

**OPSEU HEALTH MEMBERS
SURVEY**

Report on Quantitative Research

*Prepared for Ontario Public Service
Employees Union*

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Viewpoints Research Ltd.
404-115 Bannatyne Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0R3
Ph: (204) 988-9253
Fax: (204) 947-9262

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▼ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On behalf of OPSEU, interviews were conducted with registered technologists, technicians and other professionals working in Ontario hospitals to explore their views on labour shortages and workload issues.
- More than two thirds of these professionals are employed full time, with the balance working as part time or casual employees.
- Professionals working part time and casual work the highest number of hours during summer when a majority work more than 40 hours during a normal two-week pay period. In the non-summer period they work somewhat fewer hours.
- Almost two thirds of OSEU members believe their hospital does not employ a sufficient number of people in their job classification. Increased workload with the same or fewer staff is the most significant indicator that there is not enough staff.
- Low salaries, not enough students being trained, full time work not being offered and hospitals not trying hard enough to fill vacancies are seen as the main reasons why vacant positions aren't being filled.
- Almost all of those professionals in hospitals that are not employing enough people have experienced an increase in workload over the past year. Most of these members are expected to work faster, deal with patients who require more care, are responsible for more patients and have to cover more often for absent co-workers.
- Half of OPSEU members working in hospitals do not usually work paid overtime. However, two thirds of all members are working unpaid overtime. Both paid and unpaid overtime has increased in the past year for about one quarter of members.
- More than half of respondents state that they usually or often skip breaks to keep up with their work, while 16% report usually or often skipping meals.
- More than one third of professionals are not replaced when they go on more than a week's vacation.
- Almost six out of ten professionals usually or often go to work when sick.
- More than one in five professionals are called into work on their day off once a month or more. Of the approximately 40% who work standby, almost one third are called in half the time or more.
- Professionals are split as to whether patients in their hospital are waiting longer than they were a year ago for the test results or care they provide.

- A higher proportion of professionals report that waiting times are longer than they were three years ago.
- More than three quarters of all professionals agree that overall staff shortages are now negatively affecting patient care, with more than a third stating that the care provided by their profession has declined in the past three years.
- One in five professionals are aware of at least one incident where one or more patients' condition has worsened because staff was unable to provide test results or care in a timely fashion.
- Two thirds of all professionals usually or often feel rushed during their work day because staff shortages mean they have too much to do. Most report this situation has worsened in the past three years.
- A majority of professionals find that their family and social life is negatively impacted by the stress in their jobs due to staff shortages. A majority of professionals who feel there has been a decline in patient care believe stress is having a negative impact on their personal lives. Almost one in four report feeling depressed and getting sick more often as a result of poor working conditions.
- Almost one in five admit they are making too many mistakes because of staff shortages and difficult working conditions.
- Nonetheless, more than three quarters of professionals say they continue to go the extra mile because they care about their patients.
- A strong majority of professionals report they are personally satisfied with their careers, however a majority would not recommend their career to a young person close to them.
- Members overwhelmingly conclude that OPSEU has a role to play in raising the profile of their profession with the public.

▼ CONCLUSIONS

Health care professionals represented by OPSEU have very serious concerns about the timeliness and quality of patient care now being delivered in Ontario hospitals. Based on their own experiences, these professionals conclude that there are not enough people in their job classification providing the test results and care patients need and that the professionals offering these services are stressed and overworked. This situation is having a significant negative impact on the quality of service and care provided, as well as on the professionals themselves.

Most professionals (78%) believe that staff shortages in their profession are negatively affecting patient care and more than a third (35%) have seen this situation deteriorate in the past three years. More than one in five (21%) members can recall at least one incident within their own department in the last 6 months where a patient's condition deteriorated because staff shortages meant that care and/or test results weren't provided in a timely manner.

More than one in four (43%) of all OPSEU hospital professionals say that the waiting times for care and test results they provide has increased over the past year, while almost half (49%) indicate that wait times have grown in three years. There is a high degree of consensus among professionals whose workload has increased over the past year that they are now responsible for more patients (80%), that these patients require more care (78%), and that under these conditions their employers still expect them to work faster (82%).

Reinforcing concerns about insufficient staffing, almost two thirds (64%) of all professionals affirmed in this research that there aren't enough people working in their job classification. Among those who are employed in facilities without enough staff, almost all members report that workloads have been increasing while staffing levels have been reduced or remained the same (93%). Almost eight out of ten of these members (79%) agree that salary levels are so low people are not being attracted to fill job vacancies, and many agree that not enough full time work is being offered to attract professionals to fill vacancies (68%).

While frustrated and concerned about the quality of care provided to patients, most professionals remain committed to going the extra mile to care for their patients (77%) and perhaps as a result a strong majority are personally satisfied with their careers (60%). In spite of this overall satisfaction, a majority of professionals (50%) would not advise a young person close to them to choose the career they did. The longer members have been working in their profession the less satisfied they are and the less inclined they would be to recommend their profession to a young person.

Professionals are experiencing various negative personal consequences as a result of staff shortages and poor working conditions. More than half (57%) say the stress of their job has negatively affected their family or social life and almost one in five report that they are making too many mistakes at work (18%).

The impact of job related stress is especially severe for registered technologists and technicians. Approximately one in four of these professionals report getting sick more often and/or finding they become depressed as a result of staff shortages and difficult working conditions.

▼ REVIEW OF OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Purpose and Objectives

Viewpoints Research Ltd. was commissioned by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) to conduct a survey regarding the views of their members employed in hospitals regarding labour shortages and workload issues. This report summarizes the findings of this membership survey, which was conducted between November 5th and 18th, 2002.

