



Decisions and Decisional Needs of Canadians From all Provinces and Territories During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Population-Based Cross-sectional Surveys

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Introduction

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, never before had Canadians made health-related decisions in the context of so much uncertainty
- Health care decisions were complex, with limited, rapidly changing evidence and evolving public health directives
- Identifying Canadians decision-making needs was of uttermost importance to be able to provide person-centered care, achieve improved health outcomes, and inform future pandemic preparedness

Aim

We sought to identify the health-related decisional needs of Canadians during the COVID-19 pandemic

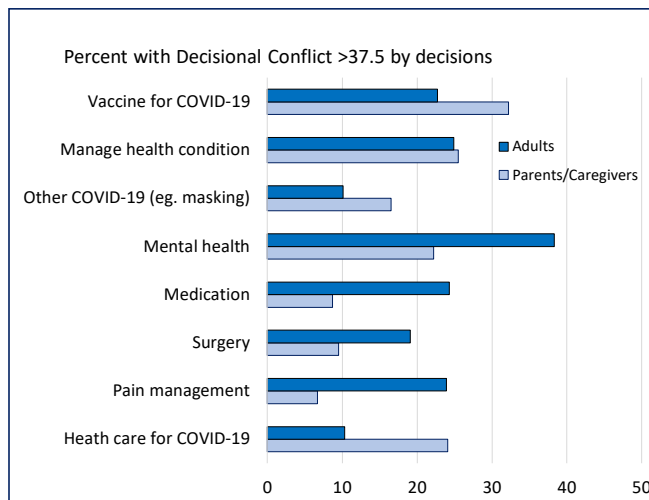
Methods

- 2 online surveys of random samples drawn from a consumer panel of 400,000 Canadians.
- Eligibility: having received or were receiving any health services in the past 12 months for themselves (adults) or for their child (parent) or senior with cognitive impairment (caregiver).
- Data collection in English or French: health-related decisions, Decisional Conflict Scale (DCS), Decision Regret Scale (DRS), factors influencing decision-making, trusted information sources, and sociodemographic data

Results

| Response rate | Adults | Parents/Caregivers |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Invitations May 18-June 4, 2021 | 14,459 | 6542 |
| Invitation view rate | 15.5% (2236/14,459) | 28.3% (1850/6542) |
| Participation rate | 69.3% (1549/2236) | 28.7% (531/1850) |
| Completion rate | 97.3% (1507/1549) | 95.1% (505/531) |
| Included in analysis | 1454 | 438 |

| Sociodemographic items | Adults | Parents/Caregivers |
|---|------------|--------------------|
| Completed survey in English | 84.5% | 15.5% |
| Female | 54.3% | 50.0% |
| Education above high school | 79.0% | 84.0% |
| Self-identified as a member of a marginalized group | 26.9% | 34.3% |
| Married or common-law | 57.6% | 73.3% |
| Number in household mean (range) | 2.6 (1-11) | 3.3 (1-8) |



| Findings | Adults | Parents/Caregivers |
|---|--------|--------------------|
| Decisional conflict score (>37.5 out of 100) | 22.2% | 21.7% |
| Factors influencing decision making | | |
| • Worried about choosing the wrong option | 38.3% | 42.0% |
| • Worried about getting COVID-19 | 34.8% | 39.5% |
| • Public health restrictions | 29.4% | 36.1% |
| • Overloaded with information | 20.6% | 17.6% |
| • Difficulty separating misinformation from scientific evidence | 20.4% | 17.6% |
| Decision regret score (>25 out of 100) | 26.8% | 34.2% |
| Trusted information sources | | |
| • Health professionals | 81.8% | 73.7% |
| • Health Canada | 64.0% | 62.3% |
| • Provincial health departments | 51.9% | 48.2% |

Conclusions

- Our survey of Canadians identified COVID-19-related decisions that emerged during the first year of the pandemic and how the pandemic influenced other health-related decisions.
- Many adults, parents, and caregivers had unmet decision-making needs, resulting in significant decisional conflict and decision regret.
- Interventions can be designed to address their decisional needs and support patients facing new health-related decisions.

Acknowledgements



This study was funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research Project Grant Priority Announcement: Patient-Oriented Research (Funding Reference Number PJK-175386).