



# Understanding the Mental Health of Canadians Throughout COVID-19 and Beyond: Poll #14



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Health  
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# Methodology

**Methodology:** This online survey was conducted among a sample of 3,500 adult Canadians. This was the fourteenth poll of this study (see below). Results between the polls are compared where applicable.

**Weighting:** While this study included a booster sample in Saskatchewan, 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.

National	Interview Dates	Number of Interviews	Margin of Error	Poll Nine	Number of Interviews	Margin of Error
<b>Poll One</b>	April 22 to 28, 2020	1,803	±2.3%			
<b>Poll Two</b>	August 21 to 31, 2020	4,010	±1.5%	<b>British Columbia</b>	370	±5.1%
<b>Poll Three</b>	October 22 to 28, 2020	2,004	±2.2%	<b>Alberta</b>	371	±5.1%
<b>Poll Four</b>	December 10 to 18, 2020	2,761	±1.9%	<b>Prairies</b>	746	±3.9%
<b>Poll Five</b>	February 1 to 8, 2021	3,005	±1.8%	<b>Ontario</b>	957	±3.2%
<b>Poll Six</b>	April 20 to 28, 2021	4,005	±1.5%	<b>Quebec</b>	655	±3.8%
<b>Poll Seven</b>	June 7 to 13, 2021	4,010	±1.5%	<b>Atlantic Canada</b>	401	±4.8%
<b>Poll Eight</b>	August 17 to 24, 2021	3,010	±1.8%			
<b>Poll Nine</b>	October 22 to Nov 3, 2021	4,108	±1.5%			
<b>Poll Ten</b>	Dec 13 to 22, 2021	3,701	±1.6%			
<b>Poll Eleven</b>	Feb 15 to 22, 2022	3,512	±1.7%			
<b>Poll Twelve</b>	April 13 to 25, 2022	3,000	±1.8%			
<b>Poll Thirteen</b>	July 13 to 22, 2022	3,023	±1.8%			
<b>Poll Fourteen</b>	October 21 to Nov 1, 2022	3,500	±1.8%			

**Table 1. Poll Sample Size, Margin of Error and Field Dates, Overall and by Province**



## Major Findings



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# Major findings

- **The mental health of Canadians is demonstrating slow, consistent improvement**, with self-rated anxiety and depression slowly improving as we emerged from the pandemic.
  - PHQ9 scores (a depression clinical indicator) demonstrate a marginal improvement - **symptoms of moderate to severe depression are the lowest (10%)** seen since polling began in early 2020.
  - Atlantic Canada is, for the first time, reporting the highest levels of anxiety of all the provinces (15%); however, it is noted our poll was taken around the time of the recent hurricane. Quebec continues to report the lowest levels of self-rated anxiety (7%) and depression (4%).
- It is evident that, while the negative mental health impacts of COVID-19 are slowly continuing to improve, **new challenges that face Canadians present additional negative mental health factors**.
  - **Inflation is affecting Canadians with more than a half (56%) feeling that their mental health is being negatively impacted.** A third of respondents are worried about not being able to fully pay household bills (an increase of 7% since Poll 12). Additionally, a third are concerned with their ability to afford to feed themselves and their family with 3% already relying on food support programs.
  - A correlation was noted between those who are experiencing very high levels of anxiety and depression and those who report that inflation is having a very negative impact on their mental health (53% and 49%, respectively).
  - A quarter of those indicating financial concerns are also having difficulty coping with feelings of stress, anxiety or depression.
- Of the 15% of Canadians that say they have needed mental health support in the last year, **over half report not having had those needs met**. Primarily, cost and wait times are cited as barriers to adequate support.



## Key Findings



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# As the pandemic improves, marginal improvement is seen in the mental health of Canadians.



- **While the mental health of Canadians has improved, there are still concerns.** Feelings of burn-out as well as the number of Canadians likely to be experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression have also remained consistent or saw marginal improvement. Additionally, those who are self-reporting high levels of depression or anxiety continue to be more likely to have severe symptoms according to the Kessler-10, increasing by 4% since July 2022 and 16% since April 2022.
- **Alcohol and cannabis dependence continues to be concern** to one-in-seven and one-in-ten Canadians respectively, with those reporting high levels of anxiety and depression being more likely to have dependent behaviours.
- **Canadians' concern over the threat of COVID-19 has continued its slow decline** with a very small change in the fears of themselves or others in their family contracting COVID-19. However, concerns about inflation are taking its place as the main deterrent to mental health.
- **More than a tenth of Canadians have thought about suicide in the past year**, consistent with findings of past polls.
- **Hope has remained consistent this poll.** Poll 13 saw a decline in those feeling hopeful as well as those feeling that they have people they can count on who will help if need be. While this decline did not continue this poll, it also didn't improve, with numbers remaining consistent to July 2020 findings.
- **Of the one-in-ten who accessed mental health supports in the past year, most accessed free supports:** but one quarter paid for part or all of the services themselves, often because they did not have sufficient health insurance to pay for what they need. Governmental supports are most often used, while one fifth use services paid for by health insurance or through free community/campus offerings.





## Results in Detail



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# Anxiety and Depression

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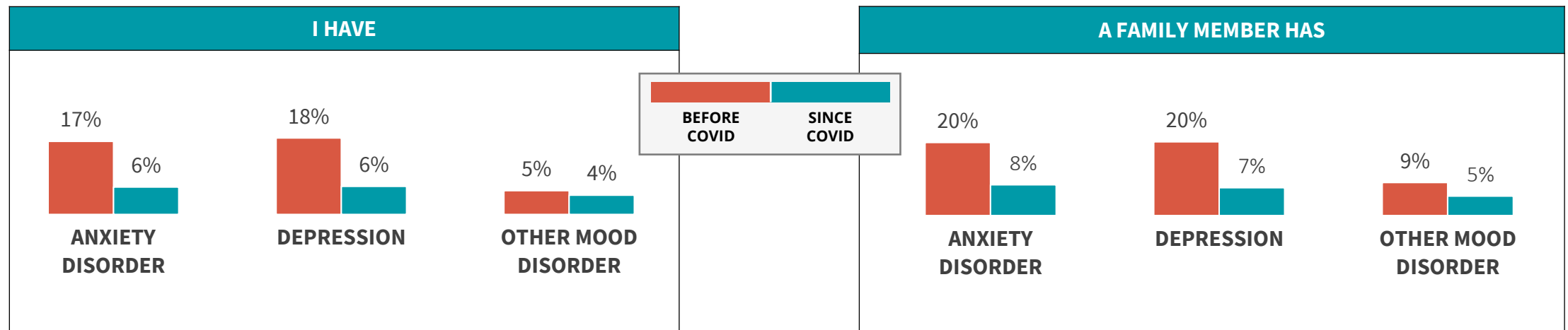
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# Three-in-ten Canadians have been diagnosed with anxiety or depression since the onset of COVID-19

- Prior to the pandemic, almost one fifth of Canadians have experienced a personal or family diagnosis of anxiety (17% personal, 20% family) or depression (18% personal, 20% family). Other mood disorders are less common, with 5% having a personal diagnosis, and 9% a diagnosis in their family.
- Since the onset of COVID-19, another 6% say they have personally been diagnosed with anxiety and 6% with depression; another 8% and 7% say a family member has been diagnosed with anxiety or depression, respectively.
- When it comes to anxiety, young adults between the ages of 18 and 34 years (11%), students (11%), frontline healthcare workers (14%), immigrants (11%) and visible minorities (10%) have higher likelihood of having been diagnosed since the onset of COVID-19.
- A larger percentage of young adults (16-17, 15% and 18-34, 11%), students (10%), frontline healthcare workers (23%) and city-dwellers (Urban 7%, vs. rural 4%) reported receiving a diagnosis of depression since the start of the pandemic, compared to other segments of the population.



Base: (Total n=3,500)

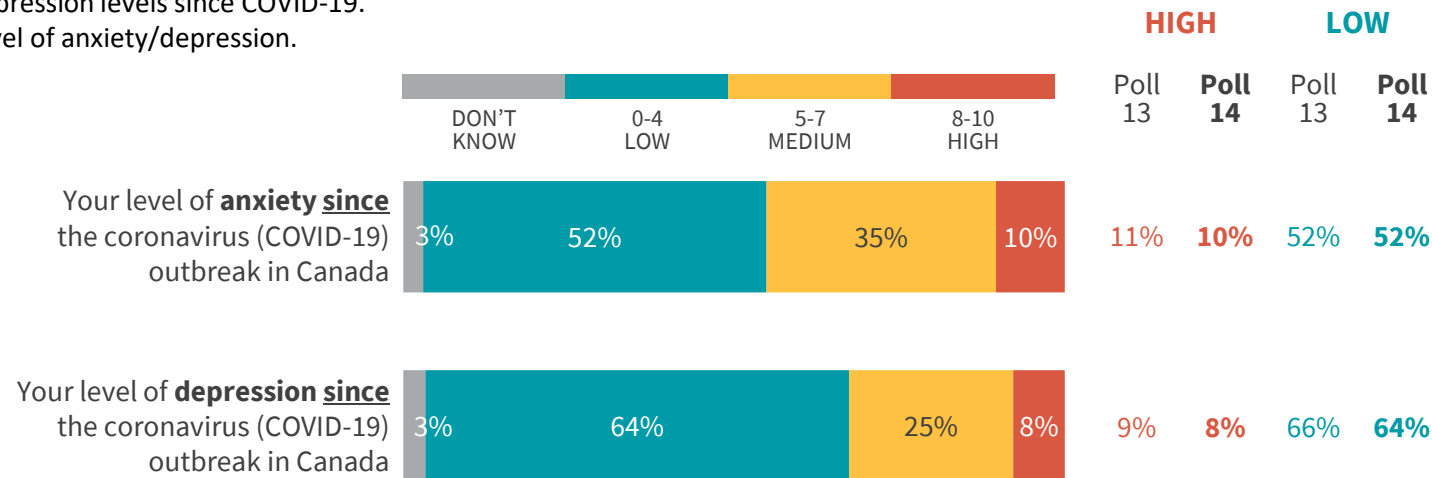
**A1A.** Have you ever, either before the Covid-19 outbreak or since it, received a diagnosis from a healthcare professional stating that you are affected by any of the following:

**A1B.** Have a close family member ever, either before the Covid-19 outbreak or since it, received a diagnosis from a healthcare professional stating that you are affected by any of the following

# High self-rated anxiety and depression rates appear to be leveling off

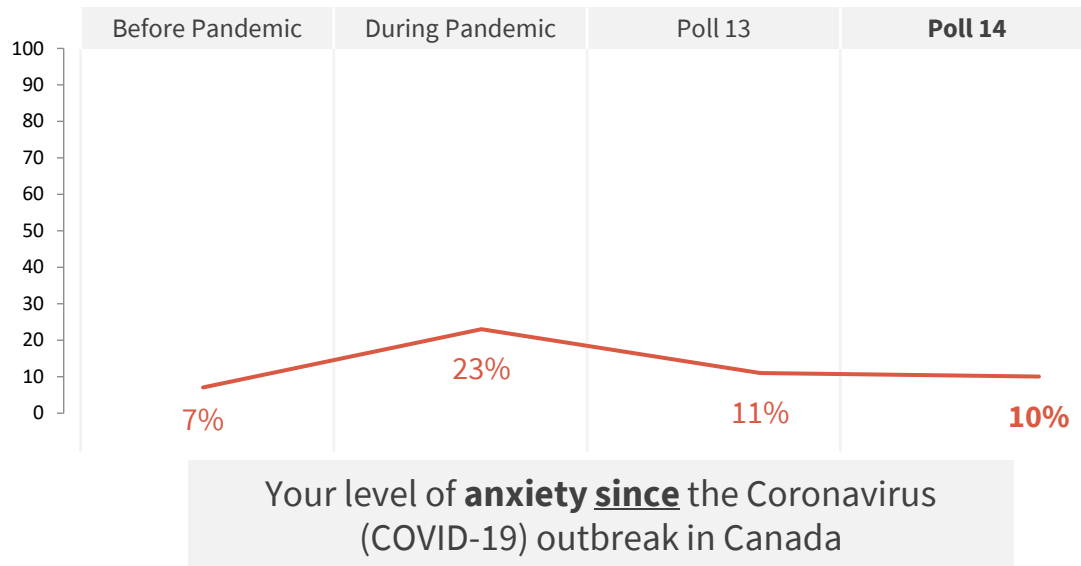
- A tenth of Canadians said they are experiencing high levels of anxiety, which continues to be higher than before COVID-19.
  - Younger Canadians between 18 to 34 years old (17%), students (17%) as well as those who are unemployed (15%) or have a low income (<30K ,15%), members of LGBTQ2S+ community (19%), and visible minorities (14%) are more likely to report high levels of anxiety.
  - High anxiety is also more prevalent among Canadians struggling with mental health or consuming cannabis or alcohol at a level considered to be harmful to dependent, affecting at least one third of individuals among those segments.
- A similar percentage (8%) of Canadians said they are experiencing high levels of depression, which remains higher than before COVID-19.
  - Young adults (18 to 34, 12%), as well as those who are unemployed (14%) or living alone (11%), have a low income (<30K, 14%) , belong to a visible minority group (12%), or identify as LGBTQ2S+ (16%) are more like to say they are experiencing high levels of depression.
  - Similarly, high levels of depression are more prevalent among Canadians struggling with mental health or a level of cannabis or alcohol consumption considered harmful or dependent, affecting at least one third of individuals among those segments.

