

CARP Health Survey Poll Report February 24, 2015

Key Findings

While there is little spontaneous awareness of the CIHI Health Care Policy Survey of Older Adults, there is substantial agreement with the key findings as presented to members.

Two thirds agree Canadians don't have timely access to care and a substantial minority has experienced this themselves, especially with respect to specialists. They wait longer than 2 months to see a specialist and a week to see their family doctors.

Two thirds agree that the many caregivers in Canada do not get the help and supports they need. Fully two thirds are themselves or know full and part time caregivers, and as many as a third say they do not get the help they need, while a further quarter get only some of the help they need some of the time.

Three quarters have actively planned for their deaths, either through documentation or discussions with family and doctor.

There is slightly less agreement that Canada suffers from a discontinuity of care between health care providers, but still more than half agree. The most commonly mentioned example is specialists ordering tests of which the primary care physician isn't aware.

There is also less agreement that many Canadians think their health care system is unsustainable (but still a majority), but as many as three quarters think fundamental change is needed in order to render the system sustainable.

Just one quarter have experienced 'patient centered care' in their interactions with the system, and to most, it means a combination of a team approach to care centered around the individual's needs rather than system availability.

Members overwhelmingly agree with the Supreme Court's decision in Carter vs Canada, including those members who are licensed doctors. More than one half of members say they know someone who would take advantage of assisted dying, including a significant minority of members themselves.

Detailed Findings

Just one seventh of members are aware of the CIHI Health Policy Survey of Older Adults (14%).

The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) recently published their Health Policy Survey of Older Adults. Are you aware of this survey or its findings?

Yes	14%
No	86%

Two thirds agree with the first key finding of the survey, that timely care is a problem in Canada.

The key finding of the survey was that older adults in Canada face challenges in timely access to primary and specialist care, and that Canada had the longest wait times for care of any of the 11 countries surveyed. Do you agree or disagree with this finding?

AGREE	64%
Agree strongly	24%
Agree	40%
DISAGREE	13%
Disagree	12%
Disagree strongly	1%
DON'T KNOW	23%

Fewer than a quarter of members have difficulty accessing timely care from their family doctors (22%) but this increases to closer to one half when accessing specialist care (43%).

Do you personally face difficulties in accessing primary/specialist health care in time?

	Primary	Specialist
Yes	22%	43%
No	78%	58%

The most common problem mentioned is waiting for more than 2 months to see a specialist (35%), followed by a tenth who wait more than a week to see the family doctor (10%). One third do not experience difficulties (36%).

What is the most serious difficulty you face in receiving care on time?

Wait more than 2 months to see specialist	35%
Wait more than 1 week to see family doctor	10%
Wait more than 2 weeks to see specialist	9%
Wait more than 2 days to see family doctor	6%
Receiving initial home care assessment	1%
Receiving first home care visit	-
DON'T FACE DIFFICULTIES	36%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	4%

On average, members see their family doctors about 5 days after they ask for an appointment, although close to one fifth see them the same day (17%).

The last time you saw your family doctor or primary care physician, how long did it take between your first call and the appointment?

Same day	17%
Two days	26%
Three days	15%
A week	21%
More than a week	20%
AVG. NUMBER OF DAYS	5 Days
DON'T HAVE FAMILY DOCTOR	2%

On average, members wait more than 50 days to see a specialist after they have been referred. Just one third are seen in less than one month (34%).

The last time you saw a specialist, how long did it take between the initial referral and the appointment?

Less than a week	6%
1 to 2 weeks	11%
2 weeks to 1 month	17%
A month	11%
2 months	17%
3 months	10%
More than 3 months	18%
AVG. NUMBER OF DAYS	54 Days
HAVEN'T SEEN SPECIALIST	11%

Two thirds of members agree with the finding that many members who are caregivers do not get the supports they need (67%).

The second finding of the survey was that many Canadians are caregivers to older adults, many need help at this but are not getting it. Do you agree or disagree with this finding?

AGREE	67%
Agree strongly	24%
Agree	43%
DISAGREE	9%
Disagree	8%
Disagree strongly	1%
DON'T KNOW	25%

Two thirds are (15%), or know (48%), full (26%) or part time (37%) caregivers. Just more than one third of members don't know a caregiver (38%).