The main objective of this research was to determine members' perceptions of labour shortages and workload issues and the impact on the quality of care provided in health care facilities, as well as to measure the impact on members' professional and personal lives.

Methodology

Sample Design

On behalf of OPSEU a total of 608 members were interviewed by telephone between November 5th and 18th, 2002. A random sample was generated using the OPSEU membership list. The sample was divided into three groups, registered technologists, technicians and other health care professionals. Benchmark groups based on the most populous professions within each of the three bargaining groups were a further sub-population that was sampled and analyzed.

Table 1 outlines the proportion of members in each category in the final sample and the margin of error for each. Some of the margins of error shown reflect those of a finite population. The margins of error for each of these groups in this study are generally considered acceptable for sub-populations within a larger population.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS/ Table 1

Type of Member	# of Interviews	Margin of Error
Total Sample	608	±3.6%
Bargaining Groups		
Other Professionals ¹	160	±6.8%
Registered Technologists	222	±6.3%
Technicians	226	±5.5%
Benchmark Groups		
Occupational & Physiotherapists	70	±11.1%
Medical Laboratory Technologist	91	±10.1%
Medical Radiation Technologist	67	±11.8%
Pharmacy and Laboratory Technician or Assistant	93	±9.5%

Questionnaire Design

The survey instrument was designed by Viewpoints Research in consultation with OPSEU staff. The average survey was approximately 18 minutes in length.

Data Collection

The fielding was conducted from Viewpoints’ call centre. When contacting a household, the interviewer asked to speak to the member by name. If that person was not at home a call back was arranged. Once a member was contacted the interviewer identified him/herself as an employee of Viewpoints Research and indicated Viewpoints was calling a random sample of OPSEU members to seek their opinions on a number of issues. They were assured that the information gathered through the survey was confidential and anonymous.

¹ Other professionals include dietitians, pharmacists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers, perfusionists, audiologists, psychometrists, psychologists and speech therapists.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the data consisted primarily of detailed cross-tabulations of responses to each question by the following subgroups: region, bargaining group, benchmark group, full time and part time status and number of years worked in current position.

Findings were also tabulated by the following behavioural or attitudinal variables:

Quality of Care: Perception of whether quality of care has improved or declined (Q43)

Recommend Career: Likelihood of recommending career to child or young person (Q48).

Several cross tabulations contained significant differences within subgroups. They are highlighted (in bullet form) in this report.

▼ DETAILED FINDINGS

Job Status

Full Time Classification

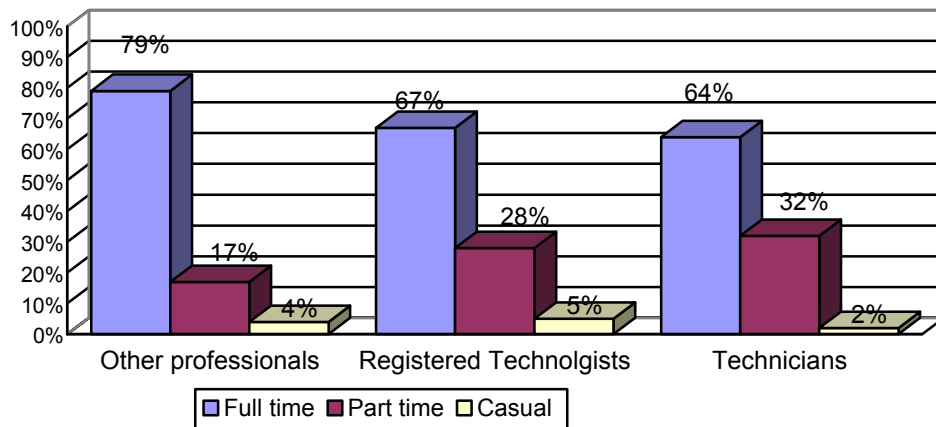
Among registered technologists (67%) and technicians (64%) approximately two out of three members are classified full time by their employer. The rate of full time classifications is significantly higher among other health care professionals where eight out of ten employees (79%) work full time.

- The percentage of full time employees increases with the number of years they have been at their job. While just over half (55%) of those with 5 years or less in their current position are full time, this rises to two out of three (68%) among those who have been in their position between 6 and 25 years. More than eight out of ten (83%) of those who have been in their position more than 25 years are working full time.

Part Time or Casual Classification

The highest rate of part time employment is among technicians, where one in three (32%) are classified part time and 2% are casual. More than one in four (28%) registered technologists work part time, while 5% are casual employees. Seventeen percent of other professionals are part time and 4% work as casual employees.

WORK STATUS BY BARGAINING GROUP/Chart 1



Part Time Hours

Part time employees are generally defined as those working 48 hours or less during a two-week pay period (24 hours or less per week). Thirty-seven percent of all part-time professionals usually work 50 hours or more during the summer. This drops to 21% in the non-summer period.

Part time registered technologists work the most hours during the summer months, when over half (51%) work more than 50 hours per pay period. Almost one in four registered technologists (22%) work 70 hours or more, the equivalent of a full time position. During the rest of the year one quarter of part-time technologists work more than 50 hours per pay period.

Technicians who work part time are the group that works the next highest number of hours, with about one in three (34%) working more than 50 hours in the summer. During the rest of the year most technicians (59%) normally work between 26 and 49 hours per pay period while 20% work 50 hours a week or more in each two week pay period.

Other professionals work the fewest part-time hours, particularly during the summer, when 15% work more than 50 hours per pay period. None of the employees in this group work more than 70 hours any time during the year. The majority (59%) of these other professionals work between 26 and 49 hours per pay period year round.

