



Partners:

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HealthCare**CAN**

Michael Smith
Foundation for
Health Research

Research Canada

Rx&D: Canada's
Research-Based
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Saskatchewan
Health Research
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A National Public Opinion Poll on Health and Medical Research

January 2015



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Foreword

In this fifth national public opinion poll in the *CanadaSpeaks* series, Canadians continue to demonstrate their strong commitment to health research and health innovation in Canada despite the economic challenges our country faces in 2015.

In a federal election year, Canadians told us that they are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports increased investments in health care and health and medical research. Ninety percent of Canadians say health and medical research makes an important contribution to health care while a strong majority (77%) say it makes an important contribution to the economy. Further, 92% of Canadians say basic research should be supported by the federal government even if it brings no immediate benefits – an increase from results in 2006 and 2009.


A very strong majority of Canadians told us it is important for both federal and provincial governments to invest in the education and training of Health and Medical Researchers. Canadians also agree that the federal government should support tax and regulatory policies that encourage private industries to conduct more medical research. Agreement is on par with results from 2009.

While a majority of Canadians say they are interested in participating in health and medical research – including helping to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding – only 24% are aware of opportunities to do so. Only one-third of Canadians are familiar with health and medical research being conducted at universities and hospitals in their province.

Overall, health reports in the media had a widespread impact in the last five years. At least one behavioural change was made by eight-in-ten Canadians because of a health report.

Health and Medical Researchers are highly trusted. Almost half of Canadians rank Health and Medical Researchers 8 or higher on a 10-point scale. Three-quarters of Canadians said they would be willing to share personal health information so long as it is kept confidential.

CanadaSpeaks 2015 was conducted in partnership with five national health organizations – the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC), the Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC),



HealthCare**CAN**, Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D) and Research Canada – and two provincial research organizations – Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research in BC and the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation.

We are proud to present our findings on behalf of our respective member organizations and Canadians.

Two provincial polls in BC and Saskatchewan were conducted using representative samples and the same questions. Results in these provinces were similar to the national results. All three polls may be downloaded from <http://rc-rc.ca/polling/2015-poll>



Methodology

From January 29th to February 2nd, 2015 an online survey was conducted on behalf of Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery.

A total of 1,027 randomly selected Canadians, aged 18 years and older, were interviewed as part of this survey.

The margin of error – which measures sampling variability – is +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. Results are statistically weighted according to Statistics Canada's current age, gender and region Census data to ensure a representative sample of the adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

Specific regional and age subgroup data, where there was a significant variation of interest, were selected and reported by Vision Critical and included in this document to provide more comparative data.

The survey was conducted using the Angus Reid Forum online panel (www.angusreidforum.com), which is recruited via an industry-leading process that incorporates a randomized, widespread invitation approach and a triple opt-in screening procedure. The panel is maintained through state-of-the-art sampling techniques and frequent verifications of personal identity, contact information, and demographic characteristics.



Acknowledgements

Research Canada would like to thank its national and provincial partners for their partnership in developing and delivering Canada*Speaks* 2015.

They include: Dr. Genevieve Moineau, The Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC); Mr. Bill Tholl, HealthCare**CAN**; Ms. Connie Cote, Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC); and Mr. Keith McIntosh, Canada's Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies (Rx&D).

On behalf of all of the Poll Partners we wish to thank Ms. Maureen Smith, a patient advocate, who assisted us with delivering these poll messages to Canadians and to the Communications Sub-committee comprised of Ms. Judy Noordermeer, Ms. Gail Fredrickson, Ms. Lori Last, Ms. Isabelle Robillard and Ms. Kathryn Thompson.

We also would like to thank Ms. Sara Cappe and Ms. Annie Balant of Vision Critical, our pollster, for the additional work they undertook on our behalf. Finally, we would like to thank Mr. Sean Dillon-Fordyce who rose above and beyond the call of duty to design this poll report and Ms. Ranjana Chopra who kept all of the poll partners and members of the Communications Sub-committee well informed and well organized.

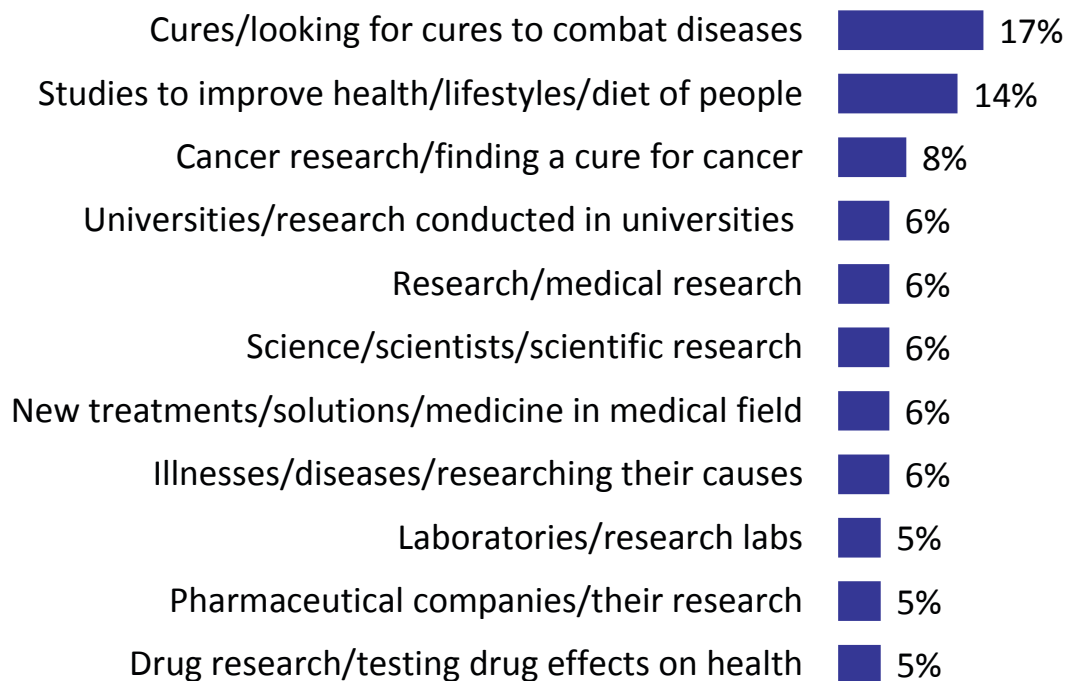
Leadership and Priorities:

Eighty-four percent of Canadians are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports increased funding for health and medical research.

Seventy-seven percent of Canadians say health and medical research makes an important contribution to the Canadian economy.

Top of mind associations with health research

Canadians first think of looking for cures to combat diseases and studies to improve the health, lifestyles and diet of people when they hear the term, "health and medical research." A quarter (24%) of older Canadians (55+), think of disease cures first compared to 10% of younger Canadians (18-34).



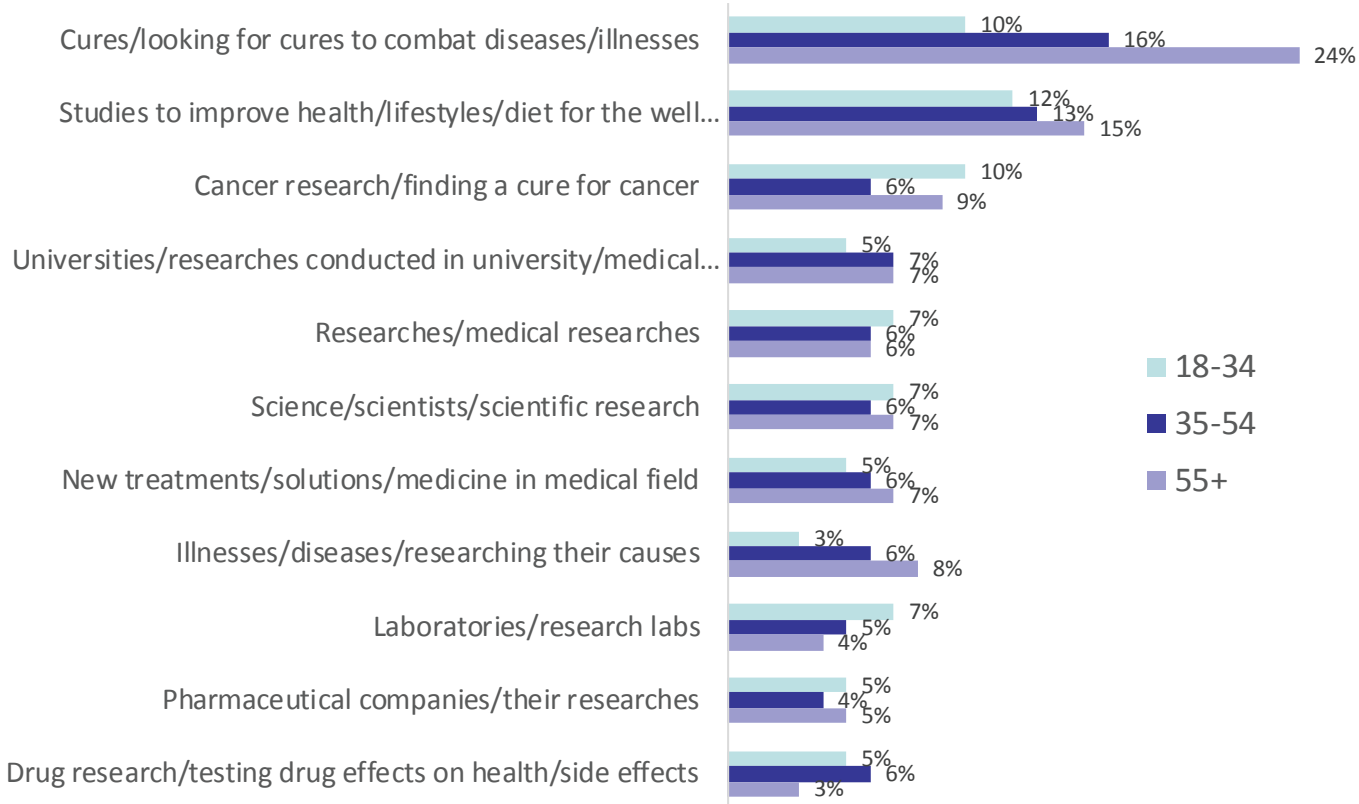
Question 1.

