



## PRESS RELEASE

### Younger Working Canadians More Likely to Value Virtual Healthcare as Employee Benefit, and to Use it for Mental Health Services

They are also more likely to face time pressure obstacles when visiting a health care practitioner such as wait times, practitioner availability, lack of time to get appointments, and ability to get off work.

**Toronto, ON, November 19, 2019** — Currently, younger working Canadians are most likely to value healthcare support offered by their employer in the form of virtual care or telemedicine, according to a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of RBC insurance. Nine in ten (94%) of working Canadians are more likely to work for an employer that cares about their overall health and wellbeing. Three-quarters (72%) indicate that they would perceive their employer in a more positive light if they offered virtual care/telemedicine, which would eliminate the need to leave work or home. This is mostly driven by younger working Canadians (18-34 78%, 35-54 74% vs. 55+ 60%) who are most likely to indicate that being offered this virtual care would improve opinions of their employer. This is particularly important because younger working Canadians currently indicate lower ratings of their employer (18-34 56% vs. 55+ 66%) and lower job satisfaction (18-34 52%, 35-54 59% vs. 55+70%).

The value of digital tools extends beyond health care delivery to managing insurance benefits as two-thirds (66%) of working Canadians indicate that they prefer a mobile app to manage and access their insurance benefits as opposed to using paper mail, telephone, or even online services. Once again, this preference is highest among younger Canadians, particularly Millennials, as less than half of Baby Boomers echo this sentiment (18-34 77%, 35-54 66% vs. 55+ 48%).

The top obstacles for working Canadians when visiting a health practitioner are related to time constraints such as wait times (59%), availability of a healthcare practitioner during evenings and weekends (52%), lack of time to get an appointment (45%), and ability to get time off work (42%). Younger Canadians' preference for virtual care should be understood in light of the finding that they are more likely to cite these time pressures, as well as lack of transportation (18-34 34%, 35-54 26%, 55+ 12%) as obstacles in visiting a healthcare practitioner. While a third of working Canadians (36%) indicate that not having a family doctor acts as an obstacle for them, this too is driven by younger Canadians as it is least likely to be a hindrance for Baby Boomers (18-34 42%, 35-54 38%, 55+ 23%).



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<b>To what extent are the following factors listed an obstacle for you to visit a health practitioner (i.e. doctor, therapist, etc.)? - Top 2 Box Summary</b>				
<b>Base: Employed Canadians</b>				
	Total n=1501	18-34 n=511	35-54 n=662	55+ n=328
Wait times to see a healthcare practitioner or specialist	59%	59%	63%	50%
Availability of health practitioner when needed i.e. evenings and weekends	52%	52%	56%	44%
Lack of time to get appointments	45%	52%	45%	36%
Ability to get time off work	42%	48%	43%	30%
Not having/not able to find a family doctor	36%	42%	38%	23%
Securing childcare (Asked only to employed Canadians with children)	35%	40%	35%	6%
Avoidance of going to the doctor or a healthcare practitioner	31%	39%	31%	18%
Health facilities not available in my location (i.e. remote)	29%	34%	29%	21%
Lack of transportation to get to appointments	26%	34%	26%	12%

Majority of working Canadians (80%) indicate that a tailored personalized wellness program would positively impact their overall well-being. Over three-quarters of working Canadians indicate that they would be likely to use virtual care to get a prescription refill (77%) and six in 10 (58%) would use it to consult a doctor for an acute problem like a virus or rash. Half would use it to consult with a mental health practitioner about their current challenges (50%) or use video/telephone mental health counselling (45%). The use of virtual care for mental health services is highest among younger Canadians who are more likely to use it to:

- consult mental health practitioners (18-34 53%, 35-54 52%, 55+ 39%), and
- avail video/telephone mental health counselling (18-34 51%, 35-54 46%, 55+ 33%)

This is in line with the finding that younger Canadians report lower levels of overall wellbeing (18-34 62% vs. 55+ 74%) and mental health (18-34 57%, 35-54 67%, vs 55+ 79%) in particular.



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### About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between May 7<sup>th</sup> and May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, on behalf of RBC Insurance. For this survey, a sample of 1501 employed 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  $\pm 2.9$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all employed Canadians aged 18+ 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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