HOURS WORKED BY PART TIME EMPLOYEES BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 2

HOURS PER PAY PERIOD	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Summer	Rest of Year	Summer	Rest of Year	Summer	Rest of Year	Summer	Rest of Year
More than 70 hours	22%	6%	0%	0%	18%	5%	16%	4%
More than 50 hours	29%	19%	15%	18%	17%	15%	21%	17%
More than 26 hours	30%	49%	55%	58%	51%	59%	44%	55%
Less than 26 hours	15%	21%	18%	18%	9%	15%	13%	18%

Staff Shortages

A majority of health care workers (64%) believe there are not enough employees working in their job classifications. Just over one in three (34%) believe there are enough employees.

Technicians are the group with the highest proportion of employees (43%) who feel there are an adequate number of people in their job classification. Among registered technologists (69%) and other professionals (69%) more than two out of three believe there are not enough employees in their classifications.

- Those who believe that the quality of care has declined in their facility are more inclined to believe that their hospital does not employ enough professionals in their job

classification (75% not enough) than those who feel care has improved (44% not enough) or stayed the same (63% not enough).

SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN YOUR JOB CLASSIFICATION/Table 3

SUFFICIENT NUMBER	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	28%	69%	28%	69%	43%	55%	34%	64%

Indicators of Staff Shortages in Your Classification

The almost two thirds of professionals who believe their hospitals don't maintain sufficient staff in their job classification were asked if a number of circumstances which are generally seen as indicators of shortages existed in their facility. Of specific indicators tested, increases in workload while staff levels remain the same or decline is the most prevalent. More than nine out of ten professionals (93%) agree that this is the case in their hospital, including 63% who strongly agree. A majority (61%) also agree that there are jobs posted but no qualified applicants to fill the vacancies. Almost half believe that the reason there are staff shortages is because the hospital is choosing not to replace workers who quit or retire.

- Technicians are most likely to agree that the workload has increased, but that staffing levels haven't changed, while they are least likely to agree that there are no qualified job applicants to fill vacancies.

In the table below total agreement combines both *strongly agree* and *agree* responses.

INDICATORS OF STAFF SHORTAGES BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 4

	Registered Technologists n=159		Other Professionals n=115		Technicians n=128		Total n=402	
	% Total Agreement	% Strongly Agree	% Total Agreement	% Strongly Agree	% Total Agreement	% Strongly Agree	% Total Agreement	% Strongly Agree
The workload has increased but staffing levels have remained the same or declined.	90%	(60%)	93%	(68%)	96%	(62%)	93%	(63%)
There are jobs posted but no qualified applicants to fill the vacancies.	69%	(34%)	64%	(34%)	48%	(21%)	61%	(30%)
The hospital is choosing not to replace workers who quit or retire.	48%	(20%)	43%	(19%)	51%	(18%)	49%	(19%)

- Significantly more members in the GTA (61%) believe that the hospital is choosing not to replace workers who quit or retire compared to workers outside the GTA (43%).

Perceptions of Why Hospitals are Having Trouble Filling Vacancies

Members perceive that the most important reason why their hospital is having trouble filling vacancies is that salary levels offered are too low. Eight out of ten members believe this a very important reason.

More than two out of three members believe there are not enough students being trained (68%), full time work is not available (69%) and that their hospital is not trying hard enough to fill them (68%).

Professionals are split as to whether the absence of desirable shifts is an important reason why hospitals are having trouble filling job vacancies (47% important; 40% not important).

Less than a majority believe that their hospital’s reputation as a bad place to work is an important reason for vacancies to go unfilled. Four out of ten feel this is an important reason, while 52% feel it is not.

Important in the table below combines both *very important* and *somewhat important* responses.

IMPORTANCE OF REASONS FOR UNFILLED VACANCIES/Table 5

	Registered Technologists n=159		Other Professionals n=115		Technicians n=128		Total n=402	
	% Important	% Very Important	% Important	% Very Important	% Important	% Very Important	% Important	% Very Important
The salary level being offered is too low.	83%	(61%)	78%	(54%)	75%	(59%)	79%	(58%)
Full time work is not being offered.	76%	(52%)	46%	(29%)	79%	(63%)	69%	(48%)
Not enough students are being trained.	86%	(67%)	55%	(28%)	58%	(38%)	68%	(46%)
The hospital is not trying hard enough to fill them.	64%	(33%)	70%	(39%)	70%	(45%)	68%	(39%)
Available shifts are not considered desirable.	60%	(31%)	21%	(10%)	54%	(33%)	47%	(26%)
The hospital has a bad reputation as a place to work.	43%	(19%)	42%	(19%)	36%	(22%)	40%	(20%)

- Full time workers are more inclined to believe that their hospital is not trying hard enough to fill vacancies (71% important) compared to part time or casual employees (58%). They are also more likely to believe low salaries are a very important reason (64% vs. 53% part time/casual) for vacancies remaining unfilled.
- Professionals who would not recommend their career to a young person are significantly more likely to conclude their hospital is choosing not to replace workers who retire or quit (60%) than those who would recommend their profession (36%).
- Workers in the GTA are more likely to feel low salaries are a very important reason for job vacancies going unfilled (68% very important) compared to those living outside the GTA (53% very important).
- Those who would not recommend their career are more inclined to believe low salaries are a very important reason why positions aren't being filled (67% very important) than those who would recommend their career (45% very important).
- Available shifts that are not considered desirable are considered an important reason for job vacancies for workers in the GTA (59% important vs. 40% important outside the GTA).
- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists are least likely to believe that undesirable available shifts is an important reason for job vacancies (17% important) compared to all other benchmark groups.

Has Workload Increased in the Past Year

Nine out of ten members say that their workload has increased in the past year. Technicians are most likely to say their workload has increased (94%), followed by other professionals (90%) and technologists (86%).

