

The Impact of Arthritis: British Columbia

The Human Story

Approximately 700,000 voters in BC, 15% of adults in British Columbia, report arthritis in Canadian Health Surveys. Arthritis affects more women than men and 57% of people with arthritis are 64 years or younger.

BC's aging population combined with other factors mean that, by 2040, one in four British Columbians, an estimated 1 million adults, will join the ranks of those living with arthritis.

Osteoarthritis (OA) in British Columbia

Approximately 650,000 people – or 1 in 7 – are living with Osteoarthritis (OA). Within a generation (30 years) it is anticipated that 1 in 4 or 1.49 million British Columbians will be living with OA and one person in British Columbia will be diagnosed every 8.8 minutes.

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) in British Columbia

Unlike OA, Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) can occur at any age. In 2010, 45,000 people in British Columbia were living with RA. The prevalence of RA is expected to rise by 80 per cent by 2030. In 2040, more than 80,000 people – or 1 in 71 people in British Columbia – will be living with RA; one person in British Columbia will be diagnosed with RA every 2.6 hours.

Economic Impact

Arthritis is the most common cause of work disability in Canada, resulting in both poor quality of life and workplace limitations. While employees living with arthritis are able to contribute mentally, their joints are in severe pain and they are likely to leave the workforce earlier than planned, including going on disability (18% within five years after diagnosis and 27% within 10 years after diagnosis).

Other studies have clearly shown that the cost of being present, but less productive, is higher than the cost of being absent, with a workforce survey showing the cost was four times higher than the cost of missed days from work.

Impact on the Productivity of the British Columbia Labour Force (Osteoarthritis)

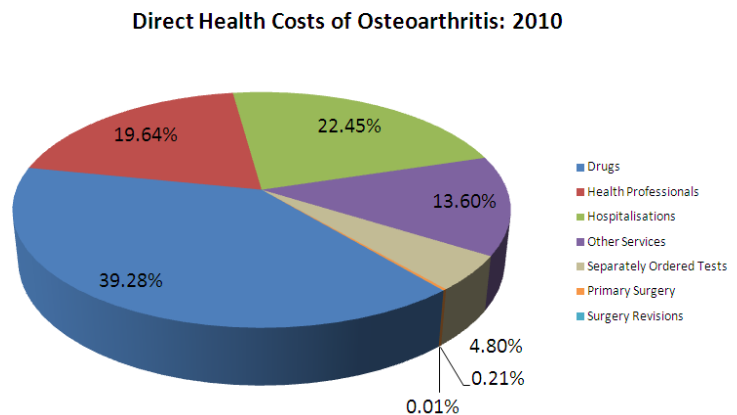
While OA is generally perceived as a condition that affects older adults, it is estimated that OA resulted in \$2.13 billion dollars in productivity losses in British Columbia in 2010. This number is expected to rise by 57 per cent by 2020 and more than double by 2040 (117 per cent). Summed over the next 30 years, OA is expected to result in \$112 billion billion in productivity losses in British Columbia alone (after adjusting for inflation and interest rates).

Impact on the Productivity of the British Columbia Labour Force (Rheumatoid Arthritis)

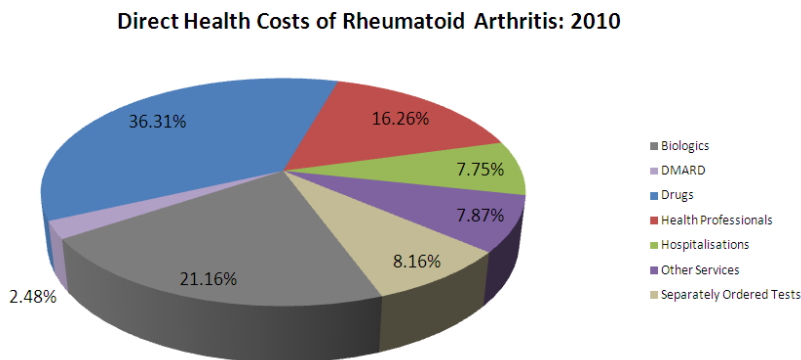
On average, someone with RA will be work disabled within 10 years of getting the disease. In 2010, it is estimated that RA generated \$402 million dollars in productivity losses in British Columbia. This number is expected to rise by 101 per cent by the year 2040. The cumulative total productivity losses generated by RA are expected to reach \$20.1 billion dollars by 2040 (after adjusting for inflation and interest rates).

Direct Health Care Costs (OA) on the Province of British Columbia

It is estimated that OA drove \$1.41 billion dollars in direct health care costs in British Columbia in 2010. These costs are expected to rise by 70 per cent by 2020 and by 112 per cent in 2040 (in 2010 dollar terms). Over the next 30 years, the cumulative total direct health care costs associated with OA in British Columbia are expected to exceed \$76.3 billion dollars.



Direct Health Care Costs (RA) on the Province of British Columbia



It is estimated that RA drove \$329 million dollars in direct health care costs in British Columbia in 2010. These costs are expected to rise by 41 per cent by 2040 (in 2010 dollar terms). Total cumulative direct health care costs associated with RA in British Columbia are expected to exceed \$13.3 billion dollars over the next 30 years (2040).