

Mental Health - Substance Use Health report card :

Failing grades from coast to coast

[November 2023 Data collection]



CANADIAN ALLIANCE
ON MENTAL ILLNESS
AND MENTAL HEALTH

ALLIANCE CANADIENNE
POUR LA MALADIE MENTALE
ET LA SANTÉ MENTALE



January 17th, 2024

Methodology

CAMIMH

The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health is the national voice for mental health in Canada. Established in 1992, CAMIMH is a member-driven alliance of 18 mental health and substance use health organizations comprised of people with lived or living experience, their families and caregivers, and health care providers. For more information, please go to www.CAMIMH.ca.

MHRC

Mental Health Research Canada is a national charity that serves to advance mental health through studentships, granting, data collection/analysis and strategic initiatives. As a leading mental health organization in Canada, we are dedicated to improving the lives of all Canadians by advancing mental health knowledge in unique ways—notably by leading, seeding and influencing to create better mental health systems. For more information visit www.mrhc.ca.

POLLARA

Founded in 1980, **Pollara Strategic Insights** is one of Canada's premier full-service research firms – a collaborative team of senior research veterans who are passionate about conducting research through hands-on creativity and customized solutions. For more information, please visit www.pollara.ca.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted by Pollara Strategic Insights with an online sample of 3,207 adult Canadians from November 1 to November 16, 2023. Results from a probability sample of this size could be considered accurate to within ±1.7 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. National results have been weighted by the most current census data in terms of gender, age and region to ensure the total sample is representative of the population as a whole.

GRADES

Respondents were asked to respond using a 1 to 10 scale (1 being low, 10 being high). Those scores were averaged and then converted to grades using the following scoring:

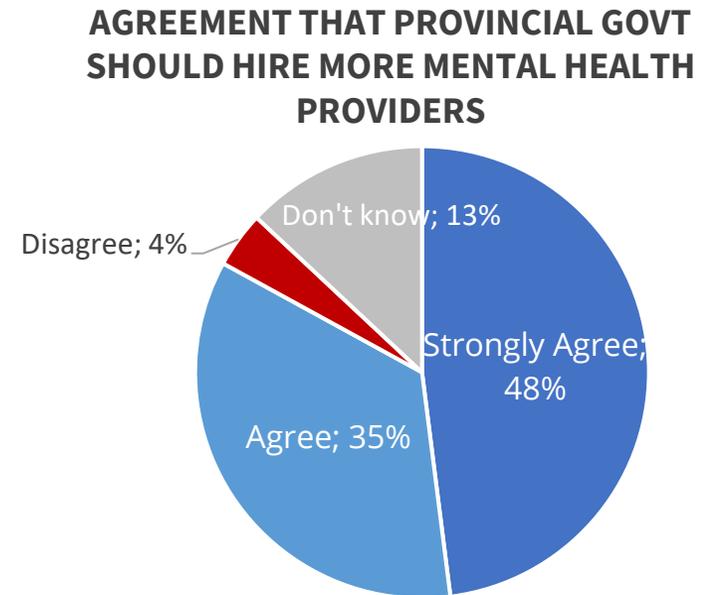
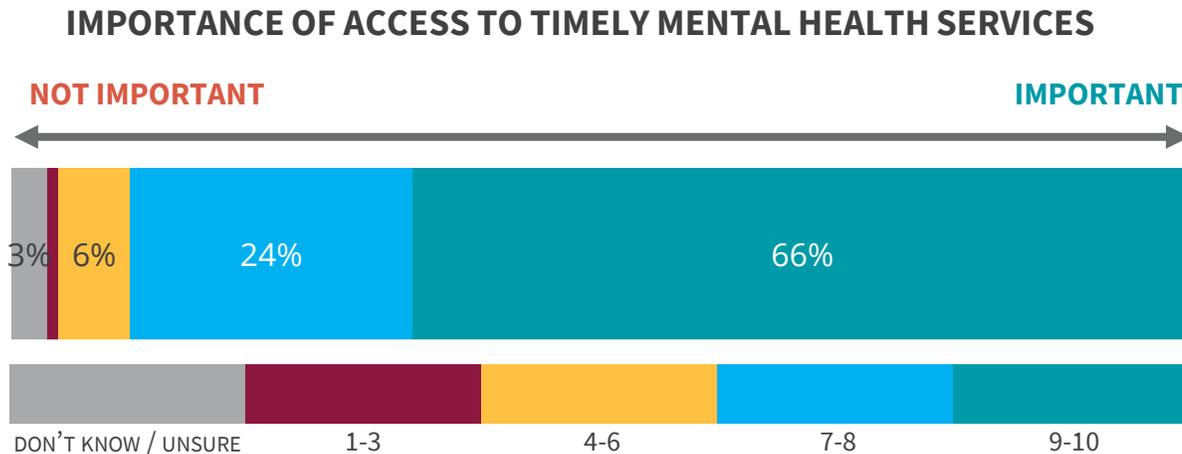
GRADE: **A+** (9-10) **A** (8) **B** (7) **C** (6) **D** (5) **F** (1-4)