INCREASES IN WORKLOAD OVER THE PAST YEAR/Table 6

HAS WORK LOAD INCREASED	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	86%	13%	90%	8%	94%	6%	90%	9%

How Work has Changed

Members were asked to indicate how relevant various changes in their working environment are to demonstrating how their workload has increased. The most relevant changes include the fact that they are expected to work faster (82%), that members are responsible for more patients (80%) and that the patients require more care (81%).

Almost as many members (78%) say they are covering for absent co-workers more often.

Two out of three members say that more tests are being ordered (66%) and that the tests and procedures they do are more complex (64%).

More work delegated by doctors (58%) is relevant to almost six in ten members. Just over half (52%) say increased student evaluation and/or administrative responsibilities are relevant.

Relevant in table 6 below combines both *very* and *somewhat relevant* responses.

FACTORS THAT INCREASE WORKLOAD BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 7

	Registered Technologists n=159		Other Professionals n=115		Technicians n=128		Total n=402	
	% Relevant	% Very Relevant	% Relevant	% Very Relevant	% Relevant	% Very Relevant	% Relevant	% Very Relevant
You are expected to work faster.	88%	(60%)	69%	(38%)	87%	(68%)	82%	(56%)
Patients require more care.	78%	(55%)	87%	(62%)	69%	(46%)	81%	(56%)
You are responsible for more patients.	79%	(57%)	86%	(60%)	75%	(57%)	80%	(58%)
You are covering for absent co-workers more often.	83%	(63%)	67%	(52%)	81%	(63%)	78%	(60%)
More tests are being ordered.	92%	(70%)	28%	(16%)	69%	(53%)	66%	(49%)
The tests and/or procedures you do are more complex.	59%	(35%)	51%	(21%)	69%	(41%)	64%	(33%)
More work is delegated to you by doctors.	68%	(39%)	53%	(23%)	51%	(30%)	58%	(31%)
You have increased student evaluation and/or administrative responsibilities.	43%	(25%)	67%	(37%)	50%	(27%)	52%	(29%)

- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists are less likely than the other benchmark groups to say that their workload has increased because they are expected to work faster (66% vs. 88% other), and because more tests are being ordered (17% vs. 86% other).
- Full time workers are more likely to feel that increased student evaluation and administrative responsibilities (56% full time vs. 40% part time) and the tests and procedures they do are more complex (65% full time vs. 59% part time) are relevant to the increase in their workload when compared to part time /casual employees.
- More tests being ordered is the most relevant factor in the increase in workload among registered technologists (92%), while it is the least relevant factor for other professionals (28%). For technicians (87%) and registered technologists (88%), being required to work faster is a significant factor that contributes to an increased workload.
- Those who feel the quality of care in their hospital has declined (66%) are much more likely to say more work is delegated to them by doctors than those who conclude the quality of care has improved (54%) or remained the same (56%).

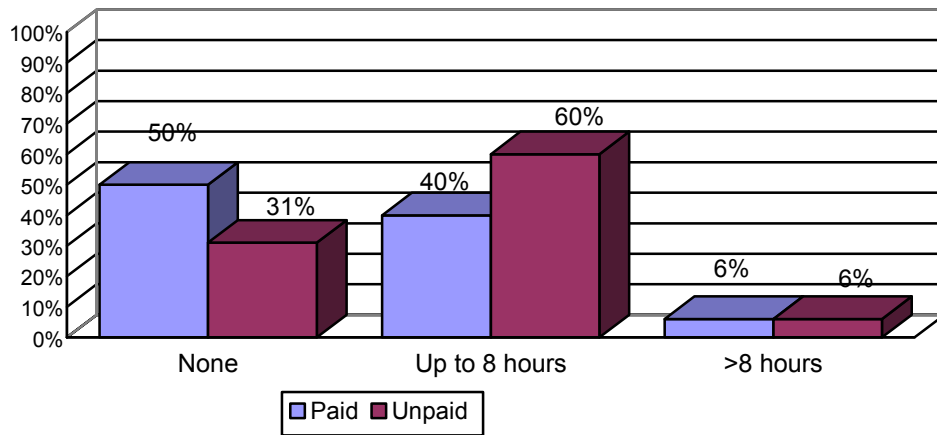
Overtime

Half of hospital professionals do not work paid overtime, while four in ten work up to eight hours of paid overtime per pay period. Approximately one in twenty members (5%) work more than eight hours per pay period in paid overtime, equivalent to more than an extra day of work every two weeks.

When it comes to unpaid overtime six in ten members (60%) work up to eight hours of unpaid overtime per pay period, while just one in three (31%) don't work any unpaid over time at all. One in twenty work more than eight hours of unpaid overtime per pay period.

Chart 2 highlights the number of hours of both paid and unpaid overtime worked per pay period by health care professionals.

HOURS OF OVERTIME PER PAY PERIOD/Chart 2



Overtime by Bargaining Group

Registered technologists are the group of members who work the most paid overtime, with half (50%) working up to eight hours of overtime, and another 8% working more than eight hours per pay period.

More than half of both the health care professionals group (56%) and technicians (55%) work no paid overtime per pay period, while approximately one in three members in each group work up to eight hours per pay period.

When it comes to unpaid overtime, other health care professionals are working the most hours, with six in ten working up to eight hours and more than one in ten (13%) working more than eight hours per pay period. Almost seven in ten registered technologists (68%) work up to eight hours unpaid overtime per pay period, while only one in twenty work more hours (4%). Just over half of the technicians (52%) are working up to eight hours.

- Six out of ten part time / casual employees work no paid overtime compared to just 45% of full time employees.