Polls 1-12 asked anxiety/depression levels since COVID-19.  
 Later polls asked current level of anxiety/depression.

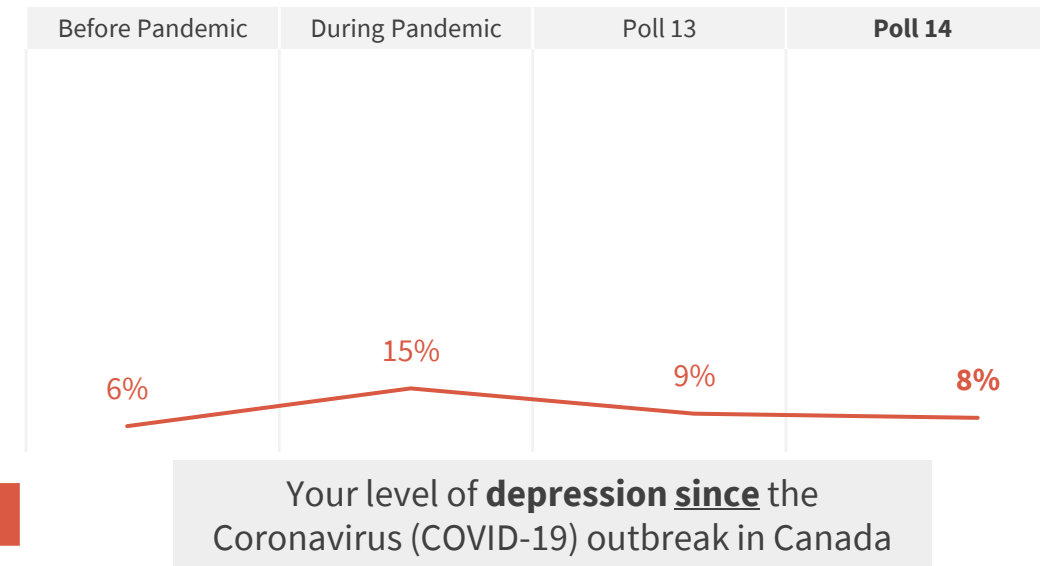


**Poll 1: Before COVID-19**  
 High Anxiety 5%  
 High Depression 4%

# Levels of high anxiety and depression are at a pandemic low, but are not quite back to pre-pandemic numbers



HIGH

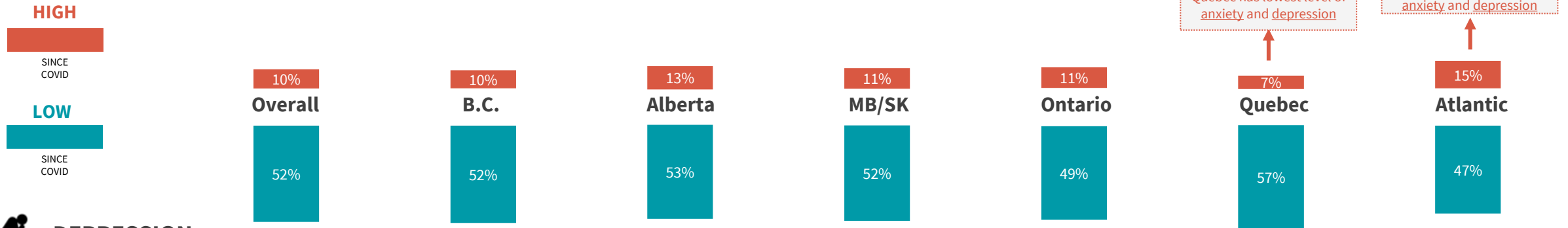


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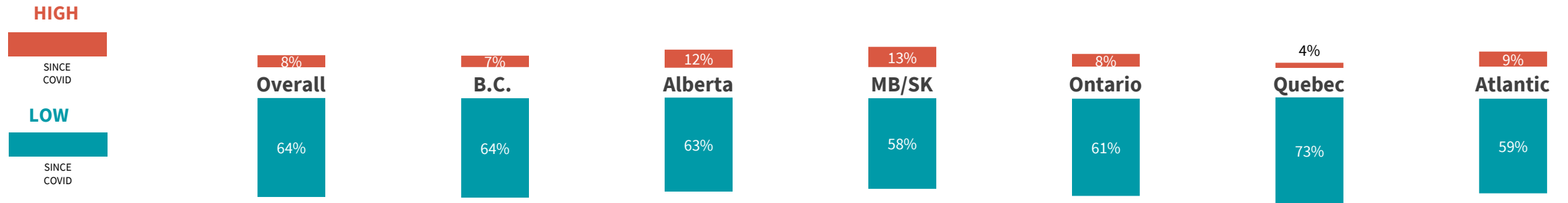


# The Atlantic provinces are experiencing high levels of anxiety in Poll 14

## ANXIETY



## DEPRESSION



Polls 1-12 asked anxiety/depression levels since COVID-19.  
 Later polls asked current level of anxiety/depression.

# There is a trended increase in moderate to severe symptoms among Canadians reporting a high level of anxiety or depression

- Three quarters (75%) of the Canadians who rated their anxiety or depression high since COVID-19 (8-10) are likely to have moderate (17%) or severe (58%) symptoms, while a quarter (25%) are likely to have no (12%) or mild (13%) symptoms.
- While levels of high anxiety and depression have declined, the likelihood that these people will have moderate to severe symptoms has increased since April (from 60% to 75%).
- Among those who rate their anxiety or depression as moderate (5-7), almost two-in-five are likely to have symptoms of a moderate (19%) or severe (22%) mental health condition, while a fifth (21%) are likely to have mild symptoms and a third (38%) are likely to have no symptoms.

## Mental Health Scores Among Canadians With High And Moderate Anxiety Or Depression Since COVID

Psychological Distress 1-5 Point Scale Items	(All/Most)	(None/Little)
Tired out for no good reason	33%	33%
That everything was an effort	26%	45%
Nervous	25%	37%
Depressed	20%	52%
Restless or fidgety	19%	50%
Hopeless	18%	59%
Worthless	16%	62%
So sad that nothing could cheer you up	13%	65%
So restless you could not sit still	11%	71%
So nervous that nothing could calm you down	11%	70%

### Moderate: 5-7

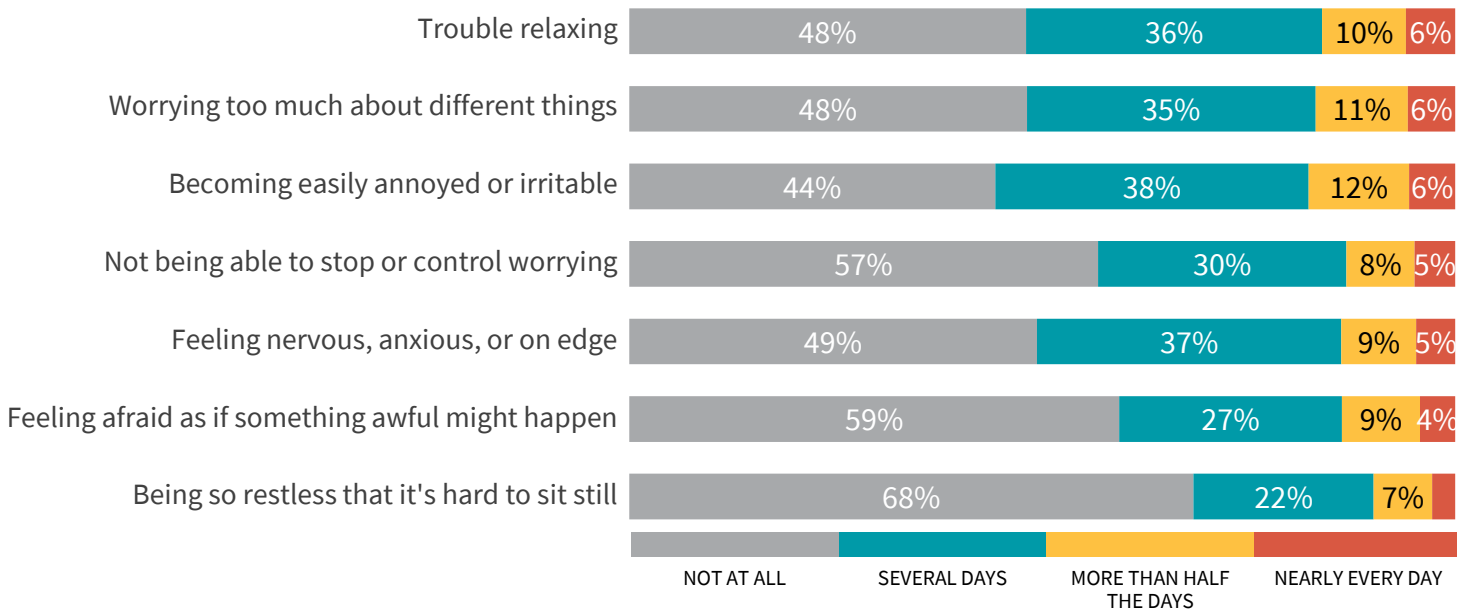
### High: 8-10

Poll 14	Poll 14	Poll 13	Poll 12	Poll 11	Poll 10	Poll 9	Poll 8	Poll 7	Poll 6	Poll 5	Poll 4	Poll 3	Poll 2	
38%	12%	12%	23%	19%	19%	20%	21%	20%	23%	19%	19%	18%	21%	Likely to have <b>no symptoms</b> (<20)
21%	13%	13%	16%	17%	19%	19%	20%	19%	18%	18%	18%	19%	16%	Likely to have <b>mild symptoms</b> (20-24)
19%	17%	21%	18%	19%	18%	22%	22%	21%	21%	20%	22%	26%	21%	Likely to have <b>moderate symptoms</b> (25-29)
22%	58%	54%	42%	45%	44%	38%	38%	40%	37%	43%	40%	36%	42%	Likely to have <b>severe symptoms</b> (30-50)

# A seventh of Canadians likely to have moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety

- Using the General Anxiety Disorder -7 (GAD-7) screening test, 4% of Canadians have symptoms of severe anxiety and 9% have symptoms of moderate anxiety. Scores have remained consistent since this test was started in Poll 6.
- Young Canadians between the ages of 16 and 34 years old, students, health care workers and post secondary educators tend have higher rates of symptoms of moderate to severe anxiety, reaching about one fifth among those segments.
- About a third of the LGBTQ2S+ community, those with financial concerns and those who struggle with cannabis or alcohol dependence have symptoms of moderate to severe anxiety.

## Psychological Distress Anxiety Frequency Scale Items



## Mental Health Scores Among Canadians With Anxiety Since COVID-19

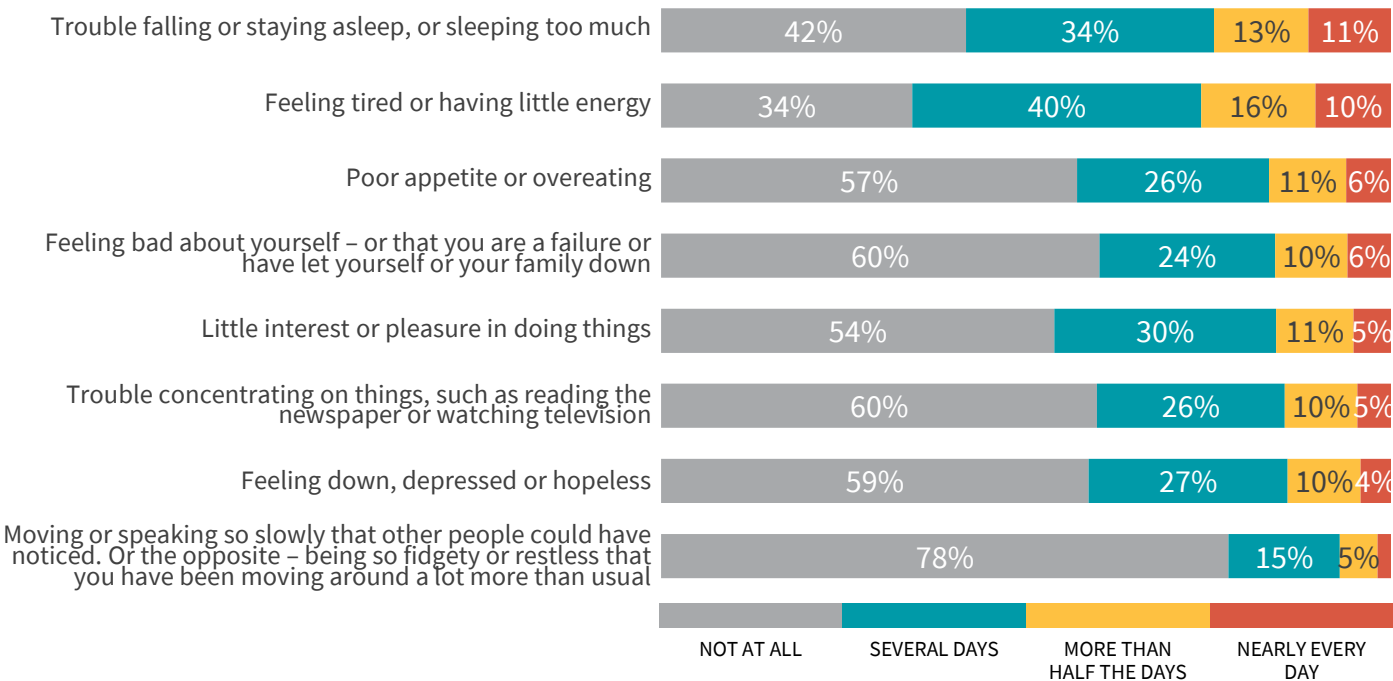
Poll 14	Poll 13	Poll 12	Poll 11	Poll 10	Poll 9	Poll 8	Poll 7	Poll 6	
64%	66%	65%	64%	62%	65%	63%	63%	62%	Likely to have <b>no anxiety</b> symptoms (0-5)
23%	20%	23%	22%	23%	22%	23%	22%	23%	Likely to have symptoms of <b>mild anxiety</b> (6-10)
9%	9%	8%	10%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	Likely to have symptoms of <b>moderate anxiety</b> (11-15)
4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	6%	Likely to have symptoms of <b>severe anxiety</b> (16-21)



# About a fifth of Canadians are likely to have symptoms of moderate to severe depression

- Using the Patient Health Questionnaire -9 (PHQ-9) test, 22% of Canadians are likely to have symptoms of moderate to severe depression, with 3% having severe, 7% moderately severe, and 12% moderate symptoms. Results have remained consistent since we first implemented this test (Poll 6).
- Rates of moderate to severe depression symptoms are highest among those receiving mental health support (50%), those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ (46%) and those with a physical impairment (36%).
- About a third of young adults (18- 34 years), students, healthcare workers, those who are unemployed or have a low income (<30K), and pregnant women have symptoms of moderate to severe depression.