FAMILIAR VS NON-FAMILIAR

Familiar vs Non-Familiar : In the interests of understanding if people who were more familiar with mental health services scored differently than those with less familiarity, we coded those who indicated either a mental health diagnosis or having accessed a service in the past year as "familiar" and all others as "non-familiar".

Access to mental health services is very important to Canadians

- Nine-in-ten (90%) Canadians consider timely access to mental health services to be important, with two-thirds saying this is very important (66% rating it 9-10).
- More than four-fifths (83%) agree that provincial governments should hire more mental health providers to improve the access to this care, with 48% agreeing strongly and only 4% disagreeing.



Mental health services receives a failing grade across all of Canada

	Total	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NS	NB	NL	Familiar*
	(3102)	(399)	(410)	(159)	(161)	(1024)	(694)	(103)	(83)	(54)	(1054)
Access – Total Score	F	F	D	F							
Canadians’ overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services	D	D	D	D	D	D	F	F	C	D	D
Current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Province in providing similar/equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care	F	F	D	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Public Confidence – Total Score	D	D	D	F	D	D	F	F	D	D	D
Confidence that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner	D	D	C	D	D	D	F	F	D	D	D
Belief that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future	F	D	D	F	D	F	F	F	D	F	F
Satisfaction – Total Score	F	D	F								
Satisfaction that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents	F	D	D	F	D	F	F	F	F	D	F
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider	F	F	F	F	D	F	F	F	F	D	F
Satisfaction that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	D	D	F
Effectiveness – Total Score	F										
Thinks that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
TOTAL MENTAL HEALTH SCORE	F	D	F	F							

*Familiar – those with a person or family mental health diagnosis or who have accessed support in the past year

GRADE: **A+** (9-10) **A** (8) **B** (7) **C** (6) **D** (5) **F** (1-4)

E2: How would you rate Canadians’ overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services (i.e., a service in which you do not have to pay for) in your province? E3: How would you rate current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services? E4: How would you rate your province in providing similar or equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care? E6: If you needed help, how confident are you that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner? E7: Do you believe that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future? E8: How satisfied are you that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents? E9: How satisfied are you with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider? E10: How satisfied are you that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all? E11: Do you think that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working? Base: (Poll 18: n= 3,207)

Older Canadians and Women give mental health services lower marks

	Total	16-17	18-34	35-54	55+	Male	Female
	(3102)	(79)	(887)	(978)	(1158)	(1559)	(1529)
Access – Total Score	4.6	4.9	5.0	4.6	4.2	4.9	4.2
Canadians' overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services	5.1	5.6	5.3	5.3	4.9	5.4	4.9
Current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services	3.9	3.9	4.4	4.0	3.3	4.3	3.4
Province in providing similar/equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care	4.4	4.9	5.1	4.6	3.9	4.8	4.0
Public Confidence – Total Score	5.0	5.4	5.3	5.1	4.8	5.4	4.7
Confidence that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner	5.4	6.3	5.6	5.5	5.0	5.7	5.0
Belief that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future	4.7	4.6	5.0	4.7	4.6	5.0	4.4
Satisfaction – Total Score	4.6	5.5	5.1	4.6	4.3	4.9	4.3
Satisfaction that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents	4.7	5.5	5.1	4.6	4.5	5.0	4.4
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider	4.6	5.3	5.0	4.6	4.2	4.9	4.2
Satisfaction that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all	4.5	5.1	5.1	4.5	4.1	4.8	4.3
Effectiveness – Total Score	4.3	4.8	4.7	4.3	4.0	4.7	4.0
Thinks that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working	4.3	4.8	4.7	4.3	4.0	4.7	4.0
TOTAL MENTAL HEALTH SCORE	4.7	5.3	5.0	4.7	4.5	5.0	4.4



