



NEWS RELEASE

Canada’s health-care wait times 19.8 weeks in 2018

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For immediate release

VANCOUVER—The median wait time for medically necessary treatment in Canada this year was 19.8 weeks, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

In 1993, when the Fraser Institute first reported national wait times for medically necessary elective treatments, Canadian patients waited just 9.3 weeks.

“Across Canada, patients continue to wait nearly four months for medically necessary treatment—a fact that should spur action from policymakers in Ottawa and across the country,” said Bacchus Barua, associate director of health policy studies at the Fraser Institute and author of *Waiting Your Turn: Wait Times for Health Care in Canada, 2018*.

The study examines the total wait time patients face 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, Saskatchewan has the shortest median wait time this year at 15.4 weeks, and New Brunswick again recorded the longest wait time (45.1 weeks).

Nationally, wait times were longest for orthopedic surgery (39.0 weeks) and plastic surgery (28.5 weeks) and the shortest for medical oncology (3.8 weeks).

“Long waits for medical treatment aren’t a trivial matter—they can increase suffering for patients, decrease quality of life, and in the worst cases, lead to disability or death,” Barua said.

“It’s time for policymakers to reform the outdated policies that contribute to long wait times across Canada.”

Median wait times by province (in weeks)

PROVINCE	2017	2018	PROVINCE	2017	2018
British Columbia	26.6	23.2	Quebec	20.6	15.8
Alberta	26.5	26.1	New Brunswick	41.7	45.1
Saskatchewan	19.8	15.4	Nova Scotia	37.7	34.4
Manitoba	24.9	26.1	P.E.I.	32.4	39.8
Ontario	15.4	15.7	Newfoundland and Labrador	21.5	22.0

NOTE: The number of survey responses in Atlantic Canada were lower than other provinces, which may result in reported median wait times being higher or lower than those actually experienced.

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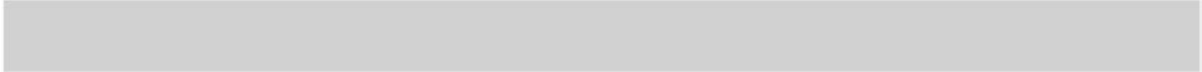
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