



PRESS RELEASE

Mental Illness now Considered by More Canadians as a Disability

Burnout, increased workload and financial protection if sick with COVID-19 among top stressors.

Toronto, February 4, 2022 — Shifts in the structure of daily life caused by the global pandemic, including the workplace and socialization, have disrupted the way in which people think about a variety of aspects, including their mental health and wellbeing. According to a 2021 Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of RBC Insurance, working Canadians are now more likely to see mental health as a disability, particularly depression (54%, up 7 points) and anxiety (44%, up 6 points), figures significantly higher than what were seen in 2019. Simultaneously, just over half (54%) have rated their mental health as good or excellent, a drop in 12 percentage points from the same year.

Young Canadians more likely to see depression and anxiety as disabilities compared to older generations

A larger proportion of Canadians between the ages of 18-34 say they consider anxiety (69%) and depression (59%) as mental health challenges. Conversely, Canadians in the 55 and older demographic are less likely to consider both to be mental health challenges at 42% and 29%, respectively. This could indicate the amount of stress that the pandemic continues to have on younger generations, or perhaps the higher likelihood of younger generations reporting issues surrounding their mental health.

Those with Group Benefits Less Likely to Feel Stressed

Working Canadians are seeing the importance of taking care of their mental health; those who rated their mental health as poor (32%) were more likely to take time off from work as a result of a disability compared to Canadians who report their mental health as good (12%). Feelings of burnout topped the list as the basis for stress (42%), highlighting the instability and confusion surrounding their work/life balance as lockdown restrictions have forced working Canadians to work from home. Thirty-nine per cent (39%) of working Canadians labeled finances and income protection if they get sick or have COVID-19 as the second highest stressor, with a heavier workload in line for third (33%).

Feelings of stress are less prevalent among working Canadians who have an insurance plan in place. Among those who have a group benefits plan through their work, 60% say their mental health is excellent/good compared to who do not have a plan through their work (49%). Moreover, among those who personally bought their own insurance coverage, 66% report having better mental health than those who did not buy personal insurance coverage (51%).



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between October 14 to 18, 2021. For this survey, a sample of 1,501 employed Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the 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 ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. 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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ISIN code FR0000073298, Reuters ISOS.PA, Bloomberg IPS:FP

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