

Impacts on Indigenous Peoples

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Key messages:

- Crowdsourced data indicate disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on First Nations people, Métis and Inuit.
 - Indigenous participants report greater impact on their ability to meet financial obligations or essential needs than non-Indigenous participants.
 - Indigenous participants report worsening mental health.
 - Indigenous women participants, in particular, report strong impacts on economic well-being and mental health.
- Stronger adverse impacts linked to pre-existing vulnerabilities, including longstanding and persistent disparities in socio-economic conditions.

Geographic isolation and high prevalence of pre-existing health conditions in the Indigenous population increases vulnerability

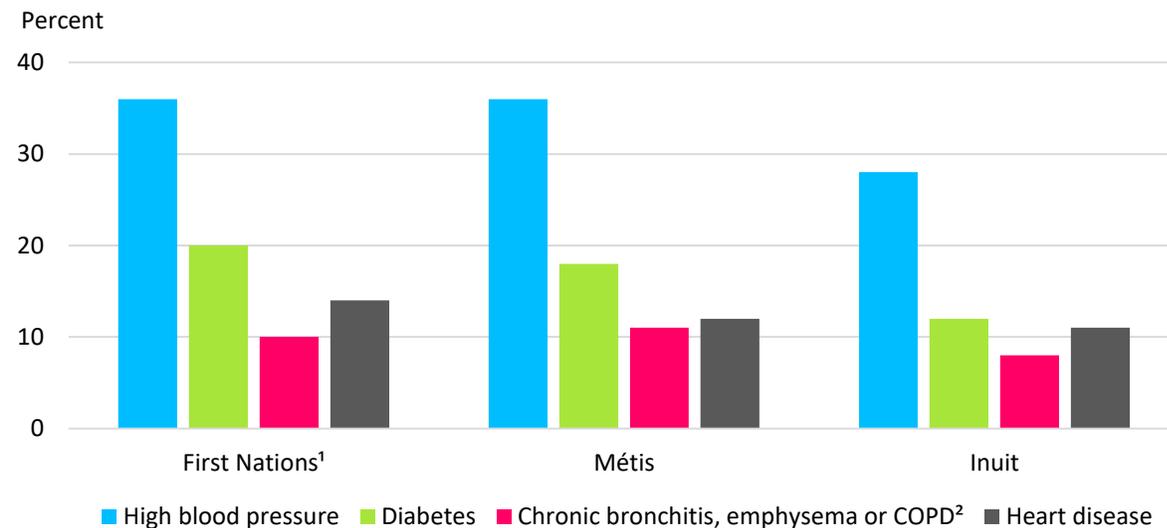
Many Indigenous people live in rural and remote communities where it is difficult to access medical care.

- Most Inuit (73%) live in Inuit Nunangat, where the vast majority of communities are accessible only by air.
- In 2017, 82% of Inuit in Inuit Nunangat reported that they did not have a family doctor. In comparison, less than one in five Canadians do not have a family doctor.

Pre-existing health conditions in the Indigenous population increase risk of COVID-19 complications.

- There are relatively high levels of pre-existing health conditions in the Indigenous population.

Proportion of First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit aged 50 years and over with selected pre-existing health conditions, 2017