What do you think of when you hear the term "health and medical research"? (Only categories 5% or higher shown.)



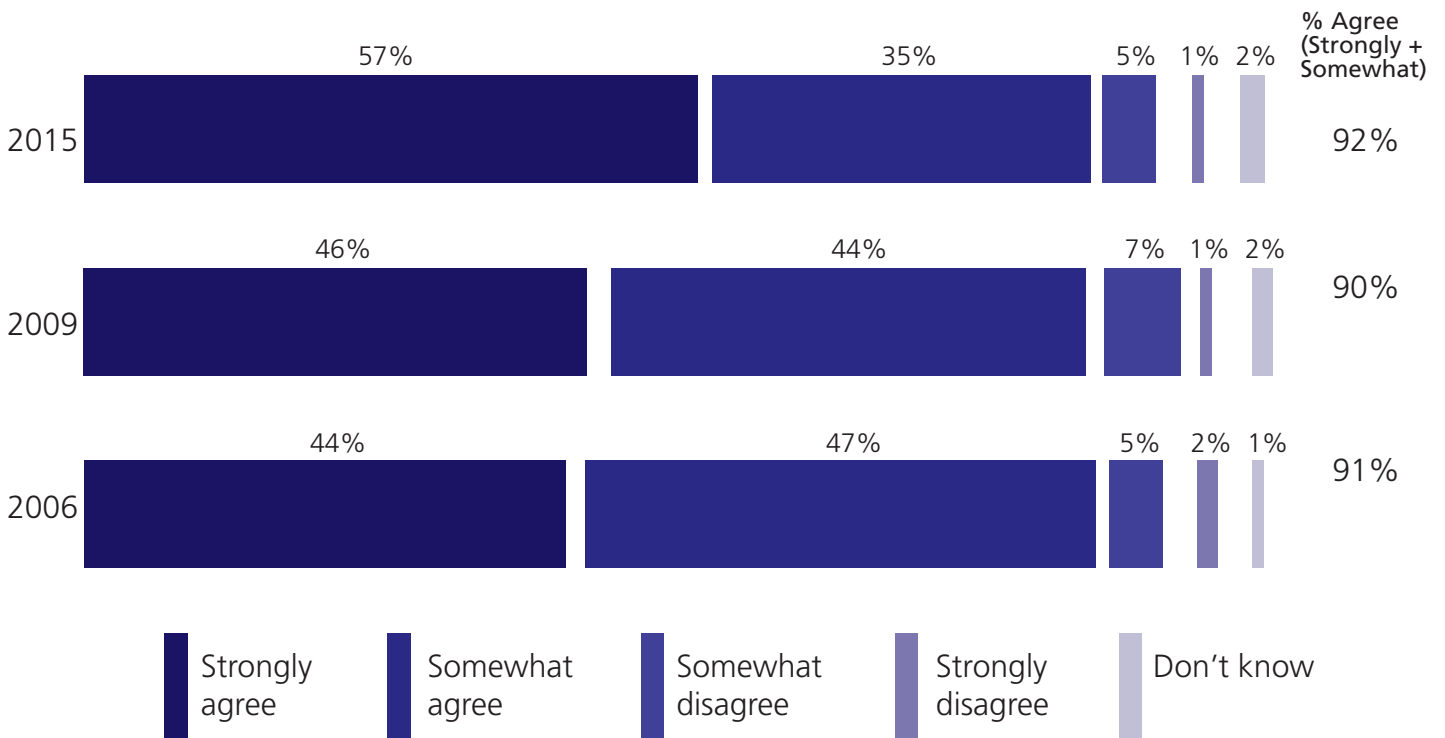
Top of mind associations with health research (by age)

While the priorities are the same across the age groups, older (55+) Canadians are even more likely to mention cures/looking for cures to combat diseases/illnesses.



Federal support of medical research research

As was the case in 2006 and 2009, 9 out of 10 Canadians agree that basic research should be supported by the federal government. In 2015, a majority of Canadians (57%) strongly agree that basic research should be supported by the federal government, an increase from 2006 (44%) and 2009 (46%).



Question 2.

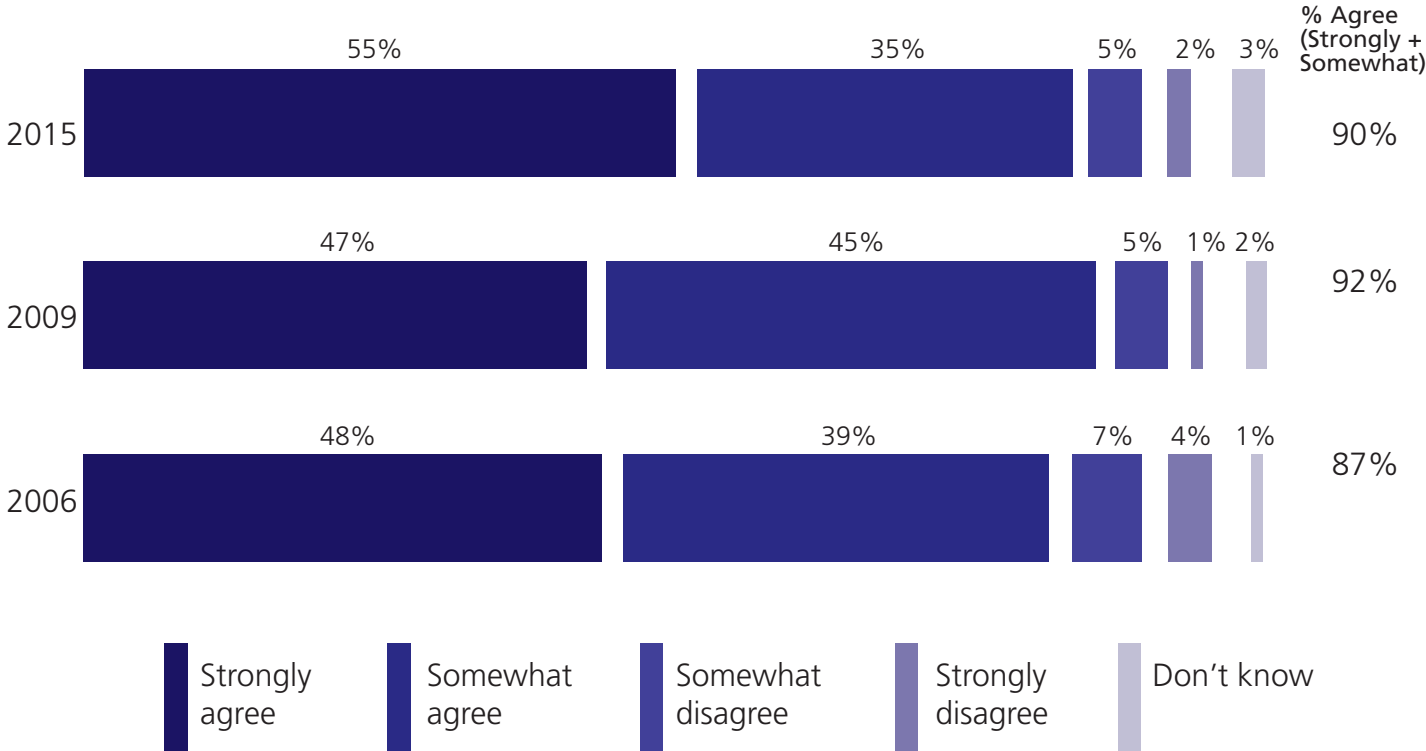
Do you agree with the following statement... Even if it brings no immediate benefits, basic research, which builds our foundation of knowledge, is necessary and should be supported by the federal government?



Training for Researchers –

Funded by the federal government

A very strong majority of Canadians (90%) think the federal government should invest in the education and training of Health and Medical Researchers; a finding similar to that from 2006 and 2009.

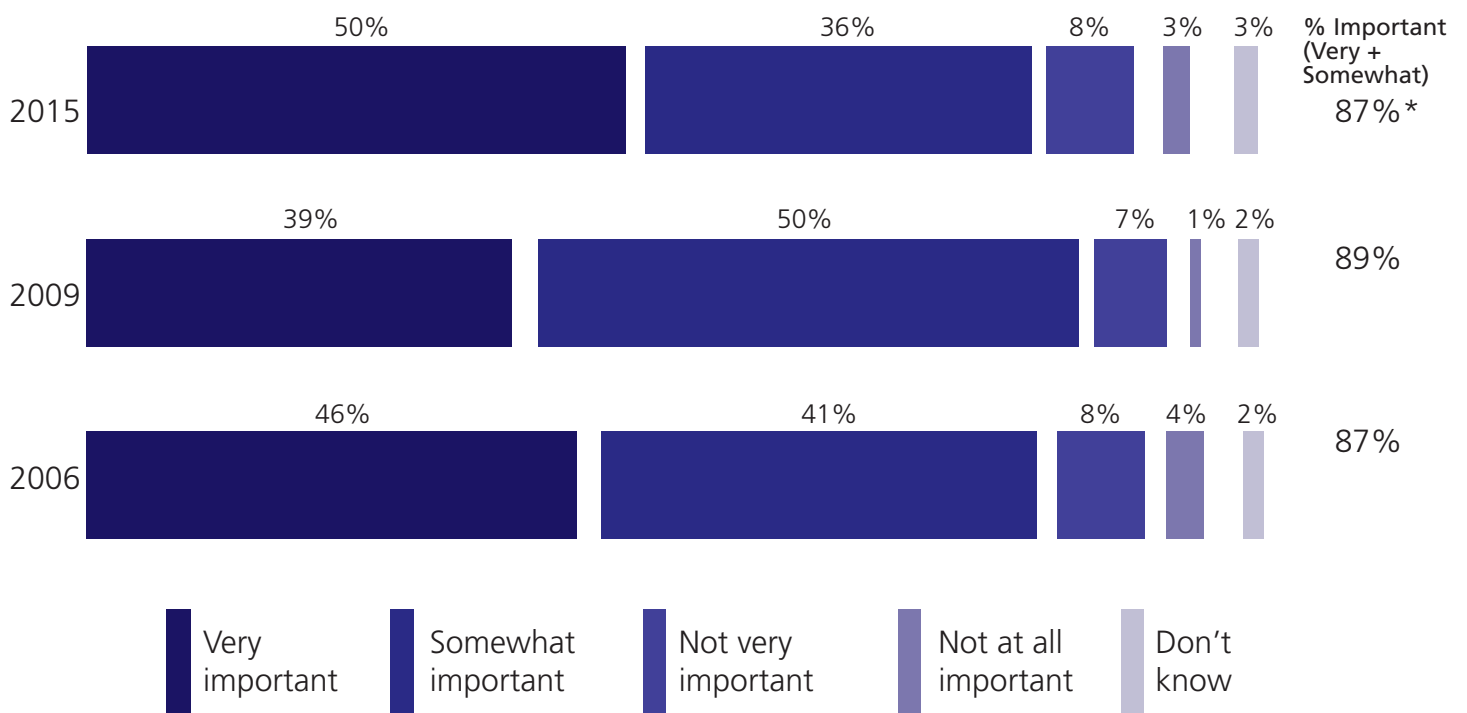


Question 3.
 Is each of the following important...
 That the federal government invest in the education and training of Health and Medical Researchers?