OVERTIME BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 8

HOURS OVERTIME PER PAY PERIOD	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Paid	Unpaid	Paid	Unpaid	Paid	Unpaid	Paid	Unpaid
None	39%	27%	56%	26%	55%	39%	50%	31%
Less than 8 hours	51%	69%	31%	59%	35%	52%	40%	60%
8 hours or more	8%	4%	6%	13%	4%	5%	6%	6%
Unsure	3%	1%	8%	3%	5%	4%	5%	2%

Increase or Decrease of Overtime Compared to Last Year

For every hospital professional who said they were working less paid overtime, there were four hospital professionals who reported working more paid overtime compared to one year ago. For a majority (60%) the amount of overtime they currently work has not changed from one year ago.

For every hospital professional who said they are working less unpaid overtime there were nine members who reported working more unpaid overtime. Three percent of members indicate that it is a decrease, while the majority (62%) says it reflects no change from one year ago.

CHANGE IN OVERTIME FROM A YEAR AGO BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 9

CHANGE IN OVERTIME	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Paid	Unpaid	Paid	Unpaid	Paid	Unpaid	Paid	Unpaid
Increased	25%	28%	16%	25%	20%	26%	21%	26%
Decreased	6%	2%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	3%
Stayed the same	59%	61%	61%	64%	60%	58%	60%	61%
Unsure/ NA	10%	8%	18%	8%	15%	13%	14%	10%

- Full time workers are more inclined to have experienced an increase in paid overtime (25%) compared to part time and casual workers (12%).
- Those professionals who believe that the quality of care in their hospitals has declined are the most likely to have seen an increase in both their paid (30%) and unpaid (38%) overtime.

Almost two in ten members say they either get a big hassle (9%) or somewhat of a hassle (9%) from their employer if they prefer to be paid for the overtime they work. One in ten say it is not much hassle (9%), while the largest group, four in ten (41%), say it is rarely a hassle. Three in ten (28%) say it is not applicable as they don't work overtime.

- The other health care professionals are the most likely to say it is a big hassle (16%) for them to be paid for the overtime they work, compared to registered technologists (5%) and technicians (8%).
- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists are the benchmark group most likely to say they get a big hassle (14%) compared to the other groups. This is also the benchmark group doing the most hours of unpaid overtime, with almost one in five (19%) putting in the equivalent of an extra day of unpaid overtime every pay period.

Skipping Breaks and Meals

Skipping Breaks

Half of health care members say that in a normal week they usually (26%) or often (25%) skip their breaks to stay on top of their work. One in four (26%) say they do so sometimes, while just two out of ten (22%) say they rarely or never skip their breaks.

- Other health care professionals are most inclined to skip their breaks with almost two out of three (64%) saying they usually or often do so, compared to half of registered technologists (52%) and four out of ten (41%) technicians.
- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists are the benchmark group that is most likely to say they usually skip their breaks (46%).

Skipping Meals

When it comes to skipping meals fewer members say they do so in a normal week in order to keep on top of their work than skip breaks. Just 16% of the total membership say they usually (6%) or often (10%) skip a meal. One in four say they sometimes do (26%). A majority of members say they rarely (31%) or never (27%) skip a meal to get work done.

- Other health care professionals again are the most likely to skip a meal, with almost one in four (23%) indicating they do so frequently, and only 50% saying they rarely or never do. This compares to 14% of registered technologists who skip meal breaks frequently, and 12% of technicians.
- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists is the benchmark group that are most likely to skip their meals (29% usually or often).

SKIP A BREAK OR MEAL BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 10

SKIP A BREAK OR MEAL	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Break	Meal	Break	Meal	Break	Meal	Break	Meal
Usually/Often	52%	14%	64%	23%	41%	12%	51%	16%
Sometimes	30%	33%	21%	26%	27%	19%	26%	26%
Rarely/Never	19%	52%	14%	50%	31%	69%	22%	58%

Vacation Replacement

When members take more than one week vacation the same proportion are replaced (45% usually, often) as are not replaced (44% rarely, never). Another seven percent say they are replaced sometimes.

- There are wide discrepancies between the three bargaining groups when it comes to vacation replacement. Other health care professionals are almost never replaced (81% rarely, never), while among technicians almost six out of ten are replaced most of the time (57% usually, often). Registered technologists are replaced (44% usually, often) more than they are not (35% rarely, never).
- Part time and casual employees are more likely to be replaced (45% usually) compared to full time (34% usually).
- MRTs are the benchmark group most likely to be replaced (57% usually), while occupational therapists and physiotherapists are least likely (10% usually).

REPLACED WHILE ON VACATION BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 11

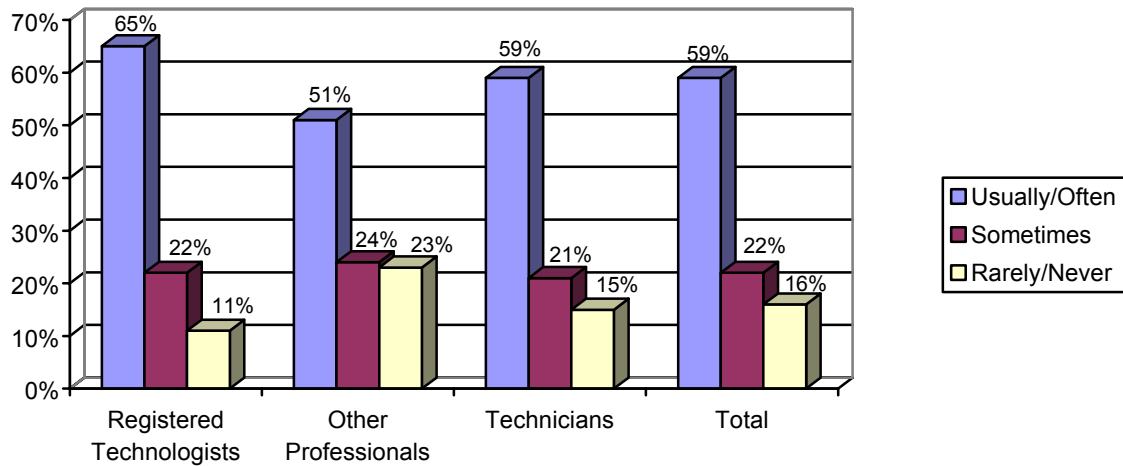
	Registered Technologists	Other Professionals	Technicians	Total
Usually/Often	44%	13%	57%	45%
Sometimes	8%	4%	7%	7%
Rarely / Never	35%	81%	30%	44%

