

Issues with Access to Psychologists in Manitoba

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Dr. Jo Ann Unger, C. Psych,
President, MPS

Dr. Karen G. Dyck, C. Psych.,
Executive Director, MPS



Mental Health Needs in Manitoba

“Without mental health, there can be no true physical health.”

- Manitoba’s Mental Health Budget 5.1% of Health Budget (2016/7) compared to National Average of 7.2% (Virgo, 2018)
- Mental Health needs remain high
 - 28% of adult Manitobans are diagnosed with a mental disorder (MCHP, 2018)
 - Up to 70% of problems brought to family physicians have a mental health component (Virgo, 2018)
 - 1 in 7 children aged 6-19 received a mental health diagnosis between 2009 and 2013 (Chartier et al., 2016)

COVID's Impact on Canadians' Mental Health

2018

- 8% fair or poor mental health
- 24% good mental health
- 69% very good/excellent mental health

May 2020

- 22% fair or poor mental health
- 30% good mental health
- 48% very good/excellent mental health

Source: Statistics Canada: Canadians' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, May 27, 2020

Impact on Canadians' Mental Health Since Physical Distancing Began

Percentage who reported a negative impact on mental health:

- 64% aged 15 – 24
- 62% aged 25 – 34
- 60% aged 35 – 44
- 54% aged 45 – 54
- 45% aged 55 - 64
- 35% aged 65 and older

Source: Statistics Canada: Canadians' mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, May 27, 2020



In Canada, every \$1 invested in covering psychological services would yield \$2.00 (\$1.78 to \$3.15) in savings to society.

Mental health problems cost 50 billion a year in Canada.

52% of Disability Claims (over 13 weeks missed work) of Federal employees due to mental health conditions

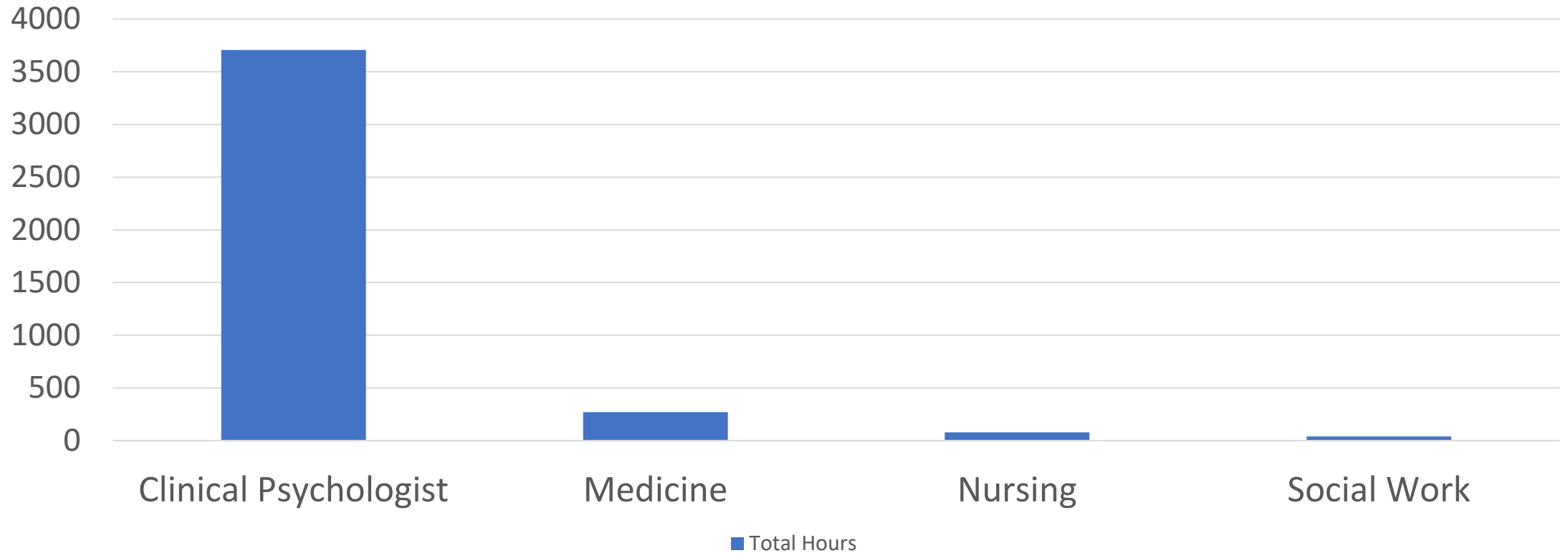
Manulife's increase in mental health benefits decreased short-term disability claims and improved return to work from 55% to 86%.