1. First Nations people living off reserve.

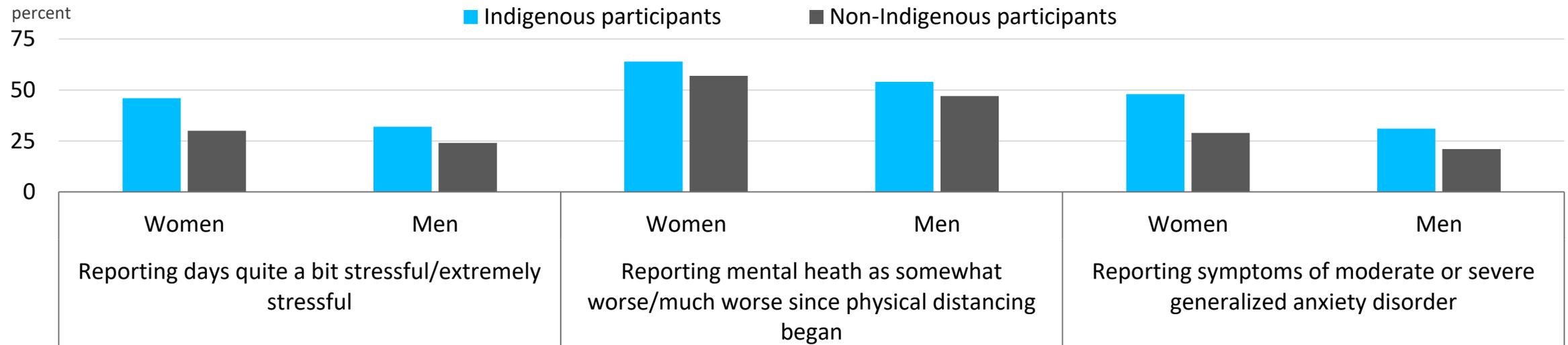
2. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Source: Statistics Canada, Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017

Indigenous people report worsening mental health since the start of COVID-19, including increases in anxiety and stress

- Relatively high percentages of Indigenous participants reported worsening mental health.
- Indigenous women particularly impacted: 46% reported that their days are quite a bit or extremely stressful and 48% reported symptoms consistent with moderate or severe generalized anxiety disorder.

Mental health impacts since the start of the pandemic, Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants by gender, April 24 to May 11, 2020



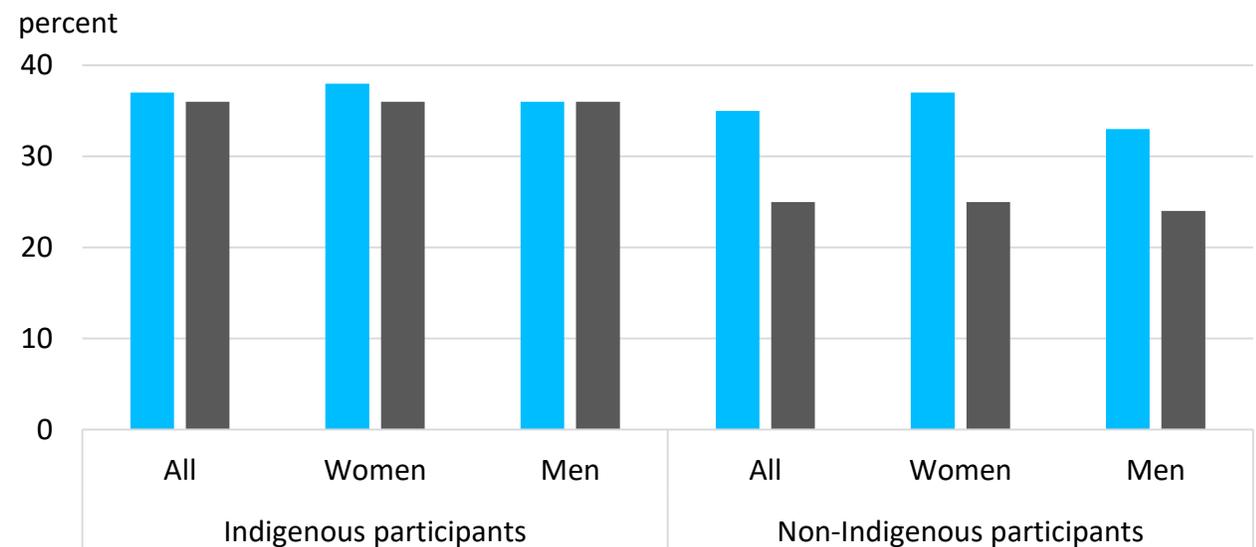
Source: Impacts of COVID-19 on Canadians - Mental Health.

Crowdsourced data indicate that Indigenous people harder hit by the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

While relative job losses have been similar, financial impacts are more sharply felt by Indigenous people.