Significantly lower than other group at 95% level of confidence

GRADE:

A+ (9-10)

A (8)

B (7)

C (6)

D (5)

F (1-4)

E2: How would you rate Canadians' overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services (i.e., a service in which you do not have to pay for) in your province? **E3:** How would you rate current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services? **E4:** How would you rate your province in providing similar or equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care? **E6:** If you needed help, how confident are you that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner? **E7:** Do you believe that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future? **E8:** How satisfied are you that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents? **E9:** How satisfied are you with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider? **E10:** How satisfied are you that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all? **E11:** Do you think that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working? Base: (Poll 18: n= 3,207)

While visible minorities feel a little more positively about mental health services, 2SLGBTQ+ do not

	Total	Visible Minority	Not Vis/Min	2SLGBTQ+	Not 2SLGBTQ+
	(3102)	(447)	(2655)	(235)	(2867)
Access – Total Score	4.6	5.2	4.5	4.1	4.6
Canadians’ overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services	5.1	5.7	5.1	4.5	5.2
Current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services	3.9	4.6	3.7	3.7	3.9
Province in providing similar/equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care	4.4	5.2	4.3	4.1	4.4
Public Confidence – Total Score	5.0	5.5	5.0	4.6	5.1
Confidence that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner	5.4	5.8	5.3	4.9	5.4
Belief that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future	4.7	5.2	4.6	4.3	4.7
Satisfaction – Total Score	4.6	5.2	4.5	4.3	4.6
Satisfaction that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents	4.7	5.3	4.6	4.3	4.7
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider	4.6	5.2	4.5	4.2	4.6
Satisfaction that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all	4.5	5.1	4.4	4.4	4.6
Effectiveness – Total Score	4.3	4.9	4.2	4.1	4.3
Thinks that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working	4.3	4.9	4.2	4.1	4.3
TOTAL MENTAL HEALTH SCORE	4.7	5.2	4.6	4.3	4.8



Significantly lower than other group at 95% level of confidence

GRADE: **A+** (9-10) **A** (8) **B** (7) **C** (6) **D** (5) **F** (1-4)

E2: How would you rate Canadians’ overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services (i.e., a service in which you do not have to pay for) in your province? **E3:** How would you rate current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services? **E4:** How would you rate your province in providing similar or equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care? **E6:** If you needed help, how confident are you that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner? **E7:** Do you believe that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future? **E8:** How satisfied are you that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents? **E9:** How satisfied are you with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider? **E10:** How satisfied are you that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all? **E11:** Do you think that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working? Base: (Poll 18: n= 3,207)

People who are familiar with mental health services score them higher but still give them failing grades

	Total (3102)	Familiar* (1054)	Not Familiar (2048)
Access – Total Score	4.6	4.8	4.5
Canadians’ overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services	5.1	5.3	5.1
Current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services	3.9	4.2	3.7
Province in providing similar/equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care	4.4	4.7	4.2
Public Confidence – Total Score	5.0	5.2	5.0
Confidence that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner	5.4	5.6	5.3
Belief that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future	4.7	4.9	4.6
Satisfaction – Total Score	4.6	4.8	4.5
Satisfaction that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents	4.7	4.8	4.6
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider	4.6	4.8	4.5
Satisfaction that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all	4.5	4.8	4.4
Effectiveness – Total Score	4.3	4.5	4.2
Thinks that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working	4.3	4.5	4.2
TOTAL MENTAL HEALTH SCORE	4.7	4.8	4.2

*Familiar – those with a person or family mental health diagnosis or who have accessed support in the past year

GRADE: **A+** (9-10) **A** (8) **B** (7) **C** (6) **D** (5) **F** (1-4)

○ Significantly higher than Not Familiar at a 95% level of confidence.

