

Providing Physiotherapy in a Pandemic

Launched by the BC Primary Health Care Network, this project is being led by Dr. Allison Ezzat (PT), Dr. Jean-François Esculier (PT), and Dr. Sabrina Wong (RN), Principle Investigator.

This study has been approved by the University of British Columbia Office of Research Ethics Behavioural Research Ethics Board.

Supporting physiotherapists in all practice settings, now and in the future, is a key focus of the advocacy work of the CPA. Research efforts aimed at identifying short-term impacts and trends over time are of vital importance in advocating for, and responding to, the changing needs of the profession. This survey offered a rapid collection of data from physiotherapists across the country, highlighting experiences and implications during COVID-19. This work is invaluable to informing key policy recommendations and directions and will assist the CPA in gaining a better understanding of the strain and impacts the pandemic has had on physiotherapists over time.

In May 2020, the BC Primary Health Care Research Network (BC-PHCRN) launched the bi-weekly COVID-19 Quick Canadian Physiotherapist Survey. The purpose of the short survey series is to better understand the current state of physiotherapy practice in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic; namely, how Canadian physiotherapists are coping with COVID-19 and how physiotherapists are adapting their practice to continue to treat the health needs of the Canadian population. The investigators hypothesize that physiotherapists, in both public and private practice, are overstressed for various reasons and need support. This study will identify the role physiotherapists are currently playing in the COVID-19 pandemic and will reveal what support they need, the pressures they are under, and the resources they lack. This information will be shared with policy and decision makers on a provincial and national scale.

Specifically, the researchers wanted to identify and understand:

- 1) What role are Canadian physiotherapists currently playing in the containment and management of COVID-19 in Canada?
- 2) What is the nature of the stress experienced by public and private practice physiotherapists across Canada in light of COVID-19? 📌



Allison Ezzat is a physiotherapist and postdoctoral fellow at the Centre for Health Services and Policy Research at the University of British Columbia, where she is the research manager for the BC Primary Health Care Research Network. She is passionate about advancing knowledge translation in health care and advocating for physiotherapists as part of a multi-disciplinary team.



Jean-François (J-F) Esculier is a physiotherapist and clinician-researcher who completed a Masters, PhD, and postdoctoral fellowship about running injuries and knee pain (patellofemoral pain and osteoarthritis). J-F leads Research & Development at The Running Clinic, is a clinical assistant professor at the University of British Columbia, and works clinically at MoveMed Physiotherapy in Kelowna, BC.



Sabrina Wong is a professor in the School of Nursing and Centre for Health Services and Policy Research at the University of British Columbia. Her research focuses on the delivery and organization of primary health care services, with a focus on health and health care inequities.

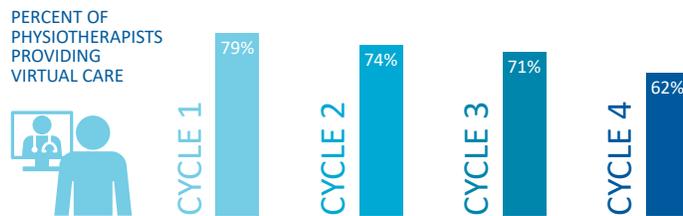
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CYCLES 1-4 OF THE COVID-19 QUICK CANADIAN PHYSIOTHERAPIST SURVEY

How are physiotherapists adapting their practice to meet the needs of Canadians?
What stresses are physiotherapists experiencing?

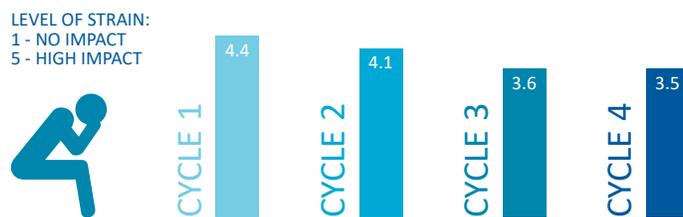


Virtual care is continuing over time



Virtual care has become part of a new hybrid model of practice. Many physiotherapists have embraced virtual care as an effective service delivery method, though recognizing that it has limitations for some patients and conditions.

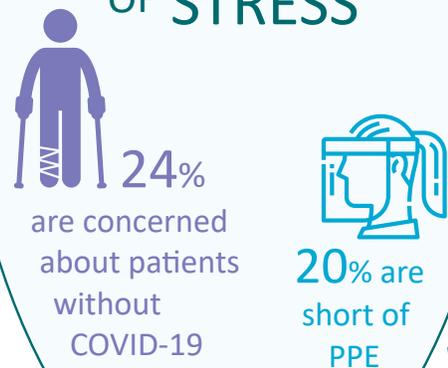
Stress has decreased over time



The long-term consequences of the disruption of services is unknown. Physiotherapists are providing care for patients recovering from COVID-19 and those struggling with non-COVID-19 related morbidity. These surveys will continue to generate essential data to show the impact of COVID-19 on the profession.



SOURCES OF STRESS



Average over CYCLES 1-4

ABOUT THE SURVEY

A short bi-weekly survey was distributed by provincial professional physiotherapy associations and divisions, social media, and personal networks. Each cycle included respondents from all provinces and one territory. The surveys were conducted by the BC Primary Health Care Research Network and led by Allison Ezzat, JF Esculier, and Sabrina Wong. Icons created by Vectors Point, Bold Yellow, Oksana Latysheva, Gan Khoon Lay, Luis Prado, Shreya Chakravarty & monkik from the Noun Project.



CYCLE 1 May 15-18, 2020

n=1,972 respondents

CYCLE 2 May 29 - June 1

n=1,245

CYCLE 3 June 12-15

n=554

CYCLE 4 June 26-29

n=424