What is a Psychologist?

- Cost-effective, specialist, health care providers who assess, diagnose and treat a range of complex mental health disorders, cognitive/developmental disorders and chronic physical health conditions (e.g. chronic pain, insomnia)
- Doctoral degree – 10-12 years training
- Regulated Profession
- Deliver evidence-based treatments tailored to specific conditions and to the patient for better outcomes
- Provide consultation and supervision
- Design, implement and evaluate initiatives at a program or system level
- As scientist-practitioners, understand and conduct scientific research to improve assessments and treatments

How Psychologists Compare?

Median Total Hours of Mental Health Training in Canadian Institutions



Benefits of Psychological Therapies

- Evidence-based psychological treatments are at least as effective and often more effective than pharmacotherapy for certain mental health conditions. E.g. depression, anxiety
- Effective component for pain management
- Relapse rates for psychological treatments are lower than pharmacotherapy
- Time-limited
- Evidence-based psychological therapies are more cost-effective than pharmacotherapy
- Few, if any, side effects for psychological therapies compared to pharmacotherapy

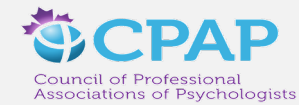


Hunsley, Elliott, & Therrien (2013); Hunsley (2002)

2020 Survey



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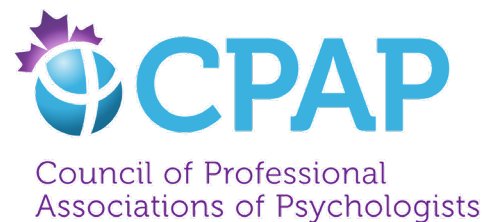


The research was commissioned by the Canadian Psychological Association and the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists and was conducted by Nanos Research

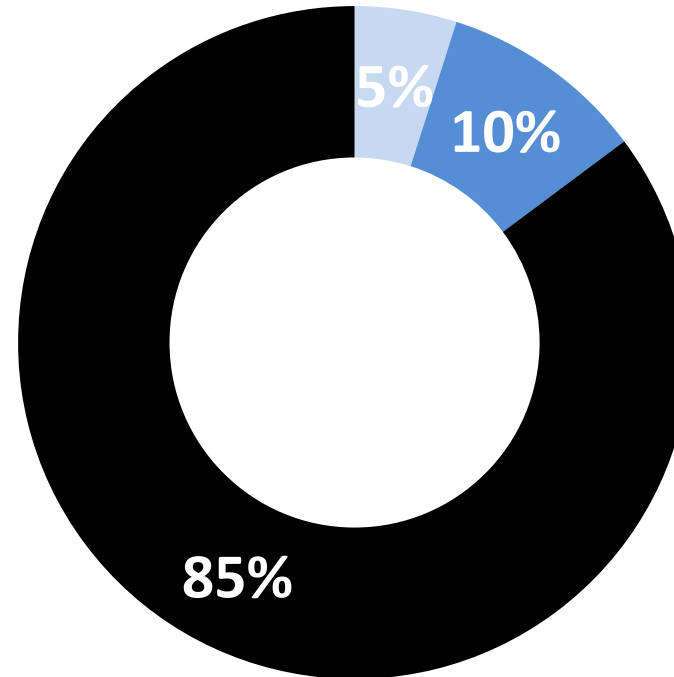
- Online survey of 212 residents of Manitoba between September 25th, 2020 and October 2nd, 2020
- Part of a larger national study of 3,070 Canadians 18 years of age or older, between September 25th, 2020 and October 2nd, 2020
- A full report is available at <https://cpa.ca/strong-majority-of-canadians-want-improved-access-to-psychologists/>



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Assessed or treated by a psychologist in the past five years



