




Mental Health During COVID-19 Outbreak: Poll #10

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Major Findings

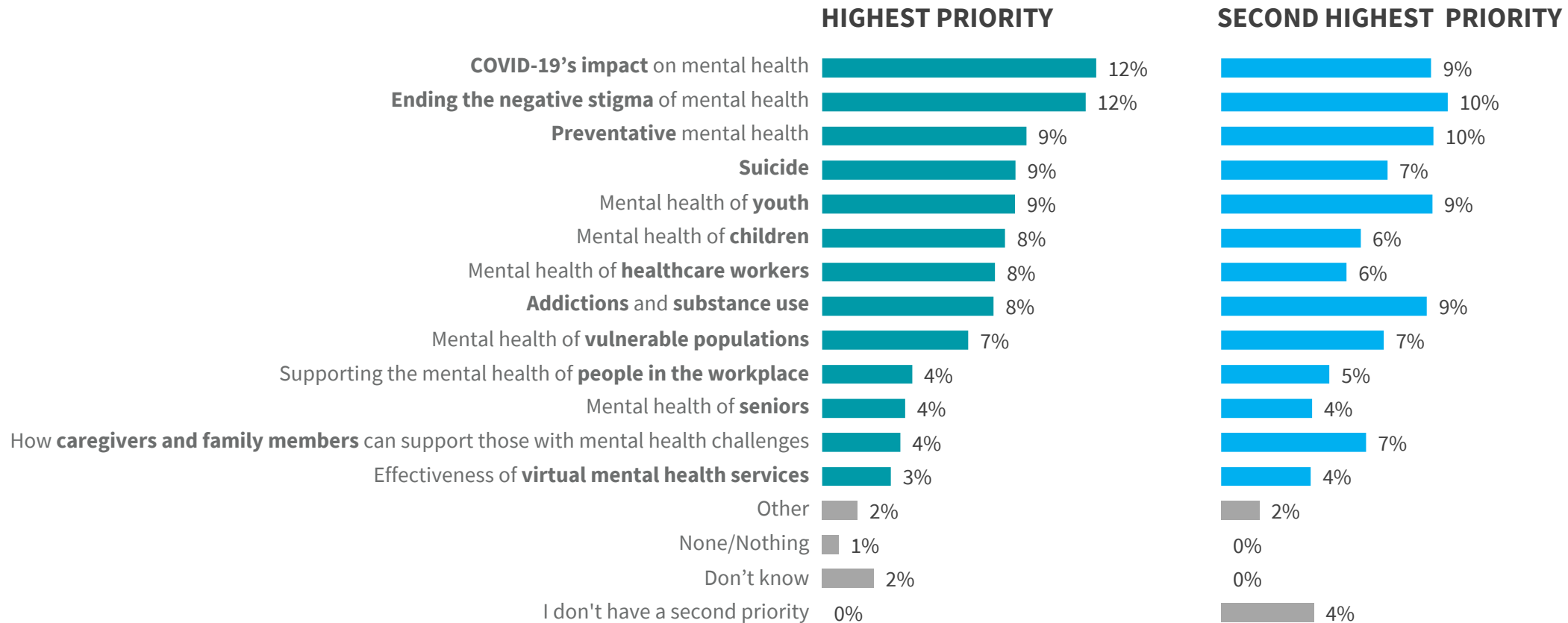
- Canadians who have been impacted by mental health challenges, whether through their own diagnosis or that of a loved one, feel that **improving mental health service provisions should be the most important focus** for mental health research (59%). This is followed by building support around individuals impacted by mental health challenges (32%).
- Beyond a research specific focus, those or loved ones of those who have received a mental health diagnosis before or since COVID-19 feel that **ending the stigma around mental health challenges, as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health should be Canada’s highest priorities at this time**. Both of these responses received 12% of the “top priority” vote among a list of 13 potential areas including the effectiveness of virtual health services and the mental health of children.
- One third of parents are reporting the availability, or imminent availability, of this vaccine for their children as having had a positive impact on their mental health, while nearly half (47%) say it hasn’t had any impact. There is not a significant difference in the mental health indicators of parents with have/will vaccinate their children versus those who won’t.
- **Overall high levels of anxiety (24%) have not changed since Poll 9** and have done so only marginally since Poll 7 (June 2021). High self-reported levels of depression have been even more stagnant, moving only marginally outside 15% since Poll 4 (December 2020).

Major Findings

- Despite the heightened likelihood of pandemic measures (lockdowns, restrictions etc.) that many Canadians are currently facing due to Omicron as well as the immense spike in reported cases, **self reported anxiety and depression remained stable, and the reported fear of catching COVID-19 (33% to 35) as well as the continuing threat over the COVID-19 virus (66% to 70%) were only marginally increased.**
 - The emergence of the Omicron variant has 65% of Canadians concerned (which is the same percentage of Canadians who are concerned about COVID-19 in general) and is having a negative impact on the mental health of nearly half of Canadians (45%).
- Results of the Kessler 10 scale of psychological distress indicate the highest percentage we have seen of Canadians experiencing symptoms of a severe mental disorder (44%). **Half of all healthcare workers are likely to be classified as severe using this scale, indicating a major mental health crisis within this sector.**
- The impact of economic downturn is having an increasingly negative effect on the mental health of Canadians. Though its overall impact is only slightly higher than Poll 9 (38% to 42%), a larger percentage of **unvaccinated Canadians have concerns about potential job loss** (46% vs. 36% overall).

