

Canadian Policy
Research Networks

IEHPs, Sustainability and Ethics: The Need for a Pan-Canadian HHR Grow-Up

*International Symposium on Health Innovation
Vancouver, BC*

Tom McIntosh

Director, Health Policy
Canadian Policy Research Networks

20 June 2007

Canadian Policy Research Networks

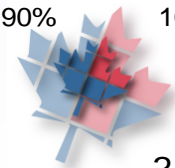
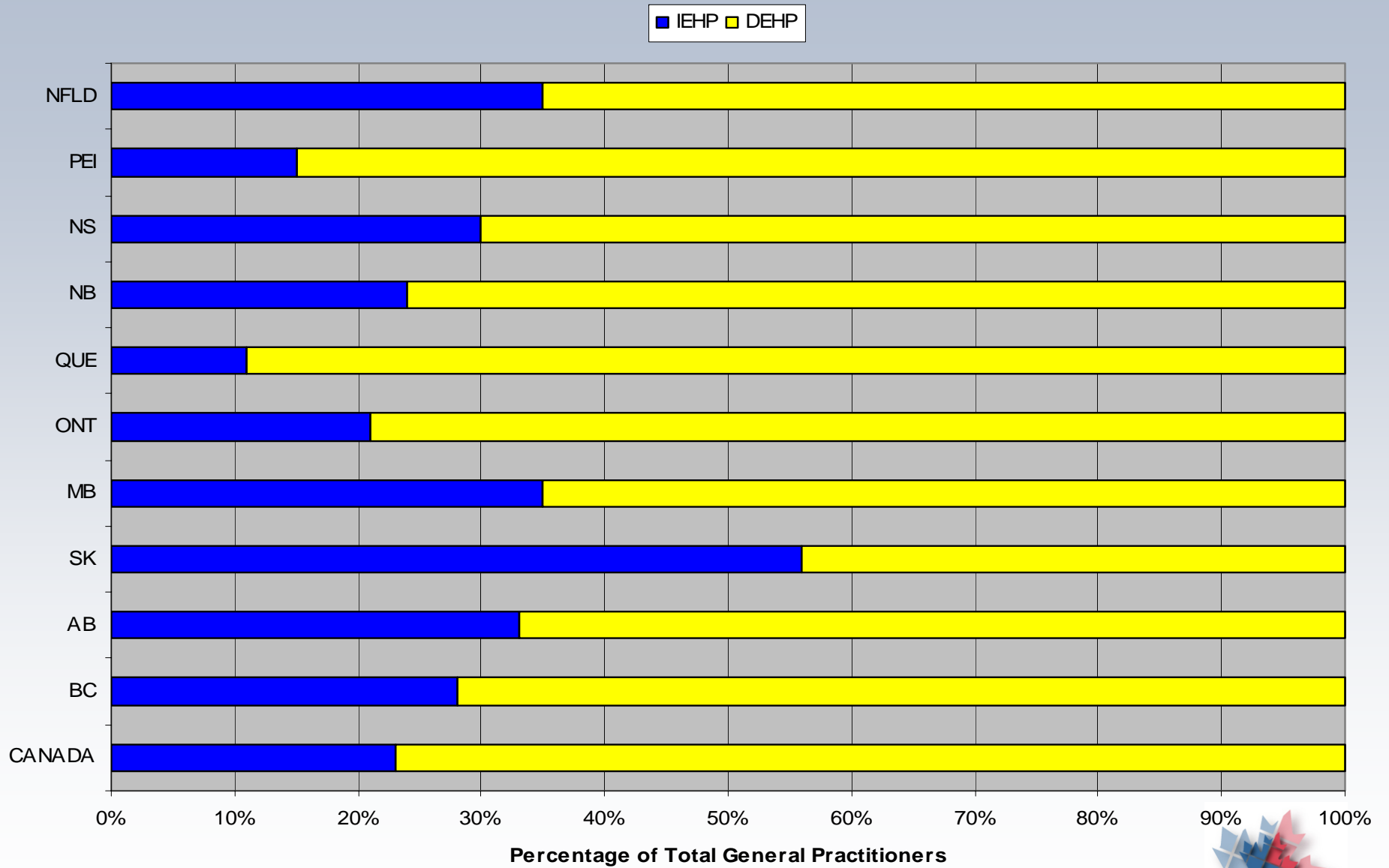


