

PRESS RELEASE

If Premier for a Day, Canadians' Would Ask the Federal Government to Help Them Improve Access to Health Care Services

The Federal Role Beyond the Cheque Book: Standardizing and Protecting Health Care

Toronto, ON, July 8, 2019 — Numerous surveys have shown that health care is the top issue of concern for Canadians as they think about the upcoming Federal Election. Canadians want their leaders to address it in their platforms, they want details on how political parties plan to improve health care and 60% have told us that their vote will be determined by who has the best plan for the future of health care.

The Canadian Medical Association and Ipsos decided to dig a bit deeper into the issue of health care to see what, if any, prescriptions Canadians would offer for improving the health system.

To do this, Canadians were asked what they would ask the Federal Government for if they were their Provincial Premier. Better access (35%) and funding (19%) top the list of "if I were the Premier" asks. But system improvements (15%) and issues of affordability (7%) also emerged, showing that Canadians understand the need for change and that the future of health care is about more than increased funding alone.

Would-be Premiers from Atlantic Canada (53%) and Quebec (45%) are most likely to push for better access ahead of all other provinces (ranging from 28% in Ontario to 35% in BC). The Prairies (19%), Western Canada (18% Alberta, 15% BC,) and Ontario (16%) are all more likely to ask for system improvements compared to Quebec (9%). Those in BC (11%) and Ontario (9%) are both more likely to raise issues of affordability compared to all other provinces (ranging from 2% in Alberta to 4% in Quebec).

Along this line, Canadians were asked what one thing (besides additional funding) they would like to see the Federal Government do to improve health care in Canada. Standardizing services to ensure consistent quality across the country came out on top, prioritized by a quarter (24%) of Canadians; followed by:

- Enforcing the Canada Health Act (e.g. protect against user fees, privatization) (17%)
- Setting health care improvement goals (15%)
- Establishing a common, national list of drugs covered by the public system (13%)

While pharmacare has been in the news of late, it seems many Canadians would prefer to see an even more active Federal Government when it comes to health care matters.

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Regionally, Albertans are the most likely to want to see the federal government standardize services (33%), significantly more so than Ontarians and Quebecers (22%, respectively). Those in the Prairies (23%), Albertans (21%) and Ontarians (19%) are all significantly more likely to want the federal government to enforce the Canada Health Act (e.g. protect against user fees, privatization) compared to those in Quebec (13%) and Atlantic Canada (11%). Quebecers are more likely to prioritize setting health care improvement goals (22%) more so than Albertans (8%), Prairie residents (14%) and Ontarians (14%).

Other areas such as sharing best practices across the country (8%), setting up accountability measures (8%), reporting on health care performance (6%), and showing leadership by creating health innovation pilot projects (5%) were chosen by less than one in ten Canadians.

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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between June 21st to 25th 2019, on behalf of the Canadian Medical Association. For this survey, a sample of 2,003 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadian adults been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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About Ipsos

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Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

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