Working When Sick

A majority of health care members say they usually (41%) or often (28%) go to work when they are sick. Just over two in ten say they sometimes do (22%), while fewer than two in ten (16%) say they rarely or never do.

Registered technologists are most inclined to work when they are sick, with two out of three saying they do usually or often. Technicians are the next most likely to work when sick (60%). Among other health care professionals one half (51%) routinely work when sick.

WORKING WHILE SICK BY BARGAINING GROUP/CHART 3



Being Called in on Days Off

Registered technologists and technicians are the two groups of members who are called in on their day with any frequency. Three in ten of these employees are called in once a month or more on their day off. Employees in the other professional category are rarely called in on their days off with any frequency.

CALLED IN ON DAY OFF BARGAINING GROUP/Table 12

	Registered Technologists	Other Professionals	Technicians	Total
Never	30%	77%	43%	47%
Less than once a month	39%	15%	27%	28%
Once or twice a month	22%	2%	17%	15%
Once a week or more	6%	1%	11%	7%

- Part time or casual employees (74%, called in) are significantly more likely to be called in on their days off than are full time employees (40%, called in).

How Frequently are Members Asked to Work Standby

Two out of three members (63%) say that standby is not applicable to them. One in ten (11%) members are asked to do standby at least one week out of every month, while 4% are asked to do one week out of every one to two months. The remaining are asked to work stand by less frequently.

FREQUENCY OF STANDBY BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 13

	Registered Technologists	Other Professionals	Technicians	Total
Not applicable	52%	79%	63%	63%
1 week or more every month	19%	4%	11%	11%
1 week out of every month to 2 months	8%	3%	2%	4%
1 week out of every two months or less	15%	11%	23%	17%

- Members between the ages of 18 and 29 years are asked to do standby more frequently than any other age group (28% one week out of every 4 to 8 weeks or more).

Among those who are asked to work standby 14% are always called in, while 45% are almost never asked in. The only group that is called in frequently is registered technologists (21% almost always). Three out of ten of these members say they are almost never called in when on standby, compared to six out of ten members in the other two groups.

Patient Care

Waiting Time for Patient Care

Members are fairly evenly divided as to whether their patients are waiting longer to receive the results of their work, or for care. Forty-three percent say that patients are waiting longer, while 45% say they are not. Five percent say it depends, while 7% say it's not applicable.

- Other health care professionals are the group most likely to say their patients are waiting longer (49%) compared to registered technologists (39%) and technicians (42%).

WAITING TIME FOR PATIENT CARE/Table 14

PATIENTS WAITING LONGER	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	39%	49%	49%	42%	42%	43%	43%	45%

- More full time employees (47%) than part time/casual employees (34%) say their patients are waiting longer to receive the results of their work.
- Members who have been working 5 years or less in their position are significantly less likely to say that patients are waiting longer (26%) compared to those who have been in their positions longer (43%). The same is true for younger members (18 to 29 years) where 34% say their patients are waiting longer compared to approximately 43% of those in older age categories.

Has Waiting Time Increased or Decreased in Three Years

About one half of health care members (49%) say that waiting time has increased compared to three years ago. One in four (25%) say waiting time has remained about the same, while just one in ten (9%) say it has decreased.

- Full time workers are more likely to say that waiting time has increased (53%) than part time / casual workers (38%).
- The older the member (50 plus years 56%) and the longer they have been working in their profession (>25 years 59%) the more likely they are to indicate that waiting time has increased.

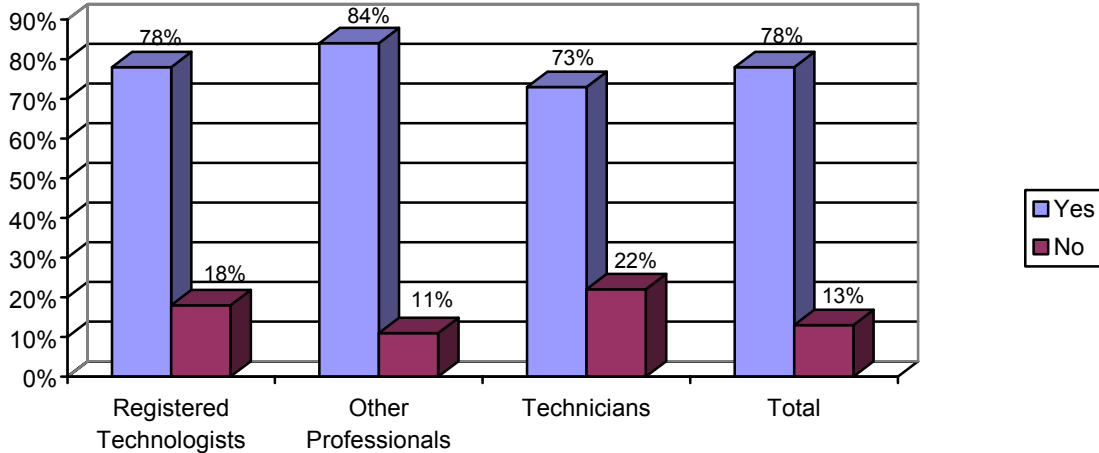
CHANGES IN WAITING TIMES IN 3 YEARS/Table 15

	Registered Technologists	Other Professionals	Technicians	Total
Increased	47%	49%	50%	49%
Decreased	11%	7%	9%	9%
Stayed the same	24%	28%	25%	25%
NA/Don't know	18%	16%	17%	17%

Are Staff Shortages Affecting Patient Care

Eight out of ten members (78%) believe that staff shortages in their profession are negatively affecting patient care. Members in the other professional group are more inclined to feel this way (84%), compared to registered technologists (78%) and technicians (73%).