Presentation Outline

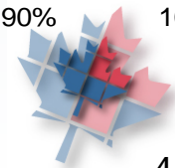
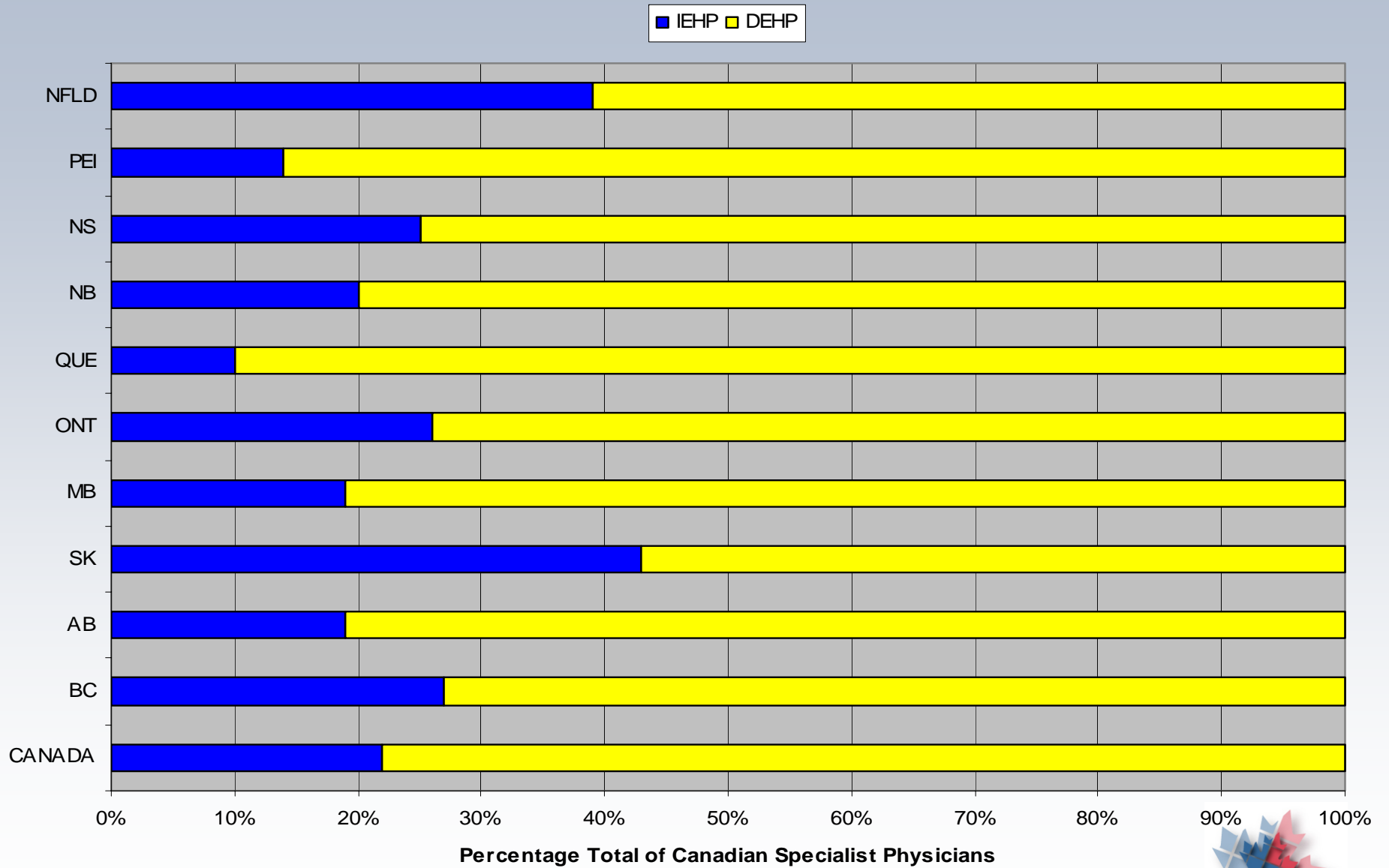
- IEHPs in Canada
- The ethical (& practical) challenges for Canada
- Thoughts on “Sustainability”
- Issues and Challenges
- Towards a Pan-Canadian HHR Grow-Op...
 - Where do IEHPs fit in the mix



