

AT-A-GLANCE



The state of mental health has gotten significantly worse since the pandemic.

10 million Canadians report “poor” or “fair” mental health – 3 times more than before the pandemic.

An alarming 38% of Indigenous Peoples reported their mental health as “poor” or “fair.”



Mental health has been profoundly neglected under universal health care since Medicare was introduced exactly forty years ago.

- Six federal governments in a row have failed to make it right.
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- The federal government should either change the Canada Health Act or write a new law with permanent funding that obliges provinces and territories to spend more on mental health and addictions.
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No province or territory is spending what it should on mental health.

- On average, provinces and territories are only spending 6.3% of their overall health budgets on mental health when they should be spending 12%.
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Where you live matters.

- People in Canada receive drastically different care depending on their home province or territory.
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- Services in the north are often scarce due to a shortage of mental health and addictions workers, including psychiatrists.
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- The rate of self-harm in the territories is between 3.5 and 5 times higher than in the rest of Canada.
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Paying for cancer treatment is unthinkable in Canada.

- Yet, mental health care often has a price tag and many people have to pay it. If they can afford to.
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- With the skyrocketing cost of living, having to buy mental health care can compete with other necessities like food and rent.
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The toxic drug crisis is out of control.

- 8,049 people died from opioid poisoning in Canada (2023), making the opioid crisis the deadliest in the world after the US, and hitting Western Canada particularly hard.
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- Up to two-thirds of drug-related charges are still for possession. People with substance use challenges need social and health supports, not jail time.
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It's not a flashy topic, but we need more data!

- You can't fix what you don't measure.
- The report relies on data from official Canadian sources, but the numbers Canada collects barely scratch the surface, especially in the north.