

For immediate release

NEWS RELEASE

**Reducing wait times and investing in hospitals are the top priorities for improving health care in Windsor and Essex County, Ontario Medical Association interim public survey results show**  
*Betterhealthcare.ca survey still open for area residents to make their voice heard on local health care issues*

WINDSOR, Ont., Aug. 17, 2021– Reducing wait times for medical procedures and investing in new hospitals, clinics and other facilities are by far the most important ways to improve health care in Windsor and Essex County, interim results of one of the most comprehensive consultations in the 140-year history of the Ontario Medical Association show.

In the public survey that is central to the OMA consultation, one question asked people to identify their top priority for improving local health care other than dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost half (49 per cent) of the 267 Windsor and Essex County residents who responded identified reducing wait times.

Sixteen per cent identified improving home care and long-term care for seniors as their top local health-care priority; 10 per cent identified improving mental health and addictions; and 10 per cent selected addressing poverty and other social determinants of health.

In a second question, residents were asked what “what is the single most important thing that can be done to improve health-care services in your community today?” More than half (52 per cent) identified investing in new hospitals, clinics and other facilities to improve access. One in four (26 per cent) chose “make it easier to get an appointment with my doctor.”

“These findings are incredibly important in helping us at the OMA develop a plan to improve health care and create a more integrated and sustainable system for all Ontarians,” said Dr. Albert Ng, chair of the local OMA district. “This is a huge province and health-care priorities here can be very different from those in other regions like Toronto. By completing the public survey, you help make Windsor and Essex County’s voice heard.”

Among other survey results specific to Windsor and Essex County:

- Almost two-thirds (63.7 per cent) said their views of the way local health care is delivered have become worse due to the pandemic. Only four per cent of respondents said their views have improved.
- When asked to grade the local health care system on a scale of A, B, C or F, 20 per cent of those who responded gave it a B, 54 per cent gave it a C and 24 per cent gave it a failing grade. Two per cent gave it an A.
- Half of those who responded said the government should give improving health care in this community the same priority as economic recovery from the pandemic and 40 per cent said it should be given the highest priority, above all other issues.
- More than four of every 10 people (44.2 per cent) of those who responded said that the health care issues that were important to them and their community were not being discussed at all and 40 per cent said that they were being discussed somewhat.

- When asked to choose the statement that best reflected their views on the way health care is delivered in their community, 28 per cent selected “more should be done to keep people healthy and out of hospitals and doctors’ offices.”

More than 7,400 residents in more than 600 communities across Ontario have completed the survey to date. It is part of a broad consultation process that has involved doctors, nurses and other health-care professionals as well as community leaders. The OMA will release its plan to improve health care based on the consultation process this fall.

**There is still time for area residents to make their voice heard. The survey will remain open through the Labour Day weekend at [betterhealthcare.ca](http://betterhealthcare.ca)**

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It's time to change Ontario's health care for the better as the post-pandemic recovery begins. Complete our survey at [betterhealthcare.ca](http://betterhealthcare.ca) and help shape the future of health care.

### **About the OMA**

The Ontario Medical Association represents Ontario’s 43,000 plus physicians, medical students and retired physicians, advocating for and supporting doctors while strengthening the leadership role of doctors in caring for patients. Our vision is to be the trusted voice in transforming Ontario’s health-care system.

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