Are you a full or part time caregiver or is someone you know a full or part time caregiver to an older adult?

YES	63%
I am full time caregiver	4%
I am a part time caregiver	11%
I know someone who is a full time caregiver	22%
I know someone who is a part time caregiver	26%
NO ONE I KNOW IS A CAREGIVER	38%

Just a quarter of those who are or know full or part time caregivers do not get the help and supports they need (23%), while about one third say they get some of the help they need (36%). Just one fifth say they get all the help and supports they need (19%).

Do you receive the financial, physical or health care support you need in caregiving or does the person you know who is a caregiver?

YES	19%
I get the all the support I need	8%
Person I know gets all the support they need	11%
SOMETIMES	36%
I get the some of the support I need	11%
Person I know gets some of the support they need	25%
NO	23%
I do not get the support I need	8%
Person I know doesn't get the support they need	15%
DON'T KNOW	23%

Three quarters of members have planned for the end of their lives (75%), including a third who have a living will (33%), a fifth who have had discussions with family (21%) and about one tenth who both have a living will or DNR and also have had discussions (13%). Just one fifth (21%) have not planned.

The third finding of the survey was that Canadians are more likely than others to plan for the end of their lives. Have you made advance decisions or preparations for your end of life care?

YES	75%
Have a Living Will	33%
Have had discussions with spouse/family	21%
Have Living Will/DNR/have had discussions	13%
Have a DNR	5%
Have had discussions with family and doctor	2%
Have had discussions with doctor	1%
NO LIVING WILL/DNR/DISCUSSIONS	21%
OTHER	4%

Just more than half of members agree that continuity of care between providers is a problem (59%).

The fourth finding of the survey was that continuity of care between providers (family doctors, specialists, labs, clinics, hospitals) in Canada wasn't great and that some providers didn't know what other providers were doing. Do you agree or disagree with this finding?

AGREE	59%
Agree strongly	20%
Agree	39%
DISAGREE	16%
Disagree	14%
Disagree strongly	2%
DON'T KNOW	24%

One third of members have personally experienced this discontinuity of care (32%).

Have you experienced a situation where your family doctor wasn't aware of test results, decisions or treatments ordered by a specialist, or by a clinic or hospital or vice versa

Yes	32%
No	69%

Cases of discontinuity cited include the family doctor being unaware of tests or treatments ordered by the specialist (41%), those ordered by the hospital (23%) or the specialist being unfamiliar with the patient's chart (15%).

How would you describe the most recent case of this happening?

MD unaware tests/treatments ordered by specialist	41%
MD unaware tests/treatments ordered by hospital	23%
Specialist not familiar with my file/chart	15%
Specialist unaware of tests/treatments in hospital	7%
OTHER	14%

More than half agree that Canada’s health care system is unsustainable, which marches survey findings (58%), but more than one quarter disagree with this pessimistic perception (27%).

The final finding of the survey was that Canadians are less likely than others to feel their health system is sustainable. Do you agree or disagree with this finding?

AGREE	58%
Agree strongly	14%
Agree	44%
DISAGREE	27%
Disagree	22%
Disagree strongly	5%
DON'T KNOW	16%

Three quarters believe the system needs to be “blown up” and rebuilt (77%).

Do you believe fundamental, structural change in the way Canada delivers and pays for health care is required in order for the system to be sustainable?

Yes	77%
No	23%

Just one quarter have seen evidence of ‘patient centered care’ in their recent encounters with the health care system (25%). As many as 3-in-10 don’t know enough about it to offer an opinion (30%).

There is a great deal of discussion of ‘patient centered care’. As far as you know, have you seen any evidence of ‘patient centered care’ in your recent interactions with the health care system?

Yes	25%
No	45%
DON'T KNOW	30%

All leading perceptions of patient centered care are focused on the needs of the individual (27% and 22%) and the team meeting these needs (27% and 22%).

What does 'patient centered care' mean most to you?

