

Only a Slim Majority (55%) 'Agrees' That Health Care Services in Their Community Are Patient-Centred

*Best Scores Related to Treatment from Health Care Providers;
Worst Scores Related to Wait Times and Appointment Delays*

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Toronto, ON – Reflecting on whether or not the health care services in their community are patient-centred, according to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Canadian Medical Association, only a slim majority (55%) ‘agrees’ (16% strongly/39% somewhat) they are. In fact, with only 16% strongly agreeing that the care is patient-focused, it is clear that there is significant room for improvement with this approach.

Further, when it comes to patient-centred care – meaning that local health care services provide patients with timely access to a full range of services that meet their needs and preferences, and that they are treated with dignity and respect – one in three (31%) Canadians ‘disagree’ (10% strongly/21% somewhat) that the health care services in their community are operating under this philosophy. Nearly two in ten (15%) have a neutral assessment.

Focusing on various indicators that might inform one’s opinions on whether health care services are patient centred or not, it appears that the best marks were given for the degree to which they are ‘treated with respect and dignity by the health care providers they encounter’, with three quarters (76%) saying that this ‘describes’ (40% completely/36% somewhat) their experiences. The following is a list of experiences and the proportion of Canadians who say that these experiences apply to them:



- I currently have access to all of the health care services I need without it costing me more than I can afford – 65% (38% completely describes, 27% somewhat describes)
- Health care providers always explain the potential risks or side-effects of any treatment or procedure that is being offered to me – 63% (29% completely describes, 34% somewhat describes)
- I am able to get in to see my family physician quickly when I need to – 53% (26% completely describes, 27% somewhat describes)
- I do not have to have the same medical tests repeated simply because I am seeing different medical professionals, they all have access to my test results – 48% (25% completely describes, 23% somewhat describes)
- I can easily access health services on evenings and weekends if I need them – 44% (19% completely describes, 25% somewhat describes)
- When I arrive for scheduled health care appointments I am not kept waiting – 38% (12% completely describes, 26% somewhat describes)
- I do not have to repeat my health history each time I encounter a different health provider – 36% (17% completely describes, 19% somewhat describes)
- I do not have to be the one responsible for informing my family physician about other health care services I may have received such as hospitalization – 36% (17% completely describes, 19% somewhat describes)
- I do not have to wait a long time for an appointment when I am referred to a specialist – 26% (8% completely describes, 18% somewhat describes)

Thinking about their experiences with the health care system as it relates to a chronic disease or condition that they or a family member has, seven in ten (70%) of those who say they either have a chronic illness or condition or who have a family member who does (41%), say that it was their experience (32% completely/38% somewhat) that that person was provided with sufficient education around the chronic disease or condition including information on its treatment.

And when it comes to other experiences related to chronic conditions, not as many Canadians who say that they have a chronic disease or condition or have a family member that does (41%), said that these situations applied to them:

- I am/my family member is provided with training on how to manage my/their chronic disease or condition so that I/they can be as independent as possible – 67% (32% completely describes, 35% somewhat describes)
- I am/my family member is routinely contacted to have tests done that identify potential problems related to my/their chronic disease or condition before they occur – 50% (26% completely describes, 24% somewhat describes)

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted June 5-7, 2009, on behalf of the Canadian Medical Association. For this survey, a national sample of 1,010 adults aged 18 and older from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.1 percentage points 19 times out of 20 of what the results would have been had the

entire adult population of Canada been polled. 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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