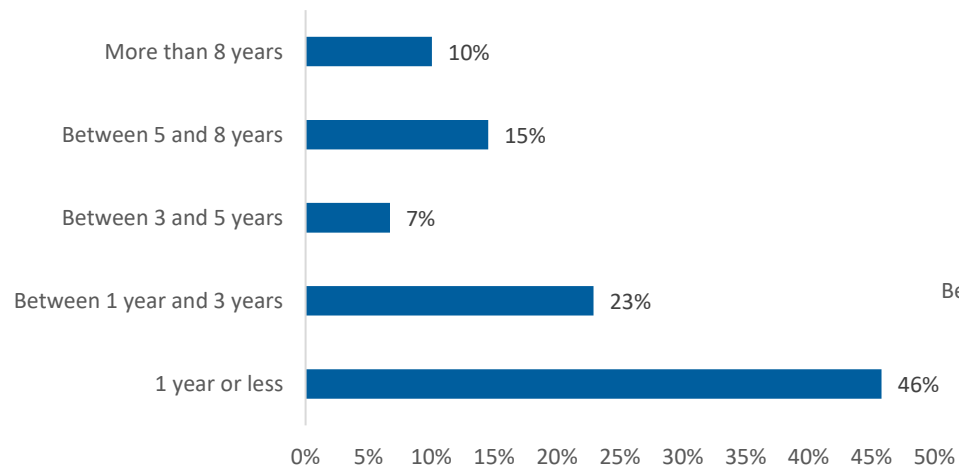
Highest level of education



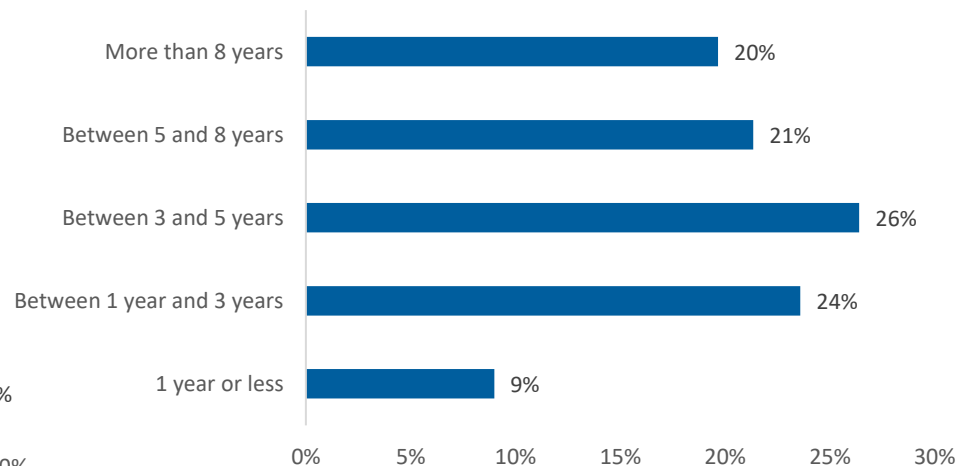
Income



Years in Canada

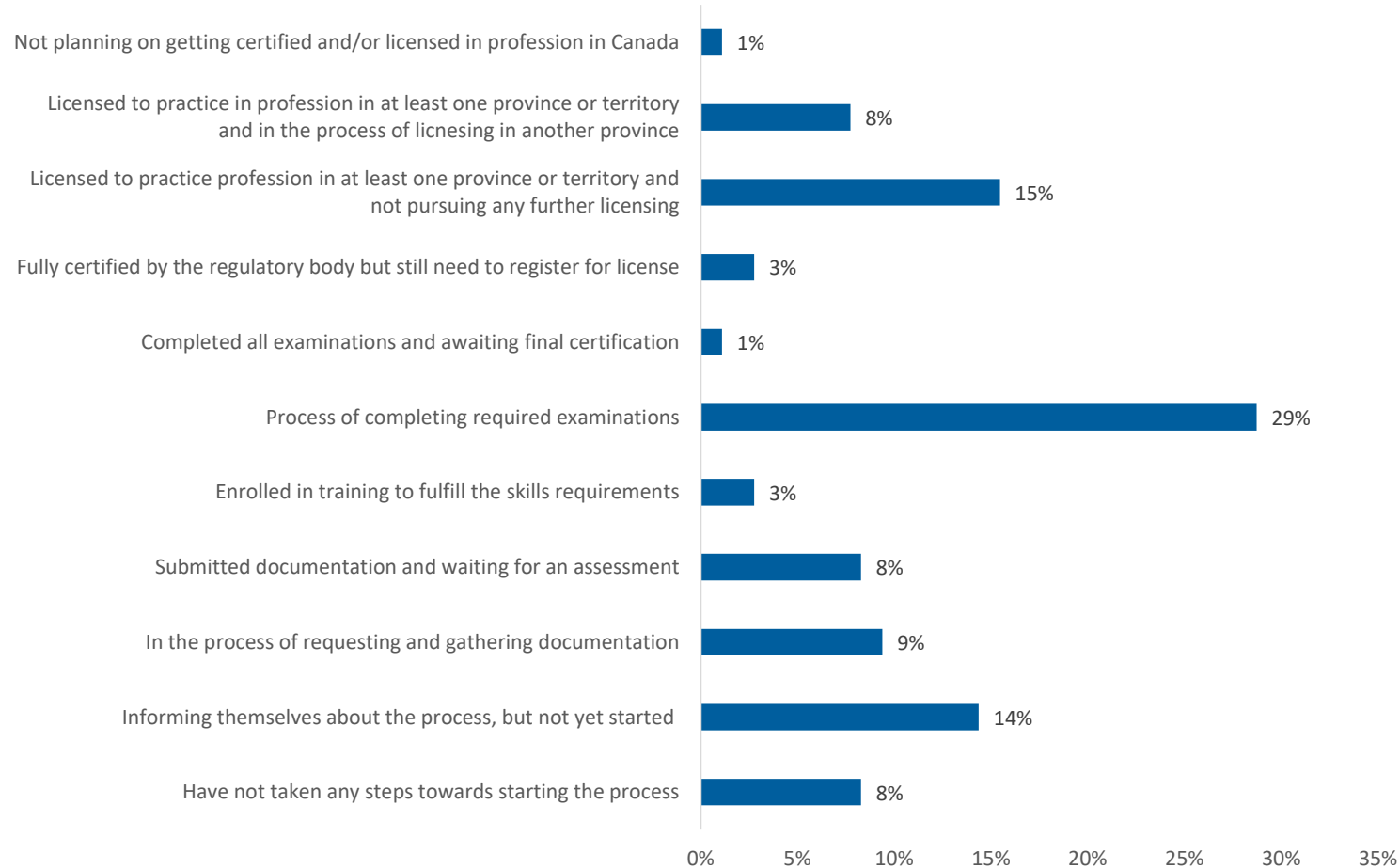


Years of experience



THE CREDENTIALING PROCESS

FCR Status



Province of FCR Process

