

HEALTHCARE IN CANADA 2020

Montreal Economic Institute

Research Report

November 2020



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MEI

Ideas for a
More Prosperous
Society



Methodology



These are the findings of an **online Ipsos poll** conducted on behalf of the Montreal Economic Institute.



A sample of **1,150 Canadians** aged 18 years and over was interviewed from **October 26-28, 2020**.



Weighting was employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects the overall population according to the **latest census information**.



The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the results are accurate to within **+/- 3.5 percentage points**, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had all Canadian adults been polled.



Respondents from Quebec were deliberately oversampled (n=400) to give more substance to questions that were only asked in that province. However, this oversample is weighted down when reporting statistics at the national level.

SUMMARY

- Canadians have somewhat mixed perceptions about the impact of **government investment** in the sector over the years. Only 37% believe that the additional amounts of money put in by their provincial government have improved the health care system. Almost as many believe that these investments have had no impact, and almost two in ten (17%) even believe that they have contributed to worsening the health care system.
- A window of opportunity for the private sector? A majority of Canadians (63%), and 75% of Quebec residents, agree that the government should allow patients **increased access**, on a voluntary basis, **to private care provided by private health entrepreneurs**, provided that medically-required care remains covered by the government.
- **Accessibility and capacity:** In the midst of a global pandemic, only 38% believe that Canada is doing a good job providing access to health care when compared to European countries, and most (88%) believe that the capacity of their province's health system leaves something to be desired.
 - According to 61% of Canadians and 75% of Quebecers, excess bureaucracy is threatening their provincial health system's ability to quickly respond to the needs of their population.

Investments in the Health System over the Past Decade

- Canadians are split when it comes whether the additional amounts of money injected over the past decade have improved their province's health care system. While they are more likely to think that these investments have improved rather than worsened the health system, more than a third believe that there has been no change. Those in British Columbia and Ontario are the most likely to say they have seen an improvement, while those in Alberta, the Prairies, and Quebec are a bit more skeptical.



	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
	A	B	C	D	E	F
<i>Improved</i>	47% BCE	26%	28%	41% B	32%	38%
<i>Worsened</i>	9%	26% AD	27% AD	12%	22% AD	18%

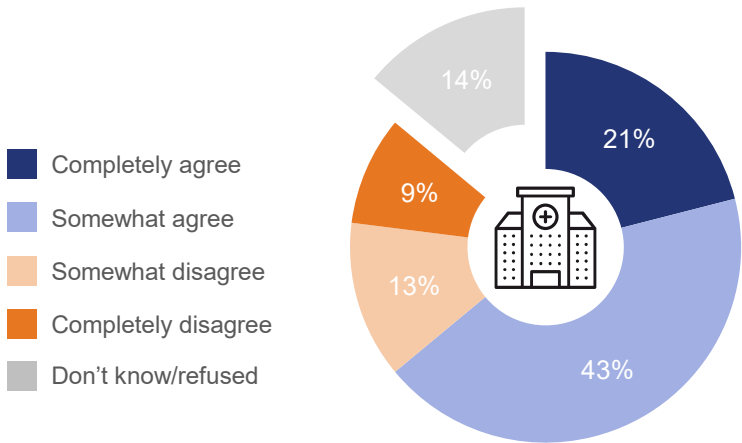
Q2. In your opinion, have the additional amounts injected into the health care system over the past ten years by the government of your province improved the health care system?
 Base: All respondents (n=1150)



Access to Private Health Care

63% **23%**

Agree Disagree



- Almost two-thirds of Canadians agree that the government should allow patients increased access, on a voluntary basis, to private care provided by private health entrepreneurs, provided that medically-required care remains covered by the government.
- Quebec stands out on account of its strong support for access to private care. Opposition to private care is stronger among those aged 55+ years.

	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Agree	62%	48%	63%	60%	75% ABD	70% B
Disagree	25% E	37% EF	22%	25% E	13%	20%

	18-34	35-54	55+
	A	B	C
Agree	64%	66%	60%
Disagree	17%	22%	28% A

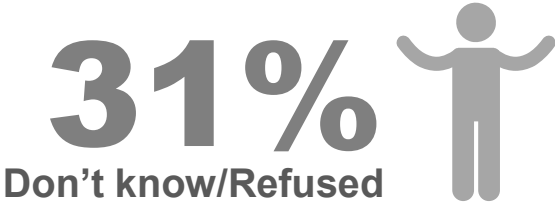
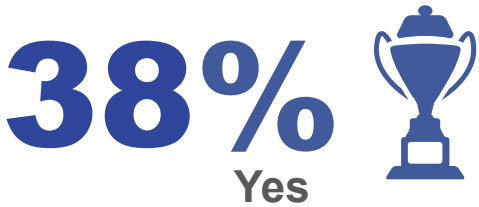
Allow increased access (on voluntary basis) to private care

Q3. Would you agree or disagree that the government should allow patients increased access (on a voluntary basis) to care provided by private health entrepreneurs, as long as medically required care remains covered by the government?
 Base: All respondents (n=1150)



Accessibility Compared to European Systems

- How is Canada doing compared to European countries like Germany, Sweden, and the UK when it comes to providing access to health care? Canadians are divided; while 38% say that Canada is doing a good job, 31% say that it is not doing a good job, and another 31% are undecided. Those in Alberta and Quebec are more likely to believe that Canada is lagging behind, while those in Atlantic Canada and Ontario are more optimistic.



