

**Politics Of Aging Poll Report
September 9, 2011**

KEY FINDINGS

The vast majority of CARP members describe themselves as politically active, about one third say their politics have changed in the past ten years since 2001, and for most of these, the change was to become more conservative.

Despite a strong belief in direct democracy, where the representative does the constituents' bidding, members do not favour the goals of the Tea Party in the US.

Despite the fact strong majorities believe those who vote should have more say in running the country than those who don't (even when told older Canadians vote the most), they disagree that policy in Canada is made in favour of older Canadians to the detriment of younger Canadians, and that this, if it did exist, would not be a good thing.

The majority of members believe newly licensed drugs should have to perform better than existing drugs before they are included in provincial formularies, one half do not know whether this is the case in Canada or not, and when told that some only have to perform better than a placebo to be listed in this country, about one half disagree with the policy, while an unusually high proportion of members have no opinion. It may be that this is a policy question which stretches respondent comprehension.

The majority believe wait time benchmarks for surgery and cancer treatment aren't being met, and the majority of members do not find these benchmarks reasonably short anyway. Members want shorter benchmarks set, even if they are missed, rather than seeing more current benchmarks met.

Members see the best solutions to wait times as being better queue management and more doctors, nurses and radiation specialists, and they agree strongly that both should be put in place simultaneously. The vast majority want the government to make new, shorter wait time benchmarks an election promise, but few would switch parties to vote for this policy.

One half of members gamble or game, spending about \$12 a month on average.

Members prefer the younger Elvis in the sportcoat to either the middle period Elvis in the black leather jumpsuit or the later Elvis in the white satin jumpsuit. A possible explanation is that our members were teenagers in the mid-1950s when Elvis first appeared, and they have a direct memory of this. Americans apparently feel the same way - the young Elvis in a sportcoat is featured on their commemorative postage stamp.

The Conservatives are preferred by more than one half of members, while the Liberals are slowly gaining share in second place and the NDP are slowly losing share in third place.

Politics Of Aging

The vast majority of members say they are politically active (87%).

How politically active are you?

ACTIVE	87%
Very active	5%
Active	14%
Somewhat active	68%
NOT ACTIVE	13%
Not very active	11%
Not at all active	2%
OTHER	1%

One third of members say their political leanings have changed in the past 10 years (32%), although just one tenth say this was a “180 degree change” (8%). Two thirds of members say they haven’t changed (68%), and this is most commonly expressed as “haven’t changed much” (53%).

Have your personal politics changed significantly since 2001?

YES	32%
Changed 180 degrees	8%
Changed somewhat	24%
NO CHANGE	68%
Haven’t changed much	53%
Still a true believer	15%

Among the one third who say their political philosophy has changed, it is clear the change has been towards the conservative end of the spectrum (23%), rather than the liberal end (14%). Among those who haven’t changed, there is a more even split (conservative - 26%, liberal - 21%).

Which of the following best describes how your personal politics have changed since 2001?

CONSERVATIVE	49%
Conservative, haven’t changed	26%
Become more conservative	23%
LIBERAL	35%
Liberal, haven’t changed	21%
Become more liberal	14%
OTHER	16%

Twice as many members feel the needs of the group (15%) outweigh those of the individual (9%), but three quarters say both must be reconciled for society to work (75%).

In your personal politics, do you think the needs of the individual or the needs of the group are paramount?

Individual	9%
Group	15%
BOTH MUST BE RECONCILED	75%
DON'T KNOW	1%

Three quarters of members believe their elected representative should do as constituents wish (72%), compared to one quarter who believe MPs should act on their own conscience (24%), which is, in fact, the basis of representative government.

Do you believe your elected representative should do as his or her constituents decide, or should they should act on their own conscience and what they think is best?

Do what constituents say	72%
Follow own conscience	24%
DON'T KNOW	4%

Two thirds of members disapprove of the Tea Party in the US, one half “strongly” (49%). Just one tenth approve of them and their goals (12%).

Do you approve of the Tea Party and its goals in the US?

APPROVE	12%
Approve strongly	3%
Approve	10%
DISAPPROVE	69%
Disapprove	20%
Disapprove strongly	49%
DON'T KNOW	18%

While three quarters of members believe those who vote should have more say in running the country than those who don't (76%), this is reduced to six-in-ten when it is pointed out that older Canadians are the most frequent voters (58%).

Do you believe those who vote should have more influence in how the country is run than those who don't vote/ More than 70% of older Canadians vote, whereas fewer than 50% of younger Canadians vote. Should older Canadians have more influence in how the country is run than younger Canadians?

	Those Vote More	Older Canadians
Yes	76%	58%
No	19%	36%
DON'T KNOW	5%	6%

As many as three quarters of members disagree that older Canadians' political clout leads to decisions made to favour them at the expense of younger Canadians (74%), and most of these adopt the median position ("disagree" - 59%).

