



Omicron impacts local health care

TORONTO, January 17, 2022—The results of a national survey released today by Maru Public Opinion finds that a majority (81%) of Canadians are alarmed about the impact of the Omicron virus on their local healthcare system and hospitals. A majority (87%) report knowing of local hospital staffing shortages (87%) caused by the virus, and almost half (45%) don't believe their community hospitals have the capacity to treat them for a serious medical condition if they needed to be cared for.

Further, four-in-ten (42%) Canadians don't have confidence that if they needed medical care in their community hospital right now they'd be admitted for a few days of treatment, and almost as many (39%) know someone who has had treatment for serious medical issues postponed or not been able to get it at all (33%) due to COVID-19.

The study also found that one-quarter (26%) of Canadians have deliberately put off seeing a doctor or health professional over the last three months because they fear contracting the COVID-19 virus at their office/facility. One-quarter (23%) also admit they are worried about some physical symptoms they are having right but are afraid to have them looked into by a physician at this time, and one-in-six (17%) report they have a medical condition that has worsened over the past three months because they have not been able to go and see a doctor or health professional due to COVID-19.

Key findings

Majority (81%) say Omicron impact on local healthcare/hospitals alarming

A full majority (81%) Canadians say the impact of the Omicron virus on their local healthcare system and hospitals is alarming. Those most likely to voice this level of concern reside in Québec (87%), followed by those living in Manitoba/Saskatchewan (84%), Ontario (81%), British Columbia (79%), Atlantic Canada (70%), and Alberta (71%).

Majority (83%) say local hospitals have staff shortages

A majority (83%) say their local hospitals are having staff shortages because of the Omicron virus. This is most likely to be reported by those living in Québec (88%), followed by those residing in British Columbia (86%), Ontario (82%), Atlantic Canada (79%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (78%), and Alberta (74%). Men (61%) are more likely than women (55%) to express this view along with those who are the oldest Canadians (55+ 63%), and those who are least educated (high school or less 57%).

Almost half (45%) don't believe community hospitals have capacity to treat them

Almost half (45%) of Canadians don't believe that the hospitals in their community currently have enough capacity to treat them for a serious medical condition if they needed to be cared for. This group of Canadians is most likely to reside in Manitoba/Saskatchewan (55%), followed by those living in Québec (53%), Ontario (45%), Atlantic Canada (44%), British Columbia (37%), and Alberta (33%). Women (48%) are more likely than men (42%) to feel this way along with those who are the youngest Canadians (aged 18-34 52%), and those who are the highest educated (University + 49%).

Four-in-ten (42%) don't have confidence they could be admitted to hospital

Four-in-ten (42%) Canadians indicate they don't have confidence that if they needed medical care in their community hospital right now that they could be admitted for a few days of treatment. Those who are most likely to feel this way can be found in Atlantic Canada (51%), followed by those living in Ontario (46%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (45%), Québec (43%), Alberta (37%), and British Columbia (31%). Women (45%) are more likely than men (39%) to express this view along with the youngest Canadians (aged 18-34 48%), and the highest educated (University + 47%).

Four-in-ten (39%) know of treatments postponed for serious medical issues

Four-in-ten (39%) know of people in their family or circle of friends who have had treatments for serious medical issues postponed in the past few months due to the impact of the COVID-19 virus on the healthcare system. Those living in Manitoba/Saskatchewan (52%), Atlantic Canada (51%), and Alberta (50%), are most likely to know someone in this type of medical predicament, followed by those residing in British Columbia (38%), Ontario (36%), and Québec (33%).

One-third (33%) know someone who can't get medical treatment

One-third (33%) of Canadians say that they know someone in their circle of family/friends with a very serious need for medical treatment who have had it postponed because they can't get it due to COVID-19. Those who are aware of this circumstance are most likely to live in either Atlantic Canada (43%) or Manitoba/Saskatchewan (42%), followed by those living in Alberta (37%), Ontario (34%), British Columbia (31%), or Québec (27%).

One-quarter (26%) have put off seeing a doctor or health professional

One-quarter (26%) of Canadians have deliberately put off seeing a doctor or health professional over the last three months because they fear contracting the COVID-19 virus at their office/facility. Those who are the most likely to be medical procrastinators live in Ontario (30%), followed by those residing in British Columbia (28%) and Atlantic Canada (27%), those in both Québec (22%) and Manitoba/Saskatchewan (22%), and Alberta (20%). Women (29%) are more likely than men (23%) to have put off seeing a doctor or health professional, as well as those who are the youngest Canadians (aged 18-34 32%), those with the lowest income (less than \$50,000 income per year 30%), and those with the highest level of education (University + 32%).

One-quarter (23%) afraid to have physical symptoms examined

One-quarter (23%) Canadians admit they are worried about some physical symptoms they are having right but are afraid to have them looked into by a physician at this time. Those expressing worry about some physical symptoms are most likely to reside in Atlantic Canada (27%), followed by those living in Ontario (25%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (23%), and British Columbia (23%), Québec (21%), and Alberta (14%). Women (24%) are more likely than men (21%) to be worried and afraid currently, along with those who are the youngest Canadians (aged 18-34 24%), those with the least amount of income (less than \$50,000 per year 25%), and those with postsecondary education (25%).

One-in-six (17%) have worsened medical condition

One-in-six (17%) Canadians report that they have a medical condition that has worsened over the past three months because they have not been able to go and see a doctor or health professional due to COVID-19. Those reporting this worsening condition are most likely to live in British Columbia (23%), followed by those residing in either Atlantic Canada (19%) or Ontario (19%), Québec (60%), Manitoba/Saskatchewan (13%), and Alberta (9%). Men (17%) and women (17%) are equally likely to admit to this while those more likely to do so are under the age of 54 (19%) and with the lowest amount of income (less than \$50,000 per year 21%).

-30-

Methodology

These are some of the findings released by [Maru Public Opinion](#) from a survey undertaken January 7, 2022, by Maru/Blue of 1513 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Maru Voice Canada online panelists. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size has an estimated margin of error (which measures sampling variability) of +/- 2.5%, 19 times out of 20. The results have been weighted by education, age, gender, and region (and in Quebec, language) to match the population according to Census data which ensures the sample is representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals when compared to the data tables are due to rounding.

Panel and data services provider [Maru Blue](#) is deeply rooted in the Maru/HUB technology platform and offers on-demand, high quality, highly scalable online community samples of deeply engaged, known respondents. Respondents could respond in either English or French.

Excerpts from this release of findings should be properly attributed, with interpretation subject to clarification or correction. Maru Public Opinion does not do any work for any political party. Maru Public Opinion polls with supporting detailed tables are found here: [Maru Public Opinion Canada](#). Corporate information can be found here: [Maru Group](#)



For more information contact:

John Wright
Executive Vice President
Maru Public Opinion
Direct Toronto +1.416.700-4218
john.wright@marublue.com

maru/

Maru is a world leading CX and Insights Software & Advisory Services company.

Maru was founded to disrupt the data and insight delivery industry with a combination of Software & Advisory Services delivering data in real-time via a unique service model. Maru helps its clients make informed decisions in near real-time by combining proprietary software, deep industry experience and access to the best minds in research. Maru's flexible service model means our clients can choose to self-serve our Software directly to create, launch and analyze projects; or choose to utilize our Software with knowledgeable support from insights experts. Maru successfully delivers major national and international CX and CEM programs for Enterprise organizations.

Painting Better Pictures, Faster

[Maru Public Opinion](#) is a research channel for the [Maru Group](#)