## Psychological Distress Depression Frequency Scale Items



## Mental Health Scores Among Canadians With Depression Since COVID-19

Poll 14	Poll 13	Poll 12	Poll 11	Poll 10	Poll 9	Poll 8	Poll 7	Poll 6	
55%	58%	55%	55%	54%	55%	53%	52%	52%	Likely to have <b>no depression</b> symptoms (0-4)
23%	20%	23%	21%	21%	21%	23%	24%	24%	Likely to have <b>mild depression</b> symptoms (5-9)
12%	11%	12%	12%	12%	13%	12%	12%	12%	Likely to have <b>moderate depression</b> symptoms (10-14)
7%	7%	7%	8%	7%	7%	7%	8%	9%	Likely to have <b>moderately severe depression</b> symptoms (15-19)
3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	Likely to have <b>severe depression</b> symptoms (20-27)

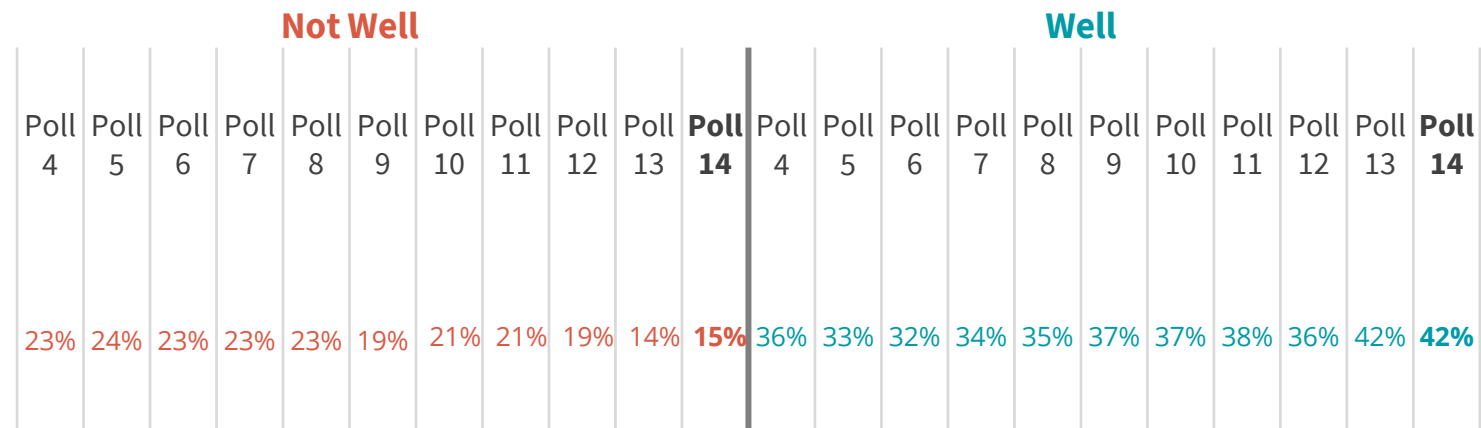
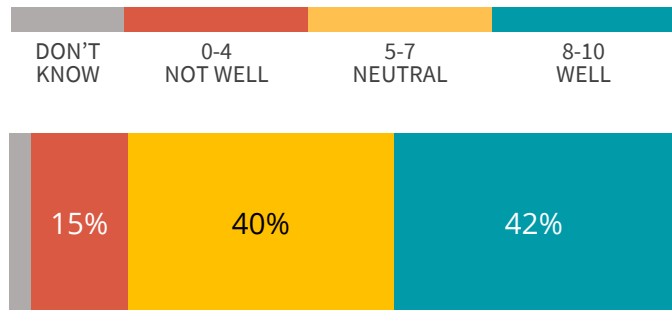
A10. In the past 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by... Base: (Total n= 3,500)

# The number of Canadians saying they are struggling to cope remains consistent

- While the number of Canadians saying they are not coping well is similar this poll (14% in Poll 13 to 15% in Poll 14), it is much lower than the levels seen during the height of the pandemic.
- Young adults under 34 years old (21%) and students (30%) are more likely to say they are not handling stress well.
- Other groups that are likely to say they are not handling stress well are those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ (24%), those with moderate (26%) or severe (41%) mental health symptoms, and those with financial concerns (25%).

## MANAGED FEELINGS OF STRESS, ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

Since the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in Canada



A2B. Since the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in Canada - On a scale of 0-10, how well were you are managing any feelings of stress, anxiety and depression that you may have.  
Base: (Total n=3,500)



# Impacts on Mental Health



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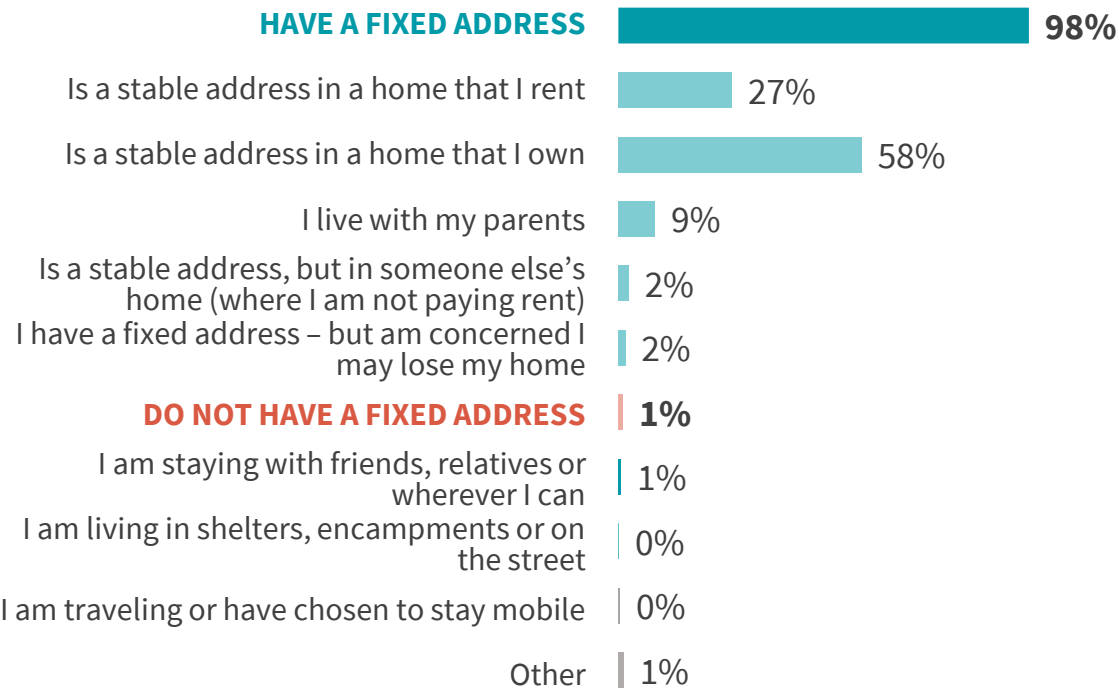




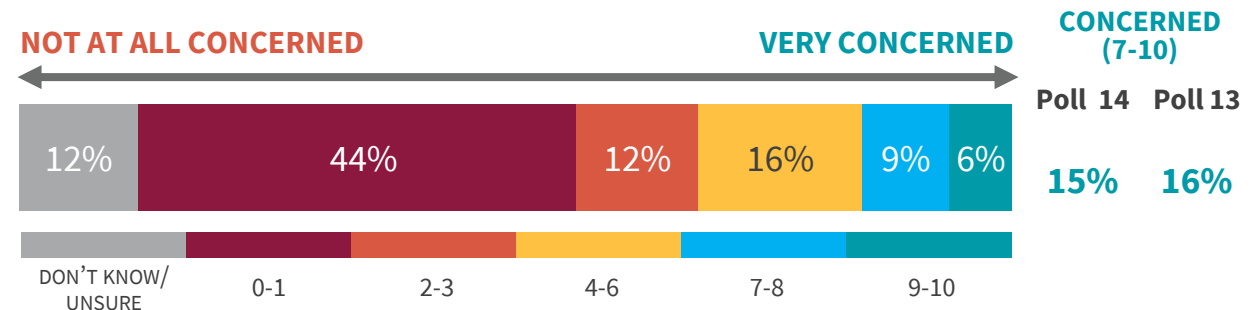
# A sixth of Canadians are concerned about making their housing payments

- Rising prices and inflation have not had that much of an impact on Canadians ability to pay for housing, with 15% having concerns (compared to 14% last poll), and more than half not being worried.
- The majority (98%) of Canadians have a fixed address, and few of these people are concerned they may lose their home (2%).
- Those experiencing high self-rated levels of anxiety or depression indicate being more concerned about making housing payments (41% and 39% respectively).

## CURRENT HOUSING SITUATION



## RENT/MORTGAGE MONTHLY PAYMENTS

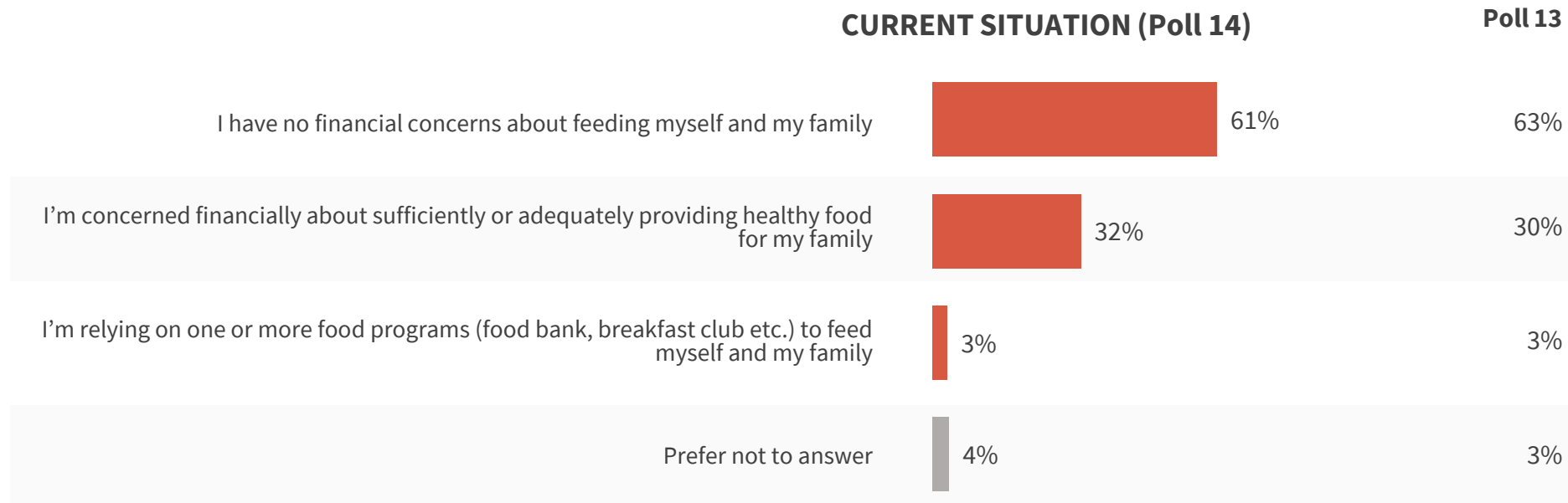


A22A: Which of the following best describes your current housing situation? Base: (Total n= 3,500)

A22B: How concerned are you about your rent/mortgage being paid each month? Base: (Total n=2,992), Poll 13: n=2,579)