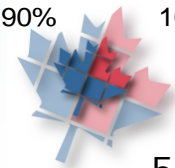
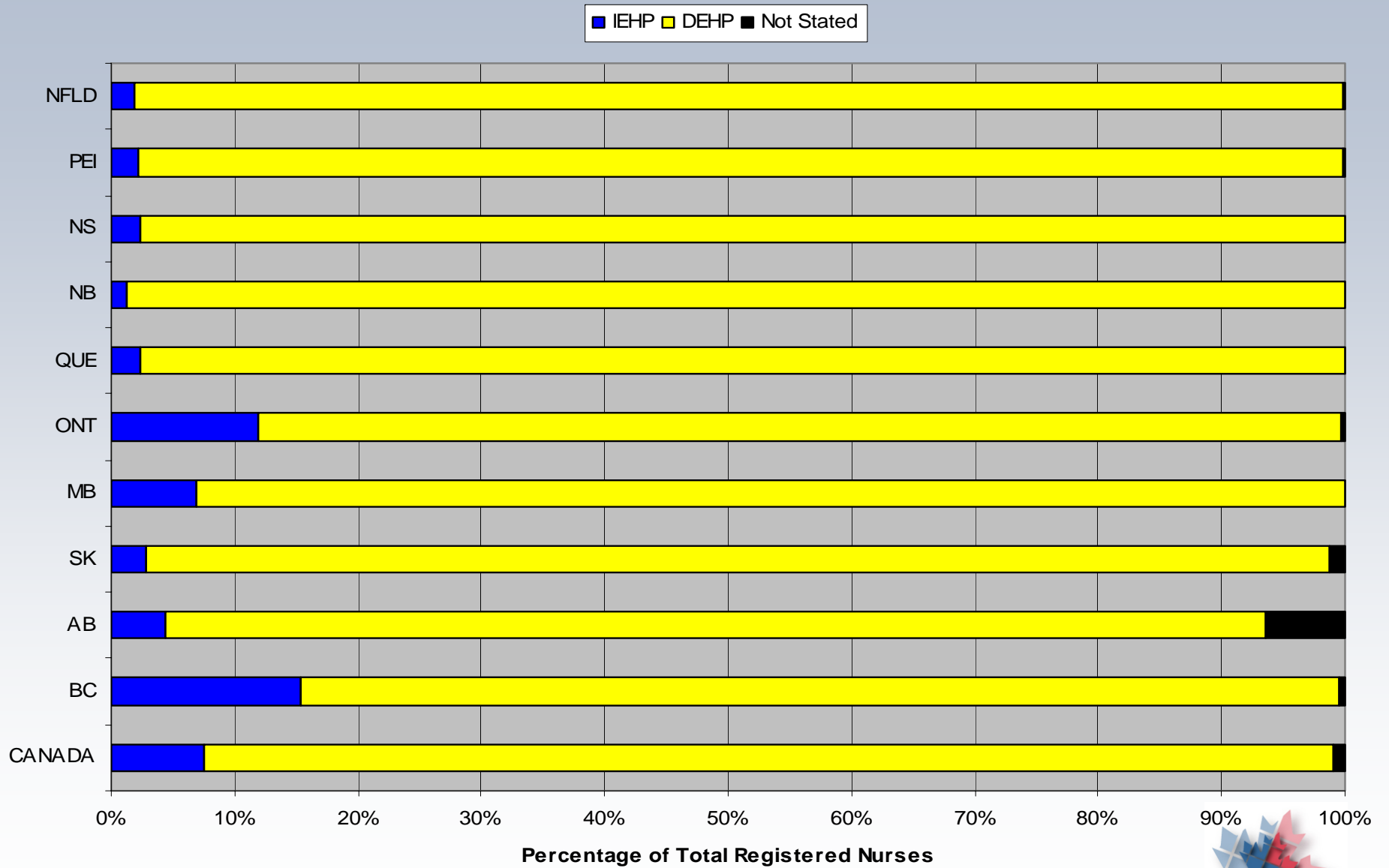
Canadian General Practitioners - IEHP vs DEHP (CIHI 2005)



