



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New mental health polling data unveils improved anxiety and depression ratings, among other major findings

Toronto, Ontario — Indicators around anxiety and depression are improving considerably, as is demonstrated in Mental Health Research Canada’s (MHRC) poll results published today. Since Canada has begun to move into the post-pandemic recovery period, current high self-rated levels of anxiety are nearly halved (21% to 11%) and high self-rated depression decreased by one third (from 14% to 9%) from levels seen during COVID-19. The data was collected in MHRC’s thirteenth poll from July 13 – 22, 2022.

“MHRC’s ability to capture and share the current state of mental health in Canada through our national polling work has contributed greatly to our understanding of mental health during the pandemic and beyond,” says Akela Peoples, CEO of Mental Health Research Canada. “Now in the COVID-19 recovery period, we will continue to dedicate our efforts to collecting mental health indicators, keeping our finger on the pulse of this critical issue.”

Despite the positive sign of improvements in the mental health of Canadians, the major findings also demonstrate some areas of concern, including:

- Those self-reporting high anxiety or depression are still much more likely to be experiencing symptoms of a severe mental health disorder (54% compared to 42% from last poll).
- A third (33%) of Canadians experience some level of food insecurity, particularly new mothers, unemployed Canadians, those with a physical impairment, those who rate their anxiety or depression as high or with a severe mental disorder, or those who demonstrate a dependence on alcohol or cannabis are considerably more likely to report moderate to serious levels of food insecurity.
- Five percent of Canadians are demonstrating signs of alcohol dependency and 9% are indicating harmful behaviours, including one in ten reporting being unable to stop drinking once they have started at least once a month.

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 13” released today by MHRC and available at www.mhrc.ca.

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. The goal of MHRC's polls one through twelve was to capture Canadians' reported perception of their level of anxiety and depression, and to identify and evaluate the factors that influence mental health through the pandemic. As we move into the pandemic's recovery period, MHRC has begun shifting its focus from mental health as it relates to COVID-19, to a more current and broader approach. This change in language and timing could account for a portion of the considerable decrease in the indicators noted above.

This study was conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights with an online sample of 3,023 adult Canadians and was conducted between July 13 to 22, 2022. Results from a probability sample of this size could be considered accurate to within ± 1.8 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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