COVID-19's impact and ending the negative stigma associated with mental health should be the highest priority in Canada

- More than one-in-ten Canadians dealing with a mental health challenge (self or family) reported that the COVID-19's impact health (12%) and ending the negative stigma (12%) should be the highest mental health priority in Canada.

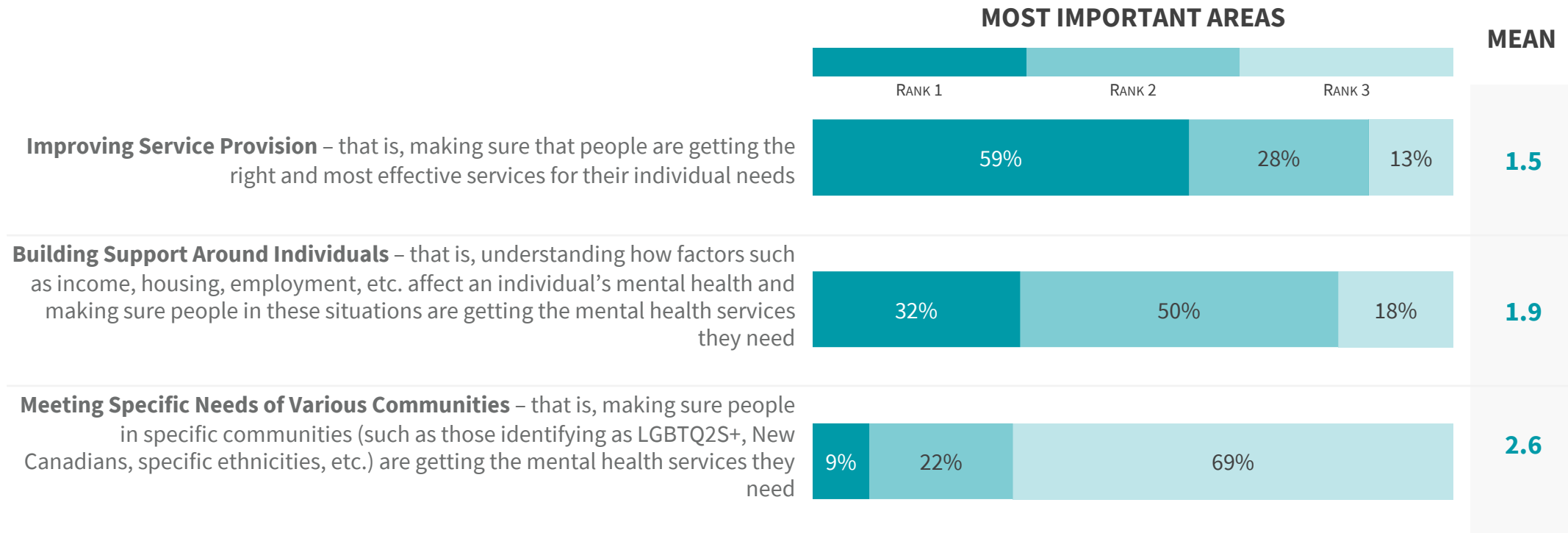


A1E. In your opinion, which of the following do you think should be the highest priority in mental health in Canada at this time?

Base: Those who received diagnosis before or since COVID-19 n=1,821

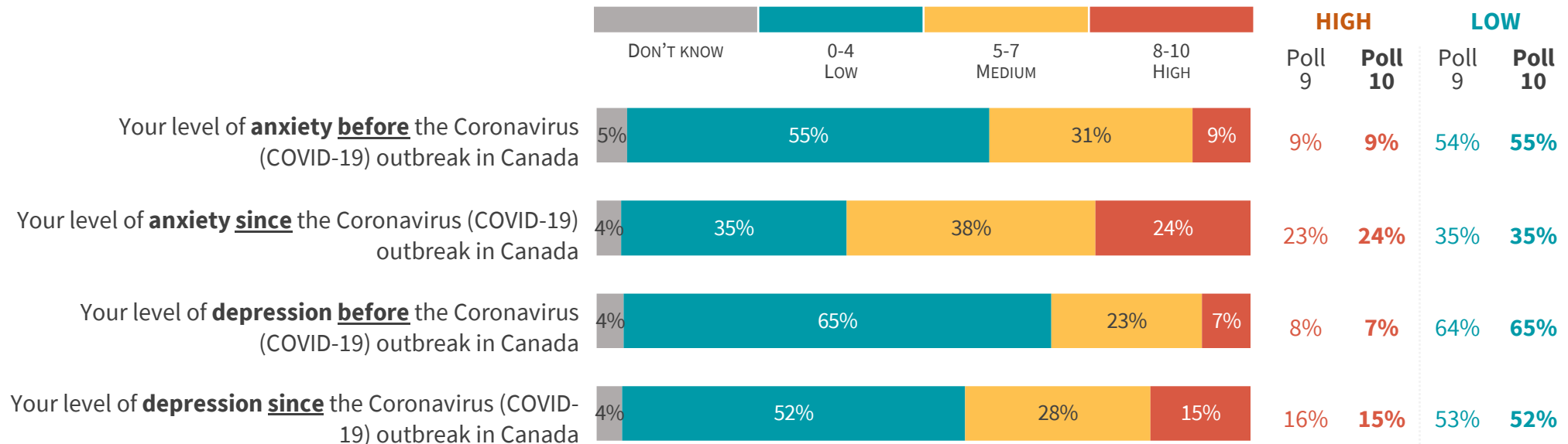
Improving service provision is considered the most important area of research