Training for Researchers –

Funded by the provincial government

A very strong majority of Canadians (87%) think it is important for their provincial government to invest in the education and training of Health and Medical Researchers.



*Note: discrepancy is due to rounding

Question 4.

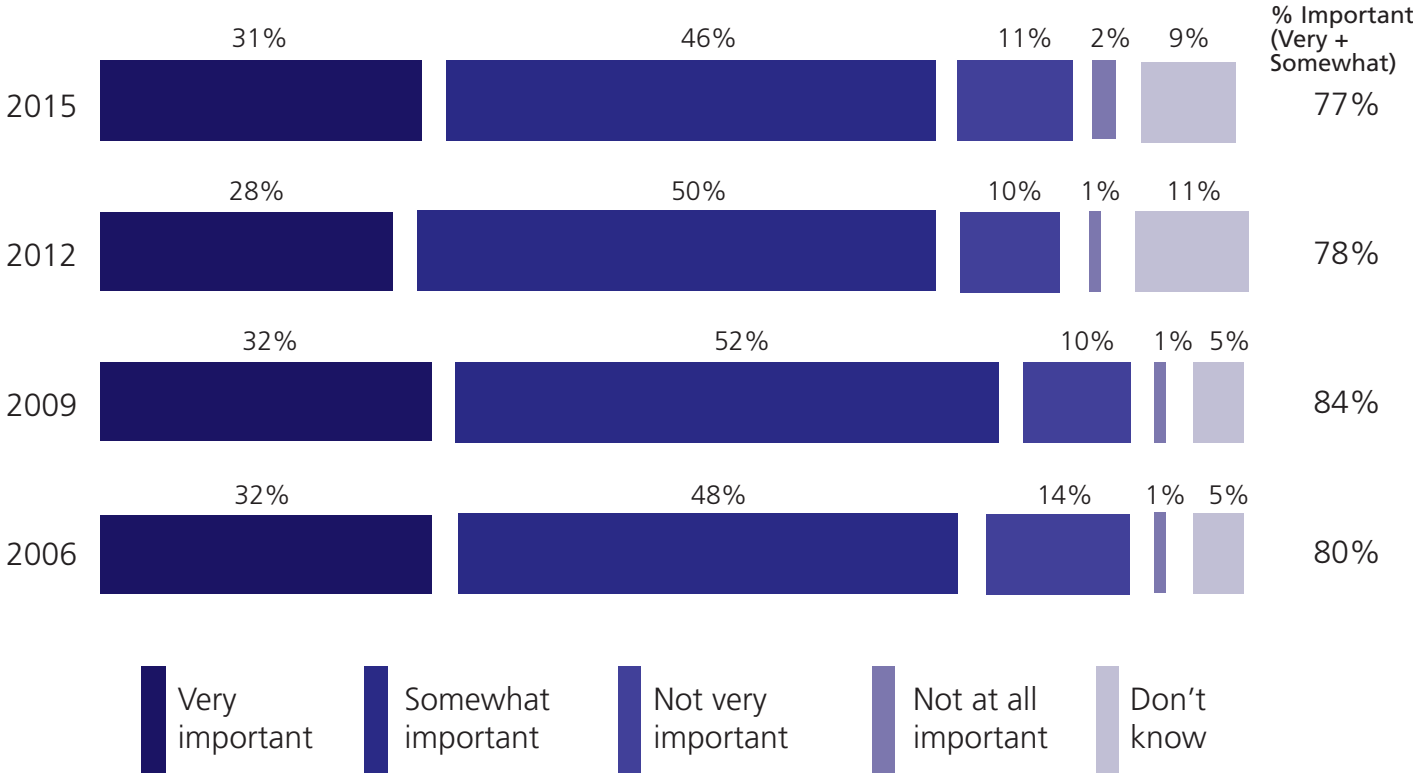
Is each of the following important...

That the provincial government invest in the education and training of Health and Medical Researchers?



Contribution to the economy

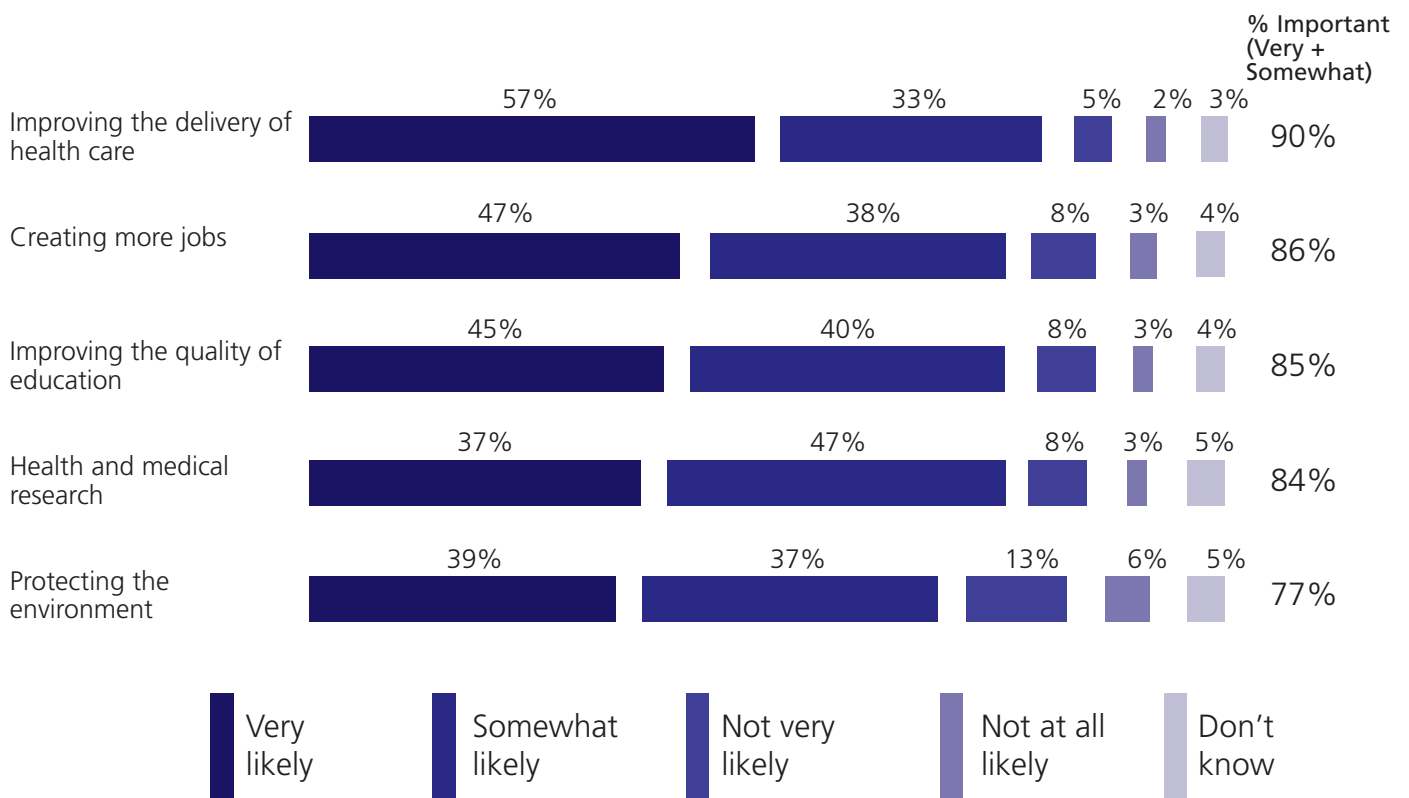
A strong majority of Canadians (77%) see health and medical research as making an important contribution to the Canadian economy, a finding similar to past years.



Question 5.
 Would you say that health and medical research makes an important contribution to the Canadian economy?

Voter support for funding areas

Canadians are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports increased funding for health care and health and medical research.



