

**Licensed Practical Nurse
Employment Insurance Summary 1996 – 2000,
January – April 2001
Newfoundland and Labrador
(Provincial Review)**

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Executive Summary

The use of Employment Insurance (EI) by Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) in Newfoundland & Labrador was examined over a five-year period. A total of 1846 claims were opened between January 1996 and December 2000. The following information summarizes the major findings during this time period.

For Licensed Practical Nurses in Newfoundland and Labrador (1996 - 2000):

- The number of regular benefit claims has decreased substantially from 370 (1996) to 143 (2000) a decrease of 61.4%.
- The number of maternity/parental claims had decreased from 44 to 22 in 1998 but has since increased to 31 in 2000, an increase of 50% over the two-year period.
- The number of sick benefit claims had decreased from 76 in 1997 to 44 in 1999, but has since increased to 64 in 2000, a 45% increase in a one year period.

Recent increases in maternity/parental and sick benefit claims will require continued monitoring and assessment in order to ensure an adequate understanding of how these factors affect the supply and demand of LPNs in the health system.

1. Introduction

The Provincial Health and Community Service Human Resource Planning Steering Committee was established in the fall of 1999 to coordinate and direct a visionary and integrated Health and Community Services human resource (HR) plan for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Its primary mandate is to address HR issues including recruitment, retention, gaps in service and forecasting for future requirements.

One component of the study is to evaluate the use of Employment Insurance by Licensed Practical Nurses throughout the province.

2. Purpose Of This Report

The following report summarizes the Employment Insurance (EI) claimant information of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) within the province of Newfoundland & Labrador for the period January 1996-December, 2000. Additional information is provided for the period of January – April 2001.

3. Methodology

The data summarized in this report was provided by the St. John's Regional Office of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). Records were received for all LPN Employment Insurance claims (where LPN was identified as occupation) with a benefit period commencement beginning January 1996- April 2001. For privacy reasons all Social Insurance Numbers in the database were masked and replaced with a unique personal identifier.

The initial request for data from HRDC was submitted in November 2000. Data was provided to the end of November, 2000. A subsequent request was made in May 2001, for which data was received to the end of April 2001. The year 2000 was omitted from any analyses concerning length of claim, given that the majority of the claims would run

into the year 2001, a period for which complete data could not be obtained. Data for the first four months of 2001 are reported in separate tables.

4. Limitations Of Data

4.1 Claimants With 0% of Eligible Weeks Paid

The database provided by HRDC included 150 records of LPN claims for which no benefits were paid. Because these records do not actually reflect a paid EI claimant, they have been removed from the analysis. The following table shows the number and percentage of claims occurring within each range of “percentage of claim used”.

Table 1: Number of LPN claims within each range of “percentage of claim used”

Year	0% (% of Tot)	0.1%- 25.0% (% of Tot)	25.1%- 50.0% (% of Tot)	50.1%- 75.0% (% of Tot)	75.1%- 100% (% of Tot)	Total
1996	45 (10.8)	103 (24.8)	82 (19.8)	72 (17.3)	111 (26.7)	413
1997	42 (11.4)	86 (23.4)	78 (21.3)	60 (16.3)	100 (27.2)	366
1998	31 (14.2)	64 (29.2)	43 (19.6)	34 (15.5)	47 (21.5)	219
1999	32 (18.5)	48 (27.7)	36 (20.8)	22 (12.7)	34 (19.7)	172

- Over the four-year reporting period, the largest proportions of LPN claimants have continued to use between 0.1% and 25% and between 75.1% and 100% of their eligible weeks.
- As stated above, the claimants who use 0% of their claim do not accurately reflect employees away from the workforce and are therefore removed from further analysis.

4.2 Years Reported

For reasons such as: a) number of weeks assigned and b) intermittent periods of inactivity, the number of eligible weeks in any one EI claim can span more than one calendar year. In an attempt to provide consistent reports, all claims are reported according to the year of benefit commencement.

4.3 Inclusion Criteria

Unless otherwise indicated, all data presented in the charts represent “Regular Benefit Claims” where the claimant is designated as able and willing to work. A separate analysis of sick benefits and maternity/parental benefits is also provided.