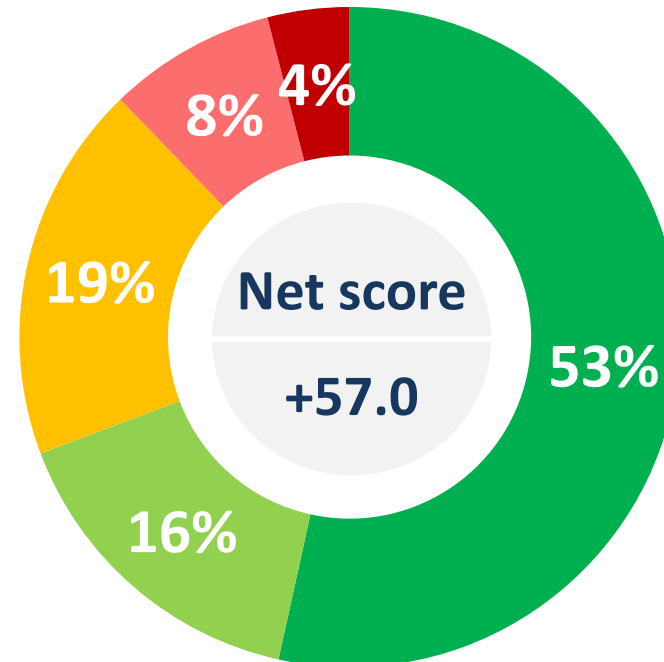
- Assessed but not treated
- Assessed and received treatment
- Have not been assessed

QUESTION – Have you been assessed or treated by a psychologist in the past 5 years?

*Weighted to the true population proportion.

*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Level of satisfactions with service provided by psychologist



- Satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Don't know

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

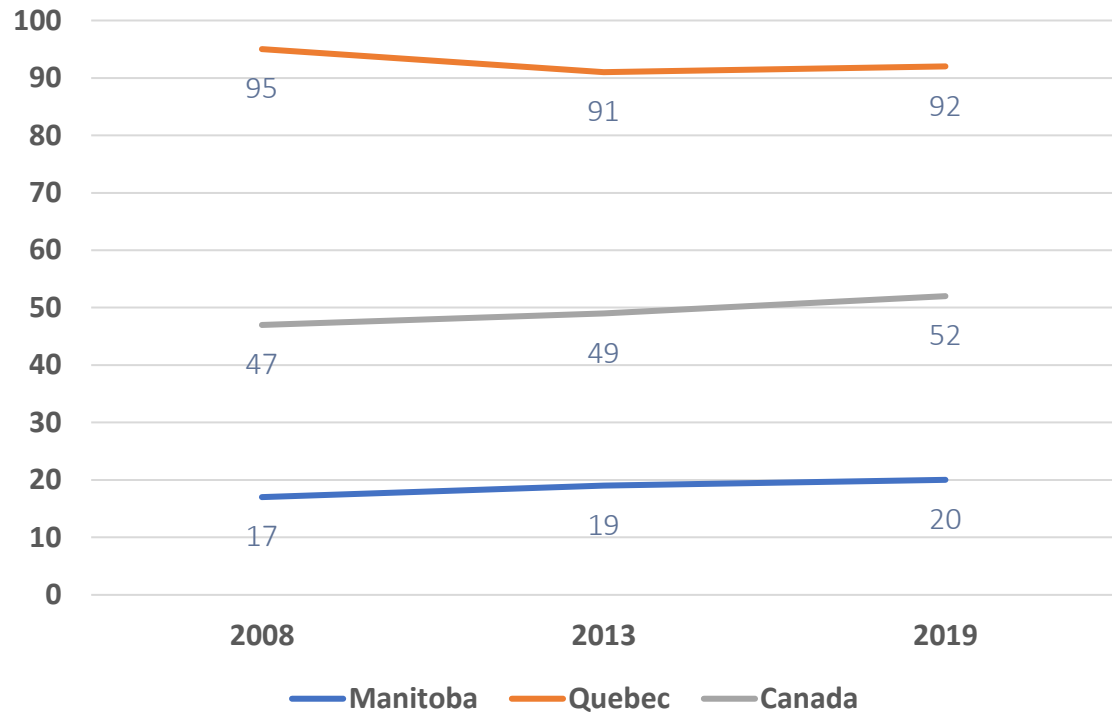
QUESTION – [IF ACCESSED SERVICES SINCE PANDEMIC OR IF ASSESSED OR RECEIVED TREATMENT IN PAST 5 YEARS]
How would you rate the satisfaction with the service provided by the psychologist?