STAFF SHORTAGES AFFECTING PATIENT CARE/Chart 4



Quality of Patient Care

One in three members (35%) feel the quality of patient care provided by their profession at their hospitals has declined compared to three years ago. Four in ten members feel the quality has stayed the same, while just 14% believe it has improved.

- Those who have been in their position for five years or less (18%) are significantly less likely to say that the quality of care provided by their profession has declined in the last three years compared to those who have been working in their job longer (35%).

CHANGES IN THE QUALITY OF PATIENT CARE IN 3 YEARS/Table 16

	Registered Technologists	Other Professionals	Technicians	Total
Improved	11%	16%	16%	14%
Declined	32%	39%	35%	35%
Stayed the same	45%	38%	38%	41%
NA/Don't know	11%	8%	11%	10%

Specific Cases of Patients’ Condition Worsening

Two out of ten members (21%) said they had a case in their department in the last six months where a patient’s condition worsened because staff were unable to provide quality / timely care and results. Seven out of ten said this had not happened, while one in ten said it was either not applicable or they weren’t sure (9%).

PATIENTS’ CONDITIONS WORSENING DUE TO STAFF SHORTAGES/Table 17

IN LAST 6 MONTHS HAVE PATIENTS’ CONDITION WORSENING DUE TO STAFF SHORTAGES	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	21%	72%	25%	65%	17%	71%	21%	70%

Feeling Rushed Due to Staff Shortages

Two out of three members said they usually (38%) or often (29%) feel rushed during their workday because staff shortages mean they have too much to do. One in four (23%) report they sometimes feel this way. Just one in ten members rarely (5%) or never (5%) feel this way.

FEELING RUSHED DUE TO STAFF SHORTAGES/Table 18

	Registered Technologists	Other Professionals	Technicians	Total
Usually/Often	69%	62%	66%	66%
Sometimes	22%	26%	22%	23%
Rarely / Never	9%	10%	11%	10%

Just over six out of ten members (62%) say that the feeling of being rushed during their workday has increased compared to three years ago. One in four said that it has not changed, while just 2% say it has decreased. One in ten said it was not applicable to them or they didn't know.

- Members who have been working 5 years or less are not as likely to say they feel rushed (31%) compared to those who have been working longer (38%).

FEELING RUSHED COMPARED TO 3 YEARS AGO/Table 19

	Registered Technologists	Other Professionals	Technicians	Total
Increased	61%	59%	65%	62%
Decreased	1%	2%	3%	2%
Stayed the same	26%	28%	22%	25%
NA/Don't know	12%	12%	11%	11%

Satisfaction with your Career

A majority of health care members are either very (16%) or somewhat (45%) satisfied with their career². Just under two in ten members say they are dissatisfied (18%) with their career, while two in ten (22%) are neutral (5 or 6 out of 10).

- Members who have been working 5 years or less are most satisfied with their work (24% very satisfied) compared to those who have been working longer (14%).
- Those professionals who conclude that the quality of care in their facility has declined are much more likely to feel dissatisfied with their career (33%) than those who believe care has improved (5%) or stayed the same (12%).

SATISFACTION WITH CAREER/Table 20

	Registered Technologists	Other Professionals	Technicians	Total
Very satisfied (9 & 10)	12%	21%	16%	16%
Somewhat satisfied (7 & 8)	43%	49%	42%	45%
Neutral (5 & 6)	24%	16%	25%	22%
Dissatisfied (1, 2, 3, 4)	20%	16%	17%	18%

² Members assessed their satisfaction with their career on a 10 point scale, where 1 meant very dissatisfied and 10 meant very satisfied.

Recommending Your Career to Your Child or Young Person

Members are divided on whether they would recommend their career to their children or other young people. Forty-six percent of members say they would, while 50% say they would not.

Registered technologists are the bargaining group that are least likely to recommend their career, with 60% saying they would not recommend their career and just over one-third (35%) indicating that they would. The opposite is true of other health care professionals. Among this group, almost two out of three (64%) state they would recommend their career, while just one in three would not (33%).

RECOMMEND YOUR CAREER TO CHILDREN/Table 21

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND YOUR CAREER TO YOUNG PEOPLE	Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	35%	60%	64%	33%	44%	53%	46%	50%

- Members living outside the GTA are significantly more likely to recommend their career (50%) to a young person compared to those living in the GTA (39%).
- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists are the benchmark group that are most likely to recommend their career to someone (70%), while MLTs are those least inclined (27%).
- Part-time and casual employees (53%) are more inclined to recommend their career compared to full time workers (43%).
- There is a correlation between the number of years a member has worked and the likelihood of recommending their career to a young person. The longer an employee has worked at their job the less likely they are to recommend it to someone. For instance, only one in three members (35%) with more than 25 years on the job would recommend it, compared to 61% of those who have worked 5 years or less.