4.4 HRDC Policy Changes

Over the time period of this report there have been several major policy changes on behalf of HRDC affecting EI claims. The major changes as they pertain to human resource planning are briefly summarized below:

- 1). June 30th, 1996. The maximum length of claim is reduced from 50 weeks to 45 weeks¹.
- 2). January 1997. There are no longer weekly minimums and maximums for determining insurable earnings. All earnings, from the first dollar, are insurable up to the annual Maximum Insurable Earnings (MIE)¹.
- 3). January 2001. An increase in maternity parental benefits from 25 to 50 weeks² is introduced.

5. Results: 1996 - 2000

The following charts and tables illustrate all licensed practical nurse employment insurance claims with a benefit commencement period between January 1996 and December 2000.

The total number of claims versus the number of individual claimants per year is presented in Table 2. The numbers reflected in the table represent all accepted claims.

¹ Human Resources Development Canada. 1997 Employment Insurance Monitoring and Assessment Report.

² HRDC News Release. May 10, 2001. An Employment Insurance program that's more responsive to Canadians' needs

Table 2: Number of LPN claims versus number of individual claimants (all claim types)

Year	Total Number of EI Claims	Number of Individual Claimants	Repeat Claims in Designated Year
1996	514	479	35
1997	490	472	18
1998	305	295	10
1999	258	250	8
2000	279	272	7
Total	1846	1768	78

The data from Table 2 above presents the multiple use of EI by LPNs per year. The number of repeat claims within a one-year period has decreased from 35 in 1996 to 7 in 2000.

Although the number of repeat claims within each year is low (78) the overall number of repeat claims, for the five years combined, is higher. If the five years presented in the above table are combined (1846 records) and the number of unique individual claimants is recalculated to show multiple use of EI either within a particular year or across the five years (e.g. one individual with 4 claims over 4 years) the gap widens with 1175 individuals opening 1846 claims. Thus, 671 or 36.3% of all claims are repeat EI claims.

5.1 Provincial Licensed Practical Nurse Employment Insurance Claims

Figure 1: Provincial LPN regular, maternity/parental, and sick benefit claims

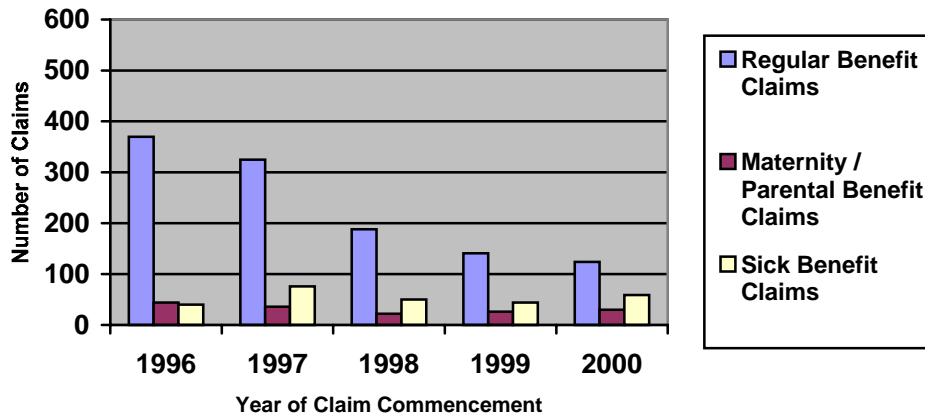


Table 3: Provincial LPN regular, maternity/parental, and sick benefit claims

Type of Claim	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Regular Benefit Claims	370	325	188	141	143
Maternity/Parental Benefit Claims	44	36	22	26	31
Sick Benefit Claims	40	76	50	44	64
Total	454	437	260	211	238

The number of LPN regular benefit claims had decreased steadily from 370 in 1996 to 141 in 1999 but has since increased to 143 in 2000.

The number of maternity/parental claims had decreased from 44 in 1996 to 22 in 1998 but has since increased again to 31 in 2000, averaging 31.8 claims per year.