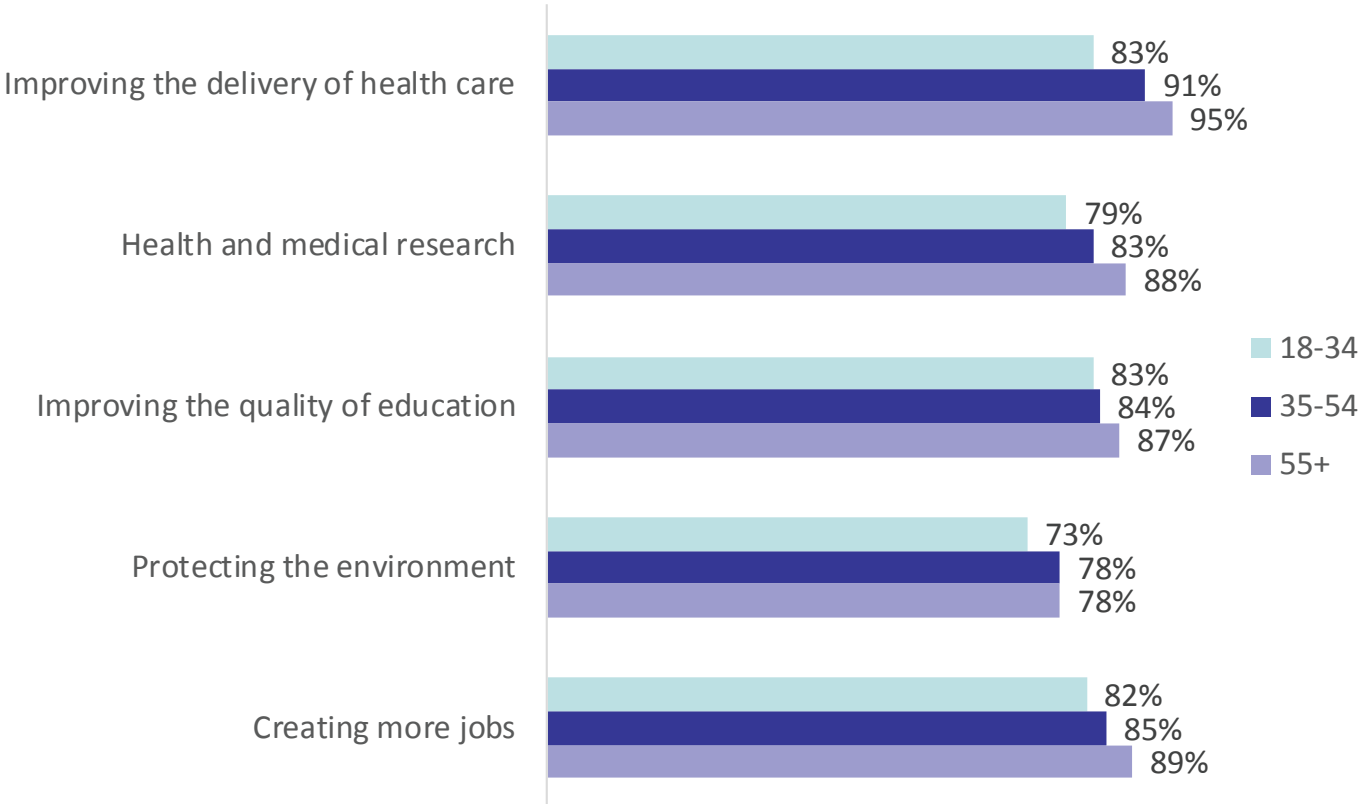
Question 6.

If a federal election were held today, would you be likely to vote for a candidate who supported increased funding for one of the following areas?



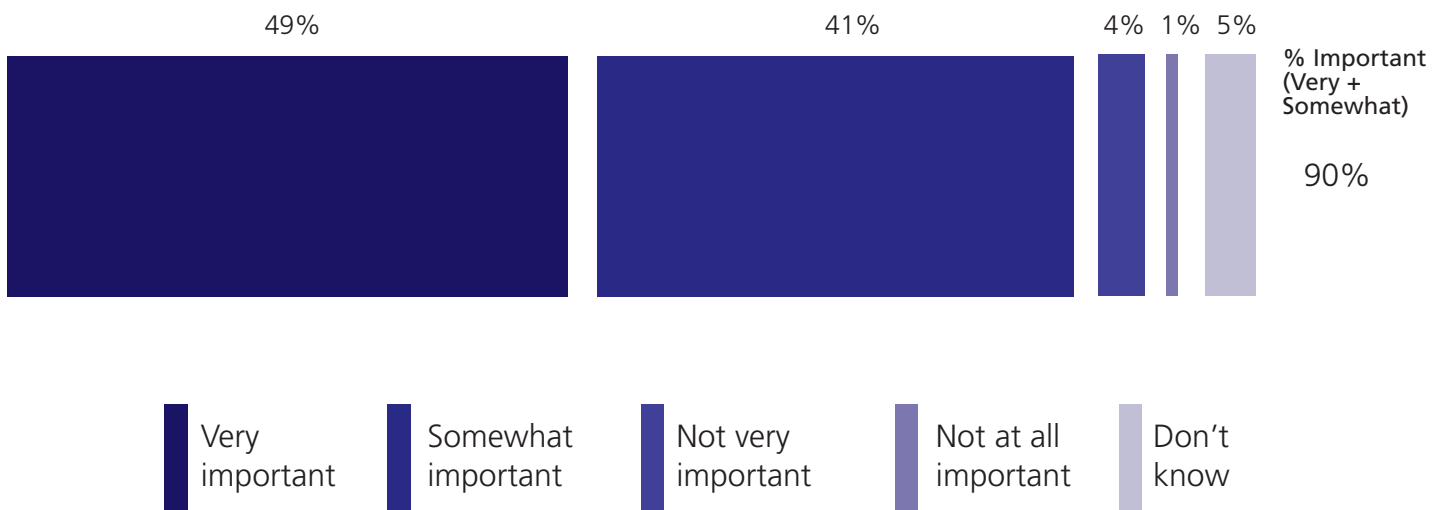
Voter support for funding areas (by age)

Older Canadians (95%, 55+) are even more likely (very and somewhat) to vote for a candidate who supports increased funding for health care and health and medical research, than younger Canadians (83%, 18-34). Overall, the trend shows that older Canadians are more likely to support increased funding for all the initiatives.



Importance to health care

A very strong majority of Canadians (90%) view health and medical research as making an important contribution to the healthcare system with half saying it is very important.



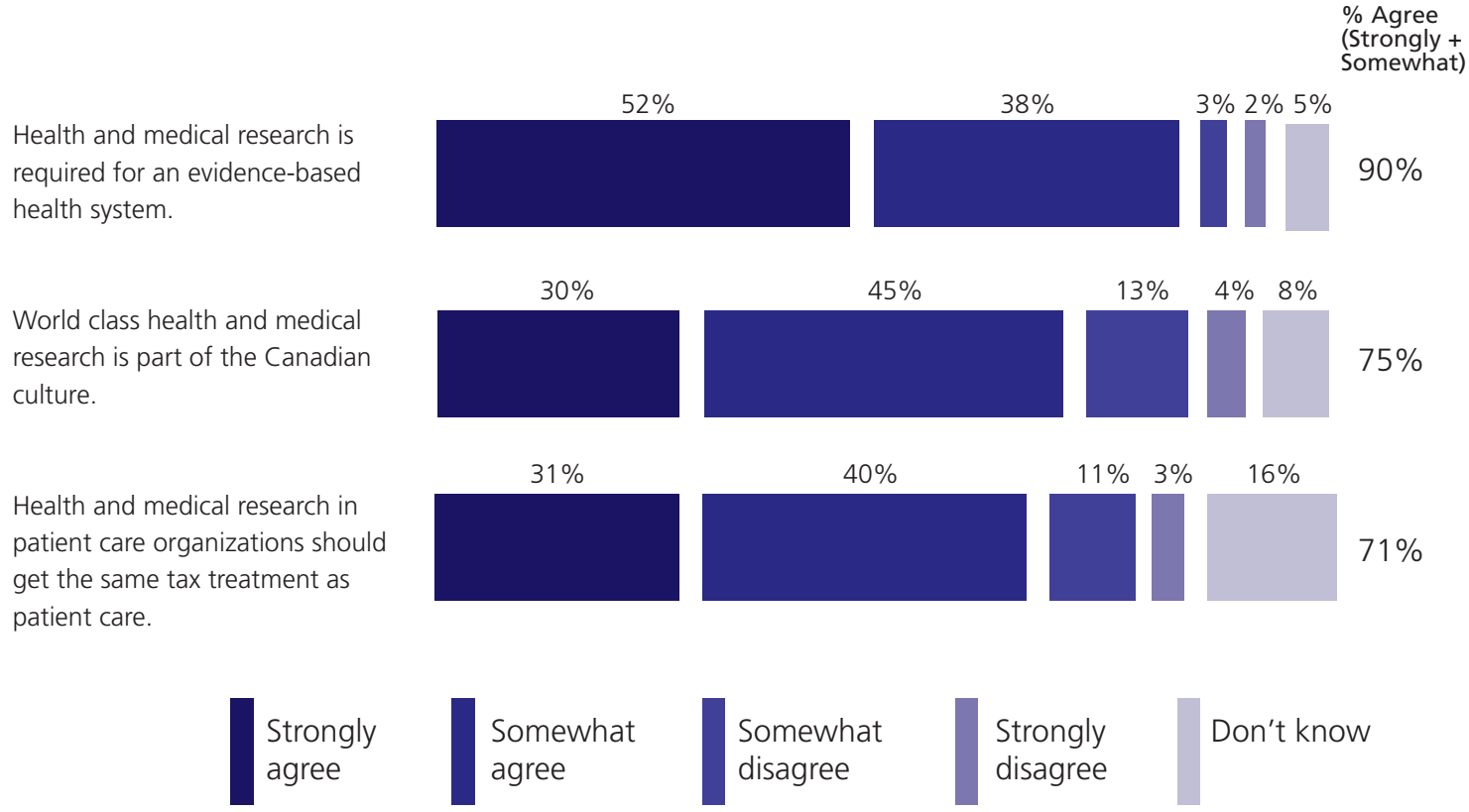
Question 7.

Would you say that health and medical research makes an important contribution to the Canadian healthcare system?



Agreement on statements related to health and medical research

A very strong majority of Canadians agree that health and medical research is required for an evidence-based health system (90%) while a strong majority of Canadians (75%) agree that health and medical research is part of Canada's culture. A majority say the tax treatment should be on par with patient care (71%).