Personal Consequences of Staff Shortages and Difficult Working Conditions

The most significant consequence of staff shortages and difficult working conditions is that the stress associated with their jobs has negatively affected members’ family and/or social life. Almost two out of three agree this is the case, with one in four strongly agreeing. These impacts are felt especially by registered technologists.

Almost four out of ten members also agree that they get sick more frequently (38%) and they feel depressed (37%) as a result of staff shortages. Over one quarter (26%) believe they are more irritable with their patients. While almost one in five (18%) say they make too many mistakes because of staff shortages and difficult working conditions.

INDICATORS OF STAFF SHORTAGES BY BARGAINING GROUP/Table 22

	Registered Technologists n=159		Other Professionals n=115		Technicians n=128		Total n=402	
	% Total Agree	% Disagree	% Total Agree	% Disagree	% Total Agree	% Disagree	% Total Agree	% Disagree
The stress of your job has negatively affected your family and/or social life.	64%	35%	49%	51%	56%	44%	57%	42%
You are more irritable with your patients.	33%	56%	22%	69%	20%	56%	26%	61%
You get sick more frequently.	42%	57%	27%	73%	41%	58%	38%	61%
You feel depressed.	41%	57%	29%	71%	39%	62%	37%	63%
You make too many mistakes.	23%	76%	13%	85%	18%	80%	18%	80%

- Pharmacy technicians and lab assistants are the benchmark group that is most inclined to say they get sick more frequently (53% vs. 36% other).
- Registered technologists (64%) are the bargaining group most inclined to report that the stress in their job has a negative impact on their family or social life.
- Registered technologists (42%) and technicians (41%) get sick more often as a result of staff shortages than other professionals (27%). Registered technologists (41%) and technicians (38%) are also more likely to become depressed than other professionals (29%).
- Full time employees are more inclined to say they feel depressed (39%) than part time and casual workers (31%).

Impacts on Professionals by Perceptions of the Quality of Patient Care

Professionals who believe the quality of patient care has declined are much more likely to experience the negative personal impacts of workplace stress related to staff shortages than those who conclude that patient care has stayed the same or improved. More than three quarters (76%) of those who think the quality of patient care has declined think the stress in their job negatively affects their family and social life. A majority of professions who feel patients are worse off report feeling depressed (51%) and are sick more often (50%) as a result of workplace stress due to staff shortages.

The following table illustrates how the personal consequences associated with staff shortages are having a much greater negative impact on people who believe that the patient care provided by their profession has declined.

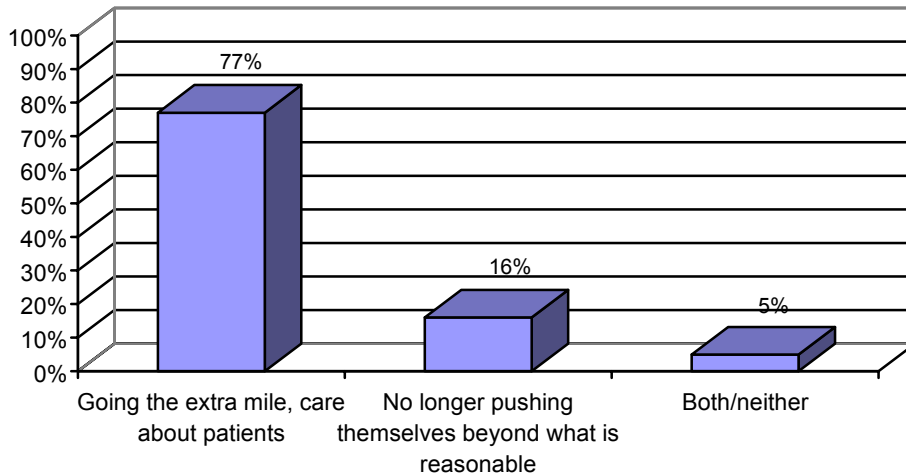
PERSONAL IMPACTS OF STRESS ASSOCIATED WITH STAFF SHORTAGES/Table 23

	Declined		Stayed the same		Improved		Total	
	% Total Agree	% Disagree	% Total Agree	% Disagree	% Total Agree	% Disagree	% Total Agree	% Disagree
The stress of your job has negatively affected your family and/or social life.	76%	24%	47%	52%	49%	49%	57%	42%
You feel depressed.	51%	47%	28%	73%	37%	62%	37%	63%
You get sick more frequently.	50%	48%	29%	70%	32%	67%	38%	61%
You are more irritable with your patients.	39%	45%	18%	70%	20%	69%	26%	61%
You make too many mistakes.	32%	68%	14%	84%	9%	87%	18%	80%

Do Employees Still Go the Extra Mile

In spite of stress at work, more than three out of four members (77%) say they still go the extra mile because they care about their patients. Fewer than two in ten (18%) say they are fed up with the stress and not being adequately supported by their employer so they are no longer pushing themselves to work beyond what is reasonable. The remaining 7% either couldn't offer an opinion or said they felt they did both.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE/Chart 5



- Other health care professionals are the group least inclined to say they go the extra mile (69%) compared to registered technologists (79%) and technicians (80%).
- Employees who have been working at their job 5 years or less are most inclined to say they go the extra mile (90%), while those who have been working between 6 and 10 years are least inclined (63%).

Does the Union Have a Role in Raising the Profile of Your Profession

Almost nine out of ten (87%) of members believe the union has a role to play in raising the profile of their profession with the public. Nine percent feel the union does not have a role, while 3% aren't sure.

DOES UNION HAVE ROLE IN PROMOTING PROFESSION/Table 24

Registered Technologists		Other Professionals		Technicians		Total	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
93%	5%	79%	15%	96%	1%	87%	9%

▼ APPENDIX A: TOPLINE RESULTS