Multi-provider care built around individual's needs	27%
Team approach to care (MD, nurse, etc)	26%
Care designed around patient, not system	22%
More communication between doctor and patient	6%
Holistic approach, treating body and mind	4%
Patient makes important decisions, not MD	3%
OTHER/DON'T KNOW	12%

More than 8-in-10 members agree with Supreme Court's ruling on Assisted Death (83%) and this includes those members who are licensed doctors (80%). In the case of all members, fully one half agrees "strongly" with the ruling (50%).

The Supreme Court of Canada just ruled in favour of physician assisted dying. Do you agree or disagree with this ruling/If you are a medical doctor, do you agree or disagree with the Supreme Court's ruling?

	All Members	Doctors
AGREE	83%	80%
Agree strongly	50%	31%
Agree	33%	49%
DISAGREE	13%	16%
Disagree	6%	6%
Disagree strongly	7%	10%
DON'T KNOW	5%	6%

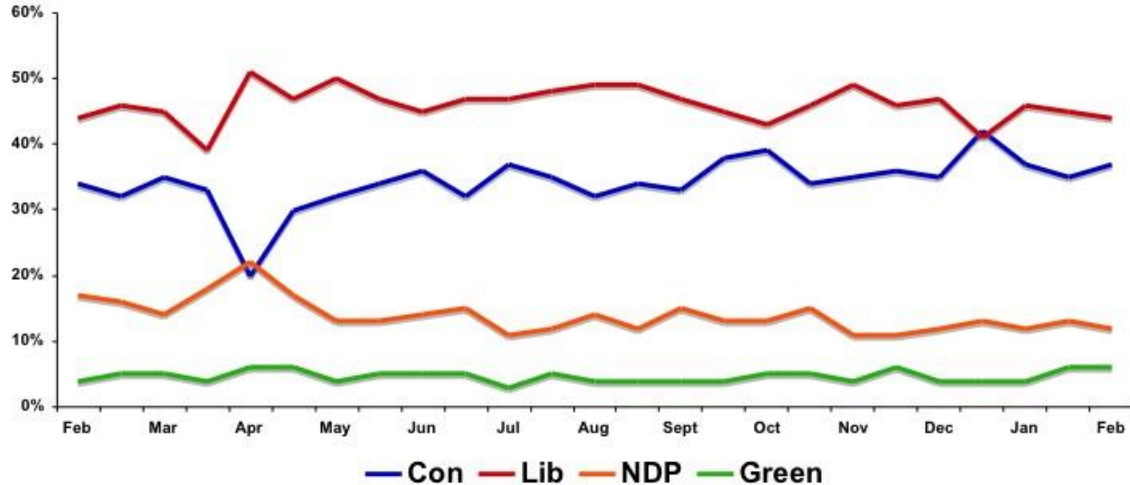
More than half of members know someone who might take advantage of assisted death in the worst circumstances (57%) and in many cases this is the member themselves (30%). One third say they know no one who would explore assisted death (32%).

Do you know anyone who might take advantage of physician-assisted dying if they faced a grievous condition or intolerable pain?

YES	57%
Me	30%
Spouse	2%
Family member	4%
Friend	4%
More than one of these	17%
NO	32%
DON'T KNOW	10%
WOULD NEVER AGREE TO THIS	2%

Electoral Preference

After briefly tying the Liberals for first place, the Conservatives have returned to second place (37%) where they have been for a year or more. The Liberals lead (44%) and the NDP is in third (12%). Despite not leading in voter preference, more than half of members expect the Conservatives to win the next election (52%), and this may be the result of New Democrats who know their party can't win (2%) but don't expect the Liberals to prevail (45%). It should be noted that all Liberal supporters expect their party to win



Which party do you EXPECT to win the next election?

	Dec 15	Dec 31	Jan 15	Jan 31	Feb 10
Liberals	51%	46%	47%	44%	45%
Conservatives	44%	51%	50%	53%	52%
NDP	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Green	*	*	*	*	*

More than 2700 CARP Poll™ online panel members responded to this poll between February 10 and 15, 2015. The margin of error for a probability sample this size is about plus or minus 2%, 19 times out of 20