



# Health Care in Canada Survey 2006

A national survey  
of health care providers, managers, and the public



This is the ninth edition of the Health Care in Canada Survey, the most comprehensive survey of Canadian public and health care providers' opinions on health care issues. The survey, which polled the Canadian public as well as doctors, pharmacists, nurses, and managers, finds widespread support for more home and community care programs, higher medical school enrolment levels, equitable access to pharmaceuticals, ensuring the security of the Canadian vaccine supply, increased funding for research, and a ban on the sale of junk food in schools. Canadians are divided on the quality of health care services currently available and the impact of allowing the purchase of private health insurance for services already covered under medicare. Canadians continue to be concerned about waiting times for elective surgery, the potential for errors while being treated in hospital, and preparedness for public emergencies such as SARS or flooding.

For the first time, the 2006 survey identified questions on Canadians' views about the negative health impact from key environmental sources. "While Canadians continue to be concerned about health care, the study also reflects their concern about the environment. In addition, it highlights their willingness to take action personally to improve health outcomes," says Marie Larose, Senior Vice President of POLLARA.

This document presents a summary of key findings. For full survey results, visit [www.hcic-sssc.ca](http://www.hcic-sssc.ca).

*Fielding of the core questionnaire was conducted between August 14 and September 13, 2006. Results for the public survey are based on telephone interviews with nationally representative samples of 1,004 members of the Canadian public, 104 doctors, 100 nurses, 100 pharmacists, and 100 health managers. Public results are considered to be accurate within  $\pm 3.1\%$  19 times out of 20, while the margin of error for results for health care providers and managers is  $\pm 9.9\%$  19 times out of 20 ( $\pm 9.7\%$  for doctors). Questionnaires were developed by POLLARA working in close consultation with the HCIC partners.*

*This is the ninth annual comprehensive national survey of the public, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and health system managers conducted by POLLARA Research. This year's survey results provide demographic breakdowns to allow examination of responses based on gender, location and income. Survey partner organizations include the Association of Canadian Academic Healthcare Organizations, Canadian Nurses Association, Canadian Medical Association, Canadian College of Health Service Executives, Canadian Healthcare Association, Canadian Home Care Association, Canadian Public Health Association, Health Charities Coalition of Canada, Canadian Pharmacists Association, Merck Frosst Canada Ltd., and Rogers Media.*



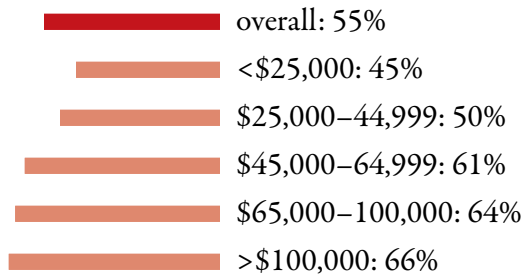
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## Quality of Health Care in Canada

Are Canadians getting **quality health care**?

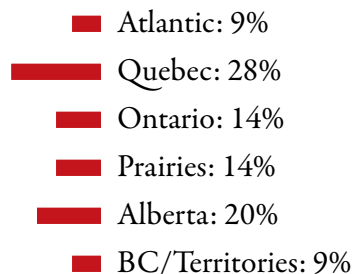
*who says yes, by income:*



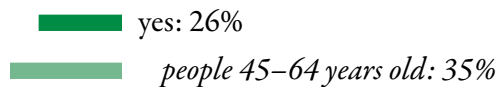
## Personal Experience with the Health System

Are you having difficulty **finding a doctor**?

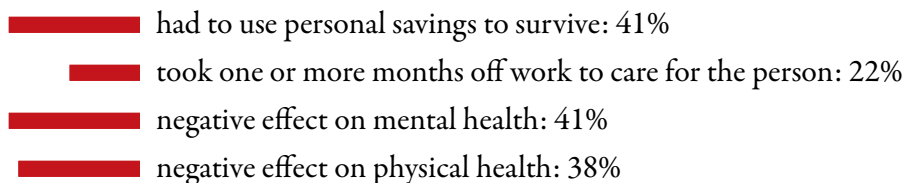
*who says yes, by region:*



Have you **cared** for a family member or close friend with a **serious illness** in the past year?