# A third of Canadians worry they can't afford healthy food for their family

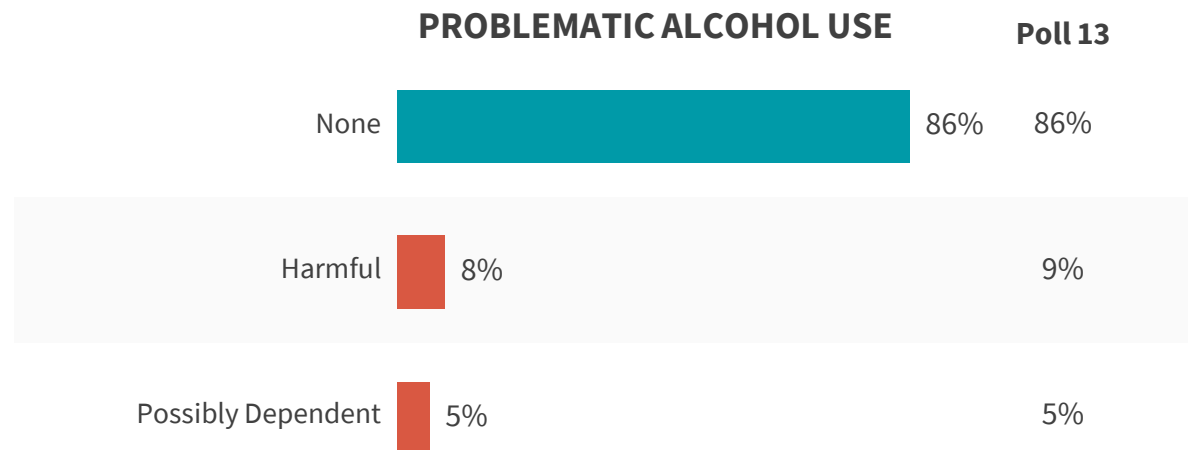
- One third of Canadians are worried about providing healthy food for their family, with 3% relying on food supports already.
- Two fifths of Canadians in the Atlantic provinces and the Prairies are concerned about being able to provide enough healthy food for their family.
- **Profile of those with healthy food insecurity:** younger Canadians (18-34 41%, 35-54 38%), those with children (45%), unemployed (58%), visible minorities (43%), those with a physical impairment (51%) .
- Those experiencing high levels of anxiety or depression are considerably more likely to be experience food insecurities (64% and 65% respectively), with more than half saying they are concerned about providing healthy food (52% and 55%, respectively) and one-in-ten already relying on a food program (12% and 10%, respectively).



A22C: Which of the following describes your current situation? Base: (Total n=3,500), Poll 13: n= 3,023)

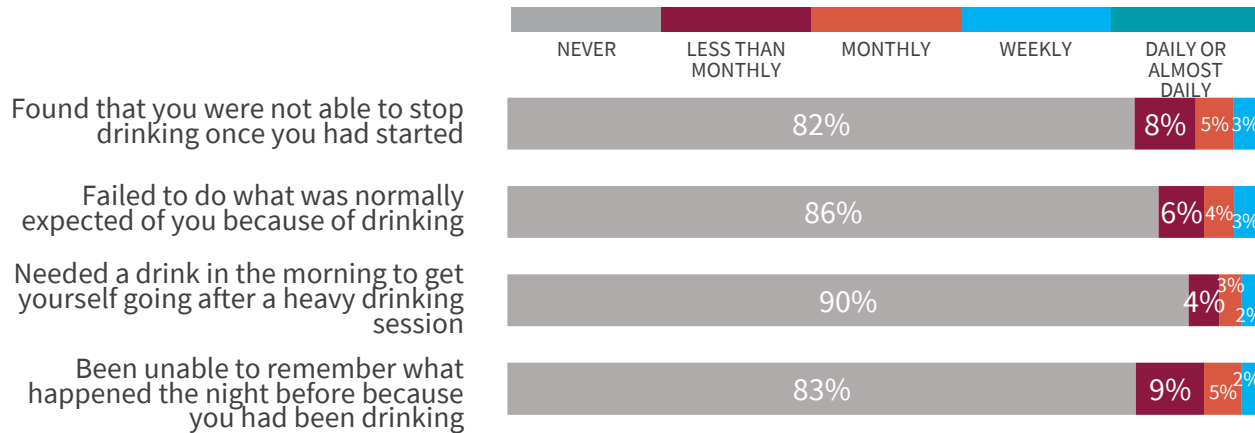
# One-in-seven Canadians exhibit signs of problematic alcohol use

- Through the AUDIT screening tool for problematic alcohol use, 5% of Canadians show signs of being dependent on alcohol, while 8% are exhibiting harmful behaviours.
- **Profile of those who indicate problematic use:** Younger adults (18-34 ,10%), those with children under 9 (9%), LGBTQ2S+ (10%), those with financial troubles (30%), those likely to have mental health symptoms (mild 10%, severe 20%) and those dependent on financial supports (12%).
- Almost one-half (48%) of those with a potential cannabis dependence are also exhibiting problematic alcohol use.
- One-in-six frontline healthcare workers express signs of problematic alcohol use (17%).

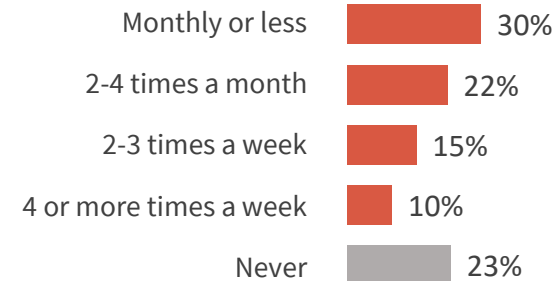


# Half of Canadians consume alcohol at least twice a month

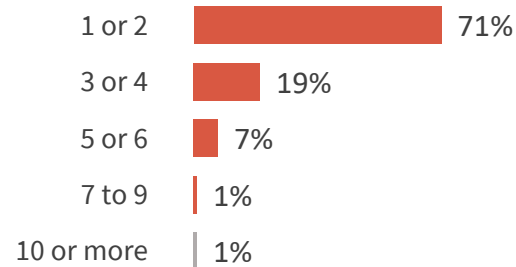
## IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS



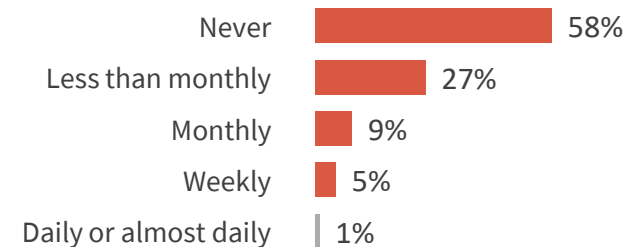
## ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION



## NUMBER OF DRINKS



## 6 OR MORE DRINKS – ONE OCCASION



C1: How often do you have a drink containing alcohol? Base: (Total n= 3,500) Data <2% not labelled.

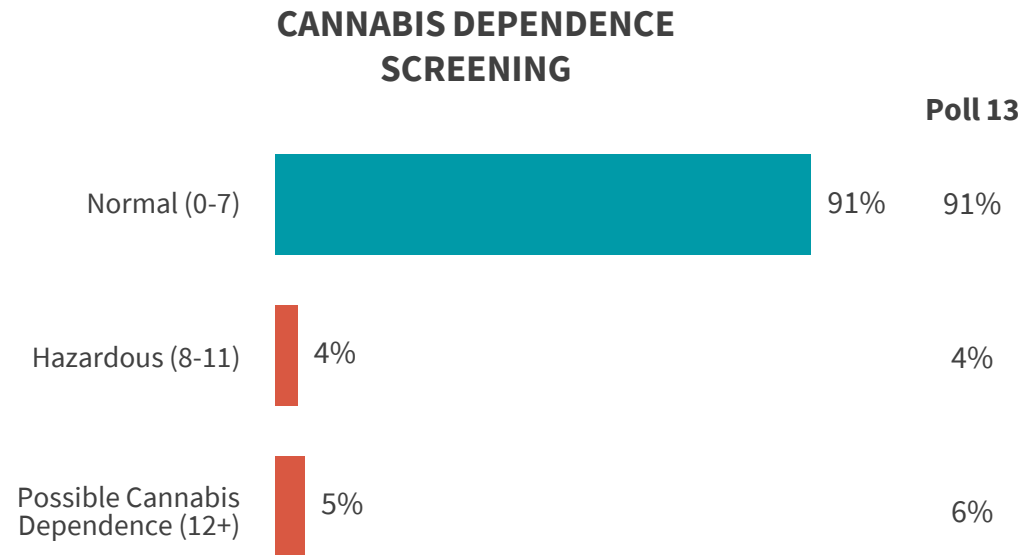
C2: How many standard drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when drinking? Base: (Total n= 2,708)

C3: How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion? Base: (Total n= 2,708)



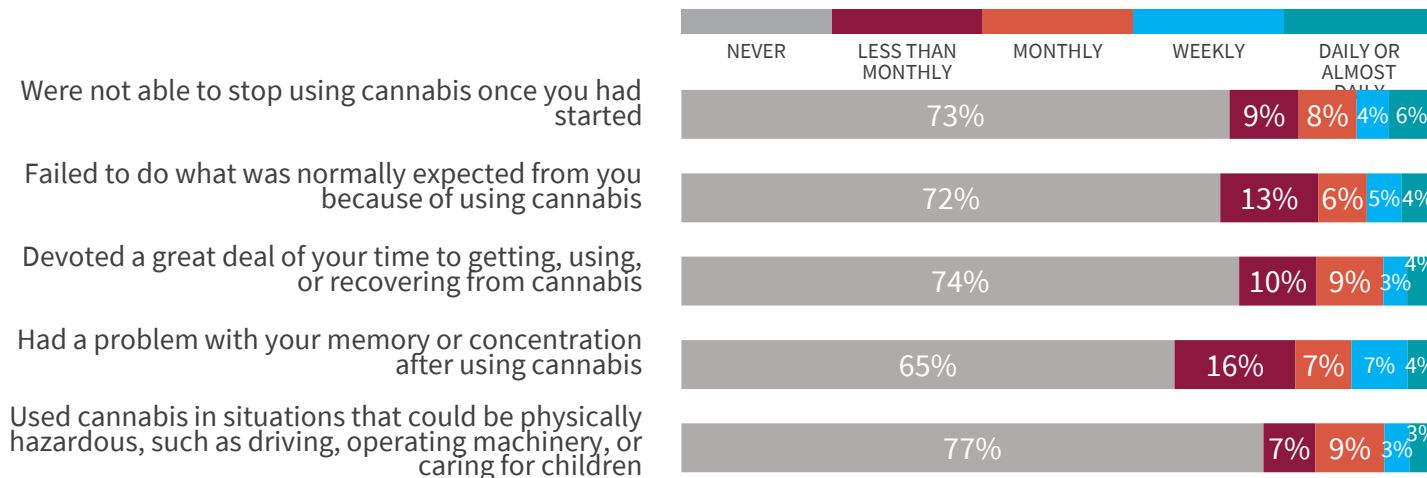
# One-in-ten Canadians show signs of cannabis consumption that is considered hazardous or possibly dependent

- Through the CUDIT-R screener 4% of Canadians are exhibiting hazardous behaviours in cannabis use and 5% a possible cannabis dependence.
- **Profile of those indicating possible cannabis dependence:** 18-34 year old (14%), men (7%), frontline health care workers (19%).
- Those living in urban areas (6%) are more likely to indicate a possible dependence than those in rural areas (2%).
- Those with a mental health disorder or who are dependent on financial supports are likely to be classified as indicating a possible dependence, as are those with a physical impairment (11%) and those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ (15%).

