

# Health-care workers' pandemic overtime hours highest in more than a decade, CIHI data shows

CASSANDRA SZKLARSKI  
The Canadian Press

OTTAWA  
New labour data offers a snapshot of COVID-19's toll on health-care workers during the earlier part of the pandemic. The Canadian Institute for Health Information said Thursday that more than one in five health-care workers put in overtime in 2021, and that the average overtime hours were the highest in more than a decade. The CIHI report cites Statistics Canada survey data that found more than 236,000 health care workers worked overtime in 2021, with an average of 8.2 hours per week of paid overtime and 5.8 hours per week of unpaid overtime.

When broken down by jobs, 45 per cent of paramedics who responded said they worked overtime, while 34 per cent of salaried family doctors and 31 per cent of respiratory therapists also said they worked extra hours.

The data comes as several hospitals across the country report overwhelming cases of flu and respiratory syncytial virus that are compounding pre-existing workplace stresses and labour shortages.

CIHI's manager of health workforce information says hospital planners and policymakers must grapple with pressures that vary across the country.

"We're continuing to have the ongoing pressures of the pandemic and the subsidiary effects of that," says Lynn McNeely, noting that includes a backlog created by previously postponed and cancelled non-urgent procedures.

Data provided by nursing regulatory colleges also show employment shifts in 2021, which ended with almost 500 fewer registered nurses in long-term care and more than 100 fewer licensed practical nurses working in community health agencies.

During that same calendar year, 1,251 more registered nurses and 667 more licensed practical nurses worked in direct patient care at private nursing agencies, occupational health centres or were self-employed.

The report also quantifies the plummet in physician services during the earliest days of the pandemic, when COVID-19 demands cancelled elective surgeries and curbed non-critical care.

CIHI cites payment data that shows doctors provided nearly eight per cent fewer health-care services in the first three months of the fiscal year starting March 2020 but that service rebounded to pre-pandemic levels by January to March of 2021.



CP PHOTO PATRICE BERGERON

A Polish crew is shown on a tank during a NATO exercise at Camp Adazi near Riga, Latvia on Thursday.

# NATO holding armoured-gun competition in Latvia to test abilities of tank units

PATRICE BERGERON  
The Canadian Press

RIGA, Latvia  
Although tanks have shown their limits in the war in Ukraine, they remain the centrepiece of the battlefield, Capt. Antonio Cornacchi of the Italian armed forces told The Canadian Press Thursday.

Cornacchi is in charge of the armoured-gunnery competition involving troops from 13 NATO countries — including Canada — that is taking place over four days at the Adazi base, located about 200 kilometres from the Russian border and a 45-minute drive from Riga, the capital of NATO member Latvia.

The military exercises — dubbed Iron Spear — involve multinational NATO battle group eFP Latvia, which serves both as a dissuasion and a shield in the event of an attack.

Thirty-four crews from 13 NATO armies are testing the striking force and manoeuvrability of tanks, as a debate rages about the relevance of armoured vehicles, following the setbacks incurred by Russian tank units in the invasion of Ukraine.

Cornacchi said tanks are "highly competitive" during exercises involving firing in motion or from

fixed positions.

"The light infantry are also important for our army, but tanks â remain the focus," Cornacchi, commander of an Italian battle company, said in an interview.

On Thursday, the NATO crews competed for who had the most precise tank-fired shots across a field of a few square kilometres made up of mounds and paths. The shots from tank guns larger than 100 millimetres produced deafening blasts in a viewing bunker where a jury — composed of Italians and representatives from other NATO countries — judged the exercises.

The jury is there to "test in a highly professional way the ability of each crew," Cornacchi said. So far during the competition, he added, the Estonian, Danish and Canadian soldiers "are doing very well." But he said there is more competition to go.

"This is just the first step, and we'll see what happens."

British and Polish soldiers on Thursday morning manoeuvred on the perimeter and fired shots, some while moving and others from fixed positions. Members of other NATO countries watched their colleagues from the roof of the bunker, braving the damp and bitter cold.

The Canadian unit competed with its German-made Leopard tanks, a model the Canadian Forces used during the war in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile in Ukraine, tank combat is common, but new weapons are threatening the tank's supremacy on the battlefield, including from drones and an arsenal of anti-tank missiles supplied by Ukraine's western allies. Among the weapons is the Javelin — which has become a symbol of the Ukraine war — a formidable American-made anti-tank missile. Javelins are small, easy to use and they are wreaking havoc on Russian tank units.

