

In Brief: 2022 Rehab Provider Experience Survey

In autumn 2022, the RCA launched its inaugural rehab provider experience survey. It was developed to address a gap in data for the Quintuple Aim approach to System Evaluation: there were few provider experience surveys, and none that captured elements or disciplines specific to rehabilitative care.

The survey was developed based on learnings from existing work, in consultation with professional rehab associations (OT, PT, SLP and Kin), and with input from Dr. Ivy Bourgeault, Research Chair in Gender, Diversity and Professions at the University of Ottawa. It was available for one month and invitations to participate were issued through RCA distribution lists and snowball sampling.

Survey elements included demographic information and employment profiles; indicators of equity and inclusion; and questions pertaining to stress and burnout. This update provides a brief synopsis of survey findings and next steps.

Rehab Provider Survey Results

For this first rehab provider experience survey, there were 641 respondents. The distribution of responses was primarily from the southern parts of the province.



- West: 27%
- Toronto: 20%
- East: 19%
- Central: 17%
- North West: 7%
- North East: 10%

Due to snowball sampling, it is difficult to calculate the response rate for the survey. As such, **the survey results should be interpreted with caution as they do not represent the entire rehab workforce population.**

Respondent Demographics

Of the respondents:



- 49% reported working in an acute or rehab/complex care hospital setting
- 90% identified as female
- 44% reported being 45 years or older
- 36% reported working in the rehab sector for 20 years or more.

The majority of respondents were occupational therapists (32%), physiotherapists (21%) and speech language pathologists (12%), followed by nurses (9%) rehabilitation assistants (9%) and kinesiologists (6%). There were a large number of “other” disciplines identified (75) which included roles in pharmacy, therapeutic recreation, and other specialties.

Equity and Inclusion Indicators

The RCA included questions about equity and inclusion to help inform future workforce planning initiatives and help facilitate a dialogue about representation within the rehab professional community. None of the questions in this section were mandatory and respondents could answer as many or as few as they wished.

Of note, two percent of respondents identified as being First Nation, Métis or Inuk/Inuit. Fifteen percent of respondents indicated they were born outside of Canada, and seven percent identified as Francophone.

Stress and Burnout

Health care provider stress and burnout has been in the spotlight over the last few years, given the added pressures of the pandemic coupled with unprecedented workforce shortages.



High levels of stress and burnout were noted with 76% of respondents reported feeling stress in their work life and 15% reported high levels of burnout. Respondents were asked to compare the stress in their work life now to before the pandemic and 62% reported feeling that it was somewhat or much worse now.

Respondents were also asked to provide any additional comments in an open-ended text box. Many chose to leave additional comments and the most common theme was one of moral distress. For instance, while many rehab providers identified enjoying their jobs and their colleagues, they often felt the amount of work, lack of resources or funding cuts made it difficult for them to do their job well.



- 75% reported that they were satisfied with their job, overall
- 54% reported that they are planning to stay in their role for 5 years or longer

Next Steps

This first iteration of the rehab provider experience survey has provided an initial glimpse into the experience of rehab providers in the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Recognizing the ongoing importance of this initiative, planning is already underway to improve the survey for its next annual release in September 2023. Please contact info@rehabcarealliance.ca if there are any questions or comments about the content of the survey findings.