



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Results from Poll 16 released today continue to demonstrate a flatline in the mental health of Canadians

Toronto, Ontario — Mental Health Research Canada (MHRC) released the results from its sixteenth poll today, where 3,494 adult Canadians reported on factors influencing their mental health between April 21 and May 3, 2023. The data demonstrates that mental health indicators continue to remain flat when compared to the last few polling reports. Levels of high anxiety (11%) and depression (9%) have remained constant, and feelings of burnout (23%) have not changed since early 2022. This indicates that the stagnant mental health improvements flagged in the previous poll are ongoing.

“Poll 16 continues to demonstrate that mental health improvements have flatlined, or have gotten slightly worse, after a long period of improvements. Is this our new normal? It doesn’t have to be,” says Akela Peoples, CEO, MHRC. “By investing in mental health research and using data-informed decision-making, we’re working towards progress and the advancement of mental health supports and care in Canada.”

Additional major findings of concern from Poll 16 include:

- Younger Canadians, those who identify as 2SLGBTQIA+, racialized groups, and those facing financial challenges are more likely to indicate high levels of anxiety and depression.
- Inflation continues to have a negative impact on the mental health of Canadians (51%). New insights show that one-third (35%) of Canadians have decreased spending on essential issues, one-third (31%) have reduced or cut into their savings and one-fifth (21%) have gone into debt as a result.
- High levels of anxiety and depression are likely among those who have gone into debt as well as among those who have indicated experiencing food insecurity (35%).
- Unsurprisingly, those experiencing extremely high levels (at least a 9 on a 10-point scale) of anxiety and depression are more likely to indicate that they are unhappy (47% anxiety, 34% depression). They are also more likely to experience suicide ideation; with 4% of men having made a plan to die by suicide in the past year.

The poll results also showed some positive trends:

- Hopefulness remains on the higher side (65%).
- Most Canadians (82%) are feeling at least somewhat happy or interested in life.

Older Canadians (aged 55 and up) are more likely to feel so than others.

- The majority of respondents feel confident that they know where to access mental health support; however, it remains the primary barrier (32%) for the one-in-twenty Canadians who feel they need support but have not accessed it.

These, and other key findings, are featured in both the summary and full report of the survey, “Understanding the Mental Health of Canadians through COVID-19 and Beyond: Poll 16” released today by MHRC and available at www.mhrc.ca.

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ABOUT THE POLL

MHRC’s national polling is part of a multi-year effort to track the mental health challenges of COVID-19 and beyond.

This study was conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights with an online sample of 3,494 adult Canadians and was conducted from April 21 to May 3, 2023. Results from a probability sample of this size could be considered accurate to within ± 1.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Results have been weighted based on age, gender and region to be representative of the Canadian population.

ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH CANADA

Mental Health Research Canada is a national charitable organization dedicated to improving the lives of the **1 in 5 Canadians living with mental illness**, as well as their families, caregivers, and communities. We advance evidence-based mental health knowledge that is problem solving and applicable in the real world. We are committed to doing research differently; emphasizing collaboration between academia and community, and ensuring those with lived experience are engaged throughout the research process.

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