

# Population Diversity and Major Issues within Labrador-Grenfell Health

## Objective

To compare demographic and socio-economic factors within the six regions of Labrador-Grenfell Health (LGH), and to report the major issues in LGH.

## Practice Points

1. Labrador is the size of the United Kingdom and the population density is more similar to a territory of Canada than a province.
2. A third of the population in the LGH region is Indigenous.
3. The rate of food insecurity in Nunatsiavut is five times the rate of the province. The weekly cost of a nutritious food basket is \$402, compared to \$264 on the island of Newfoundland (52% higher).
4. Life expectancy is 1.6 years shorter in LGH than in the province.
5. According to Statistics Canada, in 2011 the life expectancy for Indigenous people in Canada was 9.3 years less than that for non-Indigenous Canadians.

## Data (PI: Dr. T. Piggott)

Community profiles were obtained from Statistics Canada Census of Population 2016 and 2006, and from the NL Centre for Health Information (NLCHI).

The six regions studied were Labrador West, Central Labrador, Innu First Nations, Nunatsiavut communities, Southern Labrador and the Northern Peninsula. Information concerning Nunatsiavut was obtained from Nunatsiavut Government DHSD Regional Health Plan 2019–2024.

## Results

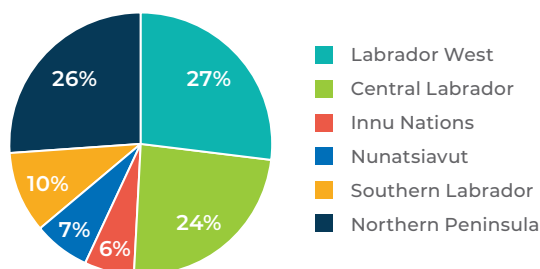


Figure 1. The Population Distributions of the Six Regions of LGH

Table 1. The Demography of the Six Regions of LGH

|                                  | Labrador West | Central Labrador | Innu Nations | Nunatsiavut | Southern Labrador | Northern Peninsula |
|----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Population                       | 9,831         | 8,710            | 1,959        | 2,558       | 3,645             | 9,281              |
| % Population change <sup>#</sup> | +1.8          | +7.2             | +11.3        | +6.0        | -16.5             | -13.9              |
| Birth rate/1,000 pop             | 11.8          | 11.6             | 35.2         | 20.3        | 8.8               | 5.8                |
| Median age                       | 36.9          | 39.4             | 21.5         | 33.4        | 48.5              | 51.7               |
| Seniors %                        | 7.8           | 11.5             | 2.3          | 8.2         | 20.6              | 24.9               |

<sup>#</sup>Population change between 2006 and 2016

- The Northern Peninsula and Southern Labrador have had the biggest drop in population, have the lowest birth rate, the highest median age and the highest proportion of seniors.
- The Innu First Nations population, although small in number, has the highest growth, the highest birth rate, and the smallest proportion of seniors.

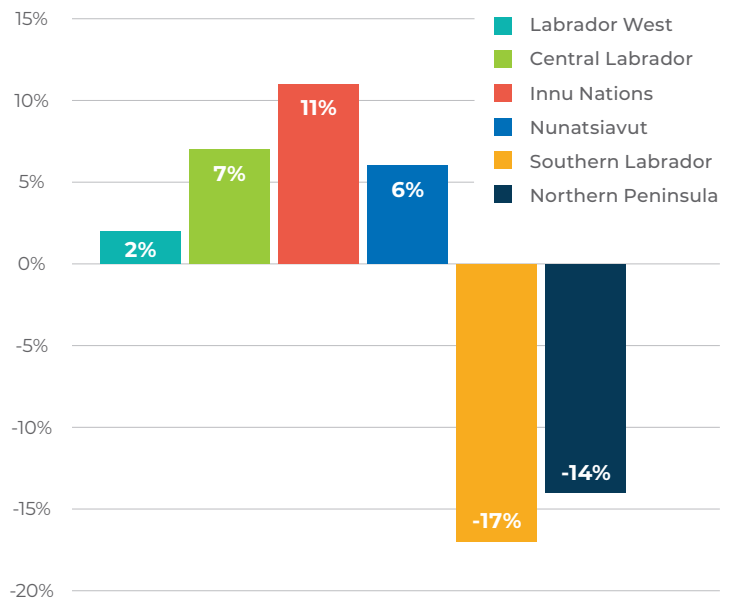


Figure 2. Population Change Between 2006 and 2016 Within Six Regions of LGH

**Table 2. Socio-Economic Factors in the Six Regions of LGH**

|                                  | Labrador West | Central Labrador | Innu Nations | Nunatsiavut | Southern Labrador | Northern Peninsula |
|----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Secondary Education <sup>#</sup> | 86.5          | 80.0             | 34.4         | 57.2        | 59.4              | 62.0               |
| Unemployment rate %              | 8.5           | 8.6              | 25.5         | 29.4        | 36.5              | 38.0               |
| Median household income \$       | 127,077       | 110,362          | 83,314       | 70,614      | 81,309            | 65,090             |

<sup>#</sup> Percentage of adults that have completed a certificate, diploma and/or degree at the secondary level or above

- Labrador West and Central Labrador have the lowest unemployment rates and the highest median household incomes, whereas the Northern Peninsula has the highest unemployment rate and the lowest income.



**Figure 3. Major Issues of Concern in LGH**

- Like the island of Newfoundland, the top issues included mental health and addictions, high cost of living, food insecurity and lack of resources for seniors, but high priority was also given to cultural sensitivity/empathy education for health professionals regarding language and culture.
- The per cent of respondents in LGH unable to access health services in the past 12 months was 37%.

**Table 3. Opportunities in the 6 LGH Primary Health Regions to Improve Broader Health and Access to Health Care Services**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Labrador West:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more community support groups</li> <li>• Support services for mental health</li> </ul>  | <b>Central Labrador:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities that promote better mental health</li> <li>• Promotion of community health and wellness</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Innu First Nations:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural sensitivity/empathy education for health professionals</li> <li>• Need better partnerships between Innu and LGH</li> <li>• Need regular community visits by professionals like Diabetic nurse</li> <li>• Improved communication about existing services</li> </ul> | <b>Nunatsiavut Communities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community freezers, eat local/traditional</li> <li>• Orientation on cultural sensitivity</li> <li>• Community wellness clinics</li> <li>• Outreach to promote healthier lifestyles</li> <li>• Increase health education in schools</li> <li>• Education on existing services</li> </ul> |
| <b>Southern Labrador:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities that benefit physical, social and mental health in the elderly</li> <li>• More access to fresh fruit and vegetables</li> </ul>  | <b>Northern Peninsula:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to quality and affordable foods</li> <li>• Educate residents on existing health and community services</li> <li>• Mental and health social programs for seniors</li> </ul>   |

Information obtained from community health assessment surveys and focus groups

## Conclusions

1. The diversity of populations in LGH is substantial in that:
  - A. Labrador West and Central Labrador are similar in having a relatively small proportion of seniors, a relatively low unemployment rate, and reasonable household incomes.
  - B. Southern Labrador and the Northern Peninsula have a high proportion of seniors, a low birth rate, high unemployment, and low household incomes.
  - C. The Innu First Nations and Nunatsiavut have a low proportion of seniors, high birth rate, high unemployment rates, and low household incomes.
2. The top issues of concern in LGH were similar to that of the island RHAs and included mental health, but language and culture was also given a high ranking.
3. The per cent of respondents unable to access health services in the past 12 months was high (37%).