Some people say older Canadians have too much political clout in this country, and that decisions are made that benefit the last generation but don't necessarily benefit the next generation. How much do you agree that this is the case?

AGREE	20%
Agree strongly	1%
Agree	19%
DISAGREE	74%
Disagree	59%
Disagree strongly	15%
DON'T KNOW	7%

Members are twice as likely to say this, if it were the case, is a bad thing (32%) than say it's a good thing (18%), although most say that it would be neither a good thing or a bad thing (42%).

If this were true, would it be a good thing or a bad thing?

Good thing	18%
Bad thing	32%
NEITHER	42%
DON'T KNOW	8%

Pharmaceutical Licensing

Three quarters of members agree that a newly licensed drug should perform better than existing drugs before it is included in provincial formularies (72%).

How much do you agree that a newly licensed patent drug should have to prove it works better than the existing drug in order to be paid for by the provinces?

AGREE	72%
Agree strongly	22%
Agree	50%
DISAGREE	23%
Disagree	19%
Disagree strongly	4%
DON'T KNOW	6%

One half of members do not know whether this is the case in Canada (54%), and of those who have an opinion, slightly more think this is the case (26%) than don't (20%).

As far as you know, do newly licensed patent drugs in Canada have to prove they work better than existing drugs before they are paid for by the provinces?

Yes	26%
No	20%
DON'T KNOW	54%

When told that, in Canada, newly licensed drugs need only perform better than a placebo to be included in provincial formularies, just fewer than half disagree with this protocol (46%), while one quarter agree (23%). A very large proportion of members cannot form an opinion on this question (31%)

In Canada, it is possible that newly licensed patent drugs have only been proven to work better than a placebo, but are paid for by the provinces. How much do you agree with this?

AGREE	23%
Agree strongly	2%
Agree	21%
DISAGREE	46%
Disagree	35%
Disagree strongly	12%
DON'T KNOW	31%

Wait Times

The wide majority of members (71%) believe wait time benchmarks set in 2004 are not being met in Canada. While one fifth do not know the answer (20%), very few think these benchmarks are being met (10%).

Do you believe Canada is meeting the wait time benchmarks for treatment and surgery that were established in 2004?

Yes	10%
No	71%
DON'T KNOW	20%

Two thirds of members feel the wait time benchmarks described to them are not reasonable (65%) while one third finds them reasonable (33%).

Among these benchmarks are 26 weeks (or six months) for a joint replacement or heart bypass surgery, and 4 weeks for cancer radiation therapy, after all preliminary tests and consultations. Do you agree these benchmarks are reasonable?

REASONABLE	33%
Very reasonable	5%
Somewhat reasonable	28%
NOT REASONABLE	65%
Not very reasonable	41%
Not at all reasonable	24%
DON'T KNOW	2%

Twice as many members feel shorter wait time benchmarks should be used, even it means missing them more often (60%) than think current benchmarks should be maintained and met more often (31%).

Which is a better course to take - to stay with these benchmarks and try to meet them more often, or establish new, much shorter benchmarks, with the risk of missing them?

Stay with benchmarks, meet them more often	31%
Shorter benchmarks, risk of missing them	60%
NEITHER	5%
DON'T KNOW	4%

Most members believe better queue management (23%) and more doctors, nurses and radiation specialists (22%) are the answer to missed wait time benchmarks. These solutions are followed by funding for patients to travel for treatment (13%) a single waiting list (11%) and better chronic disease management (10%).

Where should funding be directed to reducing waiting times?

Better queue management	23%
More doctors, nurses, radiation specialists	22%
Funding to travel for treatment	13%
Single provincial or national waiting list	11%
Better chronic disease management	10%
Incentives/penalties for meeting wait times	6%
Electronic health records	5%
More hospitals and clinics	5%
OTHER	4%
NOTHING CAN REDUCE WAIT TIMES	1%

More than one half of members believe queue management and more doctors should both be initiated simultaneously (55%), whereas fewer than half this proportion think queue management should be initiated first, and doctors hired later only if necessary (20%). Few members believe queue management should be delayed (12%) or not used at all (6%).

If better queue management is employed, available doctors and nurses' time will be spent more efficiently, reducing the need for more of them. Which of the following presents the best option in this situation?

Start queue management, hire more doctors same time	55%
Start queue management, hire doctors later, if needed	20%
Hire more doctors now, queue management later	12%
Just hire more doctors, no queue management	6%
OTHER	2%
DON'T KNOW	5%

The vast majority of members agree the government should make wait time benchmarks a platform promise that they run on in the next election (84%).

How much do you agree the government should set new, shorter wait time benchmarks, and make meeting them part of their platform in the next election?

AGREE	84%
Agree strongly	31%
Agree	54%
DISAGREE	16%
Disagree	15%
Disagree strongly	1%

Despite their eagerness for this kind of action from government, just one fifth would switch parties to vote for a wait time benchmark package (19%)

Would you change the party you normally vote for in order to support a party which promised to meet shorter wait time benchmarks for surgery and treatment?

