

# NEWS RELEASE

## Atlantic Canada’s health-care wait times longest in country

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For immediate release

**HALIFAX**—Atlantic Canadian patients continue to endure the longest health-care wait times in the country, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Consistently long wait times remain a defining characteristic of the patient experience in Atlantic Canada,” said Bacchus Barua, Director of the Fraser Institute’s Centre for Health Policy Studies and co-author of *Waiting Your Turn: Wait Times for Health Care in Canada, 2022*.

The study, an annual survey of physicians across Canada, reports a median wait time of 27.4 weeks—the longest ever recorded, longer than the wait of 25.6 weeks reported in 2021—and 195 per cent higher than the 9.3 weeks Canadians waited in 1993, when the Fraser Institute began tracking wait times.

Results from the same survey found that patients waited an estimated 20.9 weeks for medically necessary elective care in 2019—before the pandemic started.

The study examines the total wait time faced by patients across 12 medical specialties from referral by a general practitioner (i.e. family doctor) to consultation with a specialist, to when the patient ultimately receives treatment.

Among the provinces, Prince Edward Island recorded the longest wait time in Canada at 64.7 weeks, followed by Nova Scotia at 58.2, and New Brunswick at 43.3.

Critically, Newfoundland & Labrador came in at 32.1 weeks—11 weeks longer than last year’s wait time of 21.1 weeks.

The aftereffects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact the survey’s response rate, but hundreds of physicians across the country still participated this year, with more than 850 responses received across the 12 specialities (975 when psychiatrists are included).

“Long wait times aren’t simply minor inconveniences, they can result in increased suffering for patients, lost productivity at work, a decreased quality of life, and in the worst cases, disability, or death,” said Mackenzie Moir, Fraser Institute policy analyst and study co-author.

**Median wait times by province (in weeks)**

PROVINCE	2021	2022	PROVINCE	2021	2022
British Columbia	26.2	<b>25.8</b>	Quebec	29.1	<b>29.4</b>
Alberta	32.1	<b>33.3</b>	New Brunswick	41.5	<b>43.3</b>
Saskatchewan	30.9	<b>30.1</b>	Nova Scotia	53.2	<b>58.2</b>
Manitoba	31.5	<b>41.3</b>	P.E.I.	41.6	<b>64.7</b>
Ontario	18.5	<b>20.3</b>	Newfoundland and Labrador	21.1	<b>32.1</b>

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