- Three-fifths of the Canadians dealing with a mental health issue (self or family) ranked ‘improving service provision’ as the number one area that should be researched. A higher percentage of older (55+) Canadians than younger (65% vs. 16-17 46%, 18-34 52%, and 35-54 58%) and employed Canadians (58% vs. students: 48%) want research in this area .
- ‘Building support around individuals’ was considered the second most important area with one-third (32%) ranking it first and half ranking it second. Younger Canadians consider this more important than other age groups (rating first: 16-17: 40%, 18-34: 36%, 35-54: 33% vs. 55+: 28%).
- ‘Meeting needs of various communities’ is considered by most to be the least least important area listed, with only 9% ranking it first while 69% rank it last.



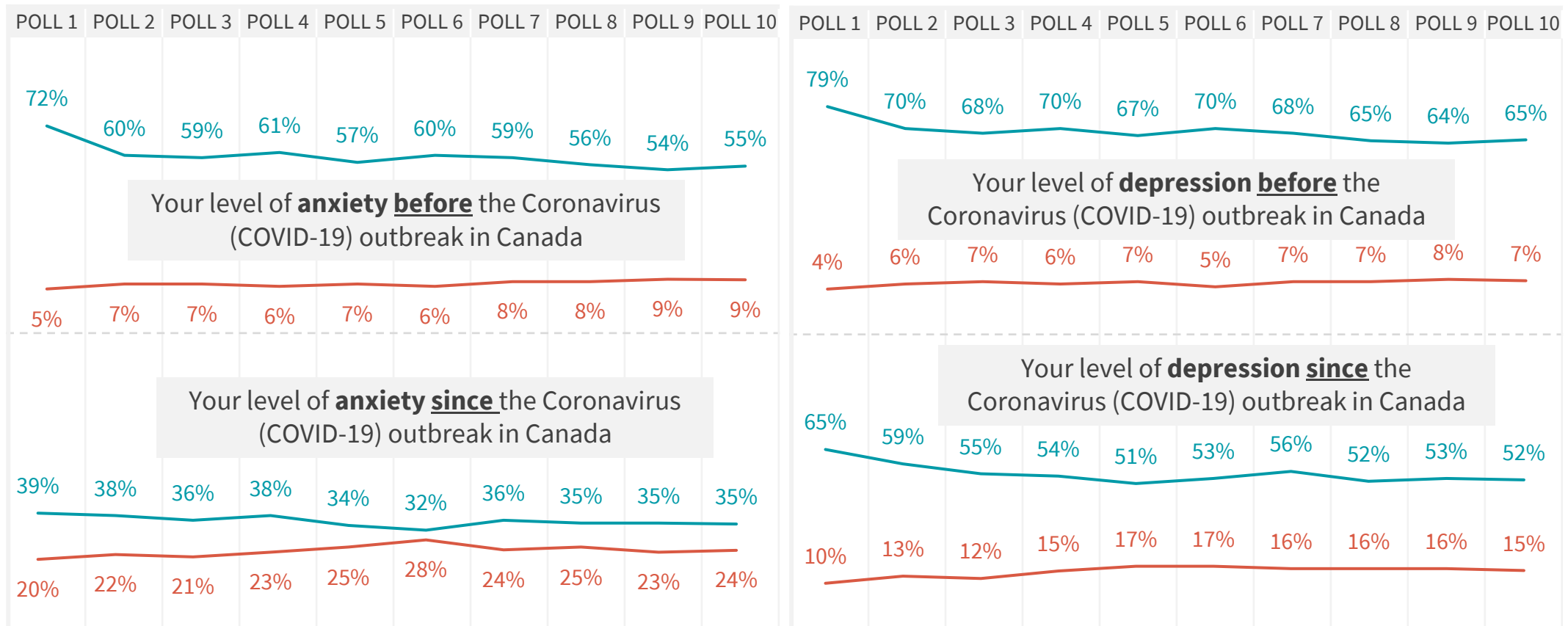
Levels of both high anxiety and depression remained consistent this poll

- Despite two-fifths of Canadians (45%) feeling the Omicron variant of the COVID-19 virus has had a negative impact on their mental health, levels of anxiety and depression remained consistent in December, compared to October.
- A quarter of Canadians said they are experiencing high anxiety, which continues to be much higher than before COVID-19.
 - Anxiety continues to be worse for younger Canadians (16-17: 31%, 18-34: 30%, 35-54: 27%, 55+: 16%), and those who are unemployed (39%). Alberta and Ontario residents reported experiencing high levels of anxiety in this poll (27% and 26% respectively).
 - Members of the LGBTQ2S+ community are experiencing higher levels of anxiety (35%).
- The percentage of Canadians reporting high levels of depression has remained consistent with Poll 9 findings.
 - Depression also continues to be worse for younger Canadians (16-17 :26%, 18-34: 21%, 35-54: 17%, 55+: 9%), as well as among the unemployed (28%).
 - Frontline healthcare workers have higher levels of depression (20%).
 - Members of the LGBTQ2S+ community experience higher levels of depression (26%).
- Vaccine status has shown little impact on levels of high anxiety or depression.