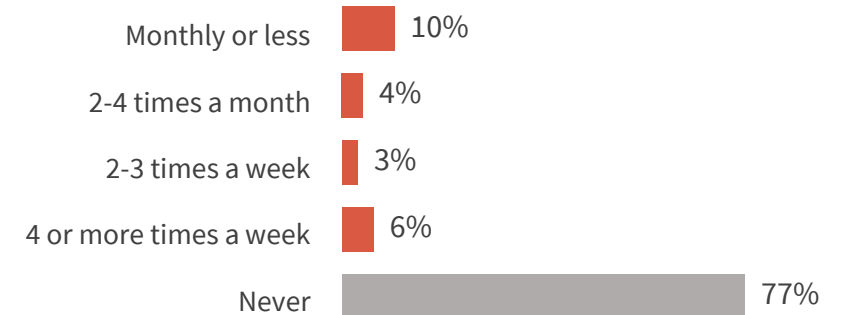


# One-in-ten Canadians consume cannabis multiple times per week

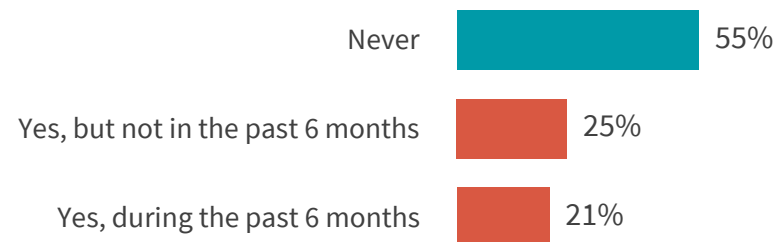
## IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS



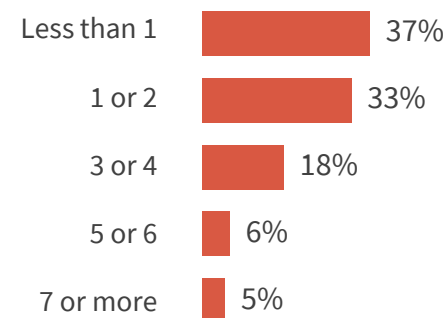
## CANNABIS CONSUMPTION



## CONSIDER STOP USING CANNABIS



## HOURS UNDER THE EFFECT



C7: How often do you use cannabis? Base: (Total n= 3,500)

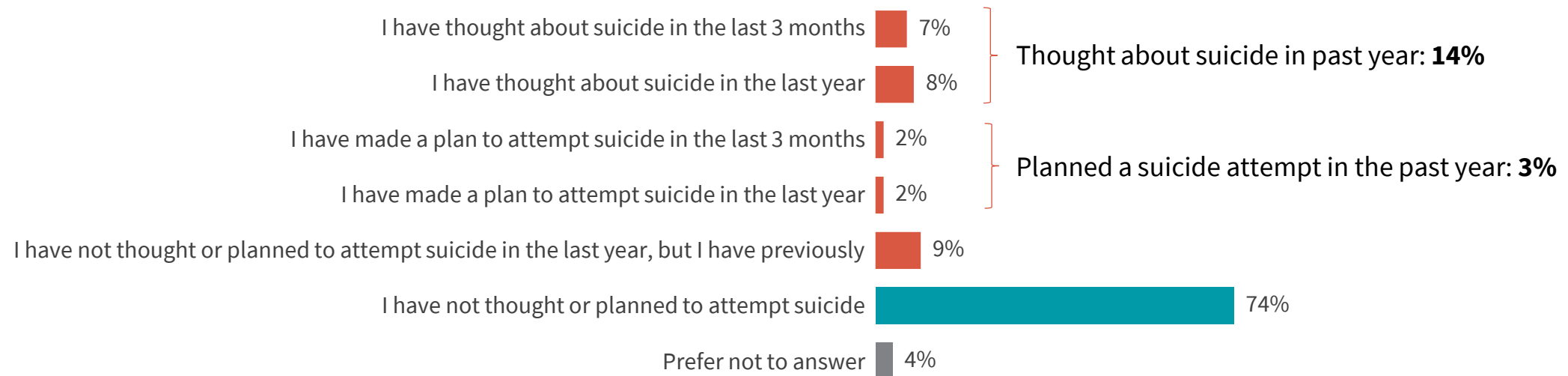
C8: How many hours were you "stoned" on a typical day when you had been using cannabis? C9: In the past six months, how often have you done each of the following?

C10: Have you ever thought about cutting down, or stopping, your use of cannabis? Base: (Total n= 821)

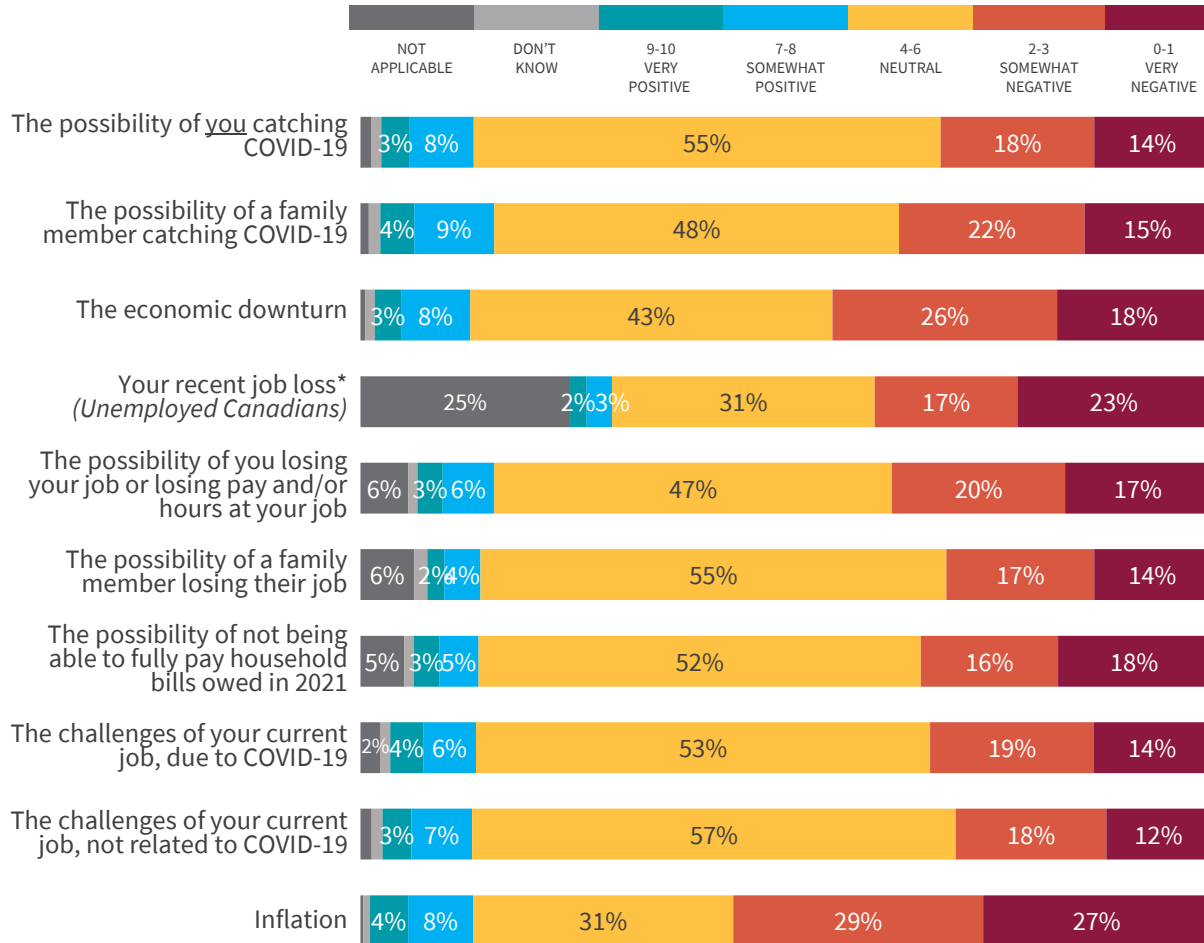
# More than a tenth of Canadians have thought about suicide in the past year

- Thoughts of suicide are more predominant among younger people, with 25% of 16–17-year-olds and 19% of 18–34-year-olds having thought of it in the past year, and 5% of 16–17-year-olds and 6% of 18–34-year-olds having planned an attempt in the past year.
- Thoughts of suicide are almost similar among men and women (13% for men and 11% for women). In the LGBTQ2S+ community, 30% have thought about suicide in the past year (17% in the past three months, similar to the findings of Poll 13) and 10% have made a plan in the past year (2% in the past three months).
- One fifth of frontline healthcare workers have thought about suicide in the past year (24%).
- Compared to the rest of the population, students (20%) and those who are living alone (22%), are unemployed (22%), have an income below 30K (20%), or are receiving financial support (31%) were more likely to have had suicidal thoughts in the past year.
- Those who rate their anxiety and depression as high (rated 9-10) since COVID-19 are more likely to have thoughts of suicide. Half (50%) of those with high depression have thought of it in the past year (36% in the past three months) and one-in-ten (14%) have planned an attempt in the past year (10% in the past three months). Of those rating their anxiety as high, 44% have thought about suicide in the past year (30% in the past three months) and 10% have planned an attempt in the past year (6% in the past three months).

## THOUGHTS RELATING TO SUICIDE



# The possibility of catching COVID-19 is still a concern to some, although it is declining slightly, while inflation is a concern to half



## Impact on Mental Health

### NEGATIVE IMPACT

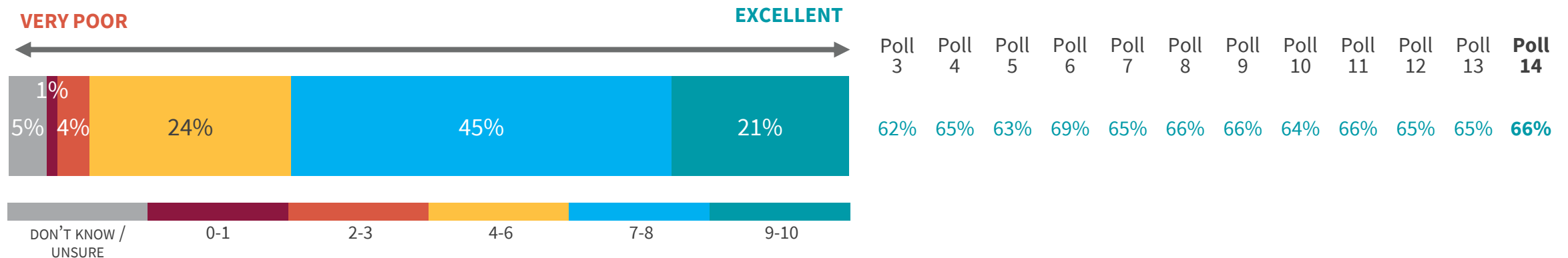
	Poll 4	Poll 5	Poll 6	Poll 7	Poll 8	Poll 9	Poll 10	Poll 11	Poll 12	Poll 13	Poll 14
The possibility of you catching COVID-19	40%	38%	39%	36%	38%	33%	35%	33%	34%	33%	32%
The possibility of a family member catching COVID-19	46%	47%	49%	44%	45%	41%	43%	39%	41%	39%	37%
The economic downturn	41%	44%	44%	40%	41%	38%	42%	42%	43%	46%	44%
Your recent job loss* (Unemployed Canadians)	47%	55%	51%	51%	46%	43%	43%	52%	40%	39%	39%
The possibility of you losing your job or losing pay and/or hours at your job	40%	40%	42%	41%	39%	35%	37%	36%	35%	36%	37%
The possibility of a family member losing their job	38%	41%	38%	38%	35%	33%	35%	33%	30%	29%	31%
The possibility of not being able to fully pay household bills owed in 2021	27%	30%	28%	28%	27%	26%	28%	28%	27%	34%	34%
The challenges of your current job, due to COVID-19	36%	36%	39%	38%	35%	34%	35%	34%	34%	32%	33%
The challenges of your current job, not related to COVID-19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29%	30%	30%
Inflation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	56%

A3A. During the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in Canada, please rate each of the following in terms of the impact they are currently having on your mental health, if any: Data <2% not labelled. Base: (Total n = 3,500), \* "Your recent Job loss" base:128 (Those who are unemployed)



# Confidence in the ability to recover from challenges has remained consistent

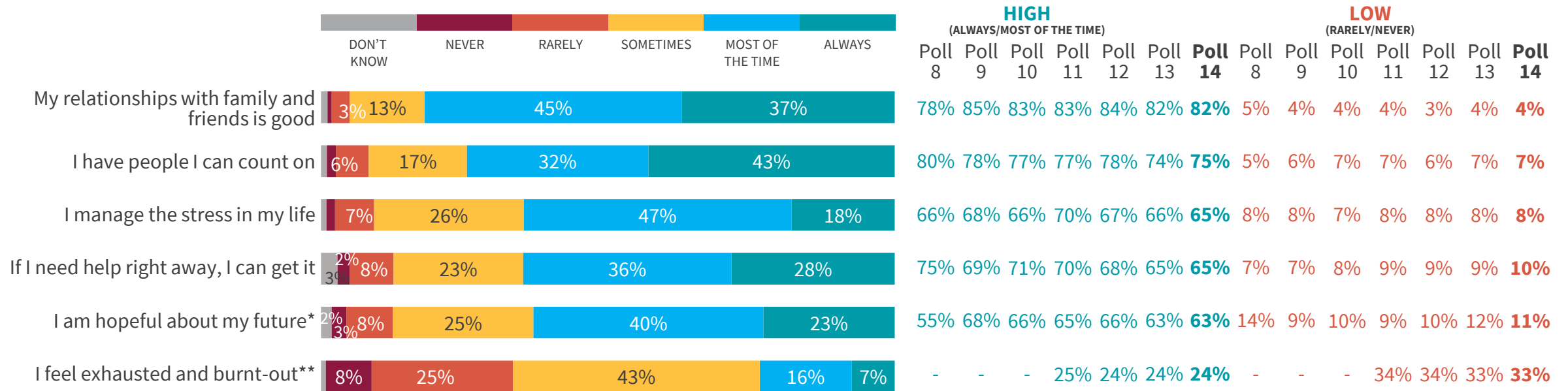
- Two thirds of Canadians continue to feel somewhat confident about their ability to bounce back from the challenges created by COVID-19 (65% rate this 7 to 10, when 10 means excellent). This has remained consistent since Poll 7.
- Younger Canadians (below 55 years old) are not as positive (7-10 rating) about their ability to bounce back from the challenges presented by COVID-19 as older Canadians (16-17: 53%, 18-34:54%; 35-54: 62%; 55+: 79%).
- Members of the LGBTQ2S+ community continue to indicate a hard time bouncing back from the challenges and unexpected troubles as just half of the members say they are able to bounce back from challenges (52%, a 6% decrease since Poll 13).
- People not diagnosed with any mental health disorder are considerably more positive (7-10) about bouncing back from the challenges they faced due to the pandemic (76%, consistent with the last poll) compared to those who are experiencing mental illness (56%).



