

Study: Difficulty accessing health care services in Canada, 2003 to 2013

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, December 8, 2016

Over 70% of Canadians 15 years of age and older reported no difficulty accessing health care when they needed it in 2013. This percentage has not changed significantly since 2003.

Almost 30% of Canadians reported experiencing difficulty getting the care they needed. However, the percentage varied depending on the type of service. For example, 16% reported difficulty accessing non-emergency surgery (such as knee surgery), while 23% reported difficulty accessing immediate care for a minor health problem (such as a fever). Of those who reported difficulty, waiting too long for an appointment and difficulty getting an appointment were the most common problems reported.

Certain sociodemographic and health characteristics were found to be associated with difficulty accessing health care services. For example, for the combined years 2009 to 2013, Canadians who reported fair or poor perceived health had higher odds of reporting difficulty accessing specialized services (such as non-emergency surgery). Meanwhile, Canadians with higher levels of education (that is, at least some post-secondary) had higher odds of reporting difficulty accessing first-contact services (such as immediate care).

Note to readers

This release presents data from the Canadian Community Health Survey – Annual Component, which is an annual cross-sectional survey that collects information related to the health status, health care use and health determinants of the Canadian population aged 12 and older in the 12 months preceding the survey.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3226](#).

The article "[Difficulty accessing health care services in Canada](#)," published in *Health at a Glance* ([82-624-X](#)), is now available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).