The Ukrainian army has published several videos of turrets from Russian tanks blasting in the air like champagne bottle corks, from the impact of Javelins and other anti-tank missiles: Nlaw, Himars or Carl Gustavs. Canada, for its part, has donated 100 M2 Carl Gustavs to the Ukrainian forces.

Just over 100 years after its invention, the heavy, expensive and cumbersome tank — highly visible and sometimes vulnerable on the battlefield — still plays a critical role in NATO's defence arsenal.

# TSB investigating fatal Nov. 9 helicopter crash near Kitsault, B.C.

The Canadian Press

KITSAULT, B.C.  
The Transportation Safety Board says it's sending an investigator to the remote site of a helicopter crash that killed one person along the north coast of British Columbia.

The board says the Geotech Aviation commercial chopper was conducting survey operations near Kitsault, between Prince Rupert and

Stewart, when it collided with terrain.

It says military aircraft and search and rescue technicians found the fatally injured pilot, who was the sole occupant on board.

There was no fire after the collision but the aircraft was destroyed.

The board says the crash happened more than a week ago, on Nov. 9, but the site is difficult to access and a recovery team was

being co-ordinated Friday.

It says it's too early to say what caused the crash, however the investigator will consider the wreckage, equipment, weather conditions, maintenance history and operation of the aircraft.

Investigations by the board seek to improve transportation safety and do not assign fault or determine civil or criminal liability.

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Medicine Hat

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## DEVELOPMENT PERMITS APPROVED NOVEMBER 10 TO NOVEMBER 16, 2022 PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

### RESIDENTIAL

**99 RANCHVIEW WAY NE** (Lot 97, Block 13, Plan 0910426) PLDP20220958. Single Detached House With Driveway Width Variance.

### COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL/INSTITUTIONAL

**202 8 STREET NE** (Block R6, Plan 1433HS) PLDP20220968. One Freestanding Sign.

### HOME BUSINESS

**17 CYPRESS WAY SE** (Lot 6, Block 4, Plan 731504) PLDP20220736. Home Business Minor. Service (Window Cleaning) And Advertising.

A person claiming to be affected by a decision of the Development Officer or the Municipal Planning Commission may appeal to the Medicine Hat Subdivision and Development Appeal Board by completing and submitting to the City Clerk Department, the required Notice of Appeal form within twenty one (21) days of this publication. Notice of Appeal forms are available from the City Clerk Department, Third Floor, City Hall or on the City's website at www.medicinehat.ca.

All Development Permits listed are subject to conditions. Further information on any Development Permit may be obtained from the Planning & Development Services Department, Second Floor, City Hall during normal business hours (Telephone 403.529.8374).

## PROTECT WATER LINES FROM FREEZING

The following actions should be considered to protect your water lines during the cold weather months:

- Repair broken windows and ensure windows/vents are closed during the winter.
- Insulate water pipes in unheated areas, including crawl spaces.
- For sinks located against a non-insulated outside wall:
  - Open the vanity door to allow warm air to reach the water pipes.
  - A light bulb placed near the water pipe may generate enough heat to keep the water flowing.
  - Heat tape wrapped around the pipe may keep the pipe from freezing.
- Residents of mobile homes should check the condition of the heat tape on their water service and water meter.
- Protect an unheated indoor water meter with an insulated box and water pipes should be wrapped in insulation using heat tape.
- Outside water faucets and underground sprinkler systems should have the water supply shut off inside the house at the isolation valve for the faucet/hose bib.
- Sprinkler lines and faucets should be drained/blown out.
- A thin stream of cold-water (as thick as a pen) running continuously from at least one faucet will help prevent a frozen water service.
- If you plan to be away from home over the winter period, close the main water isolation valve located next to the water meter in your home.
  - You should leave the heat on in your home and have someone check inside your home daily while you're away.

A frozen water service or a burst water pipe is an inconvenience and expense that most people would like to avoid. Please take all possible precautions to prevent this happening in your home or business.

For more information, refer to www.medicinehat.ca/frozenwaterlines or contact City Assets Environmental Utilities at 403-529-8176.

**www.medicinehat.ca**