Current Access Issues to see a Psychologist

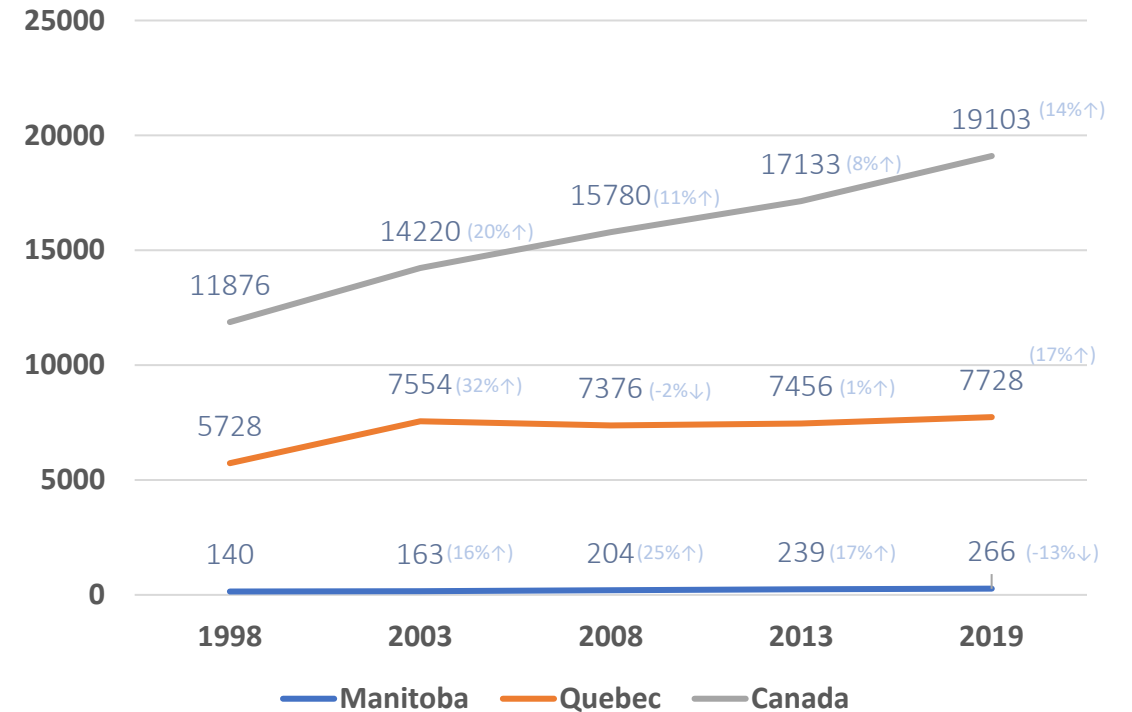
- Public Health Care
 - Limited number of psychologist positions within the health system
 - Waitlists remain long
 - Salaries not competitive leading to loss of psychologists in the public system
- Private Services
 - Unlike psychiatrists, psychologists are not covered by Manitoba Health
 - Many Manitobans have no or limited extended health benefits (dosage inadequate for effective treatment)
 - Growing waitlists

Among Canada's 10 provinces, Manitoba ranks 10th in terms of psychologists per capita

Psychologists Per 100, 000 Population
2008 - 2019

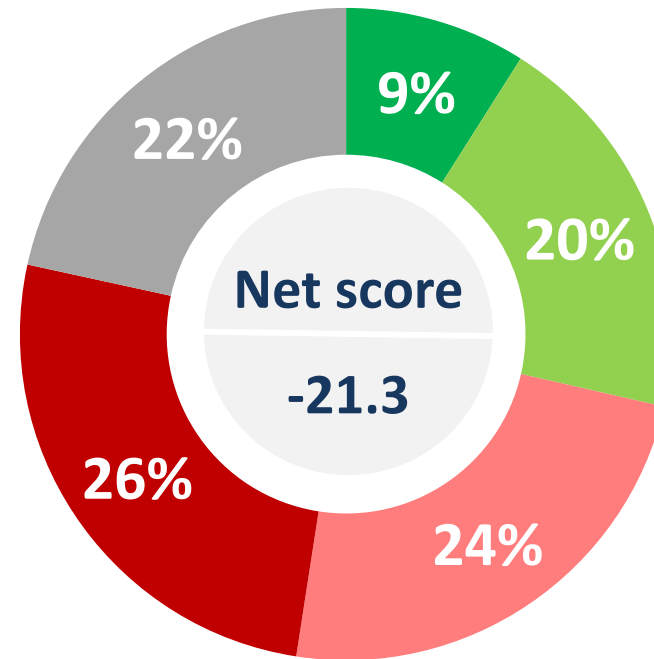


Number of Registered Psychologists
1998 - 2019



Note. Data comes from Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI).

