Survey of Canadian Attitudes Toward Psychologists and Accessing Psychological Services

NOVA SCOTIA
Survey Findings (n=131)

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“Can you tell me what health professionals you think are best able to care for people living with DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY DISORDERS?” [Open]

1st Choice

- Psychiatrist: 33%
- Family doctor/physician: 30%
- Psychologist: 26%
- Other: 3%
- DK/NR: 4%

2nd Choice

- Psychiatrist: 34%
- Psychologist: 24%
- Family doctor/physician: 17%
- Therapist: 5%
- Social worker: 3%
- DK/NR: 12%

n=131
n=84
Perceptions of Health Professionals Best Able to Help with Mental Health Problems (2)

“Can you tell me what health professionals you think are best able to care for people living with ADDICTIONS?” [Open]

**1st Choice**
- Family doctor/physician: 25%
- Counsellor: 23%
- Psychologist: 12%
- Addictions specialist: 10%
- Psychiatrist: 5%
- DK/NR: 11%

**2nd Choice**
- Family doctor/physician: 21%
- Psychiatrist: 16%
- Psychologist: 10%
- Counsellor: 9%
- Social worker: 5%
- Rehab centre: 3%
- DK/NR: 28%
“Can you tell me what health professionals you think are best able to care for people living with DEMENTIA?” [Open]

**1st Choice**
- Family doctor/physician: 49%
- Psychiatrist: 8%
- Psychologist: 8%
- Gerontologist: 8%
- Caregivers: 4%
- Therapist: 3%
- Other: 3%
- DK/NR: 9%

**2nd Choice**
- Family doctor/physician: 14%
- Psychiatrist: 13%
- Psychologist: 7%
- Neurologist: 6%
- Counsellor: 5%
- Social worker: 5%
- Dementia specialist: 4%
- Caregivers: 4%
- Nurses: 3%
- DK/NR: 33%

n=131
n=75
Perceptions of Health Professionals Best Able to Help with Mental Health Problems (4)

“Can you tell me what health professionals you think are best able to care for people living with LEARNING DISABILITIES?” [Open]

1st Choice

- Teachers: 28%
- Psychologist: 15%
- Family doctor/physician: 14%
- Counsellor: 8%
- Social worker: 5%
- Speech pathologist: 5%
- Paediatrician: 3%
- Therapist: 3%
- Specialist: 3%
- Other: 3%
- DK/NR: 11%

2nd Choice

- Teachers: 15%
- Family doctor/physician: 9%
- Psychologist: 9%
- Counsellor: 8%
- Psychiatrist: 7%
- Therapist: 5%
- Other: 3%
- DK/NR: 32%

n=131
n=75
“Can you tell me what health professionals you think are best able to care for people COPING WITH THE STRESS OF BEING DIAGNOSED WITH A DISEASE LIKE CANCER?” [Open]

1st Choice:
- Family doctor/physician: 25%
- Psychologist: 16%
- Oncologist: 12%
- Counsellor: 8%
- Psychiatrist: 7%
- Clergy, minister: 6%
- Social worker: 4%
- Palliative care worker: 4%
- Family, friends: 3%
- Therapist: 3%
- Other: 4%
- DK/NR: 5%

2nd Choice:
- Family doctor/physician: 19%
- Psychologist: 14%
- Oncologist: 10%
- Counsellor: 8%
- Therapist: 8%
- Psychiatrist: 6%
- Social worker: 5%
- Nurses: 5%
- Specialist: 3%
- Family, friends: 3%
- DK/NR: 14%
“What health professional would you say you have the most confidence in overall when it comes to helping people with mental health problems?”

- Psychiatrist: 29%
- Psychologist: 28%
- Family doctor/physician: 23%
- Counsellor: 8%
- Social worker: 5%
- Other: 2%
- None: 2%
- DK/NR: 1%

n=131
Perceptions of Psychologists in Helping People with Mental Health Problems

“I would now like to ask you some questions about psychologists in particular. How effective do you feel psychologists are in helping people who are living with these five mental health problems or disorders?”

- Depression and anxiety disorders: 37% Very effective, 31% Effective, 26% Somewhat effective, 4% Not at all effective, 2% DK/NR
- Coping with the stress of being diagnosed with a disease like cancer: 30% Very effective, 33% Effective, 28% Somewhat effective, 6% Not at all effective, 3% DK/NR
- Addictions: 17% Very effective, 34% Effective, 39% Somewhat effective, 4% Not at all effective, 3% DK/NR
- Learning disabilities: 11% Very effective, 30% Effective, 39% Somewhat effective, 13% Not at all effective, 8% DK/NR
- Dementia: 10% Very effective, 24% Effective, 38% Somewhat effective, 20% Not at all effective, 8% DK/NR

n=131
“Overall, how much confidence do you have in psychologists and the care they provide when it comes to mental health?”

No confidence at all: 1%
Somewhat confident: 33%
Confident: 44%
Very confident: 15%
DK/NR: 7%

n=131
Views on Access to Psychologists

“To the best of your knowledge, are you able to access the services of a psychologist through publicly funded health care services?”

- Yes: 54%
- No: 25%
- Unemployed: 21%
- DK/NR: 10%

n=131

“To the best of your knowledge, are you able to access the services of a psychologist through your employer’s extended health care benefits plan?”

- Yes: 52%
- No: 17%
- Unemployed: 21%
- DK/NR: 10%

n=131
“Generally speaking, if you decided to access the services of a psychologist for yourself or a loved one, how would you go about finding a psychologist and securing an appointment?” [Open]

- Through family physician: 76%
- Yellow pages or Web: 13%
- Friend or family member: 8%
- Employee assistance: 8%
- Hospital: 5%
- Public health agency: 3%
- General practitioner: 2%
- Other: 2%
- DK/NR: 2%

n=131
### Barriers to Accessing a Psychologist

“For each of these possible barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Not at all significant</th>
<th>Not very significant</th>
<th>Somewhat significant</th>
<th>Very significant</th>
<th>DK/NR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological services cost too much for you to pay yourself</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologists are not covered by your provincial health plan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological services are not covered by your employer’s health benefits</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wait times to see a psychologist are too long</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would rather deal with these problems and disorders on your own</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wouldn’t want others to know you are seeing a psychologist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*DK/NR: Not at all significant, Not very significant, Somewhat significant, Very significant*
Perceived Hourly Rate of Psychological Services

“Thinking of psychologists in particular, what do you imagine the hourly rate would be for psychological services if you were paying yourself?” [Open]

- < $50: 7%
- $50-$74: 17%
- $75-$99: 15%
- $100-$149: 28%
- $150+: 22%
- DK/NR: 11%

Average = $109

n=131
Perceived Number of Sessions with Psychologists to Deal with Problems

“To the best of your knowledge, how many sessions with a psychologist would be required by the average patient to deal with mental health problems or disorders like depression or anxiety?” [Open]

- <10 sessions: 23%
- 10-15 sessions: 30%
- 16-25 sessions: 13%
- 25+ sessions: 14%
- DK/NR: 19%

Average=26

n=131
Importance of Covering Psychological Services by Public Health Plans

“The kinds of problems that Canadians typically bring to psychologists include such things as depression, anxiety, stress, learning disorders, autism, and marital and family problems. Given this, would you say that ensuring psychological services are covered by public health plans is...?”

n=131