- 37% of Indigenous participants experienced job loss or reduced work hours, compared to 35% of non-Indigenous participants.
- Over one-third (36%) of Indigenous participants reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on their ability to meet financial obligations or essential needs, compared to 25% of non-Indigenous participants.
- Among those who experienced job loss or reduced work hours, 65% of Indigenous participants reported a strong or moderate financial impact, compared to 56% among non-Indigenous participants.

Self-reported employment and financial impact of COVID-19, May 26 to June 8, 2020



■ Experienced job loss or reduced work hours among participants employed before COVID-19

■ Reporting a strong or moderate impact of COVID-19 on ability to meet financial obligations or essential needs

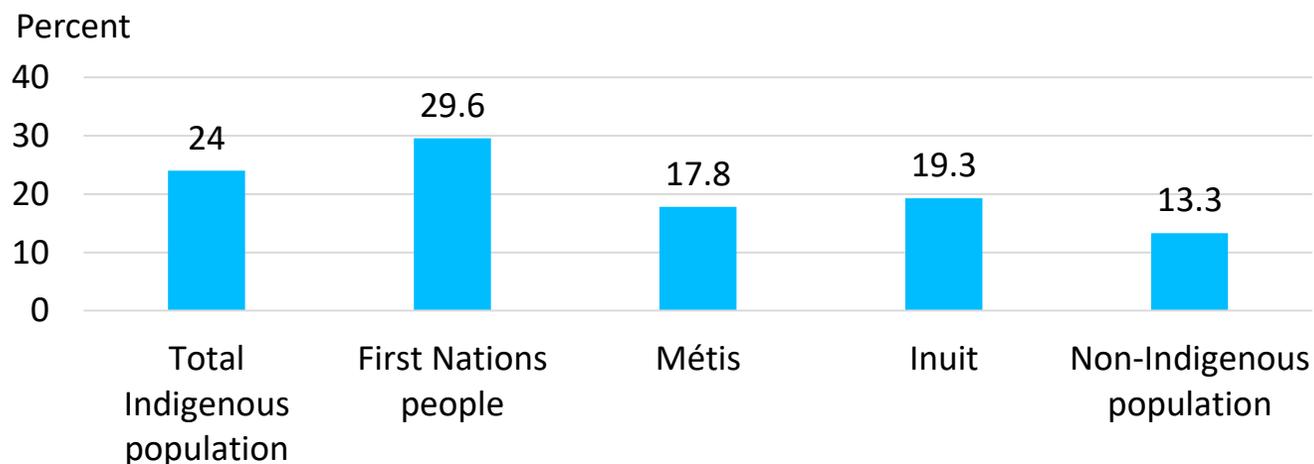
Source: Statistics Canada, Impacts of COVID-19 on Canadians - Trust in Others

Economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic likely having a larger impact on Indigenous people because of greater pre-existing vulnerabilities

Families with few financial assets face significant income vulnerability.

- In 2016, 47% of those living in families headed by an Indigenous person (First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit) were unlikely to have enough liquid assets and other private sources of income to sustain themselves for a period of two months without employment income.

Percentage living below the poverty line (market basket measure) in urban areas, Canada (excluding the territories), 2016



Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population.

Concerns about safety heightened among Indigenous participants

- 17% of Indigenous participants reported that they believe crime has increased in their neighbourhood since the start of the pandemic, compared to 11% among non-Indigenous participants.
- 22% of Indigenous participants felt that people in their neighbourhood are being harassed or attacked “often” or “sometimes” because of their race, ethnicity or skin colour. This is compared with 11% of non-Indigenous participants.