Amount of time needed for Canadians to get access to psychological services in the publicly-funded health care system

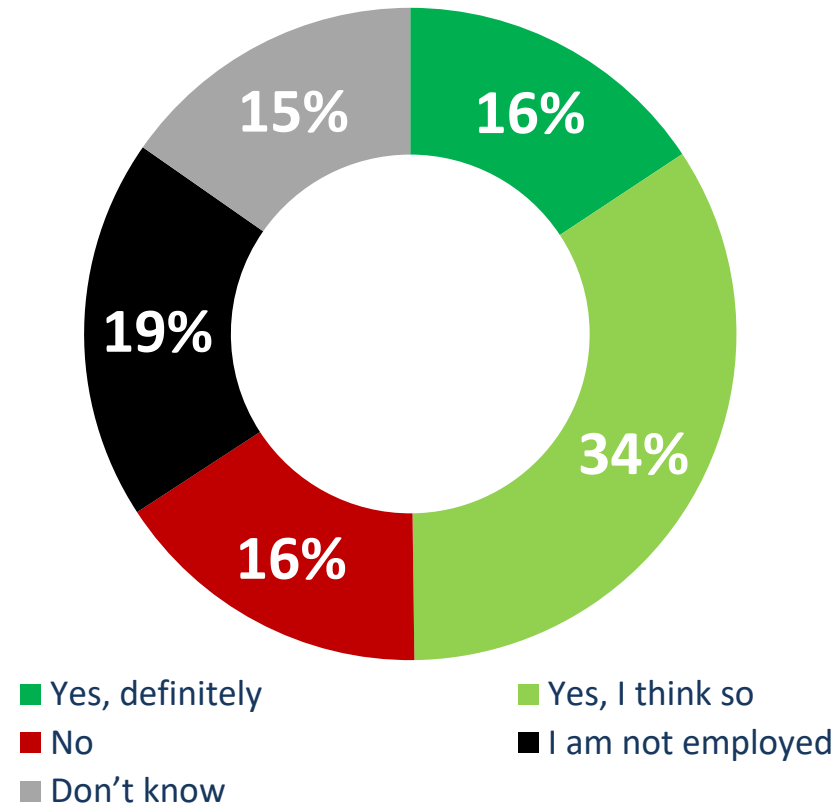


- Reasonable
- Somewhat reasonable
- Somewhat unreasonable
- Unreasonable
- Don't know

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

QUESTION – To the best of your knowledge, are Canadians able to access the services of a psychologist in the publicly-funded health care system within a reasonable, somewhat reasonable, somewhat unreasonable, or unreasonable period of time?

Access to a psychologist through employer health benefit plan



QUESTION – To the best of your knowledge, are you able to access a psychologist through your employer's health benefit plan within a reasonable period of time?

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Insurance Plans Changing Slowly

Recent Increases in Psychologist Coverage Rates per Year

- Manulife \$10,000
- Starbucks \$5,000
- Great West Life \$5,000
- Federal Government \$2,000