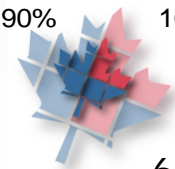
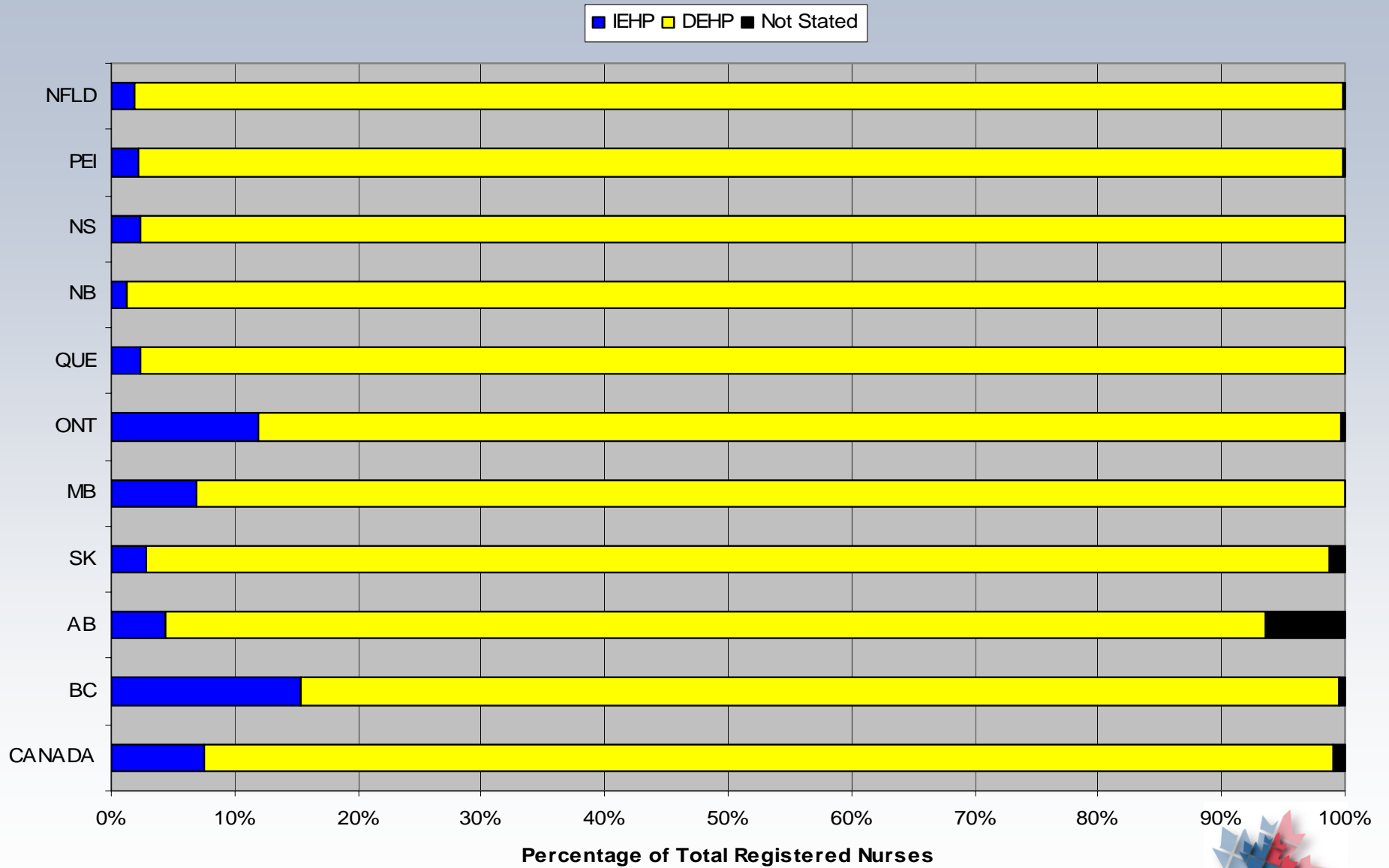
Canadian Specialist Physicians - IEHP vs DEHP (CIHI 2005)