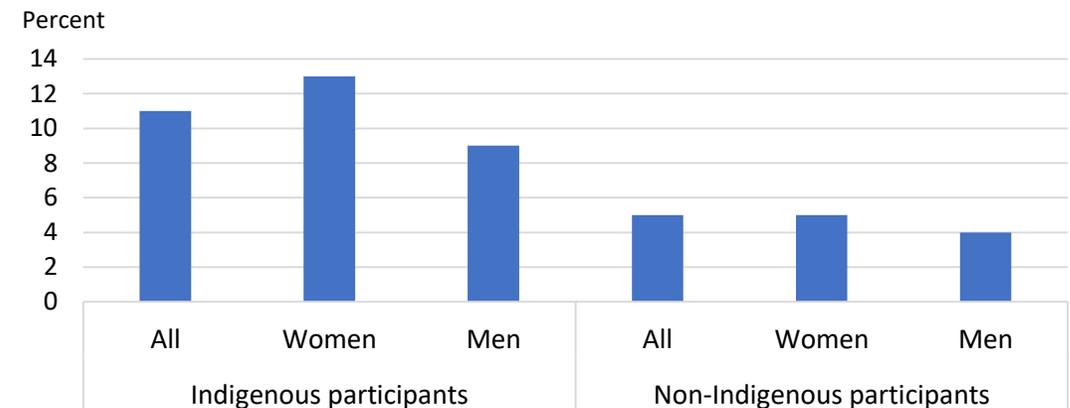
50% of Indigenous participants compared to 62% of non-Indigenous participants expressed a high level of trust in the federal government to make good decisions about when and how to reopen businesses and public spaces.

Source: [Economic impact of COVID-19 among Indigenous people](#).

When participants were asked about impacts of COVID-19:

- 47% of Indigenous women reported being “very” or “extremely” concerned about family stress due to confinement.
- 13% of Indigenous women reported some level of concern (somewhat/very/extremely) about violence in their home.

Percentage reporting some level of concern about the impact of COVID-19 on violence in their home, April 24 to May 11, 2020



Source: Statistics Canada, Impacts of COVID-19 on Canadians - Mental Health.

Looking forward

Economic recovery may come more slowly for the Indigenous population (as it did following the 2008 recession).

- Employment increases have stalled for the off-reserve Indigenous population.

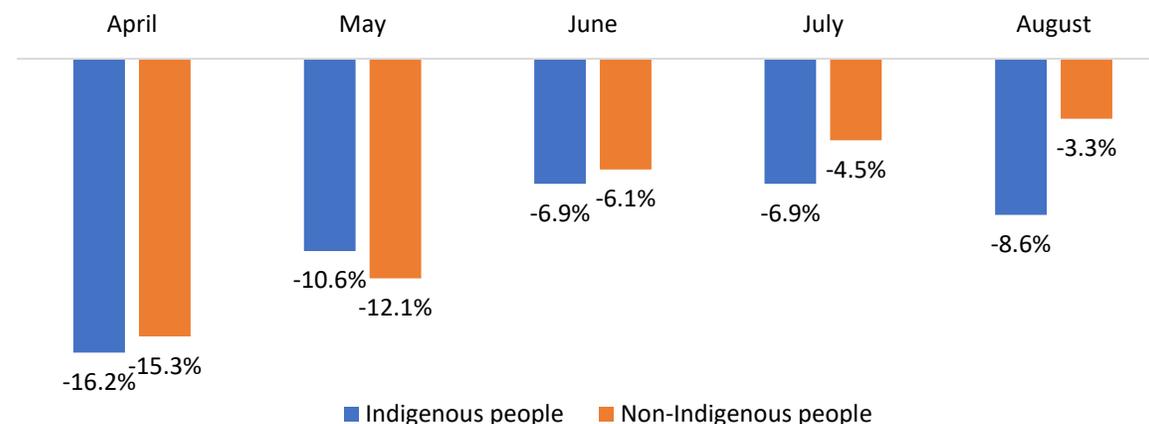
Indigenous youth may be at risk of leaving school without the proper supports.

- More than half of Indigenous participants reported being very or extremely concerned about the school year and academic success of their child due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indigenous people overrepresented among the most vulnerable:

- Based on previous research, Indigenous people overrepresented among the homeless in urban areas.
- In residential facilities for victims of abuse, representation of Indigenous women was 5 times higher than their representation in the Canadian population (2017/2018).
- Indigenous adults accounted for 29% of admissions to federal custody, while representing approximately 4% of the Canadian adult population (2017/2018).

Change in employment counts relative to February 2020, Indigenous and non-Indigenous population aged 15 and older, Excluding those residing on reserve or in Territories, April - July 2020



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.