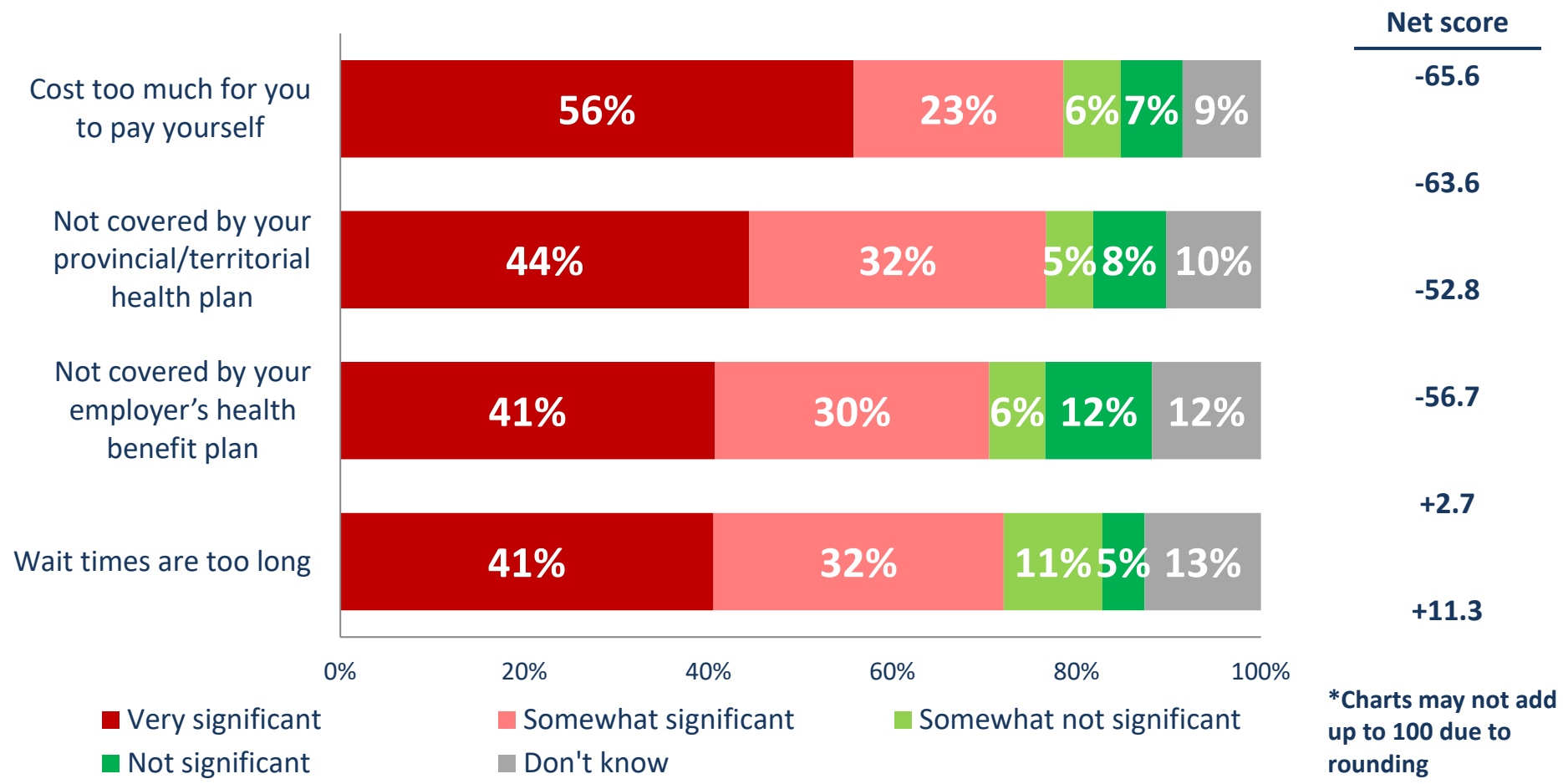
More Common Psychologist Coverage Rates per Year

- Manitoba Government \$350
- Health Care Employees \$500
 - Health Care Spending Account (HCSA)
- Liquor and Lotteries \$350
- Manitoba Hydro \$350
- Winnipeg Association of Non-Teaching Employees \$350



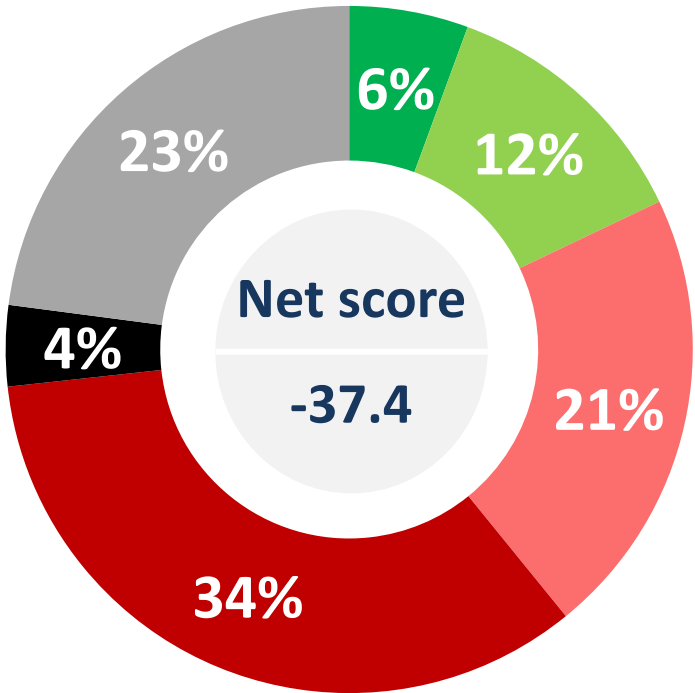
Internet search January 28, 2020

Significance of barriers in deciding to access a psychologist



QUESTION – For each of the following barriers, please tell me how significant this barrier is in deciding whether you would access a psychologist or not. [RANDOMIZE]

Impact of COVID-19 on ability of Canadians to access mental health care provided by psychologists



- Positive
- Somewhat positive
- Somewhat negative
- Negative
- No impact
- Don't know

QUESTION – In your opinion, has COVID-19 had a positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, negative or no impact on the ability of Canadians to access mental health care provided by psychologists?