A2A. Please rate each of the following using the scale 0-10 where "10" is Extremely high and "0" is None. Base: (Total n= 3,701)

Self-rated levels of anxiety levels and depression have remained consistent since Poll 9



A2A. Please rate each of the following using the scale 0-10 where "10" is Extremely high and "0" is None. Base: (Total n= 3,701)

More than half of the Canadians are indicating moderate or severe symptoms of anxiety and depression using the Kessler 10

- **Three-fifths (62%) of the Canadians who rated their anxiety or depression high since COVID (8-10) are likely to have a moderate (18%) or severe (44%) mental health disorder**, while two-fifths (38%) are likely to have a mild (19%) or no (19%) mental health disorder. While proportions of those likely to have at least a moderate disorder has increased only slightly this poll (from 60% to 62%), the severity of the symptoms has increased (those likely to have severe disorder +6%, those likely to have moderate disorder -4%).
- Among those who rate their anxiety or depression as moderate (5-7), **almost one-in-three is likely to have a moderate (14%) or severe (15%) mental health disorder**, while a fifth (21%) are likely to have a mild mental health disorder and half (49%) are likely to have no mental health disorder.
- Canadians more likely to be classified as severe: Younger (16-17*: 59%, 18-34: 54% vs. 35-54: 40%, 55+: 34%); **frontline healthcare workers (50%)**.
- Those who have not received a vaccine are only somewhat more likely to be classified as severe (50% vs. 43% both shots).

The healthcare sector is facing a mental health crisis with 50% experiencing severe symptoms of severe anxiety or depression

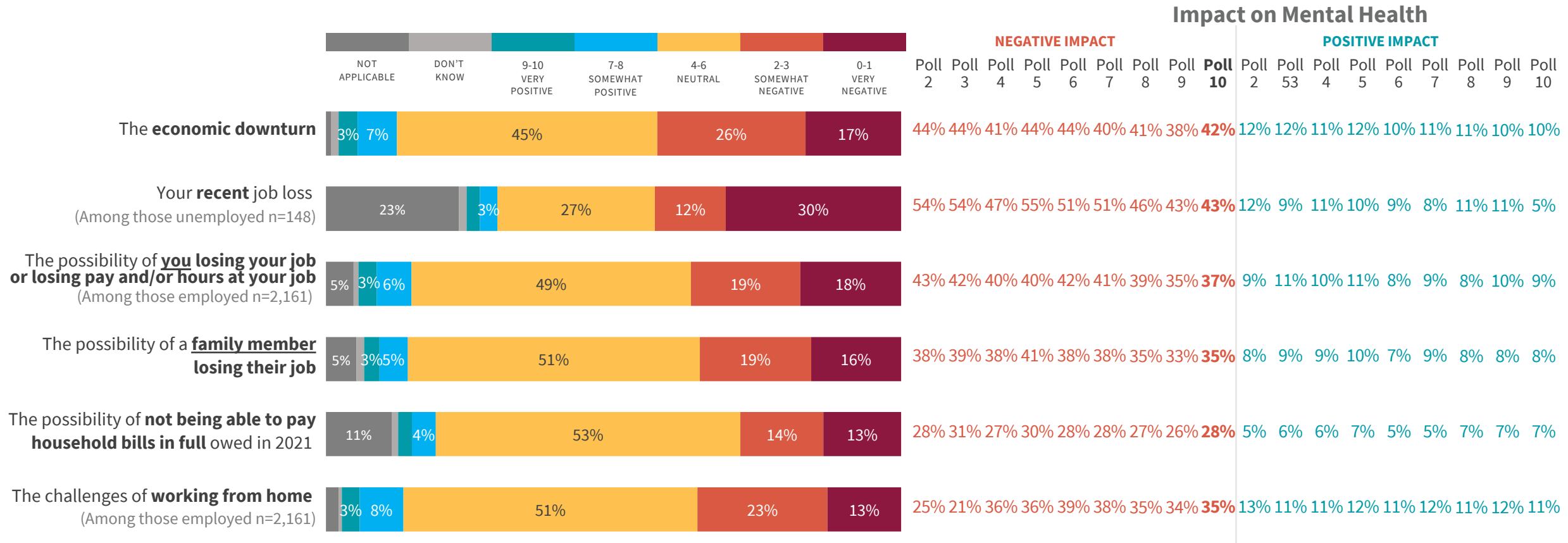
Mental Health Scores among Canadians with symptoms of high and moderate anxiety or depression since COVID-19

