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A FAMILY MEMBER WAITED LONGER THAN
REASONABLE FOR ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES.**

***Three Quarters (74%) See The Shortage Of Health Professionals
As The Main Reason Waiting Times And Access Are Getting
Worse***

Public Release Date: Wednesday, February 25th, 2004 – 1:30 p.m. (EDT)



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Three Quarters (74%) See The Shortage Of Health Professionals As The Main Reason Waiting Times And Access Are Getting Worse

Ottawa, ONTARIO – According to a new poll conducted by Ipsos-Reid on behalf of the Canadian Medical Association, two-thirds (67%) of Canadians say that they or a family member waited longer than was reasonable for access to health care services. Between 1999 and 2004, the percentage saying their wait was longer than reasonable to see a specialist has increased from 31% to 49%, to see a family physician has increased from 21% to 38% and for advanced diagnostics from 14% to 31%. Additionally, most believe access has worsened over the past two years in key areas such as access to emergency rooms services (64%), surgery (58%), and advanced diagnostics (52%).

Overall, Canadians demonstrate the greatest concern regarding the waiting times to see specialists (75%), waiting times in emergency rooms (74%), and shortages of health professionals (75%).

When asked, Canadians see the shortage of health professionals (74%) as the main reason waiting times and access to health care services is getting worse. Belief that there is an adequate supply of physicians has dropped from 35% in 1999 to 14% in 2004.

Among Canadians who have waited longer than was reasonable for access to health care services, most (58%) say that they simply waited. Close to one-half of those who waited (48%) report that they had to cope with worsening conditions and/or increased anxiety.



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These are the findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Canadian Medical Association between January 29th and February 3rd, 2004. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,500 adult Canadians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 2.8 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.

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