

## Comparator Groups in the MD Snapshot

Comparative data provides additional perspective to the **MD Snapshot-Prescribing**. Our first iteration (December 2016) included data relative to all other physicians in the province. Valuable feedback and enhanced capacity now allow us to provide refined peer comparisons to physicians.

### Creating Comparator Groups:

Specialties or subspecialty groups with similar clinical practices and prescribing patterns were grouped together to create comparator groups. Opioid and Benzodiazepine/Z drugs were developed separately to account for variations in prescribing patterns across these analytical classes. The box below provides a step-by-step overview of the process used to create comparator groups for the **MD Snapshot**.

#### Step-by-step guide: Comparator Groups

1. The measure of interest for opioids was OME/day/patient.
2. The measure of interest for benzodiazepines was DDDs/patient.
3. Distributions (visualized with box plots) were created for each specialty based the applicable measure of interest (as defined in 1 and 2).
4. Specialties with similar distributions and similar clinical practice were clustered together and further examined.
5. If one specialty was clinically similar, however their prescribing pattern (e.g. OME/day/patient) was drastically different from the rest of the groups', it was either moved to a different group or formed into a group on its own provided it contained more than fifty physicians (e.g. opioid orthopedic surgery).
6. The number of prescribing physicians and distributions were checked for consistency using data from three previous quarters.
7. Specialties with very few physicians or where a peer group comparison was not otherwise meaningful (e.g. pathology) were excluded.

### Comparator Group Assignment:

Physicians were assigned to the group containing their primary specialty for comparison. This is self-reported and is the same as what is displayed under 'Practice Discipline' on the public directory.

See Appendix for a full list of comparator groups and excluded specialties.

### Tips for physicians reviewing their **MD Snapshot**:

- Your assignment to a comparator group is based on the information you provide to the College. This is usually done during annual renewal and includes submission of credentials with supporting documentation.
- Variations in practice type, e.g. rural vs. urban practice or part-time vs. full-time, are not reflected in the comparator groups. You should take this into account when interpreting your peer comparator data.

## Appendix: Specialties by Comparator Group

| Breakdown of comparator groups by prescribing domain  |   |
|---|---|
| Opioids   | BDZ/Z   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Family Medicine, Family Medicine (Sport and Exercise), General Practice</li> <li>B. Cardiology, Endocrinology &amp; Metabolism, Gastroenterology, General Internal Medicine, Hematology, Internal Medicine, Nephrology, Neurology, Physical Medicine &amp; Rehab, Respiriology and Rheumatology</li> <li>C. Cardiovascular &amp; Thoracic Surgery, General Surgery, Head and Neck Surgery, Neurosurgery, Obstetrics &amp; Gynecology, Ophthalmology, Otolaryngology, Plastic Surgery, Thoracic Surgery, Urology and Vascular Surgery</li> <li>D. Orthopedic Surgery</li> <li>E. Psychiatry</li> <li>F. Anesthesiology and Family Medicine (Family Practice Anesthesia)</li> <li>G. Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine (Emergency Medicine)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Family Medicine, Family Medicine (Care of the Elderly), Family Medicine (Sport and Exercise Medicine) and General Practice</li> <li>B. Cardiology, Clinical Immunology &amp; Allergy, Dermatology, Endocrinology &amp; Metabolism, Gastroenterology, General Internal Medicine, Hematology, Infectious Diseases, Internal Medicine, Nephrology, Neurology, Physical Medicine &amp; Rehabilitation, Respiriology and Rheumatology</li> <li>C. Cardiac Surgery, Cardiovascular &amp; Thoracic Surgery, Colorectal surgery, General Surgery, Neurosurgery, Obstetrics &amp; Gynecology, Ophthalmology, Orthopedic Surgery, Otolaryngology, Plastic Surgery and Urology</li> <li>D. Psychiatry</li> <li>E. Anesthesiology and Family Medicine (Family Practice Anesthesia)</li> <li>F. Emergency Medicine and Family Medicine (Emergency Medicine)</li> </ul> |

### Excluded Specialties

Anatomical Pathology; Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; Community Medicine; Critical Care Medicine; Diagnostic Radiology; Family Medicine (Palliative Care); Forensic Psychiatry; General Surgical Oncology; Geriatric Medicine; Geriatric Psychiatry; Gynecologic Oncology; Gynecologic Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility; Maternal-Fetal Medicine; Medical Biochemistry; Medical Genetics; Medical Microbiology; Medical Oncology; Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine; Neuropathology; Nuclear Medicine; Occupational Medicine; Ophthalmology; Pain Medicine; Palliative Medicine; Pathology, General; Pediatric Cardiology; Pediatric Emergency Medicine; Pediatric Gastroenterology; Pediatric Hematology & Oncology; Pediatric Neurology; Pediatric Respiriology; Pediatric Surgery; Pediatric Urology; Pediatrics; Public Health and Preventive Medicine; Radiation Oncology; Sport and Exercise Medicine Vascular Surgery\*; Thoracic Surgery\*; Cardiac Surgery†; Clinical Immunology & Allergy†; Colorectal Surgery†; Dermatology†; Family Medicine (Care of the Elderly)†; Infectious diseases†

(\*) Excluded from BDZ/Z drug comparator groups only; (†) Excluded from Opioids comparator groups only