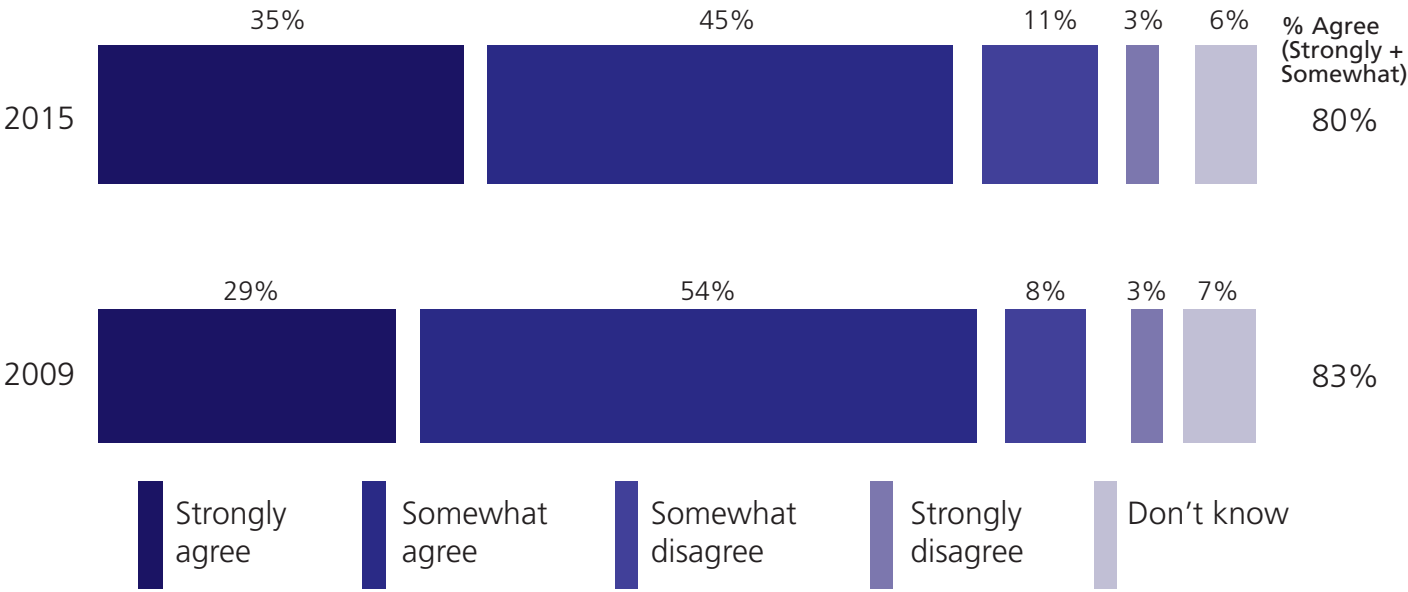
Investments

Four out of five Canadians agree that the federal government should support tax and regulatory policies that encourage private industries to conduct more medical research.



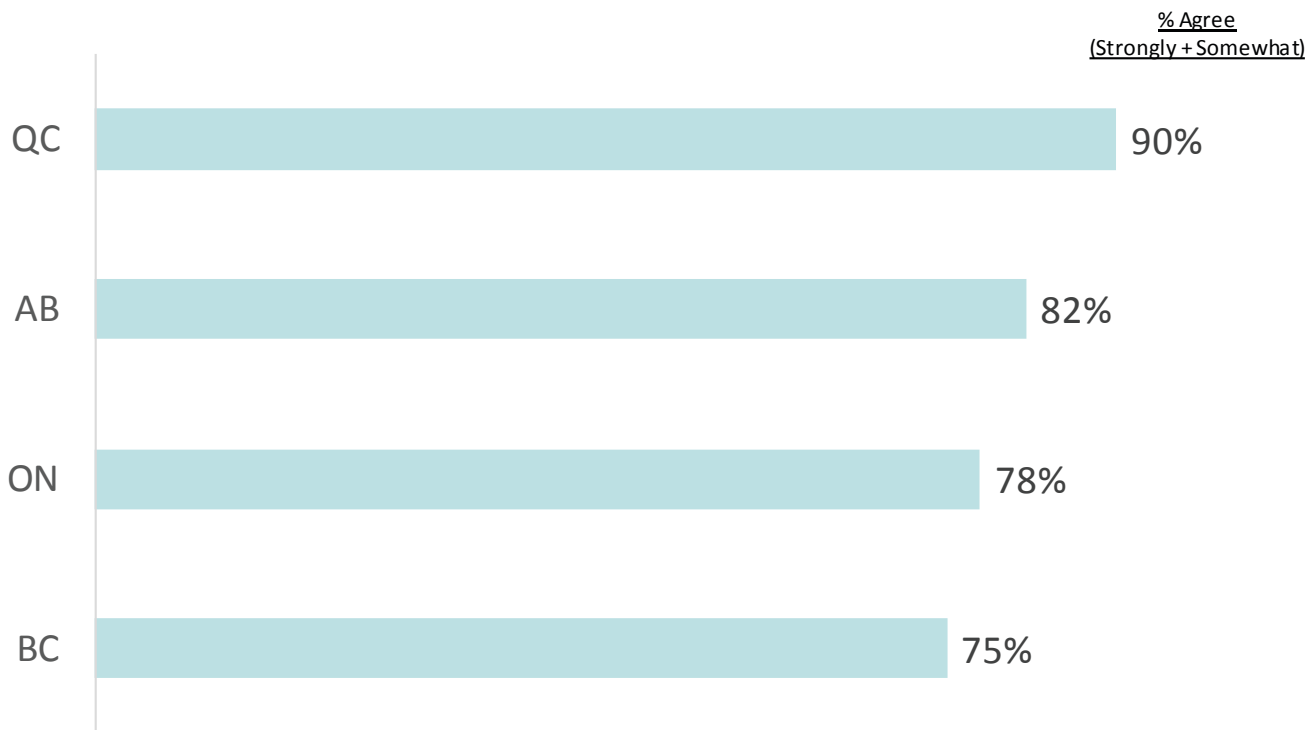
Regulation encouraging private industries

Four out of five Canadians agree that the federal government should support tax and regulatory policies that encourage private industries to conduct more medical research. Agreement is on par with results from 2009.



Regulation encouraging private industries (by region)

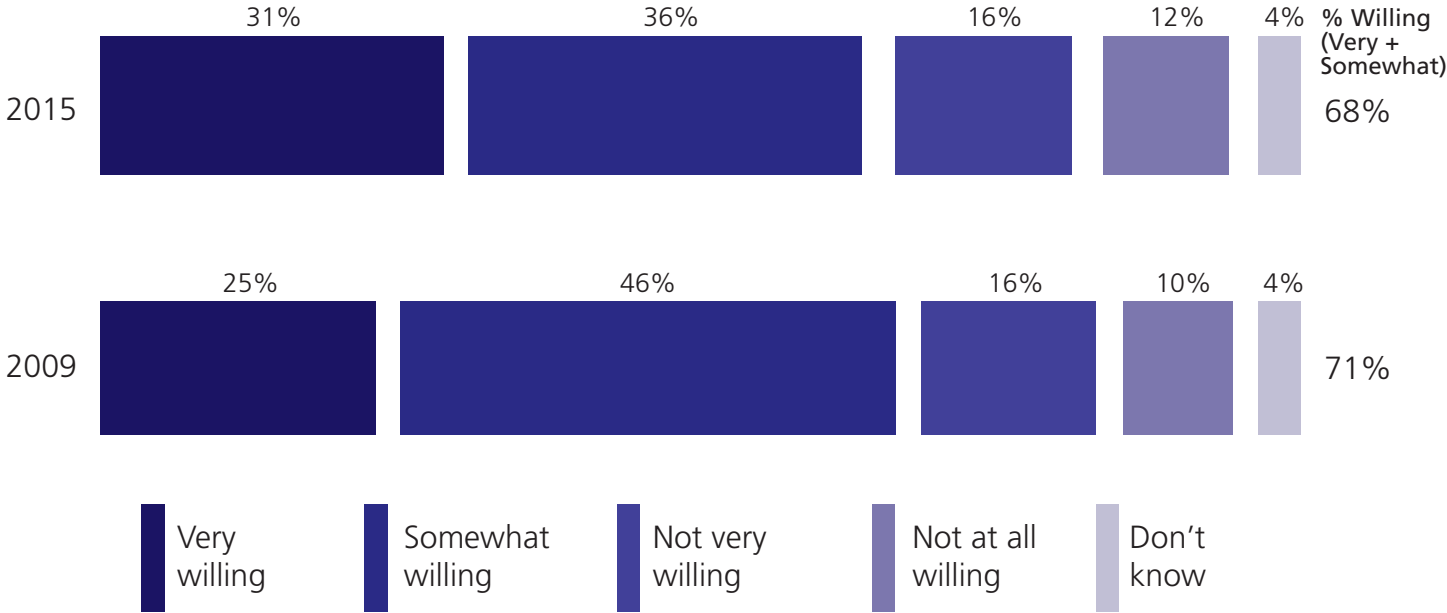
Quebeckers are more likely to agree that the federal government should support tax and regulatory policies encouraging private industries to conduct more medical research than residents of other provinces, particularly those in BC and Ontario.





Support for taxes investing in health technology

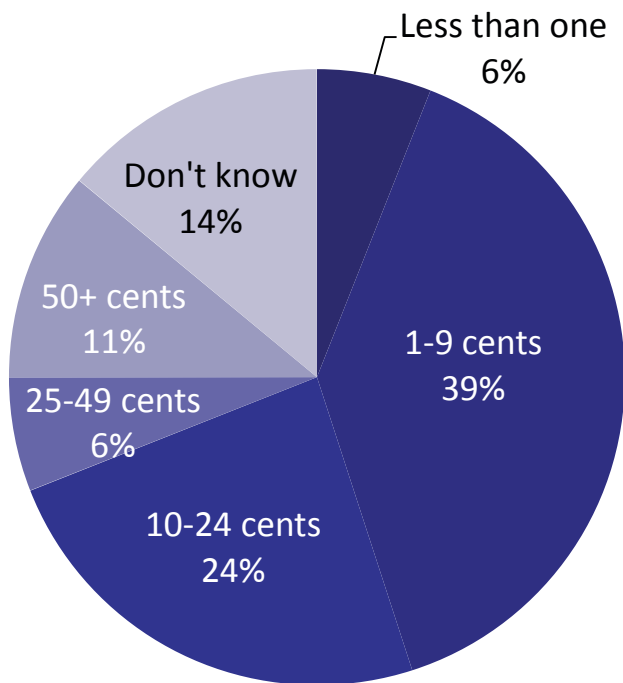
A majority of Canadians (68%) are willing to pay \$1 more in taxes if they know the revenue supports government investment in Canadian health innovation, on par with results in 2009. Support increases to three-quarters (74%) among older Canadians (55+).



Question 10.
 How willing would you be to pay \$1 more a week in taxes if you knew the revenues would pay for government investment in Canadian-made health science innovations and technologies?

Spending allocated to research

A majority of Canadians (63%) say the government should allocate between 1-24 cents on the healthcare dollar towards health and medical research, down slightly from 2009 and 2006.



Cents	2015	2009	2006
<1	6%	3%	1%
1-9	39%	33%	54%
10+ (NET)	41%	57%	30%
10-24	24%	32%	16%
25-49	6%	16%	7%
50+	11%	9%	7%
DK	14%	6%	14%

Question 11.

