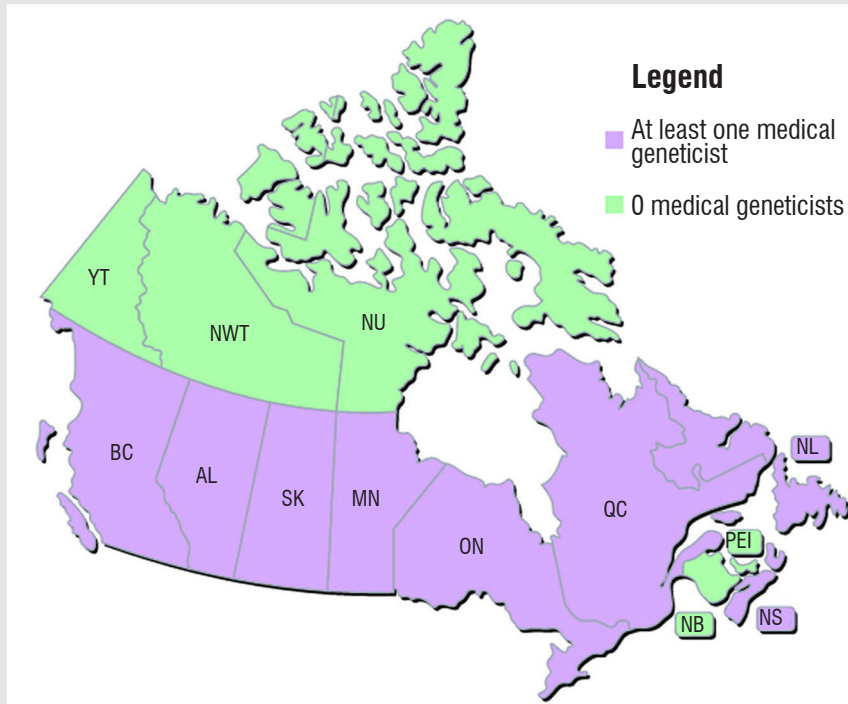




### 3.1.8 Access to Services - Medical Geneticists



Province/Territory	Number of geneticists at university health centres(1)	Geneticists at university health centres(1) /100,000 population (0–18 year olds)
AB	14	0.9
BC	6	0.71
MB	5	1.81
NB	-	-
NL	2	2.02
NT	-	-
NS	6	1.66
NU	-	-
ON	32	8.86
PEI	-	-
QC	21	1.28
SK	1	0.43
YT	-	-
TOTAL	87	1.19

Sources: Statistics Canada. CANSIM table 051-0005. Estimates of population, Canada, provinces and territories, quarterly, July 1, 2013. Ottawa: Statistics Canada; 2013. <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26?lang=eng&retrLang=eng&id=0510005&paSer=&pattern=&stByVal=1&p1=1&p2=31&tabMode=dataTable&csid=> and Pediatric Chairs of Canada (PCC), Academic Workforce Survey; 2012

Within 16 academic paediatric health centres across Canada there are 87 medical geneticists.<sup>1</sup> Access to these medical geneticists and the services they provide is not equitable across the country. For example, in Saskatchewan there is less than one medical geneticist per 200,000 children and youth up to 18 years old. Within Ontario, this number has reached close to nine medical geneticists per 100,000 residents. Thus, in Ontario the ratio of medical geneticists to 0–18 year olds is more than 20 times greater than that in Saskatchewan.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

#### Implications

Lack of access to genetic clinics and medical geneticists can result in waiting lists and wait times. Wait times vary tremendously across the country. In some instances waiting times can even be greater than a year.<sup>2</sup> Long waits such as these may delay the identification of genetic or other medical conditions as well as timely intervention. In many cases, this delay may lead to more negative outcomes of the condition and greater costs associated with its treatment. Additionally, the time and cost required to travel to health centres either far away within one's own province or territory or to a different province or territory adds additional challenges for many families, children, and youth to get the care they need. As time passes, families and children are left with many unanswered questions and concerns.

<sup>2</sup> Nova Scotia Wait Time Information; Genetic Consultation. <http://waittimes.novascotia.ca/procedure/genetic-consultation>.

