

Alternative career opportunities available for internationally trained physicians living in Canada: an overview of the job profiles

Saif Sikdar^{1,3}, Nashit Chowdhury^{2,3}, Deidre Lake^{3,*}, Tanvir C. Turin^{2,*}

¹Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Infectious Disease, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary, AB, Canada

²Department of Family Medicine, Department of Community Health Sciences, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary, AB, Canada

³Alberta International Medical Graduate Association, Calgary, AB, Canada



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Background

- Internationally trained physicians (ITPs) or international medical graduates (IMGs) living in Canada are those who have received their academic and professional training outside of Canada. Current rules and regulations have made it extremely difficult for IMGs to get the license to practice in Canada as a physician regardless of their citizenship status and level of training.
- After going through a highly competitive process, approximately only 15% of Alberta IMG applicants obtain a residency position based on the number of seats allocated to IMGs via AIMGP (263 eligible candidates; 39 seats).
- This bottleneck situation and the time and cost of re-applying gradually increases frustration among IMGs. Our interest was to look at the employment situation of IMGs in Canada and what viable pathways existed for them if interested in pursuing an alternative career in health.

Objective

- Our research was conducted to identify the factors that IMGs took into consideration when exploring an alternative career and to identify suitable alternative career pathways available for IMGs within Canada in order to advise them accordingly.

Method

- To begin with, we conducted Canada-wide focus group to identify the preferences of IMGs while they searched for jobs as an alternative career.
- Keeping this in mind, we searched for job advertisements and systematically reviewed job descriptions and their qualifications (i.e. regulated versus non-regulated) in order to identify which jobs are of most interest to IMGs based on the key decision-making factors obtained via the focus groups we conducted.

Results

- In total, we have identified 1374 job titles that that could be suitable for IMGs
- Of these, there are around 2.32%, 21.25%, 57.57% and 18.92% job titles that fall into the entry, middle, and senior-level job titles.

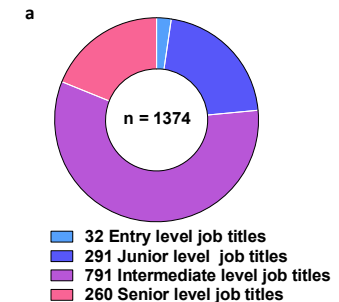


Figure 2: Job titles divided into job positions level.

Results

- In total, we have identified 192 unique job categories comprising of 47 NOC codes that could be suitable for IMGs seeking to begin an alternative career based on the short-, intermediate-, and long-term goals.
- These jobs primarily fall into two different categories: clinical (35.42%) and non-clinical (64.58%) jobs.
- Interestingly, we have found that around 7.35% of clinical and 29.84% of non-clinical job categories do not require any sort of license or approval from any regulatory bodies.
- Strikingly, there are approximately 17.71%, 51.04%, 29.17% and 2.08% unique categories that fall into the entry, middle, and senior-level job positions.

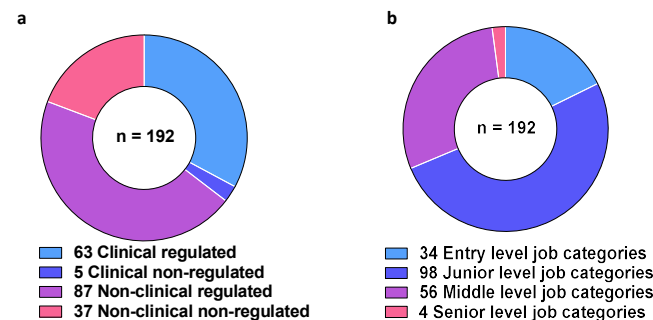


Figure 1: Job categories divided into (a) clinical and regulated; and (b) job positions level.

Conclusion

- Although more work in this area is needed to integrate IMGs with the job market, we expect that our findings and resources will help IMGs in deciding on alternative career pathways.

Acknowledgement

- This project was made possible by the support of the Mitacs Accelerate Internship program and Scotiabank



*Corresponding author:
Tanvir C. Turin (chowdhut@ucalgary.ca)
and Deidre Lake (deidre@aimga.ca)