Psychological Distress 1-5 Point Scale Items	(All/Most)	(None/Little)	Moderate: 5-7					High: 8-10					
			Poll 10	Poll 9	Poll 8	Poll 7	Poll 6	Poll 5	Poll 4	Poll 3	Poll 2		
Tired out for no good reason	29%	39%	49%	19%	20%	21%	20%	23%	19%	19%	18%	21%	Likely to have no mental health disorder symptoms (<20)
That everything was an effort	23%	52%	21%	19%	19%	20%	19%	18%	18%	18%	19%	16%	Likely to have a mild mental disorder symptoms (20-24)
Nervous	22%	41%	14%	18%	22%	22%	21%	21%	20%	22%	26%	21%	Likely to have moderate mental disorder symptoms (25-29)
Depressed	18%	56%	15%	44%	38%	38%	40%	37%	43%	40%	36%	42%	Likely to have severe mental disorder symptoms (30-50)
Restless or fidgety	18%	54%											
Hopeless	16%	62%											
Worthless	15%	68%											
So sad that nothing could cheer you up	12%	69%											
So restless you could not sit still	10%	74%											
So nervous that nothing could calm you down	9%	72%											

A2C. In the past 4 weeks, how often did you feel...: Base: (Depression or anxiety since COVID rated 1-5 n=2,454; 8-10 n=1,052; 5-7 n=1,807)

* Caution small base

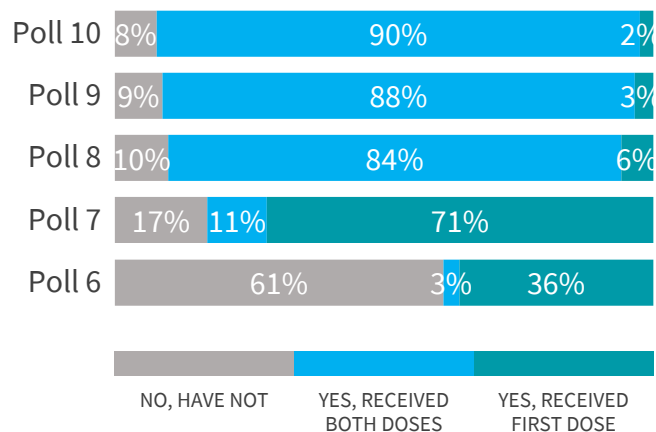
The negative impact of the economic downturn on mental health has increased again this poll



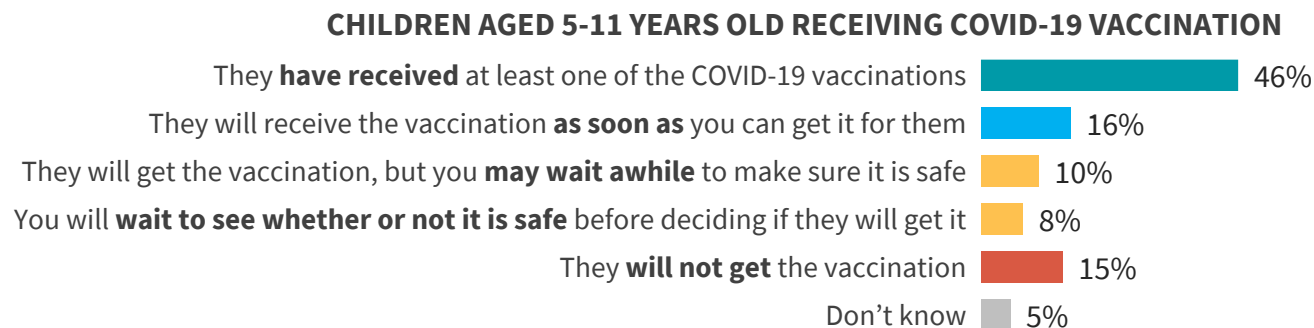
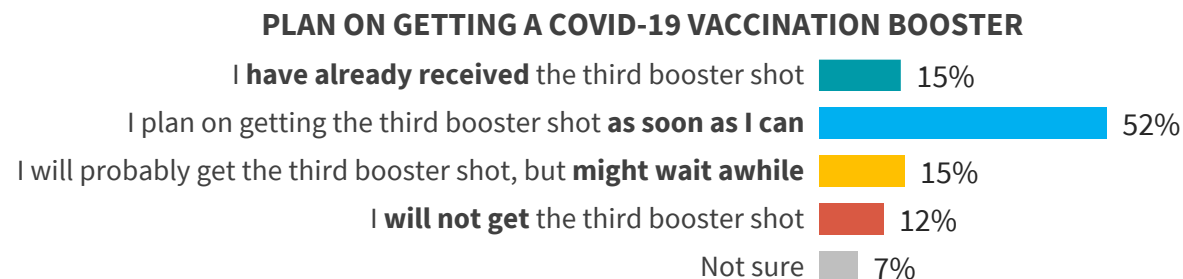
A3A. During the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in Canada, please rate each of the following in terms of the impact they are currently having on your mental health, if any:
Base: (Total n= 3,701)

Over half of Canadians who have not yet received a booster shot plan to get one

- While the number of Canadians who have received at least one dose of the vaccine has not increased outside the margin of error since October, Canadians are more likely to say they now have received both doses (90% up from 88%) with only 2% still sitting at one dose.
- One-sixth (15%) of Canadians reported to have already received the booster shot and more than half (52%) plans on getting it as soon as possible; 12% said they won't get the booster shot.
- Almost half (46%) of parents say their children between the ages of 5 to 11 have received at least one dose of vaccine and a sixth (16%) will take it as soon as possible. Another sixth (15%) said their child won't be getting the vaccination. Older parents (35-54) are more likely to have gotten their 5-11-year-old vaccinated (51% vs. 18- to 34-year-olds: 31%). Those who are concerned about Omicron are also more likely to have their children vaccinated (52% vs. those who are not concerned: 38%).
- Incidence of getting the booster shot is highest in Quebec (60%) and is lowest in Saskatchewan (29%).



