

Mental Health and Community Wellness

Project Overview

The Department of Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery was created in January 2021 in response to the increased prevalence and complexity of mental health and addictions issues and increasing demand for services and supports that will be required to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. In January 2022, the department was renamed Mental Health and Community Wellness (MHCW). The department's mandate includes mental health, substance use and addictions policy, program planning, funding, and service oversight, as well as broader health promotion and prevention programs that promote wellness.

To guide the direction and focus of the department, we listened to thousands of Manitobans, including experts, advocates, and people with lived experience to hear what they had to say. This EngageMB survey was part of these engagement activities.

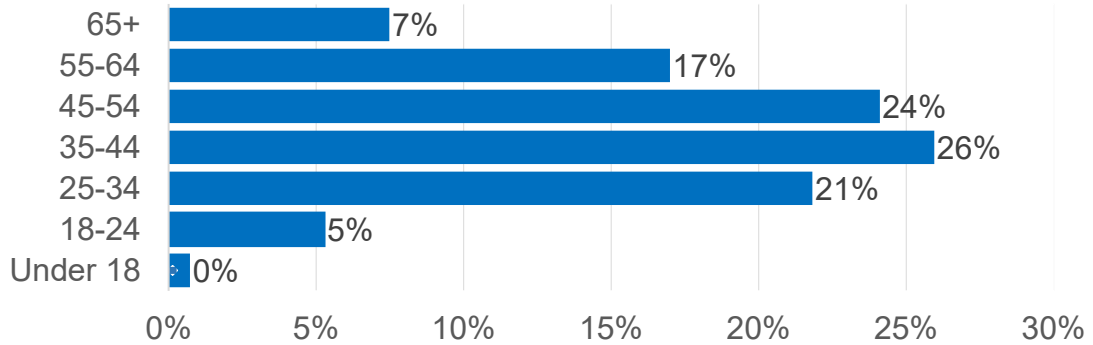
Informed by what we heard, the Department of Mental Health and Community Wellness has released a five-year plan for improving wellness, mental health, substance use and addictions services and programs in the province – [A Pathway to Mental Health and Community Wellness: A Roadmap for Manitoba](#).

What We Heard

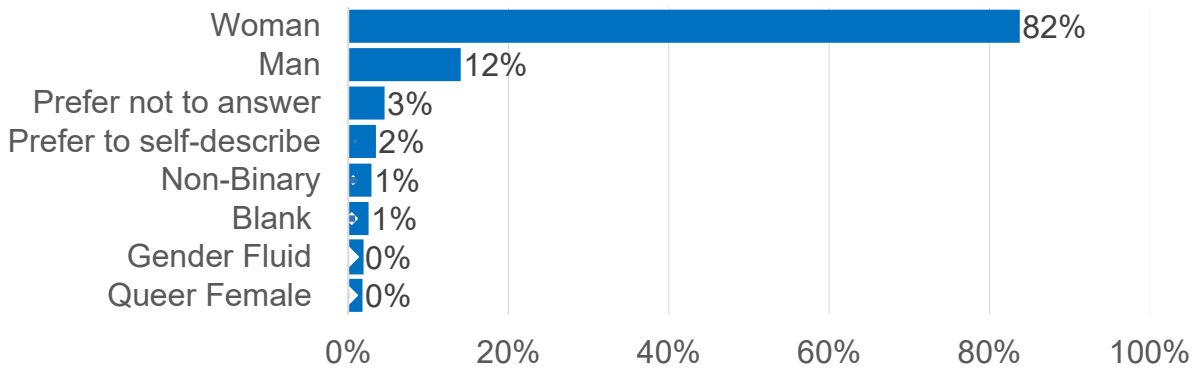
Demographics

Most respondents were between 25-64 years of age, with the largest category of respondents (26 per cent) in the 35-44 age category. The overwhelming majority of respondents identified as female (82 per cent), and 12 per cent of respondents identified as being First Nation, Métis, or Inuit. Over 50 per cent of respondents were located in the Winnipeg Health Region and 62 per cent of the total respondents identified that they were a member of the public with an interest in mental health, substance use and addictions, or wellness challenges.