E2: How would you rate Canadians’ overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services (i.e., a service in which you do not have to pay for) in your province? E3: How would you rate current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services? E4: How would you rate your province in providing similar or equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care? E6: If you needed help, how confident are you that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner? E7: Do you believe that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future? E8: How satisfied are you that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents? E9: How satisfied are you with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider? E10: How satisfied are you that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all? E11: Do you think that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working? Base: (Poll 18: n= 3,207)

Those likely to have alcohol or cannabis dependencies score mental health services higher

	Alcohol Dependency			Cannabis Dependency			
	Total (3102)	None (2642)	Harmful (269)	Dependent (191)	Normal (2822)	Hazardous (97)	Disorder (183)
Access – Total Score	4.6	4.5	4.9	5.6	4.5	5.1	5.8
Canadians' overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services	5.1	5.1	5.3	5.8	5.1	5.6	6.0
Current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services	3.9	3.7	4.5	5.4	3.7	4.2	5.6
Province in providing similar/equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care	4.4	4.3	4.9	5.7	4.3	5.2	6.0
Public Confidence – Total Score	5.0	5.0	5.3	5.7	5.0	5.2	5.7
Confidence that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner	5.4	5.3	5.6	5.8	5.3	5.7	6.0
Belief that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future	4.7	4.6	5.0	5.7	4.6	4.8	5.6
Satisfaction – Total Score	4.6	4.5	4.9	5.6	4.5	4.7	5.9
Satisfaction that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents	4.7	4.6	5.0	5.8	4.6	4.8	6.0
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider	4.6	4.5	4.8	5.6	4.5	4.6	5.9
Satisfaction that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all	4.5	4.4	4.9	5.5	4.4	4.9	5.8
Effectiveness – Total Score	4.3	4.2	4.7	5.3	4.2	4.6	5.5
Thinks that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working	4.3	4.2	4.7	5.3	4.2	4.6	5.5
TOTAL MENTAL HEALTH SCORE	4.7	4.6	5.0	5.5	4.7	4.9	5.7



Significantly lower than other group at 95% level of confidence

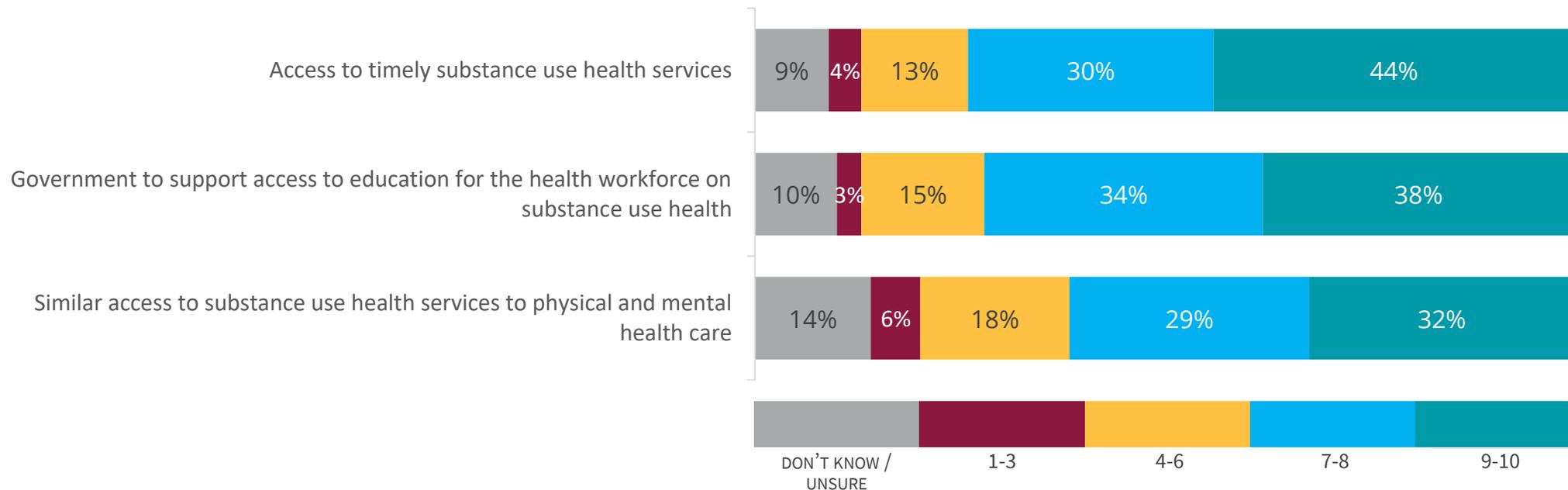
GRADE: A+ (9-10) A (8) B (7) C (6) D (5) F (1-4)