Canadian Registered Nurses - IEHP vs DEHP (CIHI 2005)



Canadian Registered Nurses - IEHP vs DEHP (CIHI 2005)



The Ethical Dilemmas (Part I)

- Proportion of IEHPs rising over last decades
- IEHPs have the right to move
 - And “push” factors are real in developing world (poverty, war, economic instability, social instability)
- Canada has very real shortages and mal-distributions of health professionals
 - These are the result (in some cases) of past policy choices
- Developing countries invest proportionately more resources in creating health profs



The Ethical Dilemmas (Part II)

- By any measure, Canada's health care challenges pale in comparison to those of developing countries
- Widespread consensus that the "active recruitment" of IEHPs from developing countries is inappropriate...
- But no consensus on how (or even whether) it can be curtailed
 - Reparations popular with developing countries, but unworkable & untenable for developed countries



Codes of Conduct

- United Kingdom Code of Conduct, 1999
 - Revised 3 times
- World Medical Association Guidelines on Ethical Recruitment of Physicians
 - Endorsed by SRPC, CNA & CMA
- Commonwealth Code of Practice, 2002
 - Canada supports, but has not signed
- Issue raised, but not explicitly confronted, by Nursing Sector Study & Task Force II



Thoughts on Sustainability

- In Canada, “sustainability” usually refers to the system’s cost:
 - % of annual increase in health budget
 - % of provincial program spending for health care
 - % of GDP for health care
- But it is not an economic term – its about how much we value something
 - We will sustain publicly financed health care for as long as (and to the extent that) we value it



IEHPs & Sustainability (?)

- We likely **could** “sustain” our reliance on IEHPs, even on those from developing world
- The real questions is ***“Should we sustain our reliance on IEHPs?”***
 - It is not an economic question, but a question of our values & how we view the ethics of this issue
- Our shortages of health professionals is a problem we have created – its roots lie in our past policy choices



Towards a Pan-Canadian HHR Grow-Op

- F/P/T have committed to:
 - Developing integrated provincial HHR plans
 - Moving toward “self-sufficiency” in HHR
 - Furthering the implementation of a Pan-Canadian HHR Framework in all jurisdictions
- But governments continue to:
 - Resist pressure to abide by international CoCs
 - Move slowly on integrating existing IEHPs
 - Implement strategies for interprovincial recruitment



What is to be done?

- Transparency & accountability on IEHPs:
 - Are some countries/regions “off-limits”?
 - What can institutions/RHAs/provinces do and not do in their recruitment? Not just “who”, but also “how”
- Intergovernmental collaboration & cooperation
 - Interprovincial competition will have to be confronted
- Intragovernmental collaboration will be necessary
 - Labour, Immigration, Health all have different interests & understandings of the issue...



Concluding Comments

- IEHPs have to be seen as one part of the overall process of “growing” HHR in Canada
 - But we can not ignore the ethics of the issue
 - “Where from” and “How they’re recruited”
- HHR is a local problem, a regional problem, a provincial problem and a national problem
 - International dimensions can’t be forgotten either
- “Made in BC” versus “Made in Canada” is a false dichotomy...it has to be both.





Canadian Policy
Research Networks

For additional information:

www.cprn.org

e-mail: info@cprn.org

Receive news of CPRN publications, presentations and events on your desktop by subscribing to *e-network*, our free weekly electronic newsletter.

www.e-network.ca

(See Web site for details)

Canadian Policy Research Networks