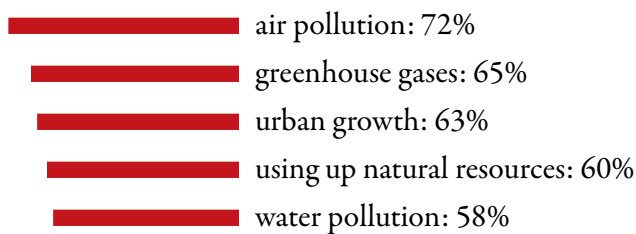


If you have cared for a family member or close friend with a serious illness in the past year, what **effect** has it had on you?

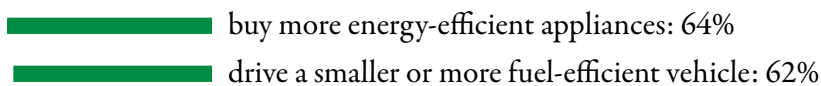


## The Environment and Public Health

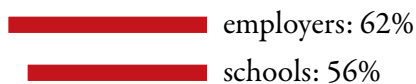
What **environmental factors** will have a worsening effect on our health over the next few years?



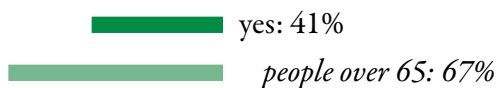
What would you be willing to do to **help the environment**?



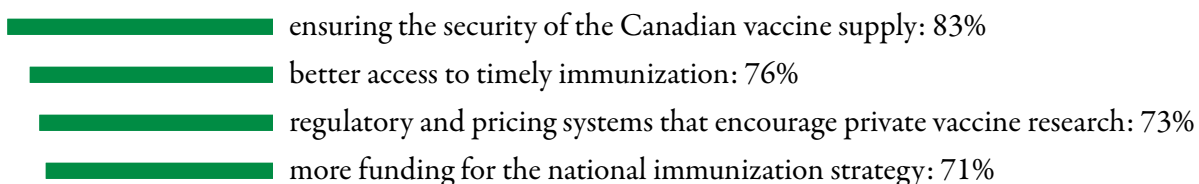
Who is unprepared to limit the spread of **pandemic influenza**?



Have you had a **flu shot** in the last 12 months?



What parts of a **national immunization strategy** are important to you?

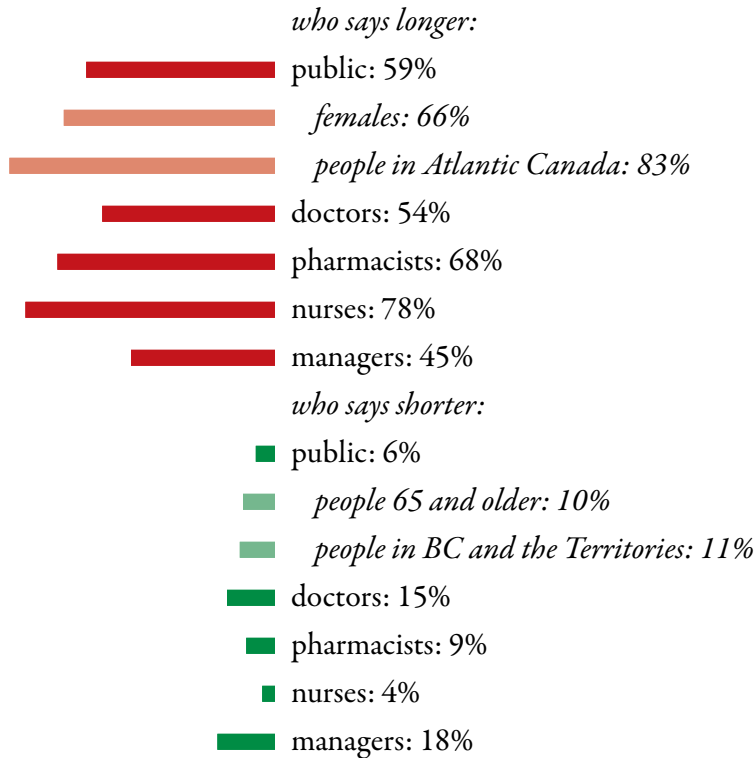


Should the sale of **junk food in schools** be banned?