E2: How would you rate Canadians' overall ability to access publicly-funded mental health care services (i.e., a service in which you do not have to pay for) in your province? E3: How would you rate current wait times to access publicly-funded mental health care services? E4: How would you rate your province in providing similar or equal access to mental health services compared to physical health care? E6: If you needed help, how confident are you that you would be able to find the mental health care service(s) you need in a timely manner? E7: Do you believe that all governments are serious about improving access to mental health care services in the future? E8: How satisfied are you that your provincial government is focused on providing access to mental health care services to all residents? E9: How satisfied are you with your provincial government when it comes to accessing a mental health care provider? E10: How satisfied are you that the federal government is focused on improving access to mental health care services for all? E11: Do you think that governments are doing enough to evaluate if mental health care services are working? Base: (Poll 18: n= 3,207)

Access to substance use health services is important to Canadians

- Three-quarters (74%) of Canadians believe it is important to have access to timely substance use health services, with 44% finding this to be very important.
- A similar proportion believes it is important for government to support access to education for the health workforce on substance use health (72%).
- While the sentiment is not as strong, still three-fifths of Canadians believe access to substance use health services should be similar or equal to access to physical or mental health services (61%).

IMPORTANCE OF SUBSTANCE USE HEALTH SERVICES



E12. How important do you think it is for Canadians to have timely access to substance use health services? E14: How important do you think it is for Canadians to have similar or equal access to Substance Use Health services compared to physical health and mental health care? E16: How important do you think it is for all levels of government to support access to education for the health workforce on substance use health? Base: (Total n= 3,207)

Substance use health services receives poor grades across all of Canada

	Total	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NS	NB	NL	Familiar*
	(3102)	(399)	(410)	(159)	(161)	(1024)	(694)	(103)	(83)	(54)	(1054)
Access – Total Score	D	F	D	D	D						
Rating of Canadians’ overall ability to access to publicly-funded substance use health services	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	F	D	D	D
Confidence that you would be able to find a health service in your province for your Substance Use Health concerns	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	F	D	D	D
Public Confidence – Total Score	D	F	D	D	D						
Confidence that you would be able to find the substance use health service(s) you needed in a timely manner	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	F	D	D	D
Satisfaction – Total Score	F	F	D	F	D	F	F	F	F	D	D
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing substance use health services	F	F	D	F	D	F	F	F	F	D	D
Effectiveness – Total Score	F	F	D	F	F	F	F	F	F	D	F
Thoughts that governments are doing enough to evaluate if Substance Use Health services are working	F	F	D	F	F	F	F	F	F	D	F
TOTAL SUBSTANCE USE HEALTH SCORE	D	F	D	D	D						

*Familiar – those with a person or family mental health diagnosis or who have accessed support in the past year

GRADE: **A+** (9-10) **A** (8) **B** (7) **C** (6) **D** (5) **F** (1-4)

E13: How would you rate Canadians’ overall ability to access to publicly-funded substance use health services (i.e., a service in which you do not have to pay for) in your province? **E15:** If you do not have a mental health problem, how confident are you that you would be able to find a health service in your province for your Substance Use Health concerns? **E17:** If you needed help, how confident are you that you would be able to find the substance use health service(s) you needed in a timely manner? **E18:** How satisfied are you with your provincial government when it comes to accessing substance use health services? **E19:** Do you think that governments are doing enough to evaluate if Substance Use Health services are working? Base: (Poll 18: n= 3,207)

Older Canadians and women are more critical of substance use health services

	Total	16-17	18-34	35-54	55+	Male	Female
	(3102)	(73)	(830)	(898)	(1095)	(1479)	(1405)
Access – Total Score	5.3	6.3	5.6	5.4	4.9	5.7	4.9
Rating of Canadians’ overall ability to access to publicly-funded substance use health services	5.2	6.5	5.6	5.2	4.8	5.6	4.8
Confidence that you would be able to find a health service in your province for your Substance Use Health concerns	5.4	6.3	5.7	5.5	4.9	5.7	5.0
Public Confidence – Total Score	5.4	6.4	5.7	5.5	5.0	5.8	5.0
Confidence that you would be able to find the substance use health service(s) you needed in a timely manner	5.4	6.4	5.7	5.5	5.0	5.8	5.0
Satisfaction – Total Score	4.9	6.0	5.3	4.9	4.5	5.3	4.5
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing substance use health services	4.9	6.0	5.3	4.9	4.5	5.3	4.5
Effectiveness – Total Score	4.7	5.6	5.2	4.7	4.3	5.1	4.4
Thoughts that governments are doing enough to evaluate if Substance Use Health services are working	4.7	5.6	5.2	4.7	4.3	5.1	4.4
TOTAL SUBSTANCE USE HEALTH SCORE	5.1	6.0	5.5	5.1	4.8	5.5	4.7



