

Linking Patient-Centred Outcomes Measures to the Health Systems Context in Canada

The International Consortium for Health Outcomes Measurement (ICHOM) developed a standard set of outcome measures about aging and healthcare that matter to older people. In Canada, a consensus process involving pan-Canadian health organizations and FPT governments established health system indicators on shared health priorities including those relevant to care of older adults. The Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging and various pan-Canadian health organizations in Canada, such as Public Health Agency of Canada, Statistics Canada, and Canadian Institute for Health Information are measuring or have reported on some of these outcomes and indicators.

Polypharmacy

One in 4 older adults were prescribed 10 or more different classes of drugs.¹

The proportion was higher in adults aged 85 and over (36.4%) and in those in the lowest income quintile (25.5%) than in those in the highest income quintile (16.5%).¹

Five of the most frequently prescribed drug classes were to treat cardiovascular disease.

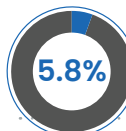
More than 1 in 5 older adults were prescribed drugs to treat diabetes (21.4%) and 23.4% were prescribed antidepressants.¹

Women, older adults, and people living in persistent poverty are most at risk of harms caused by inappropriate medication use.²



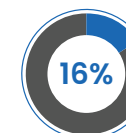
Falls

Fall-related injuries are serious threats, affecting about 5.8% of older adults annually (almost two-thirds of whom were women) and increasing hospitalization risk and declining health-related quality of life.³

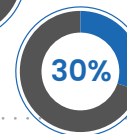


Loneliness and Isolation

More than 1 in 4 older adults (27.9%) live alone, and the proportion increases with increasing age.⁴ According to the Canadian Community Health Survey in 2018, 58.4% of those aged 85 and over lived alone, and older adults living alone were less likely to own their home and more likely to live in an area with the lowest household income.⁵



30% are at risk of becoming socially isolated.³



Pain

More than 1 in 3 seniors (37%) living in private dwellings with 2 more chronic conditions report chronic pain that lasts more than 3 months.³

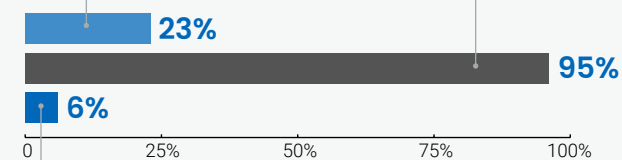
Mood and Emotional Health

The Public Health Agency of Canada reported that 72% of older adults perceived their mental health as very good or excellent, with the proportion lowering to 63.1% for those aged 85 years and over.³

Caregiver Burden

Almost 1 in 4 people living in Canada (23%) are providing care for dependent adults with almost all being unpaid.⁸

Unpaid caregivers play a significant role in home care or informal care,^{9,10} with 95% of individuals receiving home care from an unpaid caregiver.¹¹



In 2021, 6% of households in Canada reported using formal home care services, either publicly funded or purchased privately, within the past year.¹²



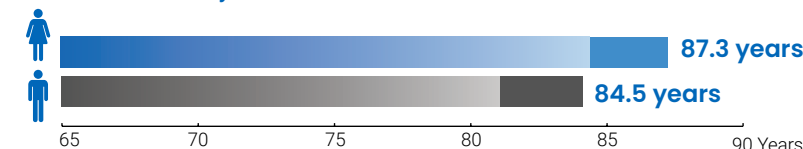
Time in Hospital

More than 340,000 older adults at risk of frailty are hospitalized each year; they are 3 times more likely to be hospitalized for 30 days or more.¹⁶



Vital Status

At age 65, women in Canada can expect to live another 22.3 years and men another 19.5 years.³



Those who are First Nations, Inuit, and Métis have a life expectancy of 3 to 5 years shorter than non-Indigenous populations at the age of 65.¹⁷

Participation and Decision-Making

One in 10 hospital stays are prolonged by a median of 9 days or more because of a lack of postacute and alternate level of care resources.

The community engagement session participants described lacking the ability to choose when to leave the hospital.¹³

Métis older adults and their caregivers emphasized the importance of "having a voice to speak for yourself or having someone speak on your behalf" in care contexts.¹⁴

Frailty



Frailty or risk of frailty are associated with adverse outcomes,¹⁵ including:

- more frequent and longer stays in hospital,
- more frequent readmission to hospital within 30 days of discharge, disability, and death.¹⁶

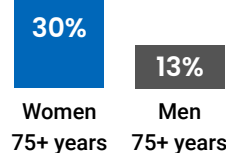
Autonomy and Control

Although the average 65-year-old in Canada can expect to live an additional 21 years, it is estimated that for approximately 6 of these years, they will need health care support.³

In Canada, about 8% of adults aged 65 or over live in collective dwellings such as long-term care facilities or nursing care facilities, this rises to over one-quarter for those aged 85 years and older.^{3,7}

Activities of Daily Living

According to Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging data, 30% of women aged 75 or older had at least 1 limitation in basic activities of daily living or instrumental activities of daily living. For men in the same age group, the percentage was 13%.⁶



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