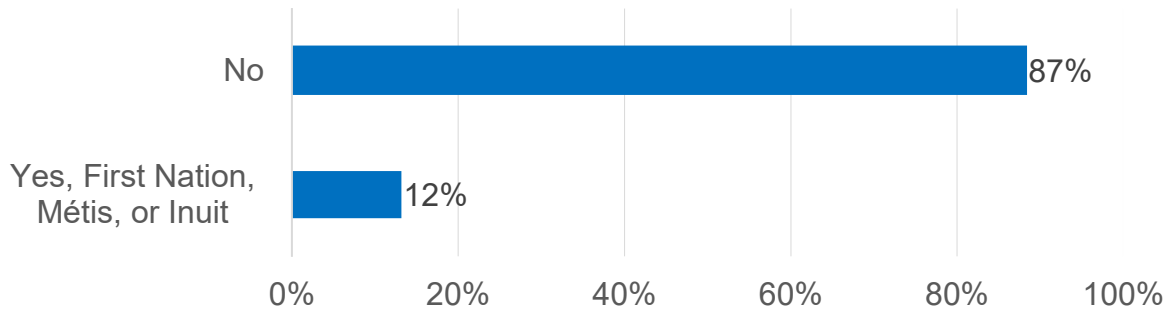
What is your age?



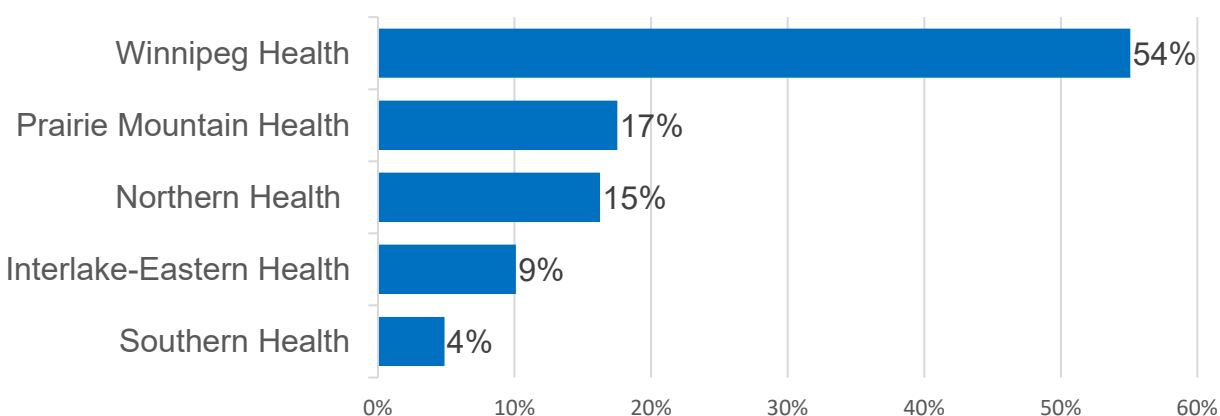
How do you identify?



Do you wish to self-identify as an Indigenous person such as First Nation, Métis or Inuit?



What health region of Manitoba do you live in?