**A3B.** Thinking about challenges and unexpected troubles that you have faced in your life... Overall, how would you rate your ability to manage and bounce back from these challenges and unexpected troubles? Base: (Total n= 3,500)

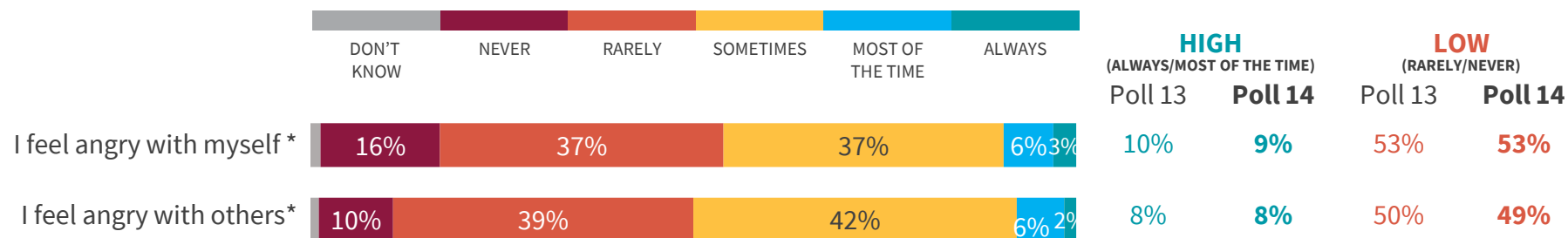
# A quarter of Canadians remain exhausted and burnt-out, although hopefulness remains high

- While still high, hopefulness saw a slight decline in Poll 13 and levels remained consistent this poll. Similarly, *having people to count on* and *the ability to get help if needed* have remained consistent this poll, after a drop in Poll 13.
- A quarter of Canadians remain exhausted and burnt-out**, a level that has not changed since this question was added in Poll 11.
- Burnout is more prevalent among students (42%), those looking for work (38%) as well as those working (26%). Additionally, those with a mental disorder are more likely to be burnt out compared to those without any mental disorder (33% vs. 14%).
- People in Quebec (73%) and those over 55 years old (70%) are feeling most hopeful. Members of the LGBTQ2S+ community (48%), visible minorities (56%) and those who are physically impaired (52%) are less likely to feel hopeful.



# One-in-ten Canadians are angry with themselves or others most of the time

- One-in-ten of the Canadians report being angry with themselves most of the time (6%) to always (3%) with 8% being angry with others most of the time (6%) to always (2%).
- Anxiety and depression exacerbate this anger. Those who say their anxiety or depression is high are more likely to say they have felt angry with particularly themselves but also others most of the time to always (high anxiety since COVID-19, angry with self: 41%, others: 39%; high depression since COVID-19, angry with self: 50%, others: 40%). Additionally, those with a diagnosis are more likely to feel angry most of the time than those without (angry at self, anxiety: 11%, depression: 11%; angry at others, anxiety: 13%, depression: 12%).
- Residents of Ontario (11%), younger Canadians (16-17: 19% vs. 18-34: 17%, 35-54: 10%, 55+: 4%), students and unemployed (22% and 15% respectively), those with a household income of less than 30k (17%), those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ (23%), and those with a physical impairment (11%) are more prone to being angry with themselves at least most of the time.



# Mental health literacy

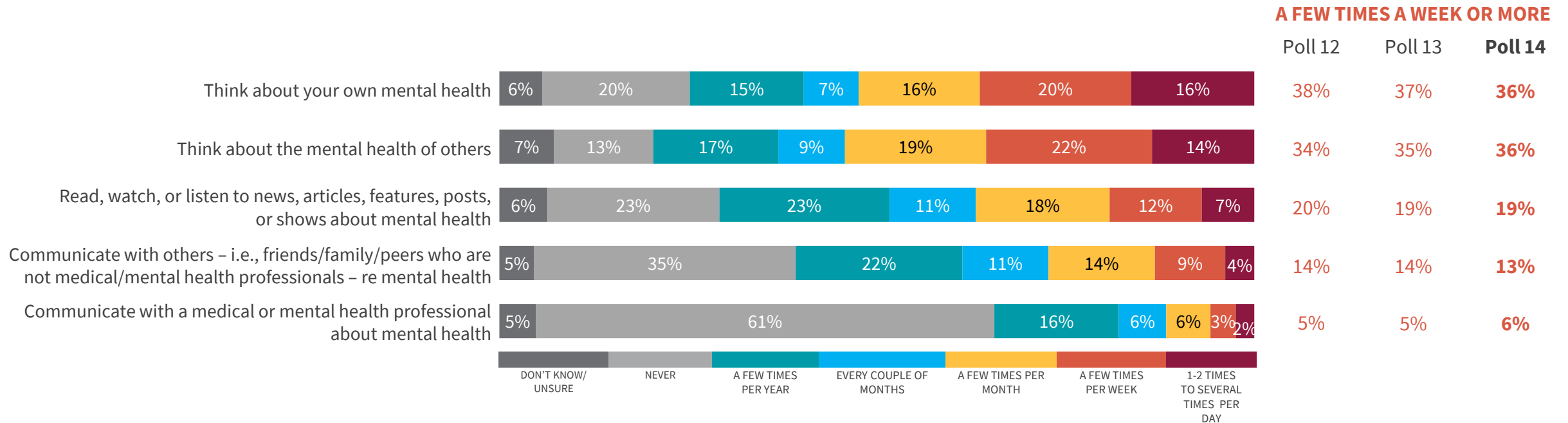


- Older Canadians (55+) indicate being less likely to think about, consume information about , or talk about their mental health. Those under 55 years old are more likely to consider their own and others' mental health. Younger Canadians (18-34 years old) are not only thinking about it, but they are also talking about it.
- Women are also more likely to spend some time thinking about mental health. While they do not do so regularly, they are less likely than men to say they never think, read or talk about it. However, when it comes to talking to professionals, results are similar between men and women.
- Students and those unemployed think more about their mental health. Retired people are the ones, who think the least about it. Students are the most literate about mental health as they consume more information as well as see medical professionals more often than any other group.
- People with children, particularly younger children, indicate being more in-tune with mental health, thinking about their own or about other people's and talking to friends and family about it on at least an occasional basis.



# Two fifths of Canadians continue to think of their own mental health at least few times a week

- Two fifths of Canadians continue to think of their own mental health at least a few times a week, this has seen a very marginal decline over the past three polls. Conversely, while the same percentage think about the mental health of others, this has seen a slow increase since Poll 12.
- Consuming information about mental health does not appear to be popular among Canadians. While only a fifth consume it at least a few times a week, a quarter (23%) continue to never get any information on the topic.
- Mental health remains a topic that is not discussed often. Only 13% communicate at least a few times a week with people who are not professionals and 6% talk to professionals. The majority (61%) never talk to professionals about their mental health.





# Mental Health Supports

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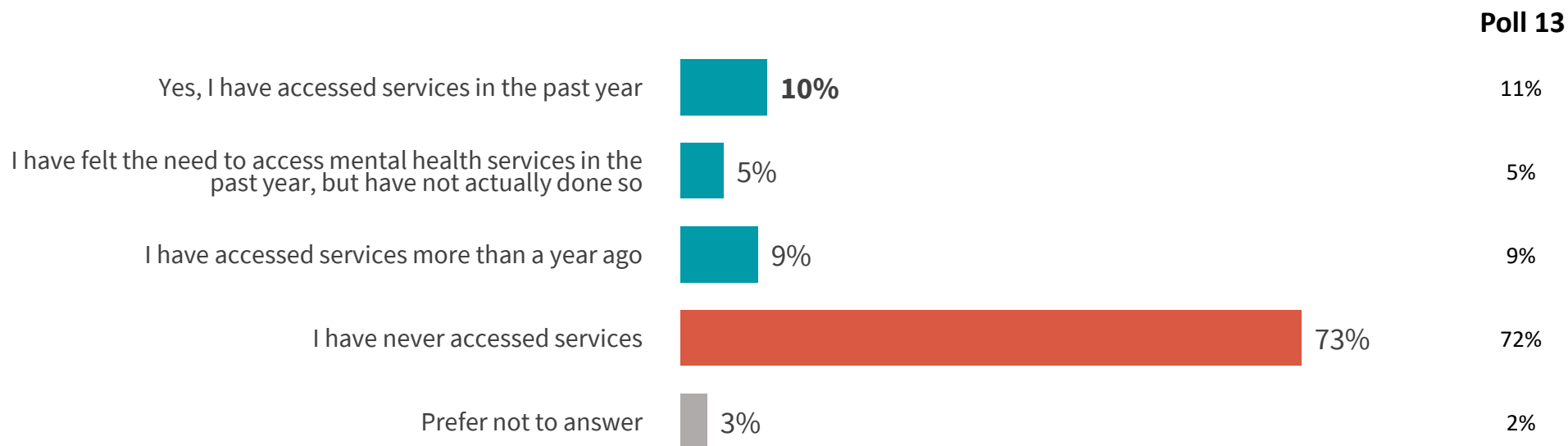
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# One-in-ten Canadians accessed mental health support in the last year

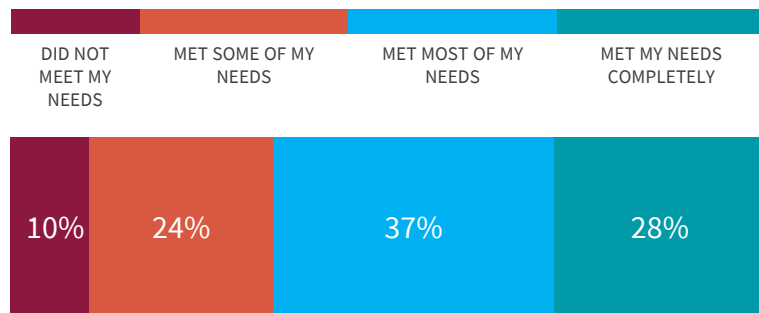
- One-in-ten (10%) reported accessing mental health services in the last year while 5% thought to access it but didn't and 9% accessed services more than a year ago. Results are consistent with Poll 13 findings.
- Close to three quarters (73%) reported they never accessed any mental health services.
- Younger Canadians (18-34: 13% , 35-54: 12% vs. 55+: 6%), students (15%) those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ (23%) and those with physical impairments (20%), those with high anxiety (28%) or depression (32%), and those who are dependent on cannabis (21%) or alcohol (23%) are more likely to have accessed mental health services in the past year.



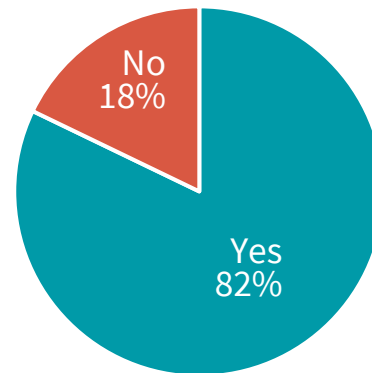
# While most are satisfied with their mental health support, some say it did not meet all their needs

- A sixth of Canadians indicate needing mental health support in the past year, although only one-in-ten have accessed it.
- When you consider those not accessing care but should be, and those who are accessing care but whose needs are not being met, 56% of people who need care are not getting their needs met.
- The majority (82%) of those who accessed mental health support say it was available in a timely manner, with 18% saying it wasn't.
- Those who felt that the support did not meet their needs cited affordability (46%), long waitlists (30%) and lack of awareness of better alternatives (25%) as their main reasons.

