

Canadian Community Health Survey: Mental Health, 2012

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In 2012, approximately 2.8 million people, or 10.1% of Canadians aged 15 and older, reported symptoms consistent with at least one of six mental or substance use disorders in the past 12 months. The six disorders measured by the survey were major depressive episode, bipolar disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, and abuse of or dependence on alcohol, cannabis or other drugs.

Symptoms consistent with a mood disorder were cited by 5.4% of Canadians aged 15 and older. A major depressive episode was the most common type of mood disorder, with 4.7% of the population aged 15 and older meeting the criteria, while 1.5% met the criteria for bipolar disorder in the past 12 months.

Measured for the first time in a national population health survey, some 2.6% of Canadians aged 15 and older reported symptoms consistent with generalized anxiety disorder, a condition characterized by a pattern of frequent, persistent worry and excessive anxiety about several events or activities.

About 4.4% of Canadians aged 15 and older met the criteria for a substance use disorder in the past 12 months. The most common of these was alcohol abuse or dependence, at 3.2%. The proportion of Canadians aged 15 and older with cannabis abuse or dependence in the past year was 1.3%, almost double the proportion of those with other drug abuse or dependence (0.7%).

There were higher rates of mood disorders and of generalized anxiety disorder among females, while males had higher rates of substance use disorders. More youth (aged 15 to 24) met the criteria for mood disorders and substance use disorders than any other age group, while the oldest age group (65 and older) had the lowest rates of all disorders.

Perceived need for mental health care in Canada

In 2012, 17% of Canadians aged 15 and older, approximately 4.9 million individuals, perceived themselves as having had a need for mental health care in the past 12 months. Among these people, two-thirds (67%) had their needs met, while 12% reported needs that were unmet. The remaining 21% had partially met needs, as they received some mental health care, but perceived a need for more.

Counselling, at 12%, was the most common type of mental health care need cited by Canadians aged 15 and older. It was also the need that was least often reported as met, with 65% of those with a counselling need perceiving that need as met. A need for medication was reported less often (10%). It was also the need most likely to be reported as met, with 91% of individuals with a medication need perceiving that it was met.

Having a mental or substance use disorder, experiencing higher levels of distress, or having two or more chronic physical health conditions were positively associated with reporting a need for mental health care. Among individuals who perceived a mental health care need, only higher distress was associated with a greater likelihood of having an unmet (versus met) need.

For those who said that they had an unmet or partially met mental health care need, the majority (73%) reported personal circumstances, such as being too busy, as a reason that their mental health care needs were not met. Almost one in five (19%) attributed their unmet need to features of the health care system (for example, help was not readily available).



Note to readers

Data from the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) – Mental Health are now available. This release presents data from two analytical articles based on the survey.

This survey collected information about lifetime and 12-month mental health status; access to and perceived need for formal and informal services and supports; functioning and disability; and factors determining health status.

About 25,100 respondents 15 years of age and older living in the provinces were interviewed for the survey from January to December 2012. People living on-reserve and on other Aboriginal settlements, full-time members of the Canadian Forces and the institutionalized population were excluded.

Available in CANSIM: table 105-1101.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5015.

For more statistics and analysis on the health of Canadians and the health care system, visit the *Health in Canada* module. This module is accessible from our website, under *Features*.

The article "Mental and substance use disorders in Canada" in *Health at a Glance* (82-624-X), and the article "Perceived need for mental health care in Canada: Results from the 2012 Canadian Community Health Survey - Mental Health" in the September issue of *Health Reports*, Vol. 24, no. 9. (82-003-X), are now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website, under *Publications*.

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; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca).