



Grand River District Health Council

Health System Planning and Rural Considerations

A Few of the Questions

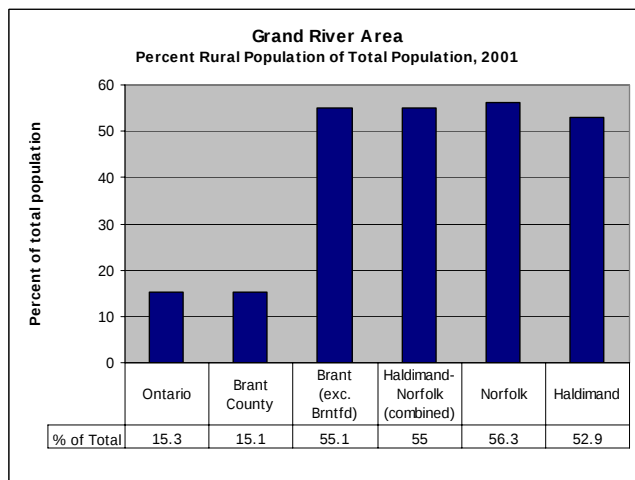
- Can you tell what portion of the Grand River DHC is rural?
- Do you know how many people live in your rural areas?
- Is this a rural issue – is it a health issue?
- We might be rural but what about our urban areas?

Rural policy analysts often start with the question, *"What is the size of the rural population?"* We suggest that an appropriate response is, *"The answer depends upon the issue you are addressing. Why are you asking?"* (Statistics Canada, 2001)



Key Definition (Statistics Canada)

Rural and small town: the population living in towns and municipalities outside the commuting zone of larger urban centres (i.e. outside the commuting zone of centres with population of 10,000 or more).



Source: Statistics Canada, 2001: Rural population – all population living in the rural fringes of census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations as well as in rural areas outside of these areas. More information available at <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/standard/popdwel/Table-UR-D.cfm?T=1&PR=35&SR=26&S=1&O=A>

A Snapshot of the Issues

- Health human resources.
- Rural – urban health disparities.
- Access to health services.
- Addressing diverse needs while challenged with economies of scale.
- Sustaining vibrant and healthy rural communities.

For more information: Definitions of Rural, Statistics Canada, 2001 – available at <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/21-006-XIE/21-006-XIE01003.pdf>

Suggestions in using statistical information when considering rural health issues:

1. What is your question?
2. Is your issue local, community, or regional in nature?
3. Do you understand enough about the issue and its dimensions, or do you need to find out more?
4. Consider the broader context – is rural relative to other considerations?
5. Use appropriate definitions and methods for the issue at hand.
6. Cross-reference definitions.
7. Select appropriate indicators.
8. Do you have access to appropriate data? If not, who does?



Rural Sensitive Socio-demographic Indicators*

Community Characteristic	Indicator (s)
Population Size and Sex	- Population count - Percent-male and female - Number-male and female
Population Growth	- Percent change - Percent source of change - natural/migration/immigration
Population Age	- Age groupings 0-15 years; 16-24 years; 25-64 years; 65-79 years; 80 years and over
Ethnic Background - Aboriginal	Percent aboriginal of total population
Education	Percent population 20 years and over with schooling beyond secondary certificate
Family	- Family structure - Percent lone parent families–female led - Number lone parent families–female led - Average family size
Dependents	- Senior age dependency ratio - Child dependency ratio
Income (LICO – low income cut-off)	- Median family income - Percent families below LICO - Number families below LICO - Percent unattached individuals below LICO - Number unattached individuals below LICO - Percent federal transfer payments of total income
Employment Rates	- Employment rate–25 years and over - Employment rate–males and female–25 years and over - Youth employment rate–15-24 years - Participation rate–25 years and over - Youth participation rate–15-24 years - Female youth participation rate–15-24 years
Leading Sectors of Employment	Percent employed–primary, secondary, tertiary industry
Place of Work of Employed (25-64 years)	- Percent working at home - Percent usual place of work–census sub-division (CSD) of residence/different CSD - Mode of transportation
Type of Employment	Percent of part-year and part-time employment
Housing	- Average value of dwelling - Percent privately owned homes - Percent homes in need of repair
Cost of living	- Percent of income spent on necessities - Average gross rent

*intended as a general guide only.

Other Community Characteristics to Consider

- History
- Industry and Business
- Services (health, emergency, social, community)
- Communications and Information Technology
- Special Populations
- Environment

According to Statistics Canada in 2001 the rural populations of the GRDHC planning area (excluding First Nations) were:
 Brant County - 17,836; Haldimand County – 23,153; and
 Norfolk County – 34,272.

More Information about Rural Health Issues ...

The Ontario Rural Council Rural Health Working Group
<http://www.torc.on.ca/torceng/memact/ruralhealth.htm>

Canadian Rural Information Service Health Directory
http://www.rural.gc.ca/cris/directories/health_e.phtml

Canadian Journal of Rural Medicine
http://www.cma.ca/index.cfm/ci_id/36550/la_id/1.htm

GRDHC Ambulatory and In-Home Rehabilitation Review (March 2004)
<http://www.grdhc.on.ca/reports.shtml>

Rural and Small Town Canada – Analysis Bulletin
<http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/21-006-XIE/free.htm>



Coming Soon!

Look for the **GRDHC rural web page** with more resources on our web site at www.grdhc.on.ca

Watch for the upcoming **Planners' Forum on Rural Issues** in the Fall – for more information contact emacintyre@grdhc.on.ca

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