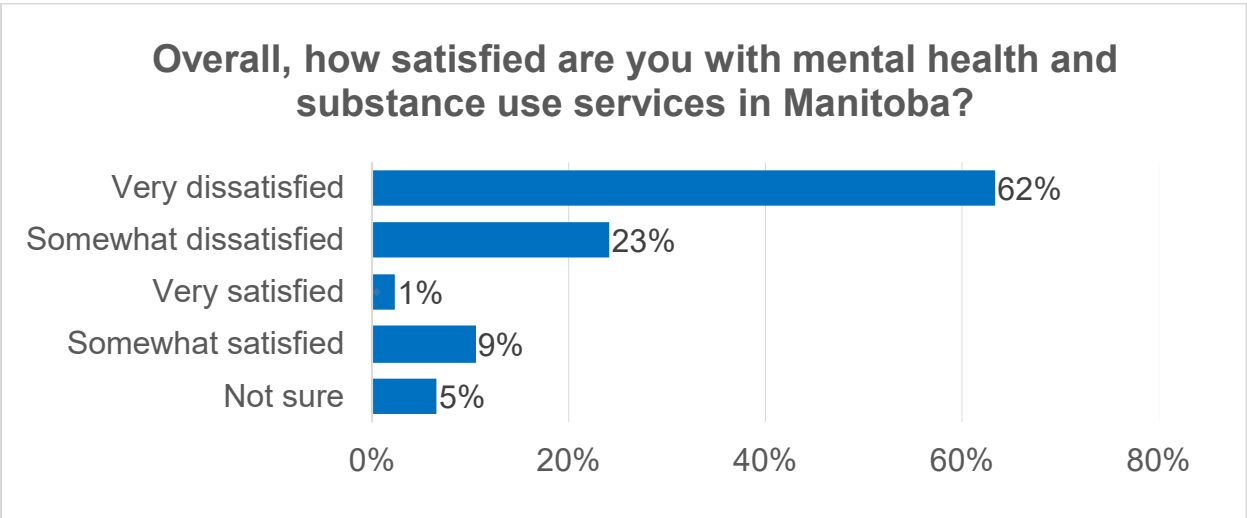


How would you describe yourself? Please select all that apply.	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
A member of the public with an interest in mental health, substance use, or wellness challenges	1589	62%
A family member or caregiver of a person living with a mental health problem or illness	1147	45%
A person living with a mental health problem or illness	1127	44%
An advocate for people living with mental health problems and/or substance use disorders and/or wellness programs and services	908	36%
A service provider (clinical or non-clinical) who works with people living with mental health problems and/or substance use disorders	611	24%
A family member or caregiver of a person living with a substance use disorder	413	16%
A service provider (clinical or non-clinical) focused on wellness and health promotion programs and services (e.g., a non-profit working with	258	10%

How would you describe yourself? Please select all that apply.	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
newcomers, case management, holistic health service provider, chronic disease association)		
A government representative or employee (municipal, provincial, federal)	232	9%
Other	137	5%
A person living with a substance use disorder	128	5%
An academic researcher specializing in mental health problems and/or substance use disorders and/or wellness programs and services (e.g., prevention, health promotion)	77	3%

Current State Satisfaction and Barriers

The survey asked participants how satisfied they are with mental health and substance use services in Manitoba and 62 per cent of respondents reported being very dissatisfied. Twenty-three per cent of respondents reported being dissatisfied and nine per cent reported being somewhat satisfied. The remainder of respondents were either unsure (five per cent) or very satisfied (one per cent).



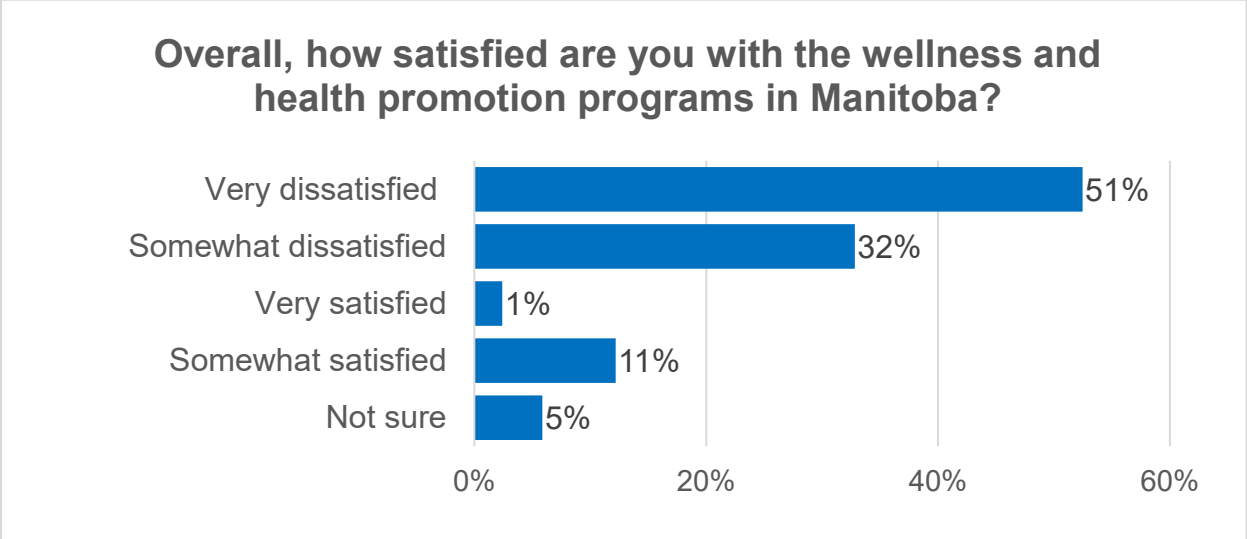
When asked about the biggest barriers/challenges in Manitoba’s mental health, wellness, and recovery system that need to be overcome, the top five response categories chosen were:

- 1) Access to appropriate services – availability/wait times/waitlists
- 2) Access to appropriate services – affordability
- 3) Collaboration and connectivity between mental health, substance use services, and other related sectors (health, justice, education, and housing)
- 4) Coordination of care across the system
- 5) System navigation (difficult to understand what services are available and which ones are right for me)

What are the biggest barriers/challenges in Manitoba’s mental health, wellness, and recovery sector that need to be overcome? (Select up to 5)	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
Access to appropriate services – availability/wait times/waitlists	2037	80%
Access to appropriate services – affordability	1465	58%
Collaboration and connectivity between mental health, substance use services, and other related sectors (health, justice, education, and housing)	1014	40%
Coordination of care across the system	847	33%
System navigation (difficult to understand what services are available and which ones are right for me)	831	33%
Access to appropriate services – eligibility	732	29%
Access to services - accessibility	653	26%
Providing adequate services to children and youth	644	25%
Providing adequate services to the Indigenous population in Manitoba	556	22%
Stigma and bias	530	21%

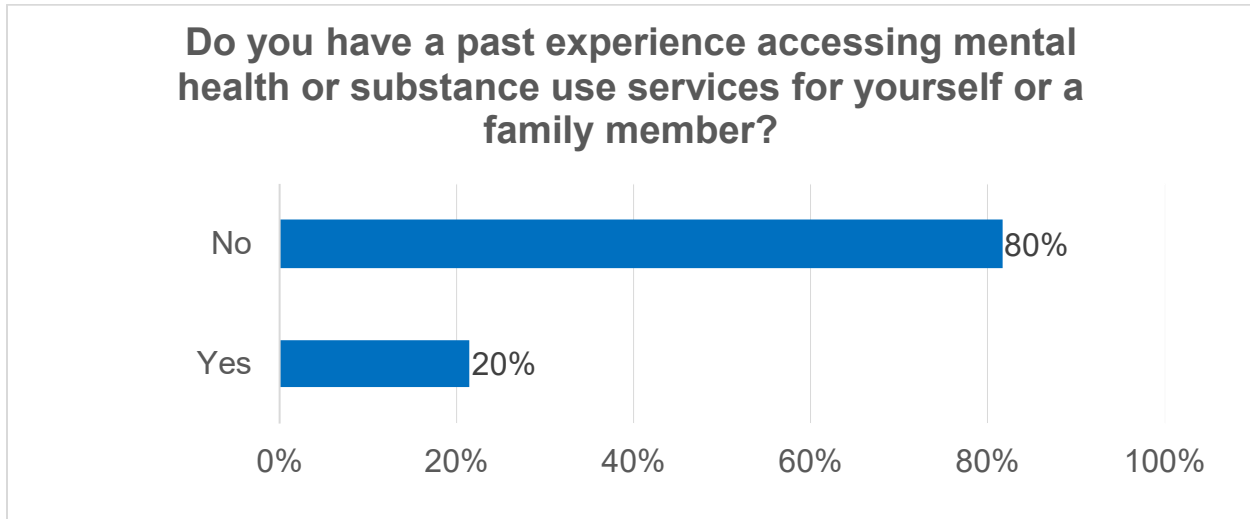
What are the biggest barriers/challenges in Manitoba’s mental health, wellness, and recovery sector that need to be overcome? (Select up to 5)	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
Access to virtual mental health, substance use, and wellness services	428	17%
Services are not patient-centered	329	13%
Communication and information sharing	319	12%
Providing adequate services to women	312	12%
Recruitment, retention, and training of human resources	269	11%
Services do not involve families and caregivers	254	10%
Support for cultural needs and beliefs/cultural safety	183	7%
Other	126	5%