Significantly lower than other group at 95% level of confidence

GRADE: **A+** (9-10) **A** (8) **B** (7) **C** (6) **D** (5) **F** (1-4)

E13: How would you rate Canadians’ overall ability to access to publicly-funded substance use health services (i.e., a service in which you do not have to pay for) in your province? **E15:** If you do not have a mental health problem, how confident are you that you would be able to find a health service in your province for your Substance Use Health concerns? **E17:** If you needed help, how confident are you that you would be able to find the substance use health service(s) you needed in a timely manner? **E18:** How satisfied are you with your provincial government when it comes to accessing substance use health services? **E19:** Do you think that governments are doing enough to evaluate if Substance Use Health services are working? Base: (Poll 18: n= 3,207)

While visible minorities feel a little more positively about substance use services, 2SLGBTQ+ do not

	Total	Visible Minority	Not Vis/Min	2SLGBTQ+	Not 2SLGBTQ+
	(3102)	(447)	(2655)	(235)	(2867)
Access – Total Score	5.3	5.8	5.2	4.9	5.3
Rating of Canadians’ overall ability to access to publicly-funded substance use health services	5.2	5.8	5.1	4.8	5.2
Confidence that you would be able to find a health service in your province for your Substance Use Health concerns	5.4	5.8	5.3	5.2	5.4
Public Confidence – Total Score	5.4	5.8	5.3	5.1	5.4
Confidence that you would be able to find the substance use health service(s) you needed in a timely manner	5.4	5.8	5.3	5.1	5.4
Satisfaction – Total Score	4.9	5.4	4.8	4.6	4.9
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing substance use health services	4.9	5.4	4.8	4.6	4.9
Effectiveness – Total Score	4.7	5.2	4.6	4.4	4.8
Thoughts that governments are doing enough to evaluate if Substance Use Health services are working	4.7	5.2	4.6	4.4	4.8
TOTAL SUBSTANCE USE HEALTH SCORE	5.1	5.5	5.0	4.7	5.1



Significantly lower than other group at 95% level of confidence

GRADE: **A+** (9-10) **A** (8) **B** (7) **C** (6) **D** (5) **F** (1-4)

Those likely to have alcohol or cannabis dependency feel more positively about substance use health services

	Alcohol Dependency			Cannabis Dependency			
	Total	None	Harmful	Dependent	Normal	Hazardous	Disorder
	(3102)	(2642)	(269)	(191)	(2822)	(97)	(183)
Access – Total Score	5.3	5.2	5.5	5.9	5.2	5.5	6.3
Rating of Canadians’ overall ability to access to publicly-funded substance use health services	5.2	5.1	5.4	5.9	5.1	5.7	6.4
Confidence that you would be able to find a health service in your province for your Substance Use Health concerns	5.4	5.3	5.6	6.2	5.3	5.4	6.3
Public Confidence – Total Score	5.4	5.3	5.6	6.0	5.3	5.7	6.2
Confidence that you would be able to find the substance use health service(s) you needed in a timely manner	5.4	5.3	5.6	6.0	5.3	5.7	6.2
Satisfaction – Total Score	4.9	4.8	5.1	5.7	4.8	5.3	6.1
Satisfaction with your provincial government when it comes to accessing substance use health services	4.9	4.8	5.1	5.7	4.8	5.3	6.1
Effectiveness – Total Score	4.7	4.6	4.9	5.8	4.6	5.0	6.0
Thoughts that governments are doing enough to evaluate if Substance Use Health services are working	4.7	4.6	4.9	5.8	4.6	5.0	6.0
TOTAL SUBSTANCE USE HEALTH SCORE	5.1	5.0	5.3	5.8	5.0	5.3	6.1



Significantly lower than other group at 95% level of confidence

GRADE: **A+** (9-10) **A** (8) **B** (7) **C** (6) **D** (5) **F** (1-4)

E13: How would you rate Canadians’ overall ability to access to publicly-funded substance use health services (i.e., a service in which you do not have to pay for) in your province? **E15:** If you do not have a mental health problem, how confident are you that you would be able to find a health service in your province for your Substance Use Health concerns? **E17:** If you needed help, how confident are you that you would be able to find the substance use health service(s) you needed in a timely manner? **E18:** How satisfied are you with your provincial government when it comes to accessing substance use health services? **E19:** Do you think that governments are doing enough to evaluate if Substance Use Health services are working? Base: (Poll 18: n= 3,207)



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