	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Yes	43%	27%	33%	42% BE	32%	50% BE
No	22%	47% ADF	37%	26%	35% AD	25%
Don't know/Refused	34%	26%	30%	32%	33%	25%

Q5. In your opinion, is Canada doing a good job providing access to health care when compared to European countries like Germany, Sweden, and the United Kingdom?
Base: All respondents (n=1150)



Need to Improve Health Care System's Capacity

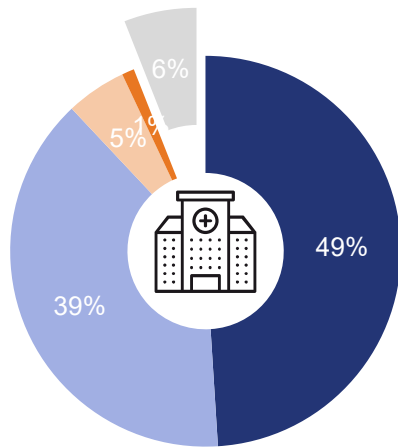
88%

Agree

6%

Disagree

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree
- Don't know/refused



- Almost all Canadians agree that there's a need to improve the capacity of their province's health care system, be it through additional beds, more PPE, hiring staff, or investing in hospitals and clinics.
- There is strong support nationwide for improving the health system's capacity, but those in Atlantic Canada are more likely to disagree that improvements are needed.
- Those aged 55+ are the most likely to say the health system needs improved capacity. Men are more likely than women to disagree.

	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
	A	B	C	D	E	F
<i>Agree</i>	88%	89%	93%	87%	89%	81%
<i>Disagree</i>	6%	10%	3%	5%	5%	15% CDE

	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+
	A	B	A	B	C
<i>Agree</i>	86%	90%	85%	85%	93% AB
<i>Disagree</i>	9% B	4%	8%	9% C	3%

Need to improve our health care system's capacity

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that it is necessary to improve our health care system's capacity (beds, personal protective equipment, medical personnel, hospitals and clinics, etc.) to avoid overcrowding during a pandemic or other health emergencies?

Base: All respondents (n=1150)

Keeping Virtual and Phone Consultations with Doctors

- Almost 7 in 10 Canadians believe that even once the COVID-19 pandemic is over, they should still have the option to have virtual and phone consultations with doctors. Two in ten are against maintaining the option after the pandemic, and 11% are undecided.
- While there is no statistically significant difference between regions, those in western provinces seem to be a little more amenable than those in the rest of the country to maintaining virtual care post-pandemic. Women are more likely than men to want to continue having this option, as well as those with an annual household income of \$100,000 or more.

69%

Yes



20%

No



Don't know/Refused

11%

Don't know/Refused



Don't know/Refused

	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Yes	73%	71%	76%	69%	66%	63%
No	18%	16%	17%	20%	22%	28%
Don't know/Refused	9%	14%	7%	11%	12%	8%

	Male	Female	<\$40K	\$40K - <\$60K	\$60K - <\$100K	\$100K+
	A	B	A	B	C	D
Yes	62%	76% A	63%	67%	73%	80% AB
No	27% B	14%	28% D	20%	18%	12%
Don't know/Refused	11%	10%	9%	13%	9%	8%

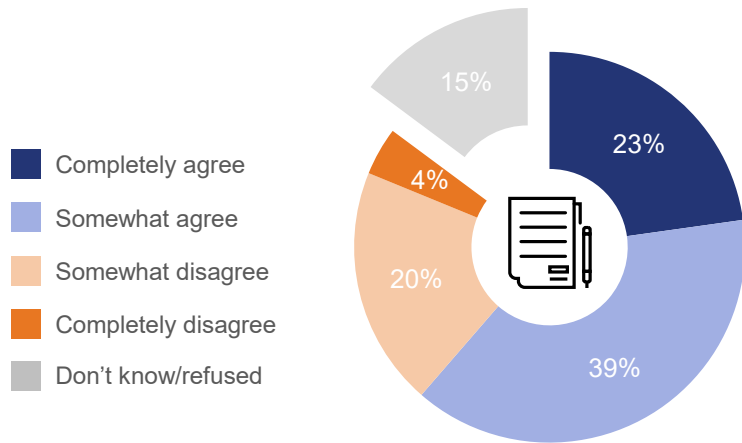
Q7. Do you think the option to have virtual and phone consultations with doctors should be permanently maintained, once the current health crisis is over?
Base: All respondents (n=1150)

Too Much Bureaucracy?

61% **24%**

Agree

Disagree



- The majority of Canadians, 6 out of 10, believe that their province's health system is too bureaucratic to quickly respond to the needs of the population.
- Once again, residents of Quebec and Alberta stand out in terms of their level of agreement with this sentiment.
- This opinion gets stronger with age; those aged 35 and over are more likely than those aged 18-34 to think there's too much bureaucracy.

	BC	AB	SK/MB	ON	QC	ATL
	A	B	C	D	E	F
<i>Agree</i>	52%	74% ACD	56%	54%	75% ACDF	58%
<i>Disagree</i>	35% BE	17%	24% E	27% E	13%	30% E

	18-34	35-54	55+
	A	B	C
<i>Agree</i>	53%	64% A	66% A
<i>Disagree</i>	26%	22%	23%

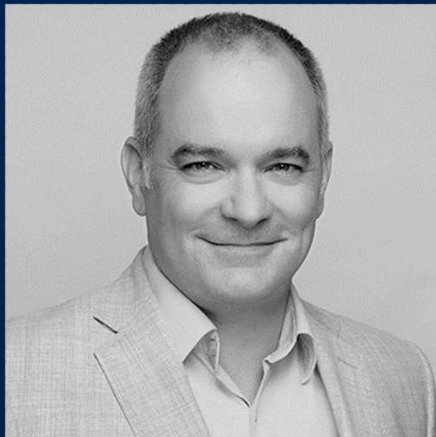
My province's health care system is too bureaucratic

Q8. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: My province's health care system is too bureaucratic to respond quickly to the needs of the population.
 Base: All respondents (n=1150)

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