Canadians who have received at least first dose – 92%



A5A. Have you received the COVID-19 vaccination? Base: (Total n=3,701)

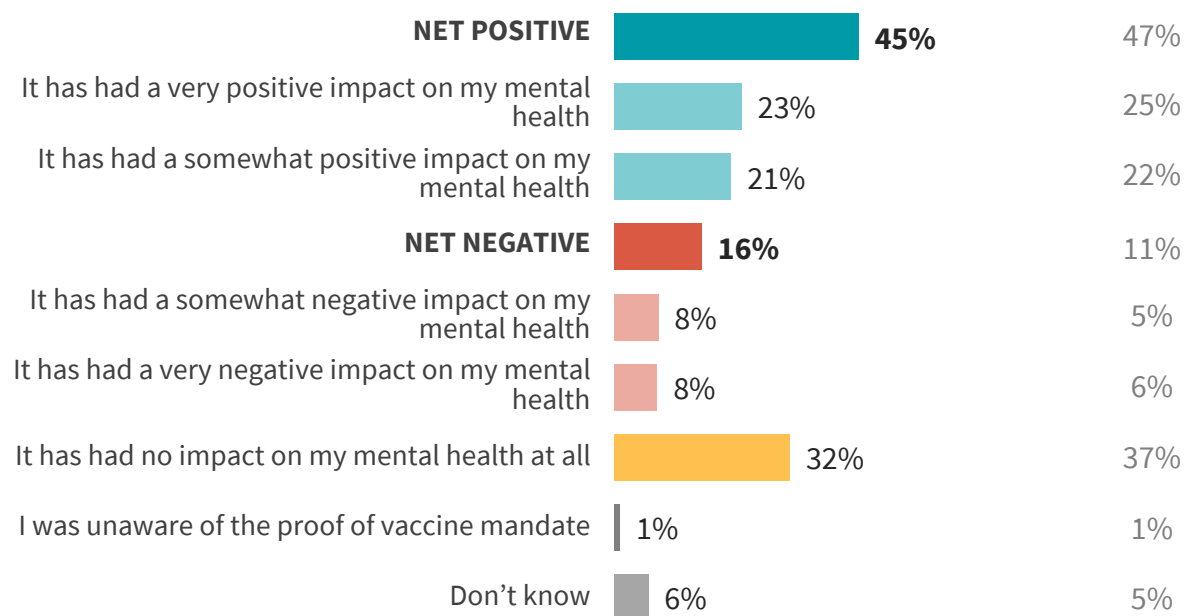
A5B. Have you, or do you plan on getting a COVID-19 vaccination booster (a third shot)? Base: (Total n=3,701)

A5C. Have your child(ren) between the ages of 5 to 11 years received the COVID-19 vaccination? Base: (Those who have children aged 5-11 years old n=488)

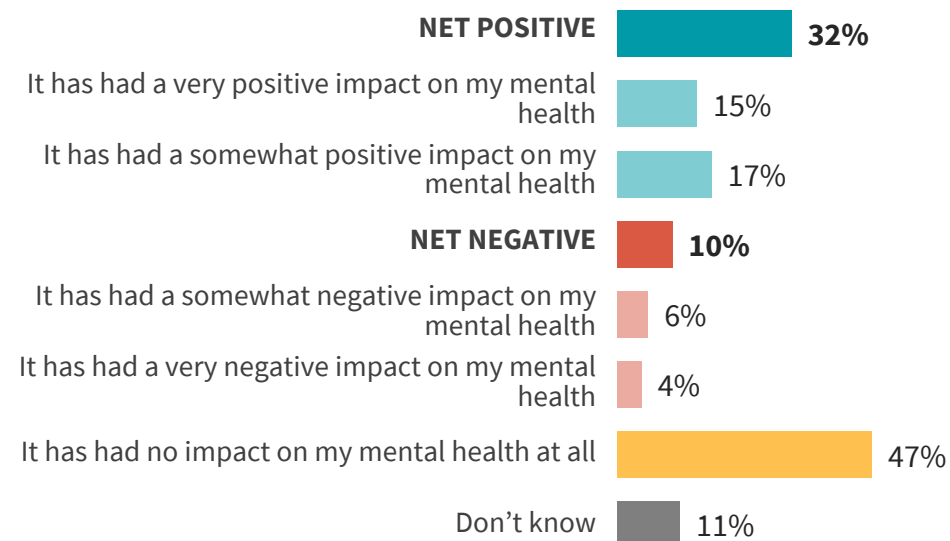
The need for proof of vaccination as well as vaccine for children is more positive than negative when it comes to mental health

- Almost half of Canadians say the implementation of proof of vaccination in their province has had a positive impact on their mental health, with close to one-quarter (23%) saying it was very positive, and one-fifth (21%) somewhat positive. One-third (32%) say it has had no impact while a sixth say the impact has been negative. The negative impact has increased significantly this poll (from 11% to 16%), with the rate of those saying it has no impact declining. Older Canadians (55+) are most likely to consider this impact strongly positive (32%).
- A third of Canadians reported to have a positive impact of the vaccine for children on their mental health (very positive 15%; somewhat positive 17%) and only one-in-ten reported to have a negative impact. Almost half (47%) said they had no impact of the vaccine on their mental health.