When asked overall, how satisfied respondents were with the wellness and health promotion programs in Manitoba, results were similarly distributed. Fifty-one per cent indicated being very dissatisfied and 32 per cent indicated being somewhat dissatisfied with the remaining 17 per cent falling across the not sure, somewhat satisfied and very satisfied categories.

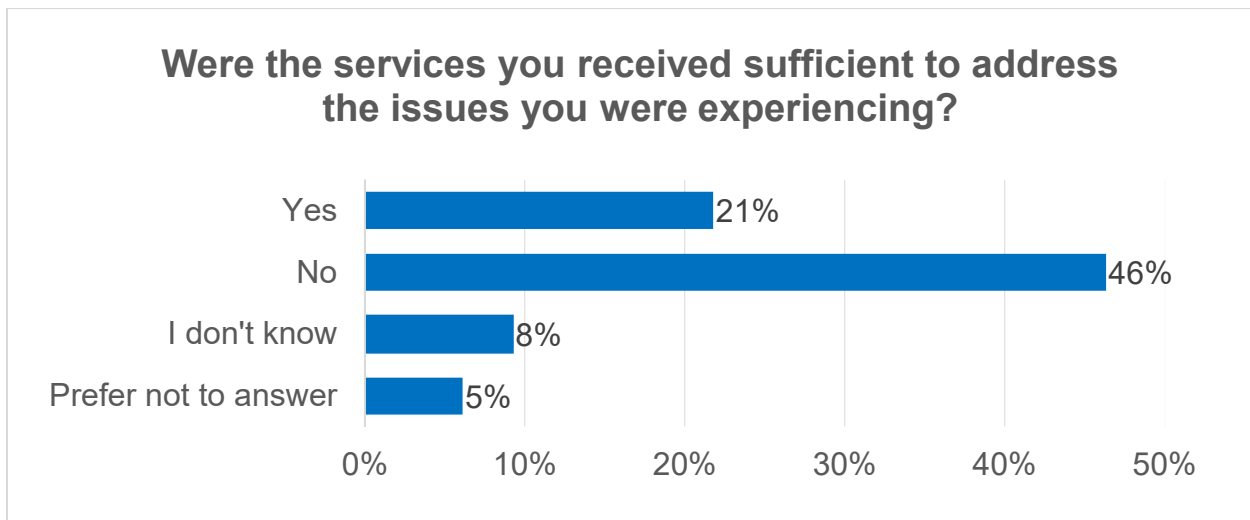


Experiences

The survey asked participants about their experience with the mental health, wellness, and recovery system in the province. 80 per cent of respondents reported having a past experience accessing mental health or substance use services for themselves or a family member.



When asked if the services received were sufficient to address the issues being experienced, 46 per cent of respondents reported that they did not. A further 13 per cent either did not know or preferred not to answer. 21 per cent reported that the services received were sufficient.



The top 5 services respondents with lived experience accessed were:

- 1) Psychological treatment/counselling
- 2) Pharmacy/medication management
- 3) Emergency services (e.g., paramedics, emergency services)
- 4) Inpatient hospital-based services
- 5) Receiving care by video or phone

What services did you access during that experience? (Multi Select) <i>Note: question only answered by those with lived experience</i>	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
Psychological treatment/counselling	1414	56%
Pharmacy/medication management	602	24%
Emergency services (e.g., paramedics, emergency department)	584	23%
Inpatient hospital-based services	446	17%
Receiving care by video or phone	365	14%
Family/caregiver supports	364	14%
Specialized rapid access/walk-in crisis services for mental health and/or substance use	327	13%
Peer support programs	297	12%
Case Management	252	10%
Other	198	8%
Day programs	161	6%
Residential treatment programs	160	6%
Social supports (e.g., housing, employment, food security)	147	6%
Withdrawal management	71	3%

When asked “What services were most helpful to you during that experience?”, respondents most commonly identified psychological treatment/counselling (41 per cent).

