

## Canadians demand change in Health Care: Navigator's latest research reveals the urgent need for reform



### AT A GLANCE

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A new study by Navigator reveals Canadians are no longer questioning the basis for major health-care reform, but are demanding immediate action to meet their needs.

For two decades, Navigator has been at the forefront of public opinion research on the Canadian health-care system. This research fills in key gaps and adds specificity to the data on Canadian public opinion according to individual treatment types (e.g., cancer screenings) and policy preferences (i.e., regarding virtual health care or systemic reform).

The latest findings provide crucial insights into the attitudes of Canadians and their expectations of our system.

## KEY FINDINGS FROM NAVIGATOR'S RESEARCH:

- 1. Broad Consensus for Reform:** Canadians are overwhelmingly concerned about the health-care system's ability to meet the needs of a rapidly aging population. Nearly 90 per cent believe that the government has neglected necessary improvements for too long and 73 per cent – an increase of 14 percentage points since 2022 – agree the system needs major reform, signaling widespread agreement that the status quo is no longer acceptable.
- 2. Access is a Major Concern:** As staffing shortages and wait times worsen, nearly half of Canadians say their access to public health care has worsened in the last few years and almost two-thirds have experienced unreasonable waits. Additionally, 94 per cent of Canadians agree they want better access to provincial health care.
- 3. Shifting Assumptions:** Traditional beliefs that health-care reform is politically perilous have been upended. Navigator's research demonstrates Canadians are increasingly receptive to reform, including private sector involvement. The demand for access to high-quality, timely, and personalized care has shifted perspectives from concerns over affordability to a more consumer-focused approach.
- 4. Support for Private Sector Involvement:** There is growing support for integrating the private sector to address surgery backlogs and improve efficiency. Eight in 10 Canadians endorse private sector surgeries when publicly funded, and a majority seek innovative solutions rather than additional government funding.
- 5. Openness to Innovation:** Canadians are embracing new approaches to health care, including services from pharmacists and nurse practitioners and digital solutions like online appointments. However, acceptance of newer technologies, such as artificial intelligence, remains cautious.

- 6. Commitment to Public Values:** While there is strong support for private sector involvement, Canadians still value the principles of public health care. There is significant concern about user pay models and a call to ensure equitable access.

## NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

**“This shift underscores the urgent need for decision makers and opinion leaders to address the evolving demands for health-care reform, or face significant consequences. Our data tells the story of a system that stands on the precipice of profound change.**

**As the health-care landscape evolves, the greatest risk lies not in embracing change but in resisting it. Success will hinge on public trust, transparency, and a commitment to the well-being of all Canadians.”**

- Jaime Watt,  
Executive Chairman, Navigator Ltd.

## METHODOLOGY

Navigator's 2024 health-care study is based upon an online national survey with 1,500 Canadians. This research aims to offer valuable guidance for policy-makers and stakeholders in navigating the future of Canadian health care.

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Want to learn more?  
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