

Ontario Physician Assistant Association Compensation Report Summary

The Ontario Physician Assistant Association (OPAA) is a provincial union exclusively created to represent hospital-based Physician Assistants. We are looking to increase our numbers to add to the strength of our voice. To outline some of the benefits of joining the OPAA, we have composed a brief summary of our annual compensation review. If you would like more information, please visit <https://opaaonline.ca/>.

Each year, the OPAA requests compensation data from every hospital covered by the OPAA collective agreement. The hospitals are required by the collective agreement to provide this information.

The wage and benefit data are compiled into the *Compensation Report*, which also includes reviewed sources of Physician Assistant (PA) salary data from hospitals outside of the OPAA collective agreement, including those in other parts of Ontario, Canada and the United States. As the work of PAs and Nurse Practitioners (NP) is comparable, NP compensation information for the hospitals covered by the OPAA collective agreement is included as well. This information is then analyzed to determine trends and establish a baseline from which OPAA can prepare for negotiations.

Findings: 2024 Wages & Benefits

The starting wage rates for Physician Assistants vary significantly across OPAA hospitals, which may impact a hospital's ability to hire in this competitive labour market. When considering the compensation data for Physician Assistants outside of the OPAA, we have also found that Physician Assistants are being offered higher wages in Manitoba and Alberta.

We found that many of the benefits provided are comparable across OPAA hospitals. There are significant differences, however, in paramedical packages, dental coverage, and the use of healthcare spending accounts. Vacation entitlements, premiums and additional compensation also vary from hospital to hospital.

Hospital	Location	Start Rate	Top Rate
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre	Toronto	\$49.425	\$63.138
Kingston Health Sciences Centre	Kingston	\$47.62	\$61.33
St. Joseph's Healthcare	Hamilton	\$52.0574	\$60.3481
Trillium Health Partners	Mississauga	\$44.66	\$57.99
Brant Community Health Care System	Brantford	\$50.22	\$57.67
Hamilton Health Sciences	Hamilton	\$48.19	\$57.57
Sinai Health	Toronto	\$45.521	\$56.928

Percentage increases since 2021 (includes post-Bill 124 outcomes)

Hospital	2021	2022	2023	2024	Notes	TOTAL
Kingston Moderation Period: Apr 1/20 - Mar 31/23	1% + 2.5%	1% + 5.75%	3.5% retro to April 1, 2023	3%	• additional merit-based increases available	16.75%
Sinai Health Moderation Period: Jan 1/21 - Dec 31/24	1% + 2%	1% + 2%	3% + 5.08% retro to April 1, 2023	2.5%	• only served 2 yrs of moderation period before Bill 124 was overturned • 5.08% is a market adjustment	16.58%

Hospital	2021	2022	2023	2024	Notes	TOTAL
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moved from 10-step grid to 8-step grid by removing first two steps in 2023 	
Brant Community Health Care System Moderation Period: Apr 1/20 - Mar 31/23	1% + 1.75%	1% + 1%	Total of 7.25%	COLA adjustment of 3% retro to April 1, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> moved from 6-step grid to 4-step grid in 2024 	15%
St Joseph's Healthcare Moderation Period: Sept 1/20 - Aug 31/23	1% + 1%	1% + 2%	1% + 2%	3.5% special adjustment + 3% general wage increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No lump sum payments for pandemic pay 2024 grid change: 8 steps changed to 6 steps with removal of steps 1 & 2 	14.5%
Hamilton Health Sciences Moderation Period: Apr 1/21 - Mar 31/24	1% + 1%	1% + 2%	1% + 2.5%	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grid compression: 8 steps to 6 steps, retroactive April 1, 2023 	11.5%
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre Moderation Period: Apr 1/20 - Mar 31/23	1% + 1%	1% + 2%	3% retro to April 1, 2023	3%		11%
Trillium Health Partners Moderation Period: Apr 1/20 - Mar 31/23	1% + 0.75%	1% + 3.75%	3.5% retro to April 1, 2023	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> additional 1.75% added to top step one year 	13%

2024 OPAA Physician Survey on the Impact of Physician Assistants

The 2024 OPAA Physician Survey on the Impact of Physician Assistants is attached as an appendix to the Compensation Report. This survey was developed by the OPAA Board to leverage the voice of our greatest advocates: the physicians we work with. With the help of our members across the 7 participating hospitals, we rolled out the survey to all the of the physicians we work alongside, 120 of whom participated.

Conclusion

Wages for Physician Assistants need to be increased in order to become competitive with other provinces and recognize the wide and complex scope of the Physician Assistant's practice. In 2024 Physician Assistants in Ontario made, on average, only \$3 more per hour than RNs, who have a significantly smaller scope of practice, and approximately \$16 per hour less than Nurse Practitioners, whose scope of practice is similar to their own.

Physician Assistant compensation should be set on par with Nurse Practitioners. At the OPAA we're committed to closing the salary gap between PAs and NPs, and we plan to achieve this through continuing negotiations with our Employer labour partners and leveraging PA regulation in Ontario in 2025.