What services were most helpful to you during that experience? (Multi Select)	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
<i>Note: question only answered by those with lived experience</i>		
Psychological treatment/counselling	1049	41%
Other	491	19%
Family / caregiver supports	267	10%
Emergency services (e.g., paramedics, emergency department)	206	8%
Inpatient hospital-based services	195	8%
Receiving care by video or phone	188	7%
Peer support programs	165	6%
Specialized rapid access / walk-in crisis services for mental health and/or substance use	151	6%
Case management	115	5%
Residential treatment programs	92	4%
Social supports (e.g., housing, employment, food security)	91	4%
Day programs	85	3%
Withdrawal management	35	1%

Future Service Priorities

When asked, “What are the most important activities for the government to focus on for mental health and substance abuse as well as for wellness?”, respondents selected the following responses most frequently:

Activities most important for the government to focus on <u>related to mental health and substance use</u>	Activities most important for the government to focus on <u>related to wellness</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Focus on prevention and early intervention for mental health and substance use 2) Recruitment and training of mental health professionals and other service providers 3) Enhance supports for families and caregivers who are caring for people with mental health and substance use challenges 4) Enhance care coordination and transitions between different providers (especially between hospital and community services) 5) Building capacity for primary care providers (e.g., family physicians) to provide care for mental health and substance use 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Address and improve food insecurity 2) Engage and partner with Indigenous communities to improve the state of wellness for Indigenous people throughout the province 3) Increase health promotion in school 4) Increase opportunities for physical activity 5) Enhance protective factors to support the development and maintenance of healthy individuals and communities

Focus on prevention and early intervention for mental health and substance use and the recruitment and training of mental health professionals and other services were reported as the top two priorities the government should consider related to mental health and substance use in the province.

What activities are most important for the government to focus on related to mental health and substance use? (Select up to 5)	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
Focus on prevention and early intervention for mental health and substance use	1486	58%
Recruitment and training of mental health professionals and other service providers	1205	47%
Enhance supports for families and caregivers who are caring for people with mental health and substance use challenges	1182	46%
Enhance care coordination and transitions between different providers (especially between hospital and community services)	1170	46%

What activities are most important for the government to focus on related to mental health and substance use? (Select up to 5)	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
Building capacity for primary care providers (e.g., family physicians) to provide care for mental health and substance use	1040	41%
Increase public awareness of mental health and substance use challenges to reduce stigma and enhance awareness of how to access services	875	34%
Seek innovative ways to increase investment in mental health and substance use	787	31%
Engage and partner with Indigenous communities to improve the mental health and substance use challenges for Indigenous people throughout the province	775	30%
Focus program and service delivery on specialized populations with severe mental health and substance use challenges	723	28%
Clarify roles, responsibility and enhance accountability across the system	596	23%
Developing guidelines and standards to support comparable evidence-based service delivery across Manitoba	394	15%
Enhance information technology supports (e.g., electronic medical record)	358	14%
Other	228	9%

The top selections for types of mental health and substance use services that should be prioritized for investment, modernization, and/or structural supports were:

- 1) Psychological treatment/counselling/therapy
- 2) Specialized rapid access/walk-in crisis services for mental health and/or substance use
- 3) Social supports (e.g., housing, employment, food security)