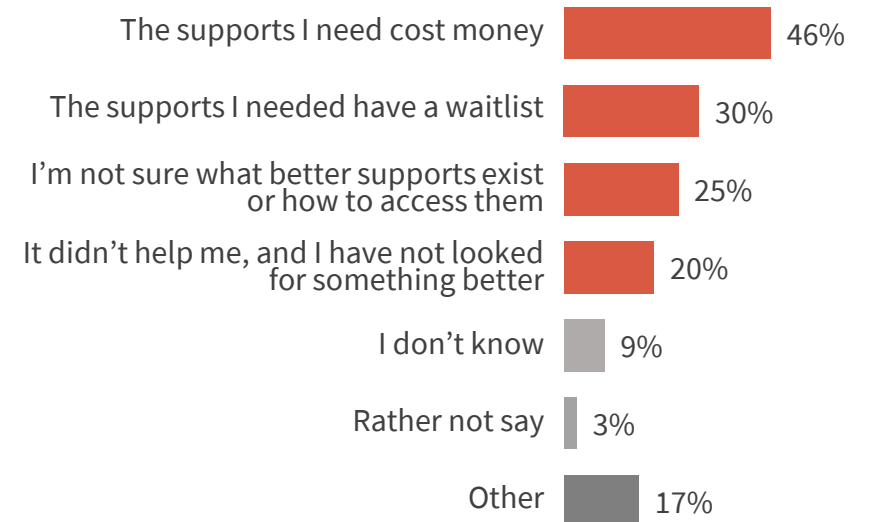
## MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS YOU ACCESSED MEET YOUR NEEDS



## AVAILABLE IN A TIMELY MANNER



## WHY SUPPORTS YOU ACCESSED DID NOT MEET ALL OF YOUR NEEDS



**B22:** Did the mental health supports you accessed meet your needs? Base n=368

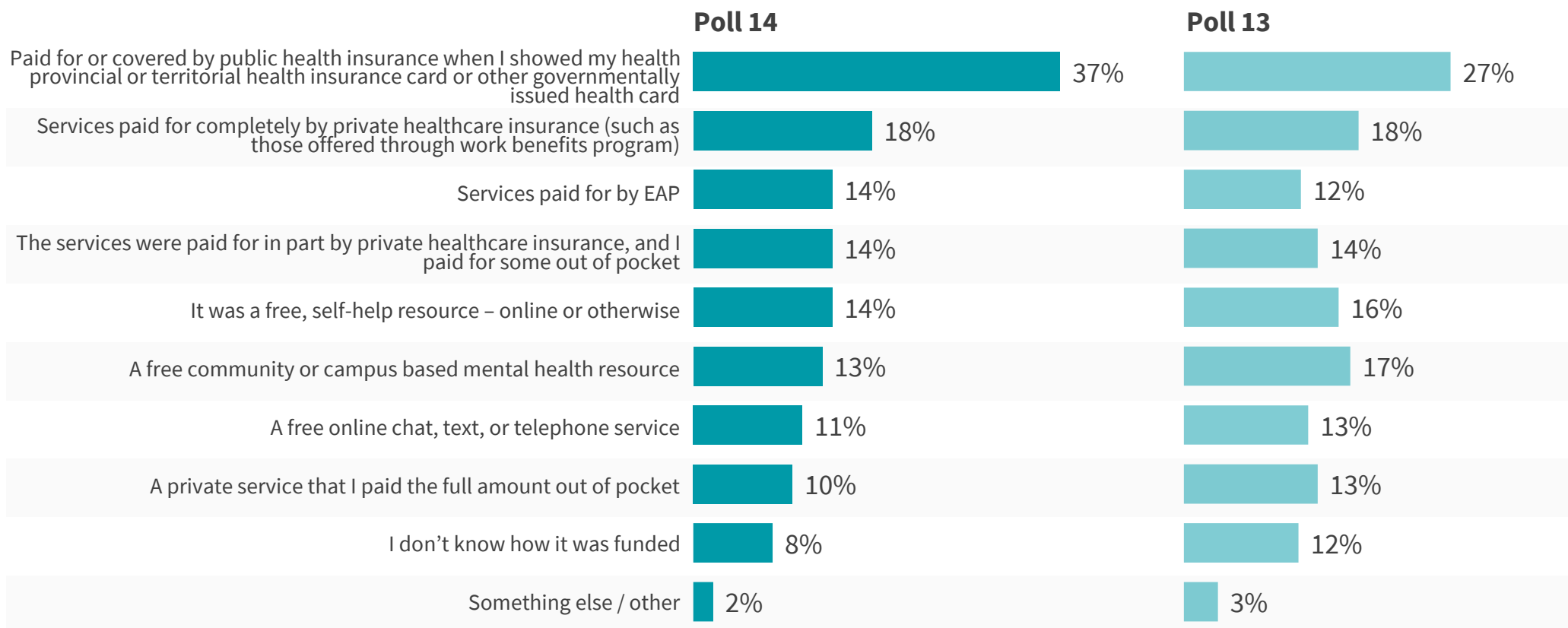
**B23A:** Were the mental health supports you needed available in a timely manner? Base n=237

**B23B:** Why didn't the supports you accessed meet all of your needs? Base n=131



# Canadians are most likely to access free mental health supports

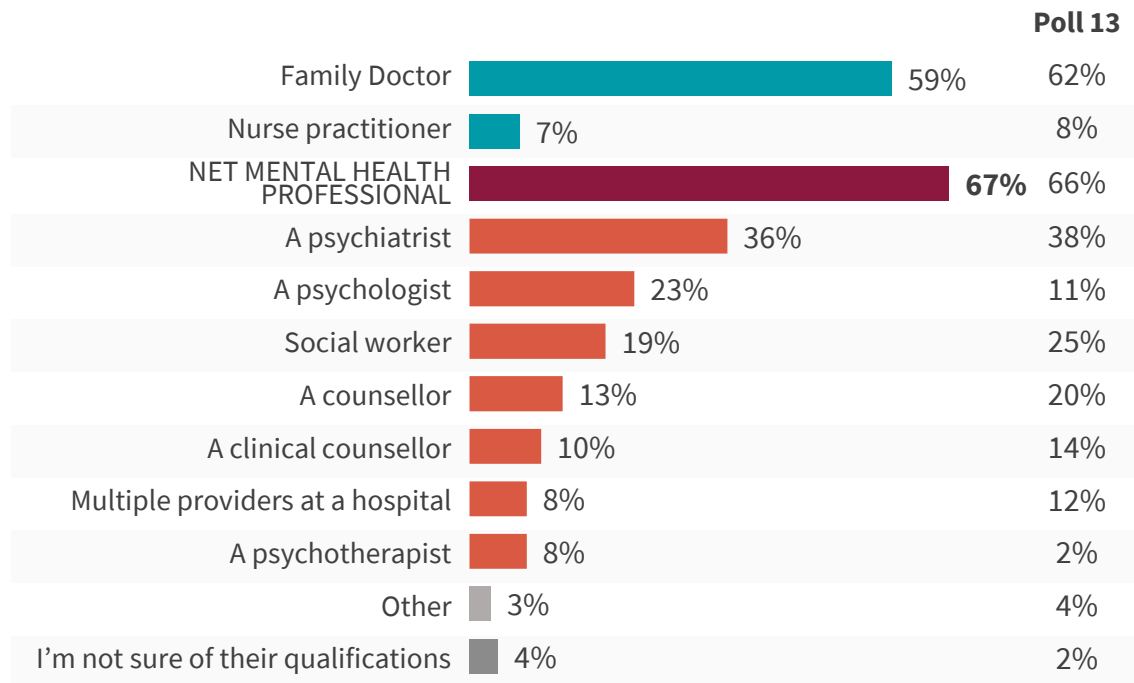
- Four-in-ten of those who accessed supports accessed those provided through government programs (37%), while 18% accessed those covered by benefits programs and 14% used services paid for by EAP.
- One-quarter paid for mental health supports, either through services that were partially covered and partially paid for (14%) or private services that they paid for completely (10%).



# Of those who accessed care funded by the public health system, two thirds talked to a mental health professional

- Two thirds of those who were covered by the public health system chose to talk to a mental health professional (67%), three fifths talked to their family doctor (59%) and 7% talked to a nurse practitioner.
- More than half (53%) reported that they are still using the services while only 9% accessed the services for 1 to 2 months and 10% accessed them for 10 months to a year.
- A tenth (9%) accessed the services at least weekly with a sixth (15%) accessing it monthly and a quarter used it only a couple to few times.

## TALK ABOUT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH TO

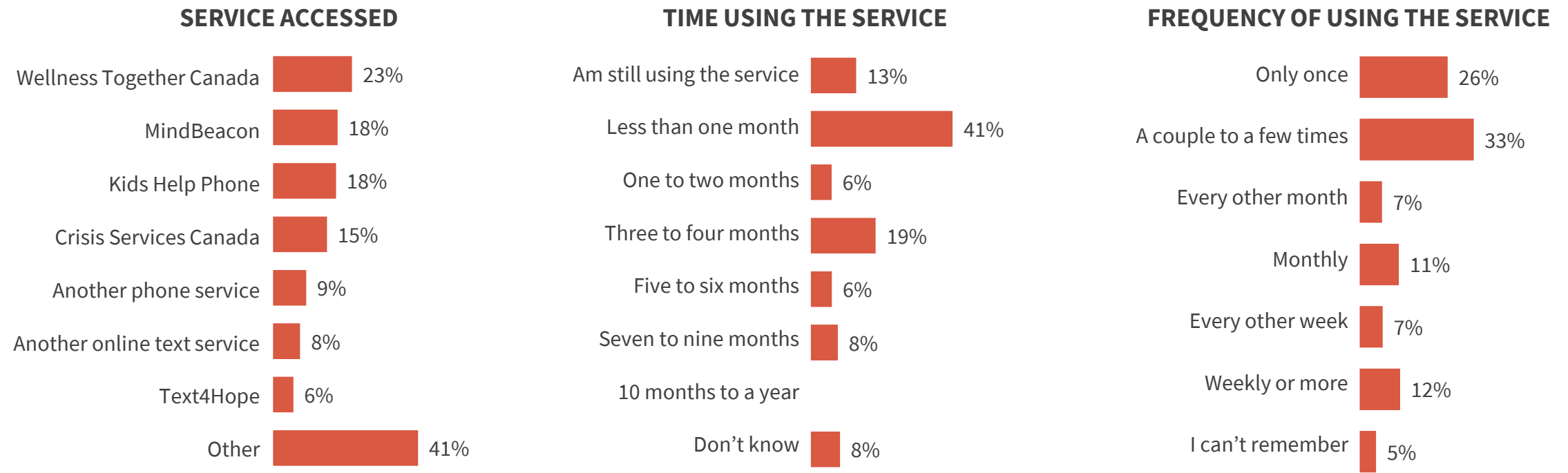


Base: (Paid by public health n= 129), Poll 13: (Paid by public health n= 95)

**B17A.** Which of the following did you talk to specifically about your mental health. **B17B:** Thinking specifically about the past year, how long did you use the service paid for by public health insurance? **B17C:** And during the time that you were using service, how often did you meet with a publicly funded mental health professional?

# Of those who accessed a free online chat platform\*, a quarter reached out to Wellness Together Canada

- A quarter (23%) accessed Wellness Together Canada with another sixth (18%) accessing Kids Help Phone. 15% also reported reaching out to Crisis Services Canada.
- One-in-ten (13%) reported that they are still using the services while 6% accessed the services for 1 to 2 months and 19% accessed them for 3 to 4 months.
- A tenth (12%) accessed the services at least weekly and another tenth (11%) accessed it monthly and a third (33%) used it only a couple to few times.



Base: (Accessed a free online chat, text or telephone service n=37, Poll 13: n= 38) \* Caution Small Base Size

B18: You indicated you accessed a free online chat, text or telephone service. Was it any of the following?

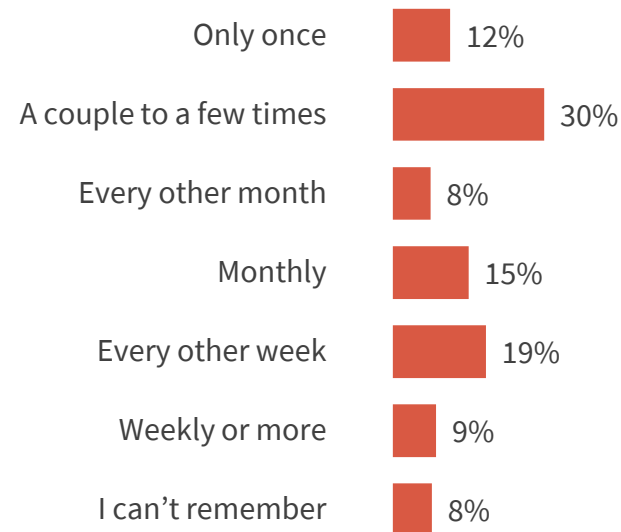
B18B: Thinking specifically about the past year, how long did you use the service?

B18C: And during the time that you were using this service, how often did you access a free online service?

# Of those who accessed community-based services\*, most talked to a professional through their city or school

- A third (30%) accessed services organized by their town, city, or region with another third (32%) accessing their school setup. A fifth (18%) also reported getting help through a charity like CMHA.
- A quarter (27%) reported that they are still using the services while 17% accessed the services for 1 to 2 months and 17% accessed them for 10 months to a year.
- More than a tenth (9%) accessed the services at least weekly while only 15% accessed it monthly and three-in-ten (30%) used it only a couple to few times.

## FREQUENCY OF USING THE SERVICE



Base: (Accessed a community based mental health resource or service n=44) \*Caution small base

**B19:** You indicated you accessed a community based mental health resource or service. How did you access this resource or service?

**B19B:** Thinking specifically about the past year, how long did you use the service?

**B19C:** And during the time that you were using this service, how often did you meet a mental health professional through the community?

# Of those who paid for mental health services out of their pocket, most talked to a psychologist

- Half (49%) talked to a psychologist with another a quarter (26%) talking to a counselor. A quarter (26%) also reported getting help from a psychotherapist and only 3% went to a treatment facility.
- Two-fifths (39%) reported that they are still using the services while 9% accessed the services for 1 to 2 months and 16% accessed them for 10 months to a year.
- A tenth (14%) accessed the services at least weekly and one-in-ten accessed it monthly and a quarter (23%) used it only a couple to few times.

## SERVICES PAID FOR



**B20A:** You indicated you paid for mental health service out of your own pocket. What services did you pay for? Base: (**Paid for mental health service in full or some out of pocket** n=84, Poll 13 n= 80)

**B20C:** Thinking specifically about the past year, how long did you see the psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker or counsellor?

