Mental health impacts of COVID-19: Wave 2

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

Self-reported change to mental health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BASE:</td>
<td>3027</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>1137</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health has</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deteriorated since</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onset of the pandemic</td>
<td></td>
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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

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety/worry</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sadness</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
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

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- 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

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

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<tr>
<td>Increased substance use as a way to cope</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased alcohol use</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased cannabis use</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased prescription medication use</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercising outdoors</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting virtually with family and friends</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining a healthy lifestyle</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting in person with those in their “bubble”</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a supportive employer</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using virtual mental health resources</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government benefits and supports</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.
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