The number of LPN sick benefit³ claims rose in 1997 to 76, decreased to 44 by 1999 but has since increased to 64 in 2000. Although the number of sick benefit claims by LPNs

³ Sick benefit claims apply to situations where the employee is sick, injured or in quarantine. They are paid for up to 15 weeks if you have had 700 hours of insurable employment in the last 52 weeks, or since the start of your last EI claim. A medical certificate with expected length of illness is required. If applying for sick benefit after Dec 31st 2000, the number of insurable hours required was decreased to 600. This does not include sick leave associated with Work Place Health & Safety Compensation Commission or workplace injury.

has not shown a significant increase over the five year period, the increase between 1999 and 2000 is noteworthy given the current HRDC sick benefit trends across the country.

HRDC has reported an increase in the number of sick benefit claims on a national basis. In the Monitoring and Assessment report of 1999, there was an 8.5% increase in the number of sick benefit claims⁴. This reported increase was followed by a commitment to investigate the rise over the 1998 period. After a review of historical labour market data, several factors were identified as contributing to the growth in sickness claims⁵ including:

1. period of strong employment growth increasing the number of sick benefits as more people become eligible for EI,
2. increase of sickness claims in combination with maternity/parental claims,
3. year-to-year volatility, and
4. increase in short-term sickness claims.

Further monitoring of sick benefit claims by LPNs and the potential effects of the above factors on the LPN workforce is suggested.

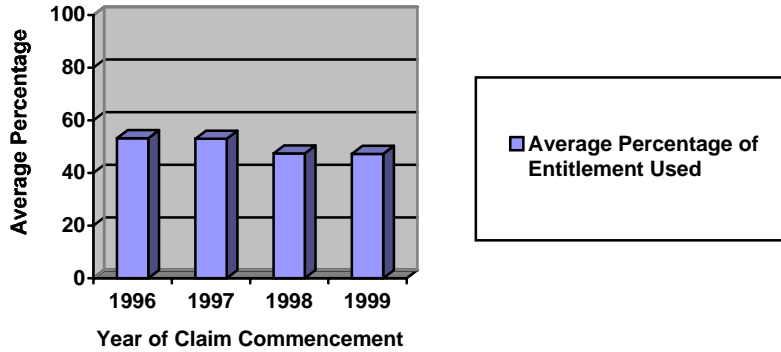
An employee is not required to use all accrued sick leave before applying for EI sick benefit. If the employee does use a portion of accrued sick leave, the two week waiting period for EI benefit can be waived. While on EI sick benefit, a) claimants receive approximately 55% of average insured earnings, and b) any periods on EI sick benefit are not considered as insurable hours and may affect other EI claims within a one year period.

⁴ Human Resources Development Canada. 1999 Employment Insurance Monitoring and Assessment Report.

⁵ Human Resources Development Canada. 2000 Employment Insurance Monitoring and Assessment Report.

5.2 Average Percentage of Entitlement Used

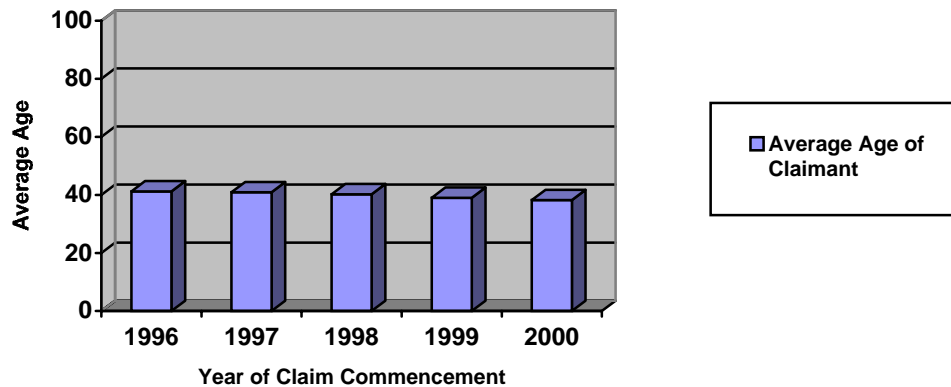
Figure 2: LPN – Average percentage of entitlement used



The average percentage of claim entitlement used has remained fairly stable over the four year time period with an overall mean of 50.2%.