IMPACT OF PROOF OF VACCINATION ON MENTAL HEALTH Poll 9



IMPACT OF CHILDREN'S VACCINE ON MENTAL HEALTH



Base: (Total n=3,701)

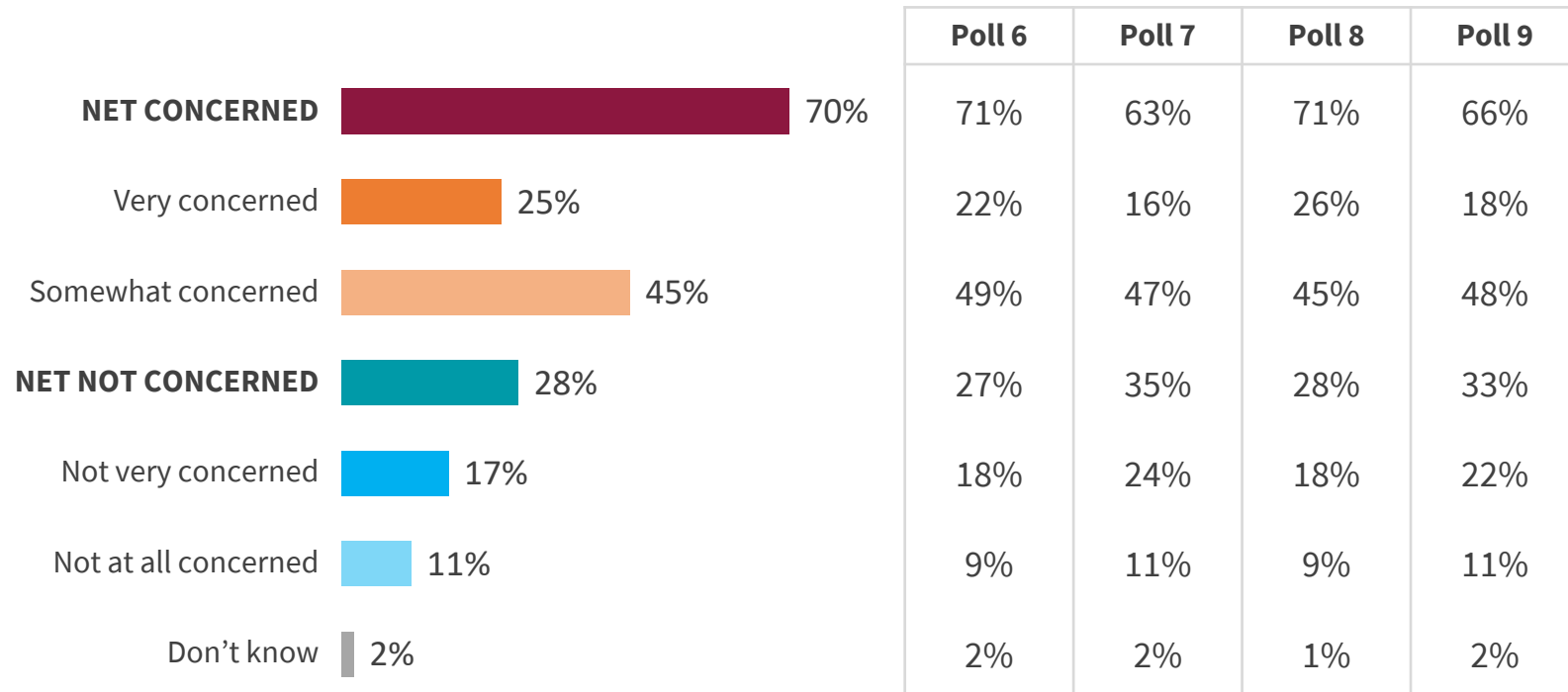
A16A. How, if at all, has the implementation of a proof of vaccine mandate in your province influenced your mental health?

A5D. What impact is the availability of a COVID-19 vaccine for children between the ages of 5 to 11 having on your mental health?

Concern over continuing threat of COVID-19 has increased only slightly this poll

- The continuing threat of COVID-19 has fluctuated from poll to poll. While this threat declined from August to October (Poll 8 to 9) it increased again in December (Poll 10 – from 66% to 70%).
- Concern is lowest in Quebec (44%), while being highest in British Columbia (79%) and Ontario (77%). Those living in urban centres (71% vs. rural: 64%), women (73%) and those 55+ (76%) are also most concerned.
- Those who have received vaccines are more concerned about this continuing threat than those who have not (both doses: 73%, none: 35%).