Base: (**Paid for a psychologist** n=67, Poll 13 n= 63)

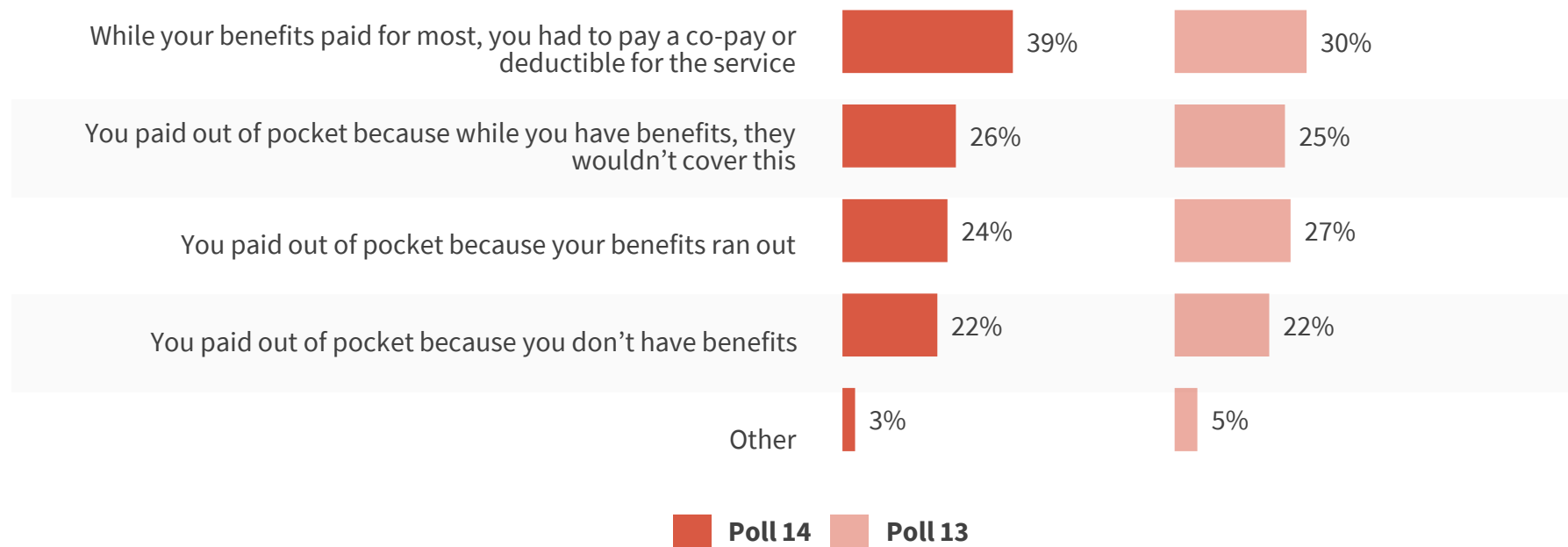
**B20D:** And during the time that you were using this service, how often did you meet with this mental health professional? Base: (**Paid for a psychologist, social worker, counsellor or psychotherapist** n=80, Poll 13 n= 72)

**B20E:** How long did you stay in a treatment facility in total over the last year? Base: (**Paid for treatment facility** n= 2) (\* Very Small Sample Size)

# Canadians who paid out of their own pocket were often paying the deductible, but many did not have proper coverage

- Four-in-ten (a 9% increase since Poll 13) reported they paid out of their pocket for their mental health supports because they had to pay a deductible. However, one-quarter (26%) did not have enough benefits to cover the support, they did not have benefits to cover the support at all (24%) or they did not have benefits (22%).

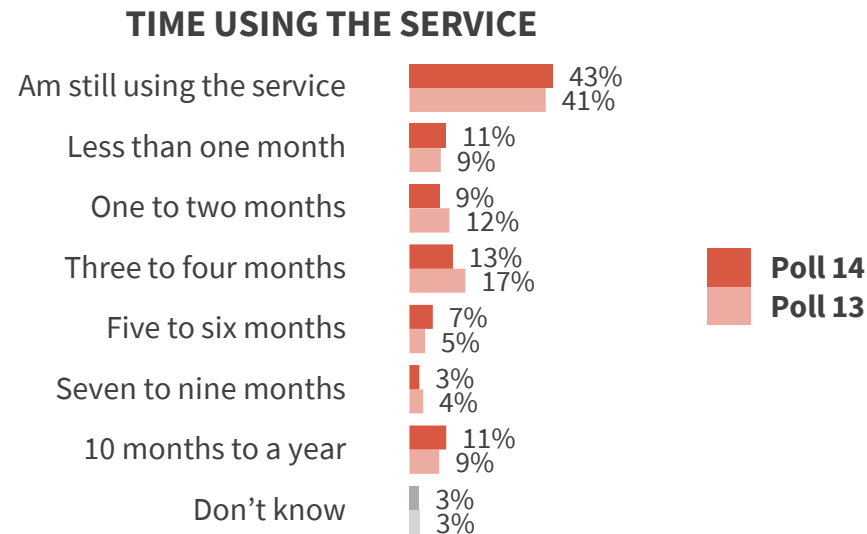
## REASONS FOR PAYMENT OUT OF POCKET





# Of Canadians who paid for the services accessed through their insurance, most talked to a psychologist or a social worker

- Of those who were covered by private health insurance, half (53%) chose to talk to a psychologist, while a quarter (26%) got help from a social worker or counsellor. A quarter (22%) talked to a psychotherapist with 9% accessing a treatment facility.
- Two-fifths (43%) reported that they are still using the services while only 12% accessed the services for 1 to 2 months and 11% accessed them for 10 months to a year.
- A tenth accessed the services at least weekly with a fifth (15%) accessing it monthly and three-in-ten used it only a couple to few times (a 10% increase from last poll July 2022).



**B21A:** You indicated your private health insurance paid for a mental health service. What did they pay for? Base: (**Paid by private healthcare insurance or EAP** n= 115, Poll 13: n= 101)

**B21B:** Thinking specifically about the past year, how long did you see the social worker, counsellor or psychologist? Base: (**Health Insurance paid social worker or counsellor, a psychologist or psychotherapist** n= 102, Poll 13: n= 80)

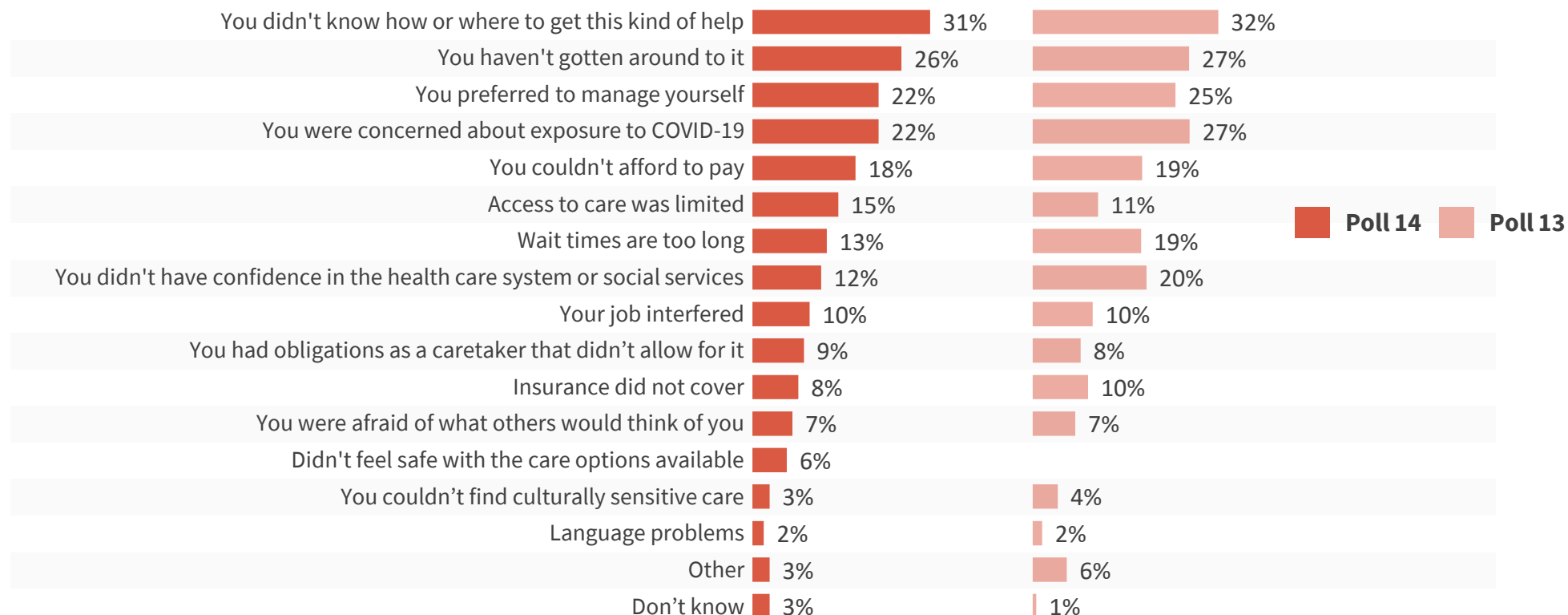
**B21C:** And during the time that you were using this service, how often did you meet with this mental health professional? Base: (**Health Insurance paid social worker or counsellor, a psychologist or psychotherapist** n= 102, Poll 13: n= 80)

**B21D:** How long did you stay in a treatment facility in total over the last year? Base: (**Health insurance paid for treatment facility** n=3, Poll 13: n= 7) (\* Very Small Sample Size)

# Many of those who didn't access mental health supports did not know how to access it

- Of those who didn't access mental health supports, a third (31%) reported they didn't have enough information about how to access the supports with another quarter (26%) who said they haven't gotten around it.
- A quarter (22%) preferred to manage it themselves and the same proportion were concerned about COVID-19 exposure, which is down 5% since Poll 13 (July 2022). Also, a fifth (18%) said they were not able to afford the care.
- The largest change was the number who did not have confidence in the health care system (12%, down from 20% last poll).

## REASONS FOR NOT ACCESSING MENTAL HEALTH

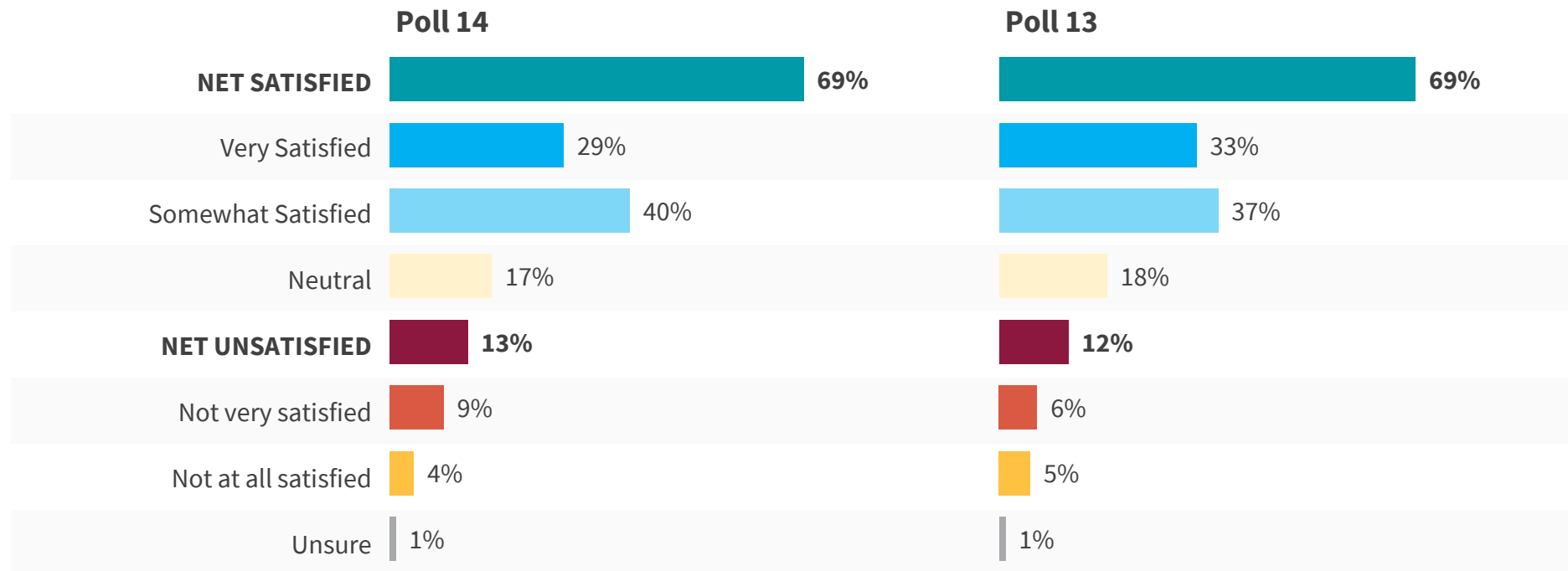


**B12B.** Why did you choose to not access the support of a mental health professional when you felt you needed it? The skip has changed due to removal of another question. Track to the same spot in merged data. Base: (Has felt the need to access mental health in the past year but have not actually done so n=167, Poll 13: n= 153)

# Most are satisfied with the support they have received in the past year

- Two thirds of those who have received support in the past year are somewhat (40%) to very (29%) satisfied with it. Satisfaction has remained consistent with the last poll (July 2022), which measured satisfaction with supports received since COVID-19.
- Younger Canadians are less satisfied than older age groups (18-34: 59% vs, 35-54: 72%, 55+: 76%)

## SATISFACTION WITH THE SUPPORT RECEIVED IN PAST YEAR





**Lesli Martin, Senior Vice President, Pollara**  
**Michael Cooper, Vice President, MHRC**  
**Brittany Saab, National Coordinator of Stakeholder**  
**Engagement, MHRC**



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