5.3 Average Age of Claimants

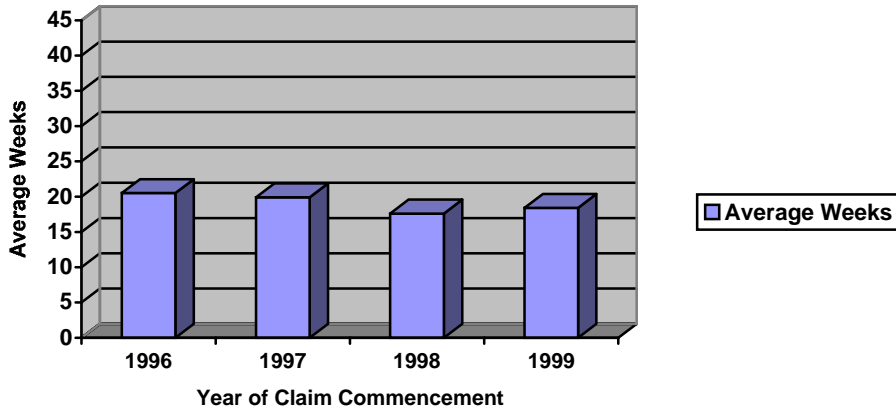
Figure 3: Average age of regular benefit LPN claimants



The average age of regular benefit claimants has remained stable around age 40 with an overall average of 39.9 years. This is in keeping with the current average age of licensed practical nurses in the province at approximately 42 years.

5.4 Average EI Weeks Paid Per Year

Figure 4: Average number of EI regular benefit weeks paid to LPNs per year

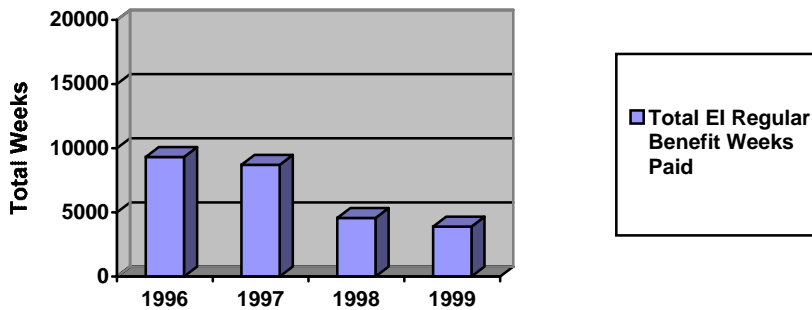


The length of LPN regular benefit EI claims has remained fairly steady averaging 19.1 weeks per claim over the four- year period.

5.5 Total Weeks of EI Benefits Paid To LPNs Per Year

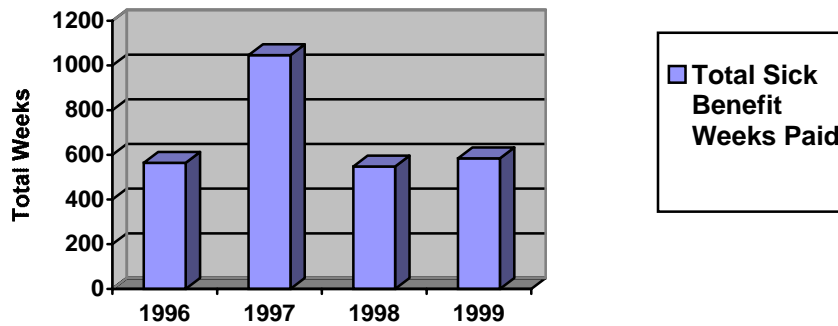
The following tables outline the total number of regular benefit and sick benefit weeks paid to LPNs per year from 1996-1999.

Figure 5: Total EI regular-benefit weeks paid to LPNs per year



There has been a steady decline in the total number of EI weeks paid to LPNs in the province. The number of weeks has decreased by 58.2% from 9314 in 1996 to 3892 in 1999.

Figure 6: Total EI sick benefit weeks paid to LPNs per year



Apart from a sharp increase in 1997, the number of sick benefit weeks for LPNs have remained fairly stable at 565 weeks per year.