Currently, less than one cent out of each dollar spent on health care in Canada goes toward health and medical research. Given this information, how many cents out of each dollar spent in health would you now say should be spent on health and medical research?

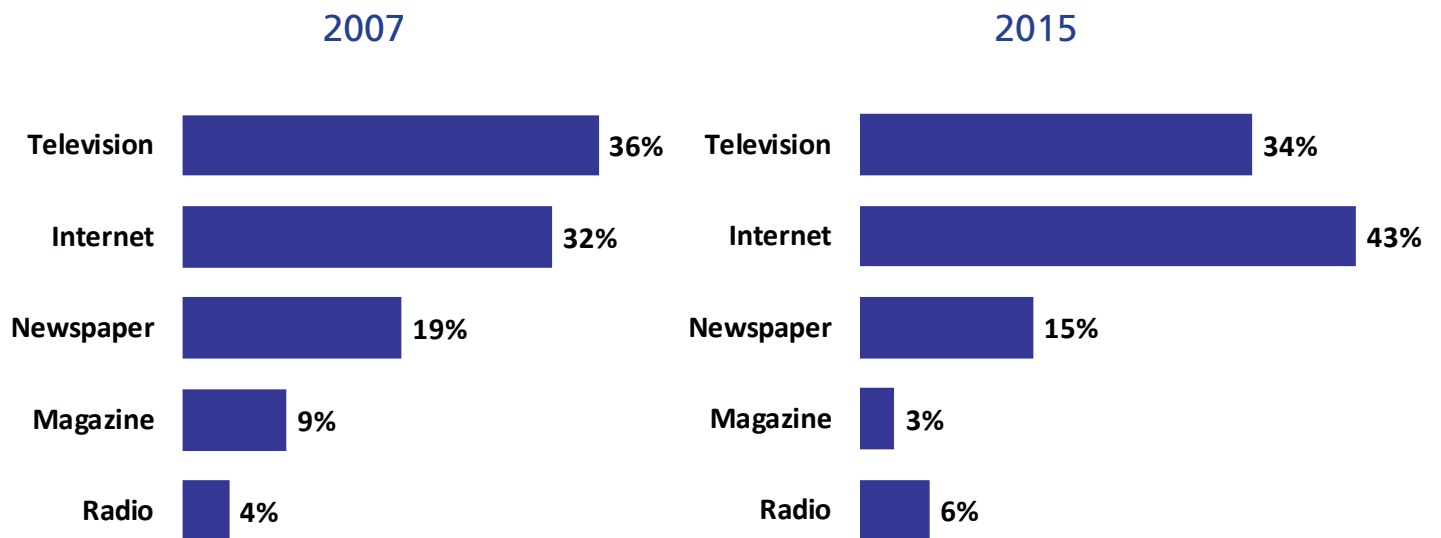
Public & Private Health Information

Eight out of ten Canadians changed their behaviour due to a health report in the media.

Health and Medical Researchers are highly trusted. Almost half of Canadians rank Health and Medical Researchers 8 or higher on a 10- point scale. Trust in Researchers was ranked higher than Teachers, Accountants and Journalists.

Research in the media

In 2015, Canadians prefer the internet to learn about advances in health research while in 2007 they preferred television. Fewer people prefer print media as a source of news on advances in health research in 2015 as compared to 2007.



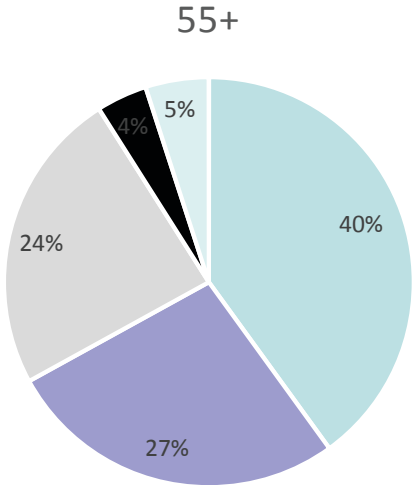
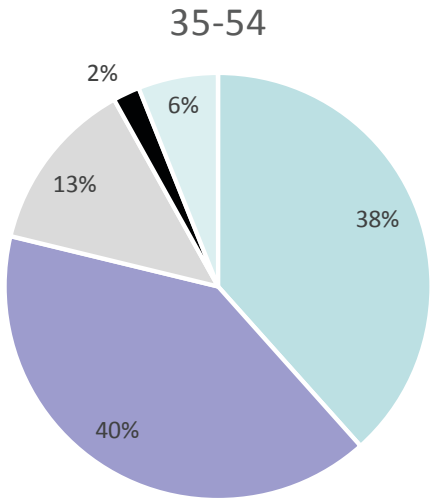
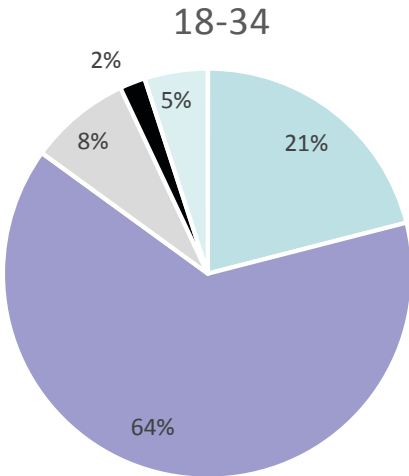
Question 12.

How do you prefer to read/hear about advances in health research in the media?



Research in the media (by age)

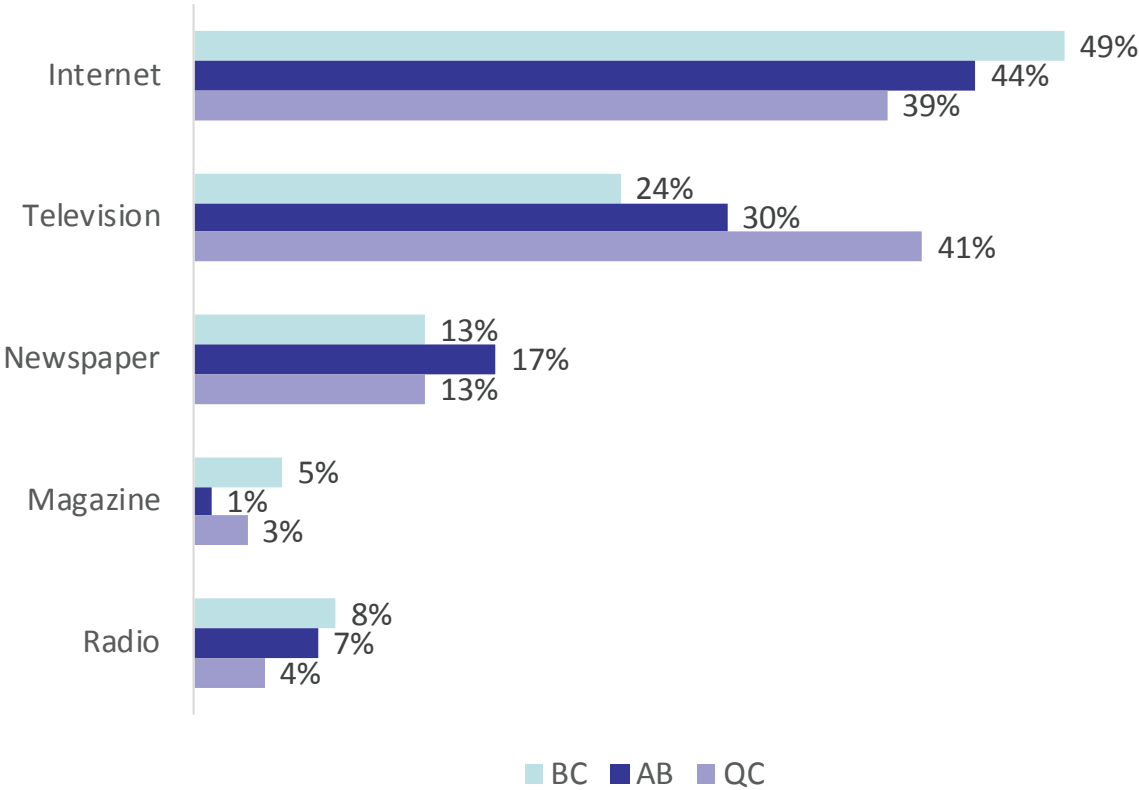
In 2015, younger Canadians, especially, favour the internet (64%, 18-34), while older Canadians prefer television (55+, 40%).



■ Television ■ Internet ■ Newspaper ■ Magazine ■ Radio

Research in the media (by region)

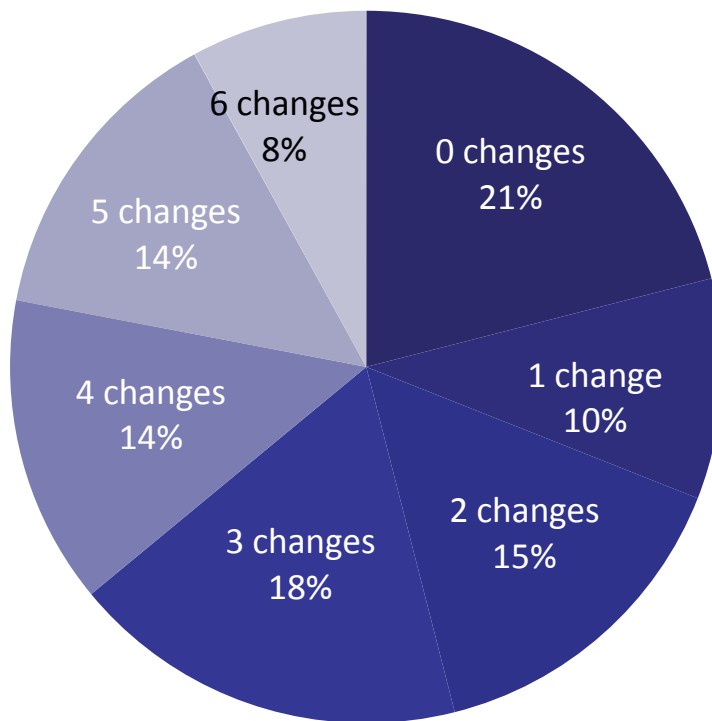
Interestingly, television is preferred in Quebec to a larger degree than other regions. BC is most likely to prefer internet.





