

Mental health impacts of COVID-19: Wave 2



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



maru/matchbox

Summary of Findings Mental Health Impacts of COVID-19: Wave 2

Self-reported change to mental health

	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
BASE:	3027	445	397	213	1137	491	343
Mental health has deteriorated since onset of the pandemic	40%	42%	40%	40%	44%	32%	36%

Deteriorating mental health among population subgroups

- 61% of those with a pre-existing mental health issue (up slightly from 59% in Wave 1)
- 50% of those with a disability (up slightly from 47% in Wave 1)
- 60% of those aged 18-24, compared to 21% of those aged 75+
- 54% of Indigenous peoples (up from 41% in Wave 1)
- 54% of LGBTQ2+ people (up from 50% in Wave 1)
- 61% of those who are unemployed
- 45% of women, compared to 34% of men

Emotional responses to COVID-19

	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
BASE:	3027	445	397	213	1137	491	343
Anxiety/worry	48%	48%	42%	50%	53%	42%	43%
Stress	38%	38%	35%	41%	43%	30%	33%
Sadness	25%	28%	21%	23%	29%	20%	17%
Depression	24%	24%	23%	21%	28%	19%	18%
Calm	20%	22%	18%	19%	18%	22%	19%

Hopeful	17%	22%	17%	16%	20%	8%	26%
Empathetic	15%	20%	11%	15%	18%	11%	14%
Content	9%	10%	8%	11%	12%	5%	8%

Emotional responses among population subgroups

- 67% of those with a pre-existing mental health condition reporting high levels of anxiety/worry (up from 63% in Wave 1) as well as:
 - stress (57%), loneliness (39%), sadness (35%) and depression (48%)

Experiences of stress or worry

	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
BASE:	3027	445	397	213	1137	491	343
Worried about: second wave of the virus	71%	69%	66%	64%	75%	69%	69%
A loved one or family member dying	58%	55%	54%	59%	62%	58%	55%
Contracting the virus	55%	55%	49%	56%	56%	56%	48%
Being separated from family and friends	54%	51%	55%	53%	56%	54%	49%
Vaccine safety and effectiveness	51%	53%	53%	46%	54%	44%	50%
Finances	39%	36%	48%	41%	40%	32%	43%
Vaccine availability	30%	31%	28%	27%	32%	27%	30%
Job loss	26%	22%	31%	22%	28%	27%	24%
Having enough food to meet family's needs	20%	12%	20%	20%	19%	25%	21%
Being safe from domestic violence	10%	5%	10%	5%	12%	11%	11%

Experiences of stress or worry among population subgroups

- 48% of parents of children under 18 worried about finances
- 51% of those with a household income less than \$25,000 worried about finances
- 36% of parents of children under 18 worried about job loss
- 27% of parents of children under 18 worried about having enough food to meet their family's needs

Suicidality and self-harm

	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
BASE:	3027	445	397	213	1137	491	343
Suicidal thoughts or feelings	10%	8%	11%	8%	13%	7%	8%
Deliberate self-harm	4%	1%	4%	2%	4%	5%	4%

Suicidality and self-harm among population subgroups

Suicidal thoughts or feelings:

- 28% of LGBTQ2+ (up from 14% in Wave 1)
- 27% of those with a pre-existing mental health condition (up from 18% in Wave 1)
- 24% of those with a disability (up from 15% in Wave 1)
- 21% of those aged 25-34 and 19% of those aged 18-24
- 20% of Indigenous peoples (up from 16% in Wave 1)
- 13% of parents of children under 18 (up from 9%)

Deliberate self-harm:

- 14% of LGBTQ2+
- 10% of those with a pre-existing mental health condition (up from 18% in Wave 1)

Healthy and unhealthy coping strategies

	Total	Region					
		BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
BASE:	3027	445	397	213	1137	491	343
Increased substance use as a way to cope	17%	13%	17%	18%	20%	13%	17%
Increased alcohol use	20%	16%	18%	18%	22%	21%	16%
Increased cannabis use	9%	6%	8%	15%	12%	6%	11%
Increased prescription medication use	7%	3%	7%	6%	8%	7%	6%
Exercising outdoors	54%	57%	55%	62%	57%	49%	45%
Connecting virtually with family and friends	36%	39%	36%	26%	40%	33%	33%
Maintaining a healthy lifestyle	40%	43%	42%	41%	41%	36%	36%
Connecting in person with those in their “bubble”	33%	43%	38%	32%	40%	13%	42%
Having a supportive employer	15%	13%	17%	14%	16%	11%	19%
Using virtual mental health resources	3%	2%	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%
Government benefits and supports	9%	10%	9%	9%	9%	8%	12%

Coping among population subgroups

Increased alcohol use:

- 28% in parents of children under 18
- 29% in Indigenous peoples
- 30% in those with a pre-existing mental health condition

Increased cannabis use:

- 24% in Indigenous peoples
- 23% in LGBTQ2+ people
- 20% in those with a pre-existing mental health condition
- 17% in those with a disability
- 15% in parents with children under 18

Increased prescription medication use:

- 18% in those with a pre-existing mental health condition

Among those who reported experiencing a mental health concern during the pandemic, the reasons for not accessing virtual mental health services/supports included:

- 48% felt they weren't in need of help
- 22% said they didn't know that the resources exist
- 21% said they didn't believe they would be helpful
- 17% preferred in-person health care supports
- 11% cited privacy concerns

Methodology

This is the second of three waves of a cross-sectional monitoring survey on the impacts of COVID-19 on mental health in Canada led by academic researchers from the University of British Columbia (UBC) and the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) in partnership with Maru/Matchbox. The survey questions were informed by a UK longitudinal survey commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation in March 2020 and guided by research evidence on mental health impacts of past pandemics through input from people with lived experience of mental health conditions. Questions were refined for the Canadian context. Wave 1 data were collected between May 14-29, 2020. Wave 2 data were collected Sept. 14-21, 2020 from a total of 3,027 respondents and weighted to ensure a representative sample of the adult Canadian population by age, gender, region, and household income. The maximum margin of error for proportions derived from our sample of 3027 participants is +/- 1.79% at a 95% level of confidence.



For media inquiries:

Katherine Janson

National Director of Communications
Canadian Mental Health Association
Phone: (647) 717-8674
kjanson@cmha.ca

Lou Bosshart

Media Relations Specialist
UBC Media Relations
Phone: (604) 822-2048
lou.bosshart@ubc.ca