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Highest Proportion of Health Care Providers in Canada 60 and Older

Note: 2019 data from Canadian
Institute for Health Information

- Physicians (26%)
- Psychologists (24%)
- Dentists (15%)
- Medical lab
technologists (15%)
- Health information
mgmt. professionals
(14%)

Supply Management: Training Programs

University of Manitoba Clinical Psychology 5-year Program Statistics

| | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 | 5-year average |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Applicants | 40 | 59 | 39 | 69 | 53 | 52 |
| Accepted | 3 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 5.8 |
| Graduates | 6 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5.2 |
| # and (%) obtaining residency | 7 (100%) | 4 (100%) | 6 (86%) | 0 | 4 (100%) | 5.2 (96.5%) |
| Total Residency positions offered in Manitoba* | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 |

* Residency positions refers to the total number of clinical psychology internship positions available in Manitoba through the Department of Clinical Health Psychology, Max Rady College of Medicine

Addressing labour shortage in Manitoba

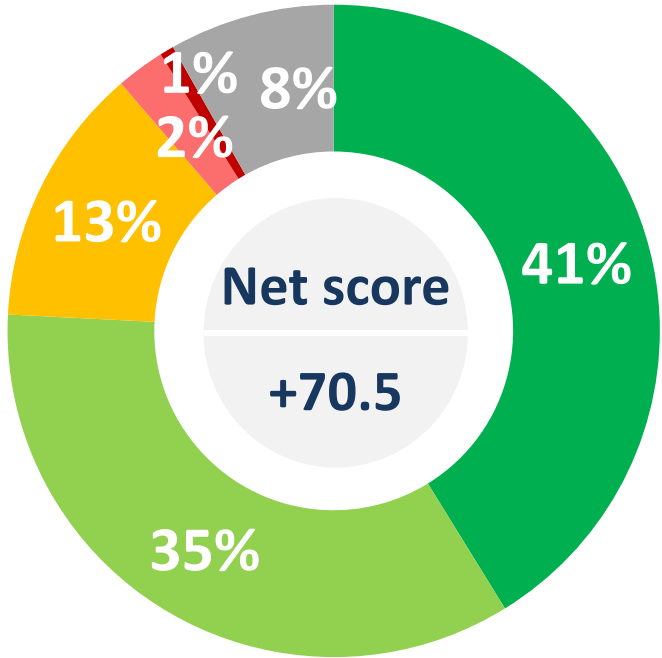
Key arguments from Peachey (2017) and Virgo (2018):

- Access to psychological services in Manitoba is limited
- Significant shortage of child psychologists
- Regional disparity in service access
- **Increase psychologists to match national average:**
 - Protect existing and effective roles in tertiary centres
 - Promote educational and recruitment initiatives
 - Train clinical psychologists at the doctoral level and integrate into team-based care, regional mental health, and substance use/abuse centres
 - Require clear role clarification including team-based work, consultation for assessment, delivery of specialized evidence-based therapy and capacity building for other team members
 - Increase number of Child Psychologists and those based rurally

The Current Reality

- A significant proportion of Manitobans are affected by mental health issues
- The need for mental health services has been further exacerbated by the pandemic and it's believed the increased need will persist after the pandemic
- Psychologists are cost-effective healthcare providers with specialized training to assess, diagnose and treat a range of mental conditions as well as cognitive/developmental disorders, and chronic physical health conditions
- There are significant barriers to accessing psychologists in Manitoba