Number of behaviours changed

Overall, health reports in the media had a widespread impact in the last five years. At least one behavioural change was made by eight-in-ten Canadians because of a health report. This figure has slightly decreased from 2007 where 85% of Canadians had made at least one change as a result of a health report in the media.

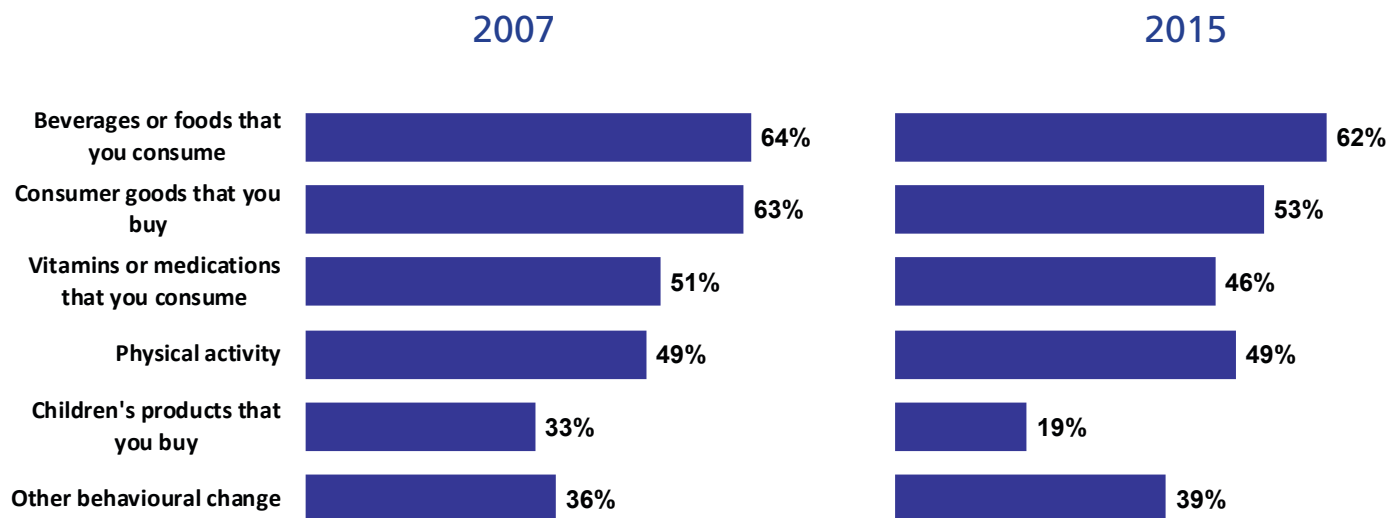


Question 13.

Within the past 5 years did you make a change to any of the following behaviours in response to a health report that you saw, read or heard in the media?

Impact of media reports

Fewer Canadians are likely to change their behaviours in most of the following categories in 2015 as compared to 2007 except for physical activity which remains the same and other behavioural change which has slightly increased from 2007.



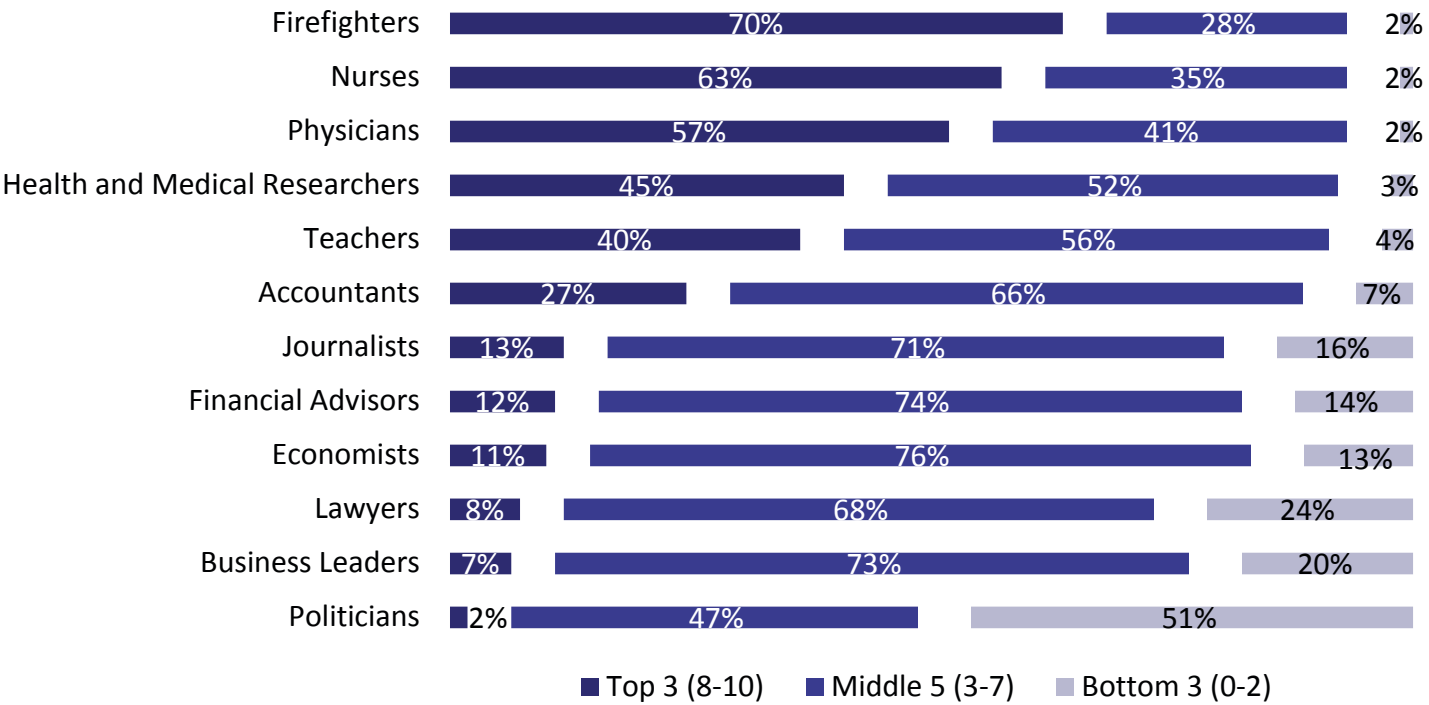
Question 14.

Within the past 5 years did you make a change to any of the following behaviours in response to a health report that you saw, read or heard in the media?



Trust the work of...

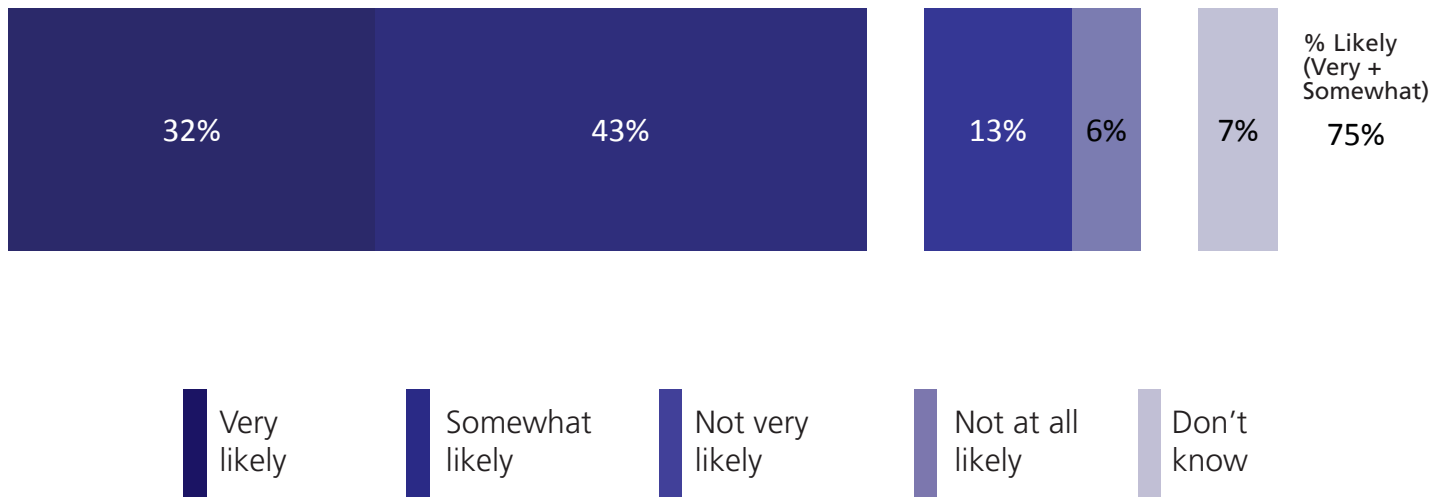
Health and Medical Researchers are highly trusted. Almost half of Canadians rank Health and Medical Researchers as an 8 or higher on a 10-Point scale. Only 3% rank Researchers below a 4 on this scale. Trust in Researchers was ranked higher than Teachers, Accountants and Journalists.



Question 15.
 On a scale of one to ten where 10 is most trusted and 1 is not trusted at all, how much do you trust the work of:

Health file information

Canadians say there is a benefit to sharing personal health information with three-quarters willing as long as their personal information is kept confidential.



Question 16.

Health Services Researchers often look at the relationship between patients' health and their use of the health system in order to inform future decisions. If your personal information were to remain confidential, how likely would you be to consent to the use of the relevant information from your file?