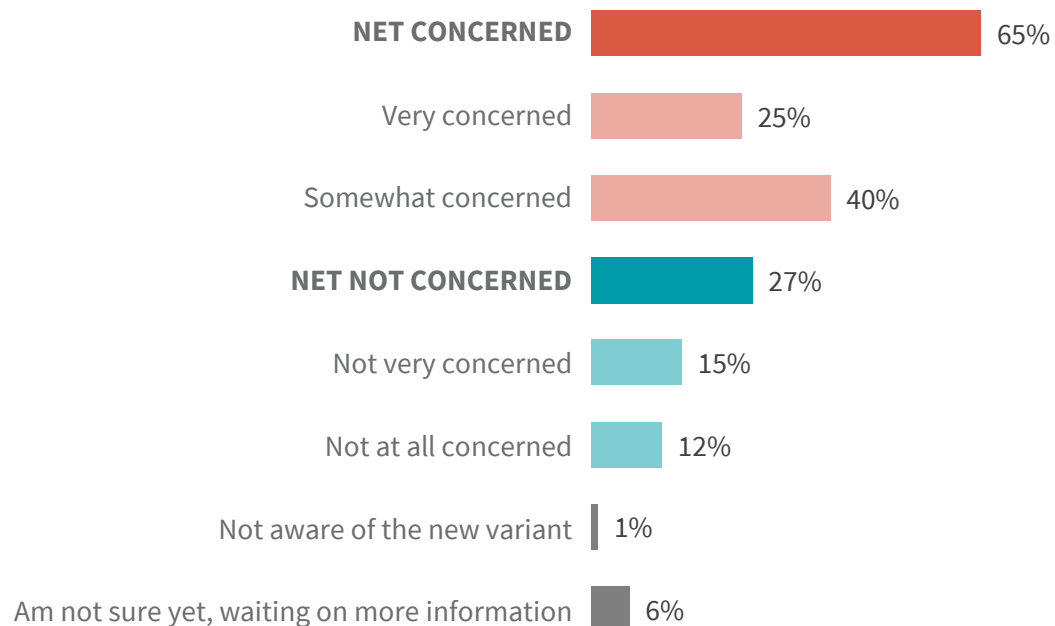
CONCERNED ABOUT THE CONTINUING POTENTIAL THREAT OF COVID-19



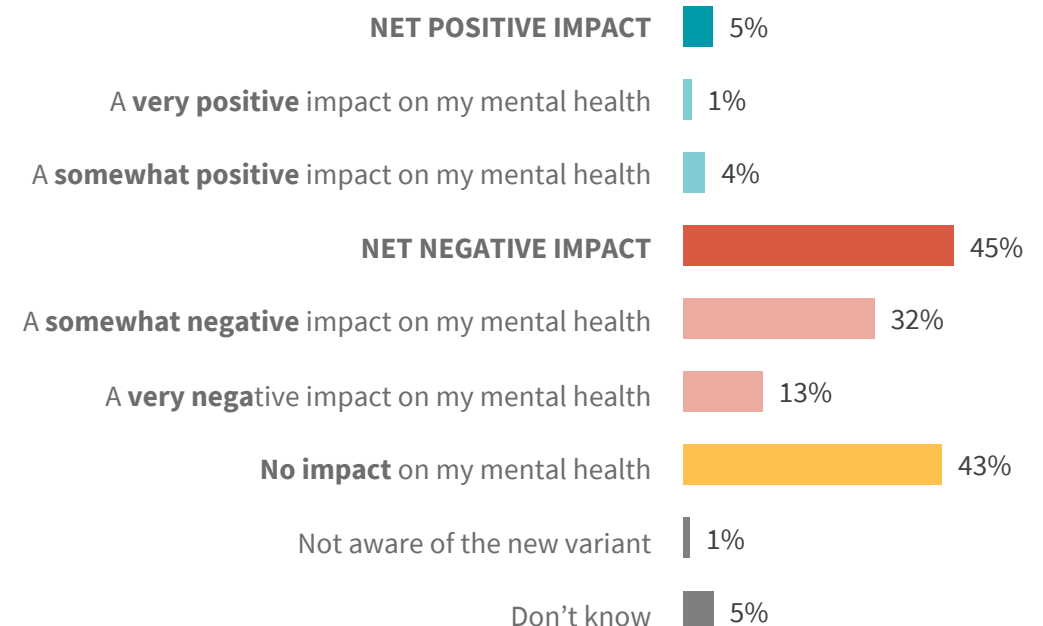
Two-thirds are concerned about the Omicron variant and nearly half report it having a negative impact on their mental health

- Two-thirds (65%) of Canadians are concerned about the Omicron variant while a quarter are very concerned, and two-fifths are somewhat concerned. More than a quarter (27%) reported being unconcerned about the variant. Older Canadians (73% vs. 35-54: 62%, 18-34: 59%) are more concerned about the new variant. Those who are vaccinated are more worried about the variant (both doses: 69% none: vs. 24%) and are more likely to say it is having a negative impact on their mental health (47% both vs. 30% none).
- Close to half (45%) said that Omicron is having a negative impact on their mental health while two-fifths (43%) are experiencing no impact on their mental health. Despite some claims that this variant could “end the pandemic”, very few feel the impact has been positive.

CONCERNED ABOUT OMICRON



IMPACT OF OMICRON ON MENTAL HEALTH



A16C. Based on what you know or have heard, how concerned are you about the new COVID-19 variant, called Omicron? Base: (Total n=3,701)

A16D. And what impact is the new COVID-19 variant, Omicron having on your mental health? Base: (Total n=3,701)



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