

Nine In Ten (86%) Canadians Say There Is A National Shortage Of Doctors

Nearly all (96%) say it is important that the government takes a leadership role in dealing with the shortage

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Toronto, ON – It seems that Canadians are becoming increasingly concerned by the lack of doctors in the country. According to a new poll conducted by Ipsos Reid on behalf of the Canadian Medical Association, only 14% of Canadians agree (3% ‘strongly’, 11% ‘somewhat’) that the country has a sufficient number of doctors today to provide timely access to health care to meet the health care needs of the population. Nearly nine in ten (86%) disagree, saying there is a shortage.

- Canadians between the ages of 18 and 34 (18%) are more likely than those between the ages of 35 and 54 (14%) and those over the age of 54 (9%) to think that there are enough doctors in the country.
- Canadians living in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (27%) are more likely to think the same thing, compared to residents of Atlantic Canada (18%), Quebec (15%), Ontario (12%), British Columbia (12%), and Alberta (10%).

In fact, nearly all Canadians (96%) say it is important to them that the Government take a leadership role in dealing with the shortage of doctors in Canada. Additionally, nine in ten (89%) say that if a federal election were to be held in the next few months, the shortage of doctors in Canada would be an important issue (48% ‘very important’, 42% ‘somewhat important’) in the election.

- Women (96%) are more likely than men (83%) to say the doctor shortage would be an important election issue.
- Residents of Atlantic Canada (94%) and vote-heavy Ontario (93%) are more likely to say the shortage would be an important issue in the election, compared to Canadians living in Alberta (87%), British Columbia (87%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (87%), and Quebec (86%).

Along the same lines, nine in ten Canadians (91%) say that it is important (49% 'very important', 42% 'somewhat important') for a political party to include a plan for addressing the Canadian doctor shortage in their platform. One in four Canadians (24%) say that dealing with a shortage of physicians would be the most important issue in determining their vote in the next election, but just over a third (36%) say the most important issue for them would be the economy. Other issues include the environment (19%), the war in Afghanistan (11%), and crime (10%).

- Women (29%) are more likely than men (18%) to say that the shortage of doctors would be the most important issue in the election, while men (41%) tend to put more importance in the economy than women (31%).
- Residents of Quebec (30%) are more likely to say the shortage of doctors would be the most important issue, compared to those living in Ontario (25%), Atlantic Canada (20%), British Columbia (20%), Alberta (18%), and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (12%).

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of CMA from 03/21 to 03/24, 2008. This online survey of 1,023 adult Canadians was conducted via the Ipsos I-Say Online Panel, Ipsos Reid's national online panel. The results are based on a sample where quota sampling and

weighting are employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to Census data. Quota samples with weighting from the Ipsos online panel provide results that are intended to approximate a probability sample. An unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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