Yes	19%
No	55%
DON'T KNOW	26%

Gaming

More than half of members take part in gambling or gaming activities (53%)

Do you gamble at all, including playing the lottery or buying scratch cards in addition to visiting casinos or betting on horses?

Yes	53%
No	45%
PREFER NOT TO SAY	2%

Among those who play, the average amount wagered in a month is just more than \$12.00.

About how much per month do you spend gaming?

Less than \$5	26%
\$5 to \$10	24%
\$10 to \$20	27%
More than \$20	23%
AVERAGE \$ PER MONTH	\$12.60

Midsummer Elvis Poll

CARP members were asked which of Elvis' incarnations they preferred - the young Elvis in the sportcoat from the 50s, the middle period Elvis from his concert in Las Vegas in the black leather jumpsuit in the 60s or the later period Elvis in the white satin jumpsuit in the 70s.

Close to one half of members prefer the young Elvis (48%), compared to just 1-in-7 who prefer the middle period Elvis (16%) and just one twentieth who prefer the later (or fat) Elvis (5%).

These results mirror those of a very large survey undertaken a decade ago by the US Postal Service when they were about to introduce their Elvis stamp. Americans widely preferred the young Elvis to the older Elvis (middle period Elvis was not tested), and the young Elvis in a sportcoat appears on the stamp.

It is thought that our members' clear preference for the younger Elvis is based on age. Our members are, on average, 69 years old, meaning they were born, on average, in 1942. This would make them teenagers when Elvis first appeared in the mid-1950s. Thus, these members remember young Elvis directly, rather than through nostalgia-fuelled TV programs and tributes, as might be the case with younger respondents.

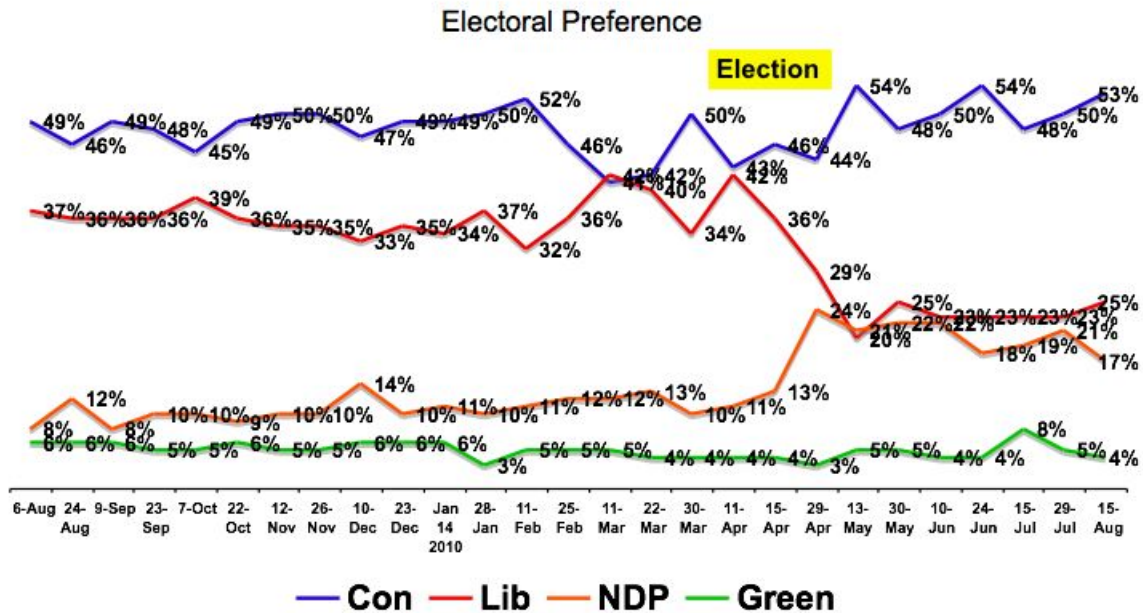
It is suspected that the one tenth who answered “who?” (10%) are primarily being facetious.

Do you prefer Elvis during his earlier period (sports coat), his middle period (black leather jumpsuit) or his later period (white satin jumpsuit)?

Earlier period (sportcoat)	48%
Middle period (black leather jumpsuit)	16%
Later period (white satin jumpsuit)	5%
Who?	10%
DON'T KNOW	21%

ELECTORAL PREFERENCE

While the Conservative Party remains dominant (53%) the Liberals (25%) have drawn significantly ahead of the NDP (17%) and now occupy second place on their own. This poll was conducted before the death of Jack Layton, so that event has no effect on the recent NDP decline.



Over 2800 CARP Poll™ panel members responded to this poll between August 15 and 18. The margin of error for a sample this size is plus or minus 1.8%, 19 times out of 20. That is, if you asked all members of the CARP Poll™ panel the identical questions, their responses would be within 2%, either up or down, of the results shown here, 95% of the time