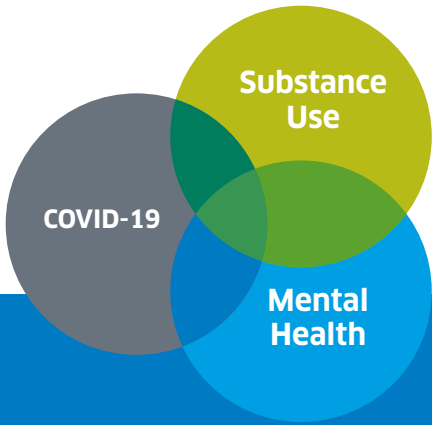


MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DURING COVID-19



According to recent [surveys](#) conducted by Leger on behalf of the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction and the Mental Health Commission of Canada, many Canadians still report significant mental health and substance use concerns more than two years into the COVID-19 pandemic.¹

Mental health and substance use concerns remained elevated in all regions, throughout each wave of the pandemic.

35% Almost **35%** of survey respondents reported moderate to severe mental health concerns.



25% About **25%** of respondents who used alcohol or cannabis reported problematic use.



The proportion of people accessing mental health and substance use services remained low.



Fewer than **1 in 3 people** with mental health concerns accessed mental health services.²



Fewer than **1 in 4 people** with problematic alcohol or cannabis use accessed substance use services.³

The impacts of COVID-19 on mental health and substance use are interconnected.

3X People with moderate to severe depression symptoms were **3 times** more likely to report problematic alcohol use compared with those who do not.

3X People with a history of substance use disorder were **3 times** more likely to report suicidal ideation compared with those who do not.

Financial concerns and social isolation were the top two stressors across all regions.



Individuals with low income were **1.4 times** more likely to report moderate to severe symptoms of depression and anxiety compared with those who did not.

But not everyone is affected equally.

Age, income, employment and gender were the top predictors of mental health and substance use concerns.

- Depression symptoms were about 2 times more likely among respondents who were youth, unemployed or from the 2SLGBTQ+ community compared with other respondents.

CALLS TO ACTION

- Greater focus on timely access to and the availability of a range of services and supports, especially for people most affected.
- Increased awareness and public education about available services and supports across jurisdictions.
- Better policies and a range of programs to foster resilience.
- More research to understand the distinct experiences of different social, cultural and ethno-racialized groups.

Learn more about the [full series of polls online](#).

¹ Caution should be exercised when comparing results with other surveys.

² Question 42: During the past month, have you accessed formal treatment services (e.g., a medical doctor, psychologist, social worker, counsellor, support groups, peer counsellor) to help manage your use of any of the following substances (on the internet, via phone or in person)?

³ Question 44: During the past month, have you accessed formal treatment services (e.g., a medical doctor, psychologist, social worker, counsellor, support groups, peer counsellor) to help manage your emotions or mental health (on the internet, via phone or in person)?