



NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

New poll shows number of NL residents without a family doctor surpasses 125,000

May 31, 2022

St. John's, NL – A new poll released by Narrative Research and commissioned by the Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association, shows that 24% of people of the province do not have a family doctor. In a province with a population of 522,453, this equates to approximately 125,000 people without a family doctor.

The NLMA has been repeating this survey for the past nine years. In 2014, the percentage of NL residents without a family doctor was 11%. Last summer, 19% of NL residents reported not having a family doctor. This year's public polling numbers show the number of unattached orphaned patients has grown by about 26,500 people.

The region with the largest proportion of people without a family doctor was Central and Eastern rural Newfoundland at 37%. These numbers are consistent with reports of physician vacancies in recent months. Polling results also showed that 31% of residents without a family doctor reside in Western and Labrador-Grenfell, while 14% of reside on the Avalon.

"These numbers illustrate that we are not seeing improvements in access to primary care," said NLMA President Dr. Susan MacDonald.

"The problem is growing more severe. Urgent and significant measures are needed to deal with this expanding problem."

Data for the poll was collected May 5-24, 2022, using a random sample of 400 adults in Newfoundland and Labrador aged 18+ years. Overall results are accurate to within ± 4.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Margins of error for sub-samples vary by size and are available upon request.

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Attachment: Polling Results

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NEWS RELEASE

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TABLE NM4:

A family doctor is the doctor you go to regularly for your general health care needs. This would exclude walk in clinics and other types of clinics where you may see different doctors each time you visit. Do you currently have a family doctor?

	NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR %	REGION			GENDER		HH INCOME			AGE			EDUCATION		FAMILY DOCTOR	
		Avalon	Central/Eastern	Western/Labrador	M	F	L.T. \$50K	\$50- <\$100K	\$100K+	18- 34	35- 54	55+	High school (or less)	Post secondary (completed)	Yes	No
Yes, have family doctor	76	86	63	69	73	78	73	78	79	77	72	77	71	78	100	0
No, do not have family doctor	24	14	37	31	27	22	27	21	21	23	27	23	29	22	0	100
Don't know/No answer	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
WEIGHTED SAMPLE SIZE (#)	400	205	113	82	192	205	114	116	127	89	137	174	151	243	302	97
UNWEIGHTED SAMPLE SIZE (#)	400	210	102	88	214	183	119	119	122	96	122	182	156	236	300	99