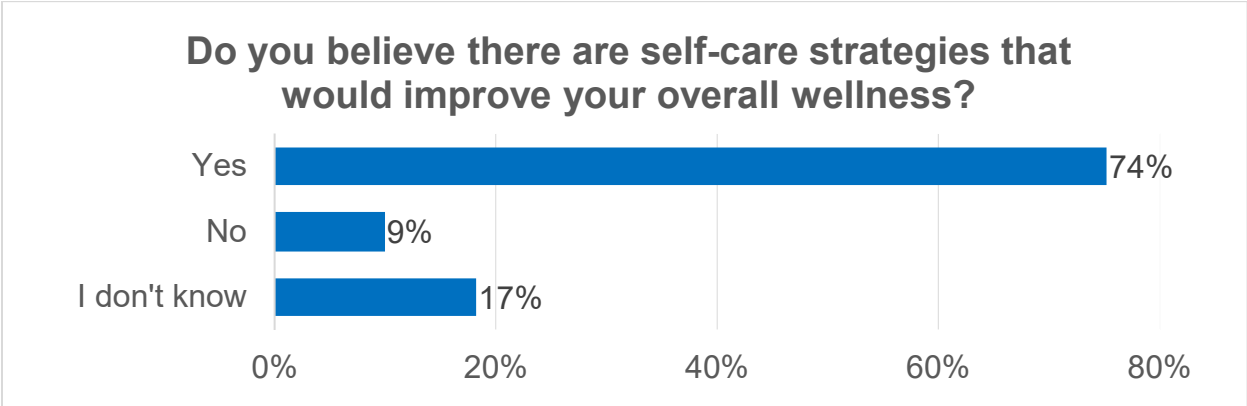
What types of mental health and substance use services should be prioritized for investment, modernization, and/or structural supports? (Select up to 5)	Total Times Selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
Psychological treatment/counselling/therapy	1871	74%
Specialized rapid access/walk-in crisis services for mental health and/or substance use	1508	59%
Social supports (e.g., housing, employment, food security)	1259	49%
Harm reduction programs and supports	983	39%
Family/caregiver supports	863	33%
Emergency services (e.g., paramedics, emergency department)	665	26%
Residential treatment programs	651	26%
Inpatient hospital-based services	601	24%
Traditional Indigenous healing methods	552	22%
Day programs	469	18%
Peer support programs	444	17%
Case management	440	17%
Receiving care by video or phone	399	16%
Withdrawal management	379	15%
Other	122	5%

Related to wellness: addressing and improving food insecurity, engaging and partnering with Indigenous communities to improve the state of wellness for Indigenous people throughout the province, and increasing health promotion in schools were most commonly identified as areas for the province to focus on.

It should be noted that addressing and improving food security does not fall under the mandate of the Department of Mental Health and Community Wellness, however the department is involved in broader health promotion across the province.

What activities are most important for the government to focus on related to wellness? (Select up to 5)	Total Times selected	Percentage of Total Question Respondents
Address and improve food insecurity	1291	51%
Engage and partner with Indigenous communities to improve the state of wellness for Indigenous people throughout the province	1165	46%
Increase health promotion in school	1069	42%
Increase opportunities for physical activity	963	38%
Enhance protective factors to support the development and maintenance of healthy individuals and communities	878	34%
Promote healthy aging and seniors wellness activities	755	30%
Support networking, sharing of ideas, and partnerships between communities, provincial stakeholders and government	705	28%
Enhancing cultural and spiritual wellness opportunities (e.g., cultural connectedness)	649	26%
Reduce the incidence of diabetes and other chronic conditions in Manitoba	627	25%
Enhance the public's access to healthy sexuality and sexual health promotion services	575	23%
Encourage the private sector to support wellness	515	20%
Prevent and reduce youth vaping	417	16%
Develop an evaluation plan that uses surveillance data to set benchmarks and monitor results across various demographic and geographic populations	399	16%
Encourage active transportation	256	10%
Address and prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections	197	8%
Other	180	7%

When asked about self-care strategies related to wellness, 74 per cent of respondents felt that there are self-care strategies that would improve overall wellness, while nine per cent of respondents indicated that they do not believe there are self-care strategies that would improve overall wellness. The remainder indicated that they did not know.



Next Steps

The Department of Mental Health and Community Wellness has released a five-year plan for improving wellness, mental health, substance use and addictions services and programs in the province – [A Pathway to Mental Health and Community Wellness: A Roadmap for Manitoba](#).

This roadmap has been informed by input of:

- Manitobans through this EngageMB survey
- Additional engagement conducted across the province, including people with lived/living experience of mental illness, substance use and addictions challenges, families and caregivers, clinical and administrative leaders, front line service providers and wellness and public health organizations
- Past reports related to mental health, substance use, addictions and wellness including the [VIRGO Report](#), reports from the [Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth](#), and the findings of the [Illicit Drug Task Force](#)