

# MAJORITY OF DOCTORS AND NURSES CONCERNED ABOUT NEGATIVE IMPACT OF WAIT TIMES ON PATIENTS' HEALTH

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Patients' Conditions Have Worsened While Waiting For Care  
Majority of Doctors And Nurses Concerned About Inability Of  
Different Levels Of Government To Work Together To Improve  
Healthcare System – Almost All Support Need For National  
Strategy To Improve Access To Healthcare Services*



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To Improve Access To Healthcare Services***

**Ottawa, ON** - As the Premiers descend upon Niagara On The Lake, Ontario, to meet in their "Council Of The Federation" to formulate strategy in order to provide a united front for the September meeting healthcare summit with Prime Minister Paul Martin, a new poll released today co-sponsored by the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Nurses Association shows that the vast majority of doctors and nurses in Canada are not only concerned with the negative impact of wait-times on patients' health, but are also almost unanimously in agreement for a national strategy to improve access to healthcare services.

*These are the findings of a telephone survey of 200 doctors and 100 nurses conducted from June 25<sup>th</sup> to July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The survey was co-sponsored by the Canadian Medical Association and the Canadian Nurses Association. With a samples of these sizes, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 6.9$  percentage points for physicians and  $\pm 9.8$  percentage points for nurses 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire practicing doctor and nurse populations in Canada been surveyed.*

According to the poll conducted by Ipsos-Reid, the majority of doctors and nurses surveyed are concerned about the negative impact of wait times on patients' health (78% physicians

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and 91% nurses) - with almost half of doctors (44%) and nurses (49%) saying their patients' conditions have worsened while waiting for care. Further, some doctors and nurses say their patients "lose the ability to function normally" (11% physicians and 18 % nurses) and become "unable to work" (8% physicians and 6% nurses) as consequences of having to wait for care.

The majority of doctors (81%) and nurses (86%) are concerned about the inability of different levels of government to work together to improve the health care system, and almost all doctors (90%) and nurses (97%) surveyed support the need for a national strategy to improve access to health care services.

Finally, nine in ten doctors (90%) and nurses (91%) think Canada simply does not have enough doctors to meet the country's health care needs, and the same proportion of doctors (88%) and nurses (93%) think Canada simply does not have enough nurses to meet the country's health care needs.

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