

SECTION ONE: THE LABOUR MARKET

THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN ONTARIO

ACTIVITY: True or False

TIME: 1 hour

LEARNING OUTCOME:

Participants will understand:

- How the Canadian health care system is financed and administered
- The roles of each level of government with respect to health care
- Factors that affect health care spending

DESCRIPTION:

- Instruct participants to complete the True or False exercise on **page 7** of their workbooks.
- Take up answers as a class (use answer key provided).

**CANADA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM:
TRUE OR FALSE – ANSWER KEY**

1. **Canada's health care system is publicly-financed and publicly-delivered.**

FALSE: While Canada's health care system is publicly-financed, it is privately-delivered. Canada does not have a system of "socialized medicine", with doctors employed by the government. Most doctors are private practitioners who work in independent or group practices and enjoy a high degree of autonomy. Some doctors work in community health centres, hospital-based group practices or work in affiliation with hospital out-patient departments. Private practitioners are generally paid on a fee-for-service basis and submit their service claims directly to the provincial health insurance plan for payment.

2. **Provincial health care insurance is sometimes referred to as "Medicare".**

TRUE: OHIP – the Ontario Health Insurance Plan – provides free health care services to Ontarians. Generally, OHIP and other provincial health insurance plans are called "medicare".

3. **About 50 per cent of all active physicians in Canada are "primary care" physicians.**

TRUE: Primary care physicians are the point of first contact with the health care system for most Canadians; family physicians or general practitioners are the main primary care physicians. They control access to most specialists, many allied providers, hospital admissions, diagnostic testing and prescription drug therapy.

4. **Women are the primary users of health services.**

TRUE: Women suffer more illness yet live longer than men. They are equally at risk for heart disease as men and are the fastest growing segment of our population.

5. **Dentistry services are covered by OHIP.**

FALSE: Dentistry services are covered by some private health insurance plans but not OHIP.

6. **The operating budgets of hospitals are determined by the federal government.**

FALSE: The operating budgets of hospitals are determined by the **provincial** government.

**CANADA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM:
TRUE OR FALSE – ANSWER KEY**

7. **The fundamental principles of the health care system are established by the federal government.**

TRUE: The federal government's role in health care involves the setting and administering of national principles or standards for the health care system (set out in the *Canada Health Act*), assisting in the financing of provincial health care services through fiscal transfers, and fulfilling functions for which it is constitutionally responsible.

8. **The Province of Ontario provides additional health benefits, beyond the services covered by OHIP, to seniors.**

TRUE: Ontario provides insurance for prescription drugs, dental care, vision care, assistive equipment and appliances (prostheses, wheelchairs, etc.), as well as independent living services and services of allied health professionals such as podiatrists and chiropractors to seniors.

9. **Many Canadians have private insurance, which covers supplementary health benefits such as prescription drugs.**

TRUE: Many Canadian employers offer “group insurance” as a benefit to employees. These benefits entitle workers to free or cheaper access to prescription drugs, non-physician health care services, dentistry and vision care.

10. **Health care spending accounts for around one-quarter of provincial program expenditures.**

FALSE: Health care spending accounts for almost 40% of provincial program expenditures. This is why during times of government fiscal restraint, health care spending is often a target.

11. **Public sector funding represents about 70 percent of total health care expenditures in Canada.**

TRUE: The remaining 30 per cent of health care expenditures are paid by private insurance companies, employers and out-of-pocket by consumers.

12. **Public health care expenditures in Canada are rising and are expected to continue rising.**

TRUE: Public health care spending leveled off in the mid-1990s, but has risen every year since 1996. It now comprises about 10% of Canada's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

**CANADA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM:
TRUE OR FALSE**

T	F	1. Canada's health care system is publicly-financed and publicly-delivered.
T	F	2. Provincial health care insurance is sometimes referred to as "Medicare".
T	F	3. About 60 per cent of all active physicians in Canada are "primary care" physicians.
T	F	4. Women are the primary users of health services.
T	F	5. Dentistry services are covered by OHIP.
T	F	6. The fundamental principles of the health care system are established by the federal government.
T	F	7. The operating budgets of Hospitals are determined by the federal government.
T	F	8. The Province of Ontario provides additional health benefits - beyond the services covered by OHIP -- to seniors.
T	F	9. Many Canadians have private insurance which covers supplementary health benefits such as prescription drugs.
T	F	10. Health care spending accounts for around one-quarter of provincial program expenditures.
T	F	11. Public sector funding represents about 70 percent of total health care expenditures in Canada.
T	F	12. Public health care expenditures in Canada are rising and are expected to continue rising.