



3.1.2 What Genetic Services Exist for Children and Families in Canada?

87*
Medical Geneticists¹



269
Genetic Counsellors²



* This number reflects the medical geneticists working at 16 of the 17 academic paediatric health centres in Canada. Medical geneticists working at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine or in non-academic paediatric health centres were not included in this count.

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¹ Pediatric Chairs of Canada (PCC), Academic Workforce Survey, 2012; and

² Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors, Membership directory. Oakville, Canada, 2013.

Genetic services are organized through genetic clinics across the country that employ interprofessional teams of healthcare providers. Two important providers on this team are medical geneticists and genetic counsellors. There are approximately 87 medical geneticists in Canada; most practice in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec, but they are found in other provinces as well. The majority are in academic centres, but they provide outreach to smaller cities, as well as rural and remote areas.

In Canada, the Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors certifies genetic counsellors. There were approximately 269 certified genetic counsellors in Canada in 2009.

Alongside these genetic services, there are a number of community-based organizations in Canada that focus on providing support and education to families with a genetic disorder. [The Canadian Directory of Genetic Support Groups](#) lists 78 Canadian organizations offering such support. The umbrella organization, [Canadian Organization for Rare Disorders \(C.O.R.D.\)](#) provides overarching support and advocacy for many genetic disorders.

Of the genetics services available, laboratory services are a central component. All academic pediatric centres offer cytogenetic, molecular, and/or biochemical laboratory services; however, these vary from centre to centre.