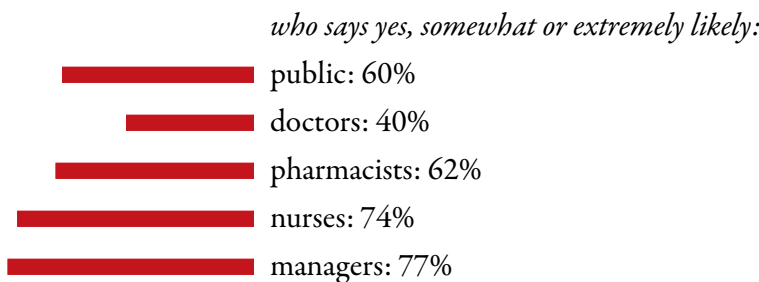


## Waiting times, Safety in Hospitals, and Emergency Preparedness

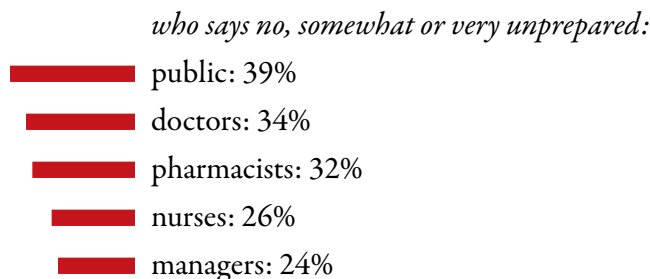
Do you think **waiting times** for elective surgery have gotten longer or shorter in the past 2 years?



Are you likely to be subject to a serious **medical error** while being treated in a Canadian hospital?



Is the health system prepared for a **public emergency** situation like flooding, or a disease outbreak like SARS?



## Personal Responsibility and Public Expenditures

Should Canadians **take responsibility** for their own health?

- Canadians should take care of their own health, prevent illnesses and injuries, and by lead a healthy lifestyle: 85%
- Canadians should work in partnership with healthcare providers to manage their health care: 79%
- Canadians who live a healthy lifestyle should be rewarded, for example by tax incentives: 50%

## Role of Public Vs. Private Insurance

What would we get if Canadians could buy **private health insurance** for services covered under medicare?

- a two-tiered system: 63%
- a shortage of doctors and nurses: 62%
- increased health care costs: 55%
- shorter waiting times: 64%
- better access: 59%
- better quality: 55%

What way for people get **quicker access** to health care services covered under medicare do you support?

- the government providing more resources: 86%
- employers paying the cost of private insurance to cover the full cost of service: 58%

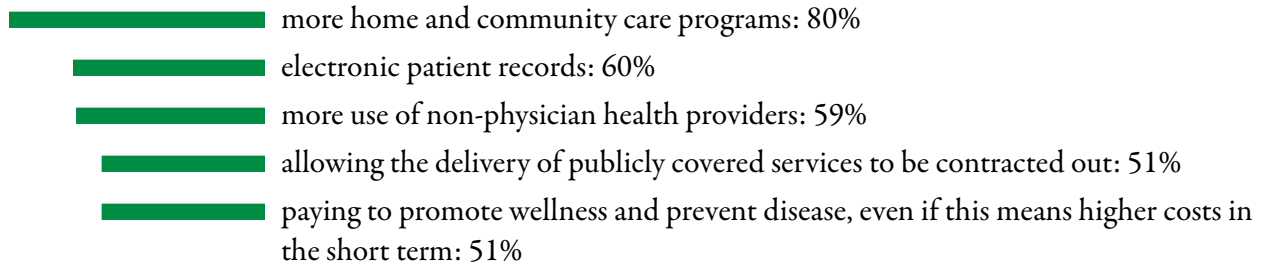
Would you be willing to **pay out of pocket** for faster access to specific treatments and tests?