6. Results: January – April 2001

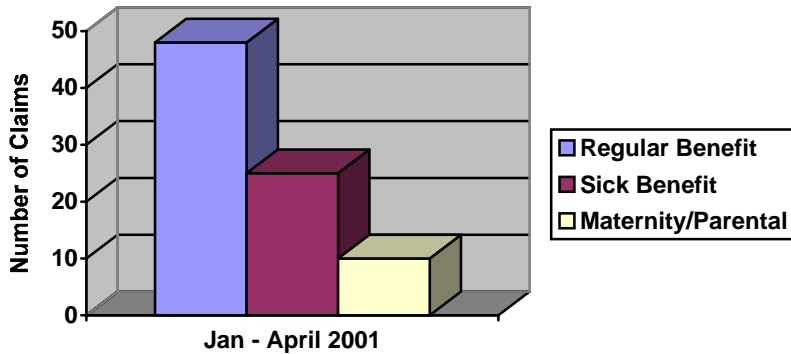
The following data provides information on EI claims that were opened between January 1 and April 31, 2001.

Over this time period there was a total of 88 LPN claims made by 85 individuals.

6.1 Claim Type January – April 2001

The following chart summarizes the number and type of EI claims that have been opened by LPNs from Jan-April 2001. Since a number of claims have been recently opened they have not yet had any weeks paid. For this reason, all accepted claims are included in this section.

Figure 7: Province wide LPN regular, maternity/parental, and sick benefit claims Jan – Apr 2001.



Provincially, for the period Jan 1-April 31, 2001, there have been:

- 48 LPN Regular Benefit Claims
- 25 LPN Sick Benefit Claims
- 10 LPN Maternity/Parental Claims

6.2 Claimants receiving benefits as of May 6th or May 13th, 2001

It was of interest to determine the number of LPN claimants receiving benefits as of the last two “week” codes provided by HRDC (May 6th and May 13th, 2001). This would include all claims from both 2000 and 2001 showing a “last week paid” as one of these two weeks. As of May 6th or May 13th, 2001 there were 85 regular benefit, 16 sick benefit, and 17 maternity/parental claimants receiving benefits throughout the province.

7. Summary

7.1 Summary of Data 1996-2000

i. Portion of Claim Being Used

On average the highest proportion of LPNs use between 0.1% and 25% and between 75.1% and 100% of their entitlement. The overall average percentage of entitlement used is 50.2%

ii. Number of Claimants

Over the five-year period there were 1175 individuals that opened a total of 1846 claims.

iii. Average Age of Claimants

Overall, the average age of LPN claimants is 39.9 years.

iv. Trends in Regular, Maternity/Parental, and Sick Benefit Claims Between 1996 and 2000

The number of regular benefit claims had decreased from 370 (1996) to 141 (1999) but has since increased to 143 in 2000.

The number of maternity/parental claims had decreased from 44(1996) to 22 (1998), but has since increased to 31 in 2000. A continued rise in maternity/parental claims may have significant human resource implications given the federal government's recent decision to increase the combined maternity/parental benefit to 50 weeks.

The number of sick benefit claims, decreased to 44 in 1999 but has since increased to 64 in 2000. The overall average was 54.8 claims per year.

Despite a sharp increase in 1997, the total number of LPN sick benefit weeks has remained fairly stable at approximately 565 weeks per year.

v. Average Number of LPN EI Weeks Paid Per Year

The length of LPN regular benefit claims has averaged approximately 19.1 weeks per year over the five-year period.

vi. Total Number of EI Benefit Weeks Paid To LPNs

Provincially, the number of regular benefit weeks paid to LPNs has decreased by 58.2% from 9314 weeks (1996) to 3892 weeks (1999).

7.2 Summary of Data January – April 2001.

i. Claim Types

Provincially, for the first four months of 2001, there have been 48 regular benefit claims, 25 sick benefit claims, and 10 maternity/parental claims for licensed practical nurses.

Should the current rates continue:

- the number of regular benefit claims will decrease to 135, down from 143 in 2000,
- the number of sick benefit claims will increase to 75 up from 64 in 2000, and
- the number of maternity/parental claims will be down by one from 31 in 2000 to 30 in 2001. However, due to new maternity/parental leave policies, the entitlement per person has doubled therefore impacting workforce participation.

ii. LPNs Currently Collecting EI Benefits

During the first two weeks in May, 2001 there were:

- 85 LPNs across the province paid regular benefits
- 16 LPNs across the province paid sick benefits, and
- 17 LPNs across the province paid maternity/parental benefits. Only the 10 claims that were opened after Jan 1, 2001 are entitled to the increased parental leave benefit, which when combined with maternity leave, now totals 50 weeks.