Providing greater access to psychologists through employer health benefit plans

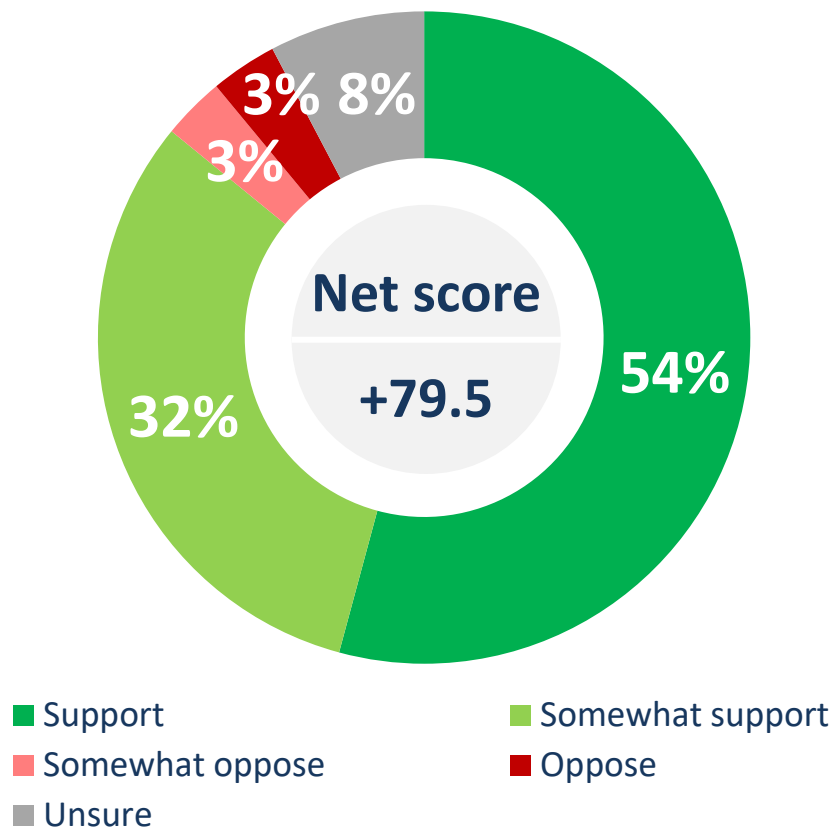


- Very good idea
- Good idea
- Average idea
- Poor idea
- Very poor idea
- Don't know

QUESTION – Is providing greater access to psychologists through employer health benefit plans (e.g., more sessions, higher financial caps) a very good idea, good idea, average idea, poor idea or a very poor idea?

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Support for improving access to psychologists through the publicly-funded health care system



QUESTION – Do you support, somewhat support, somewhat oppose or oppose improving access to psychologists through the publicly-funded health care system?

*Weighted to the true population proportion.
*Charts may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

The Solutions

Train more:

- Increase graduate and residency training opportunities in Manitoba

Have more:

- Increase publicly funded psychologist positions in mental health and primary care, with particular attention to areas that are particularly underserved (e.g., child and adolescent, geriatric, rural and remote)
- Advocate for increased insurance benefits for employees to ensure appropriate access for effective treatment without a physician referral

Keep more:

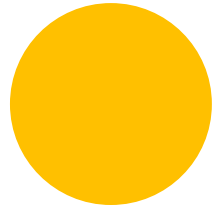
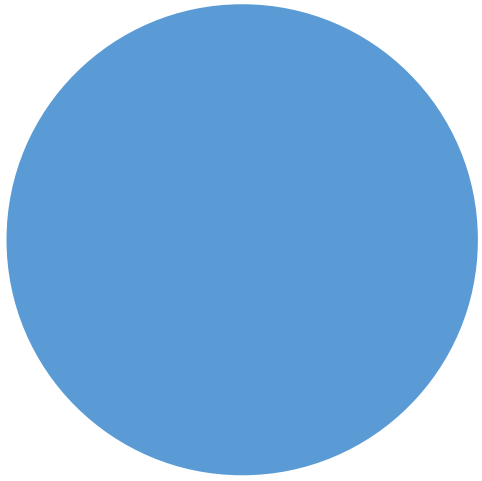
- Develop a targeted plan to recruit and retain psychologists, with specific attention to underserved areas (e.g., rural and northern)

Want to be part of the solution?

- Have conversations with friends and family about the importance of mental health and access to psychologists.
- Learn more about access to psychologists through your extended health plan and advocate for increased benefits to ensure appropriate doses of effective treatment without a physician referral.
- Write a letter to the editor regarding concerns about access to psychologists in Manitoba.

Want to be part of the solution?

- Communicate with key political figures about your concerns (e.g., Minister of Health, Minister of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery, your Member of Legislative Assembly)
 - Not sure who your MLA is?
 - <https://www.electionsmanitoba.ca/en/Voting/MyVotingInfo>
 - or call (204) 945-3636
 - Write a letter
 - Send an email
 - Make a phone call
 - Schedule a meeting



Thank You