- yes: 30%

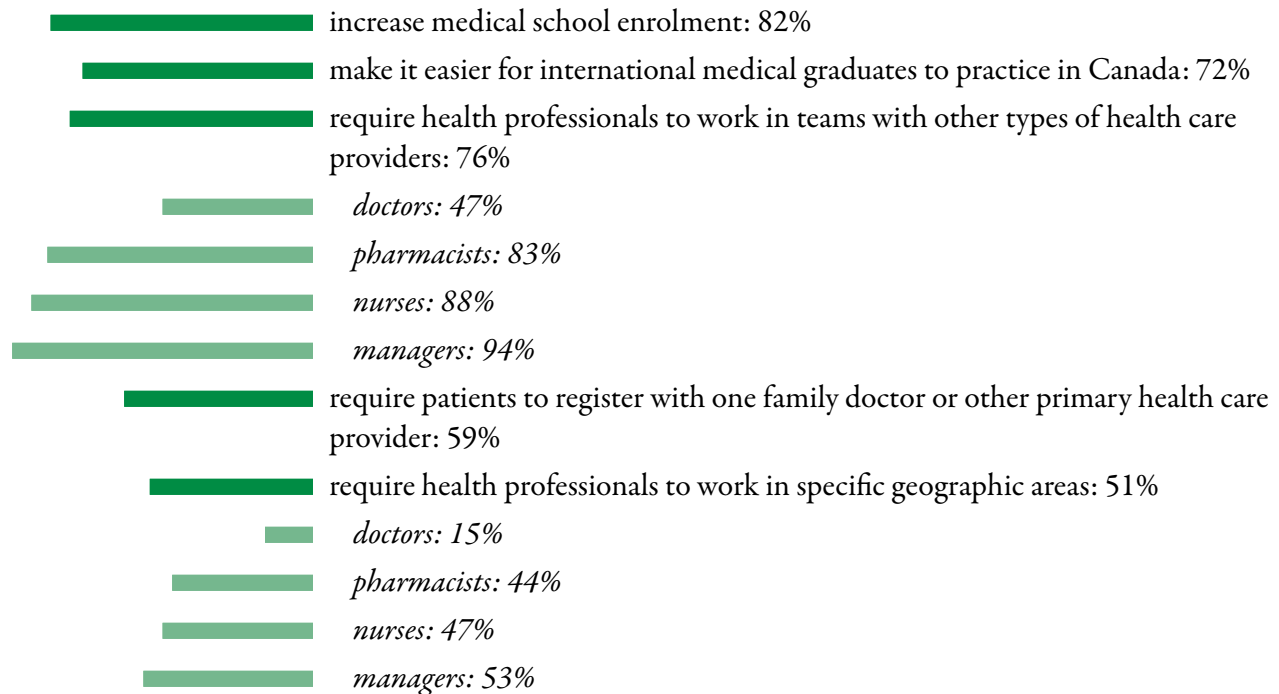


## Transforming the Healthcare System

What initiatives would you support to **improve the health system**?

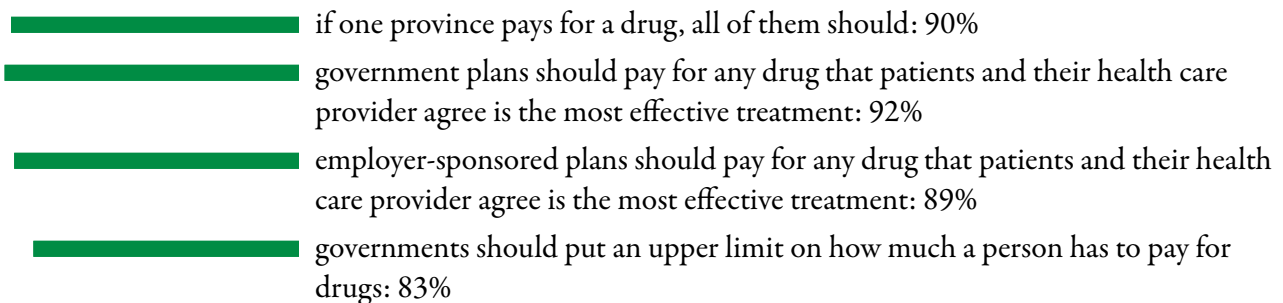


How should we **increase access** to health professionals?



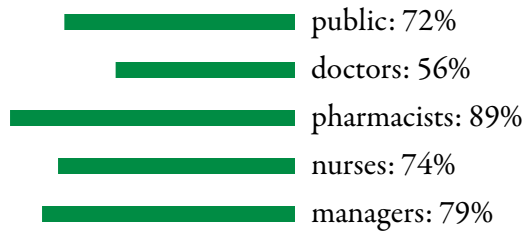
## Pharmaceuticals and Health Research

How should **coverage for medications** work?

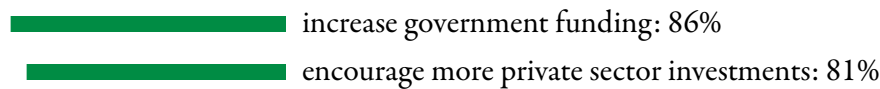


Should **pharmacists and nurses** be allowed to **prescribe drugs** in some circumstances?

*who says yes:*



How should we increase **health research** at universities, teaching hospitals, and other charitable organizations?



## The Future of Health Care

What kind of **change** does Canada's health system need?

