

Genetic Counsellor

Help families understand inherited disease, genetic tests and what the results mean. A science degree, a hard-to-get 2-year master's, and a fast-growing field.

TYPICAL PAY

\$97,000

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$50k to \$125k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

6 to 7 years

after high school

DEMAND

Good

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospital genetics clinics, cancer centres, prenatal clinics, testing l...

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
 Biology, chemistry, math and English. You need marks for a science degree.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
 Usually genetics, biology or molecular biology, with a psychology course. Manitoba wants a GPA (grade point average) of 3.7 in your last two years. Volunteer in crisis counselling, hospice or disability support, because programs want to see counselling experience, not just ma...
- 3 Master's in genetic counselling** 2 years
 Five programs in Canada: UBC (University of British Columbia), Manitoba, Toronto, McGill and Université de Montréal in French. Classes, clinical rotations and a research project. Manitoba takes three students a year.
- 4 Certification exam** After graduation
 The CBGC (Canadian Board of Genetic Counselling) exam earns the CCGC (Certified Canadian Genetic Counsellor) credential. Many also write the American board exam. Manitoba reports a 100% first-time pass rate over the last three years.

Pros and cons

- + Weekday hours, no on-call, good hospital pension
- + Genomics is growing fast and jobs keep opening
- + Long, meaningful conversations with patients
- Admission is a long shot; many apply two or three times
- You deliver devastating news, sometimes about unborn children
- Not yet regulated, so the title is not protected

Good to know

About 600 in the whole country

The CAGC (Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors) counts more than 600 genetic counsellors working in Canadian health care, and the association itself has over 400 members. A small profession...

Three seats a year

The University of Manitoba's master's program admits three students each fall and wants a GPA (grade point average) of at least 3.7. Across all five Canadian programs, only a few dozen new counsellors graduat...

Optional boosts

Hereditary cancer. Prenatal and reproductive. Pediatric and rare disease. Laboratory and industry.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Genetic counsellor, wages (updated Nov 2025)
 Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors: training programs
 Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors: regulation
 University of Manitoba: Genetic Counselling, Master of Science

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/genetic-counsellor>



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