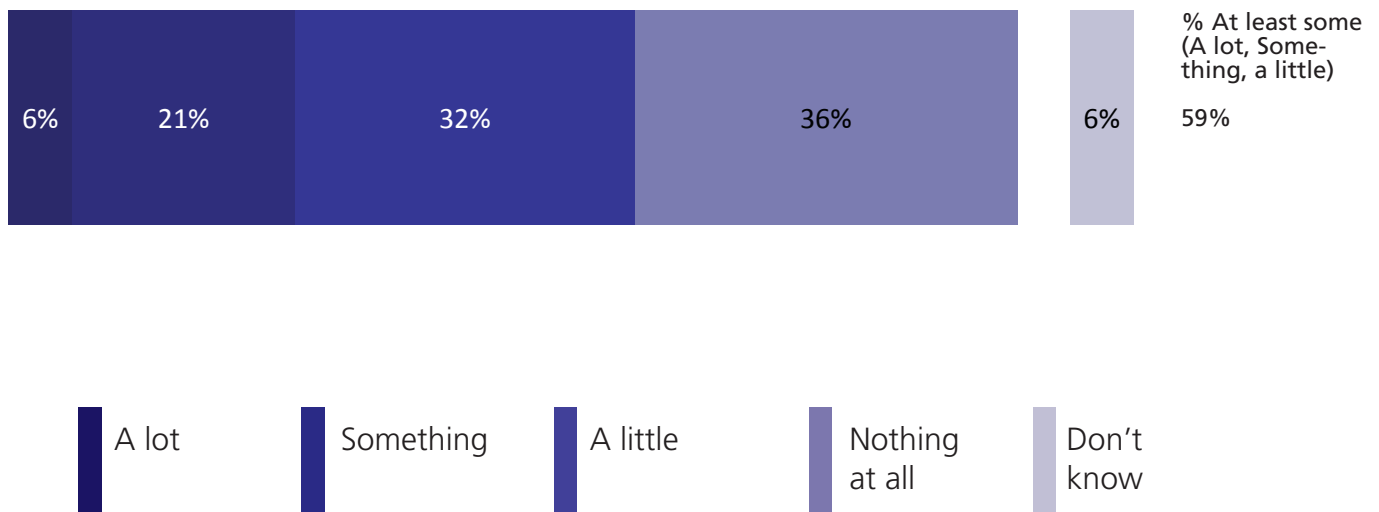
Public Engagement

One third of Canadians are familiar with health and medical research being conducted at universities and hospitals in their provinces.

A majority of Canadians say they are interested in participating in health and medical research – including helping to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding – however, only 24% are aware of opportunities to do so.

Research decision-making

While a majority of Canadians (59%) are aware of the possibility of engaging in health and medical research, only 6% have seen, read or heard a lot about patient participation.



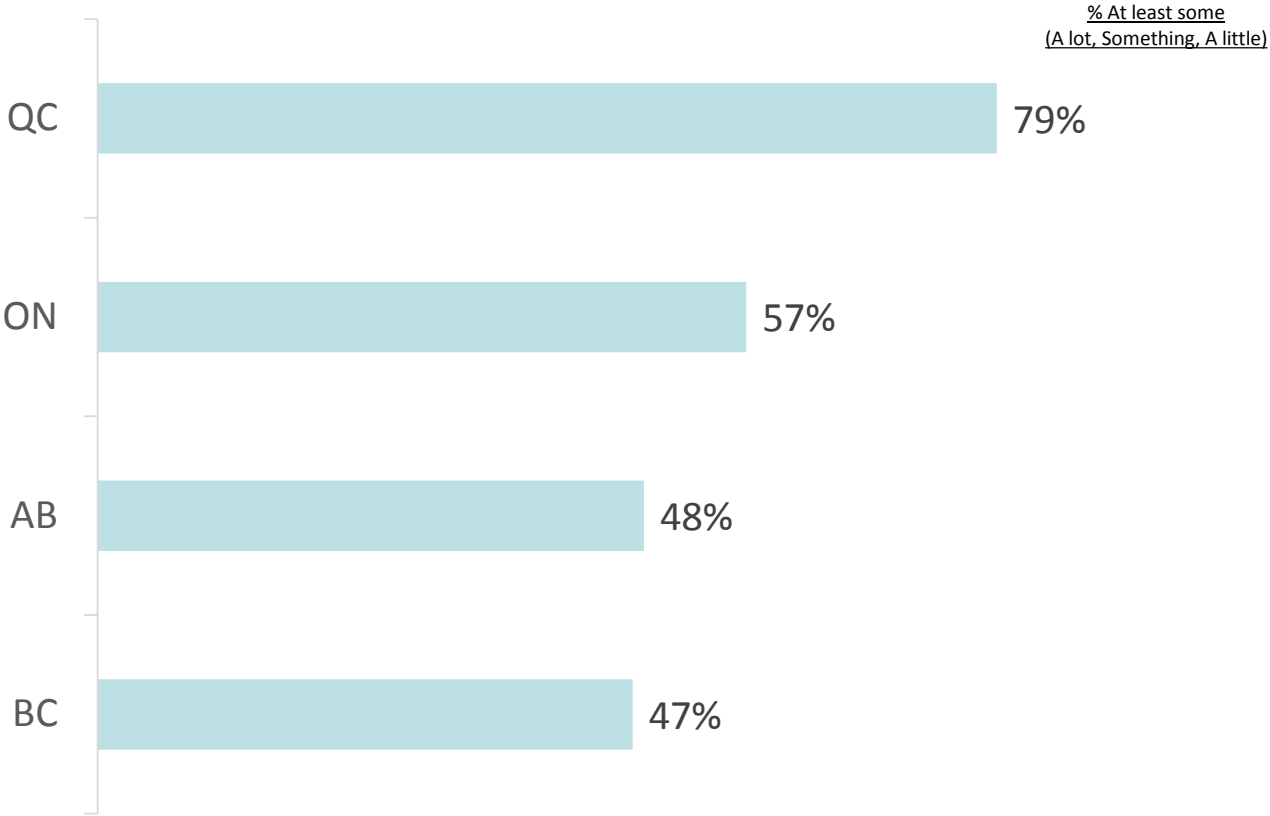
Question 17.

How much have you seen, read or heard about patients and the public being able to participate in health and medical research, including helping to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding?



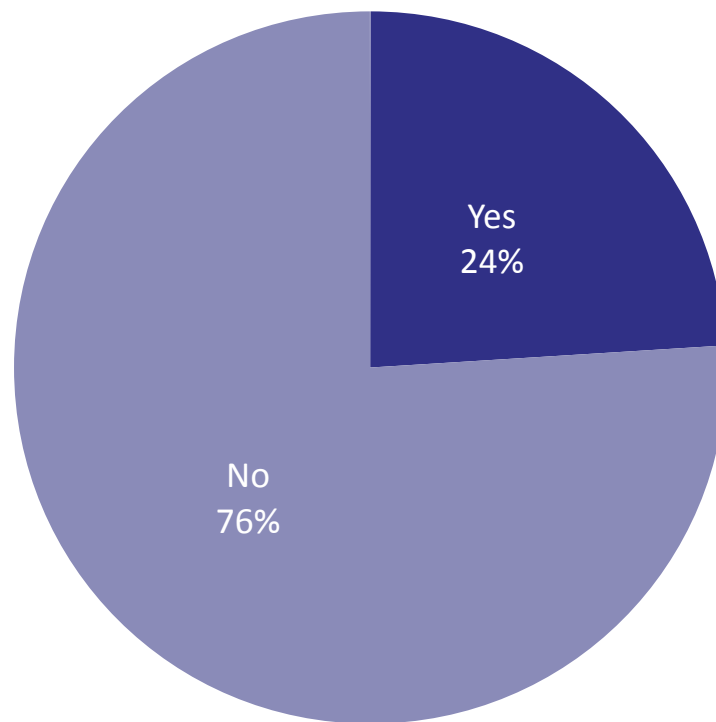
Research decision-making (by region)

Quebec residents are much more likely to say that they've encountered information about the public being able to participate in health and medical research.



Participation opportunities

One-quarter of Canadians are aware of existing opportunities to participate in health research.



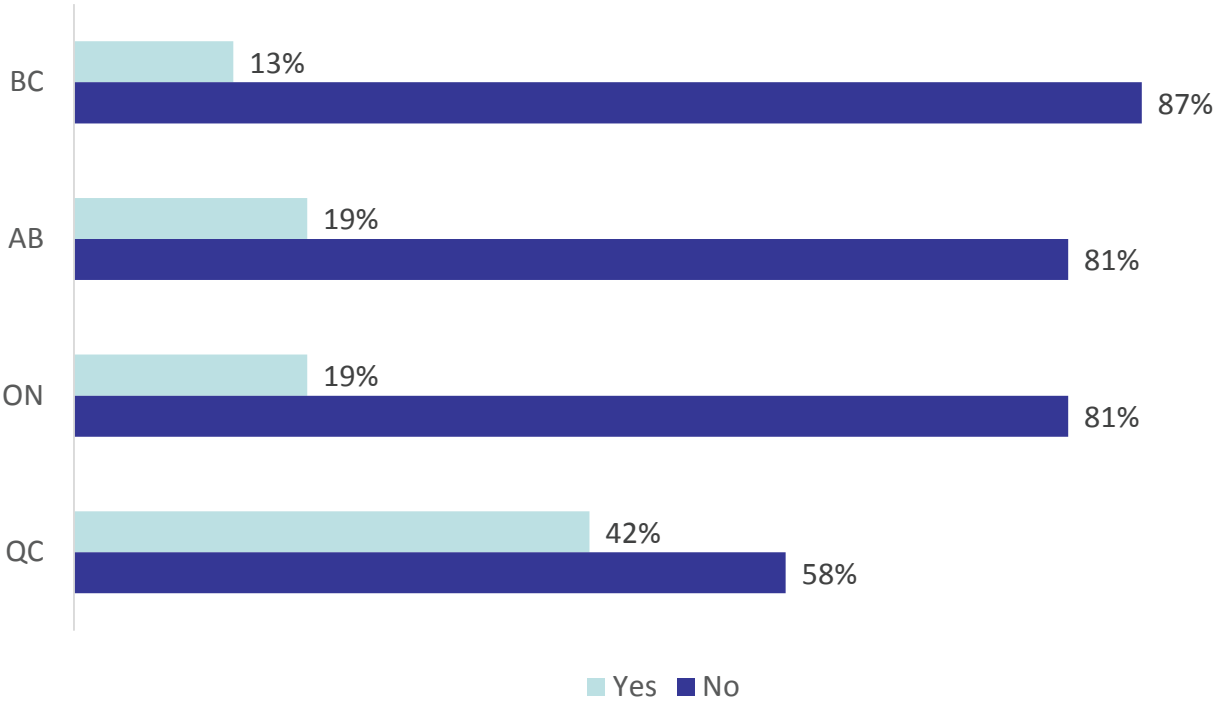
Question 18.

Are you aware of current opportunities that exist for patients and the public to participate in health and medical research, including helping to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding?



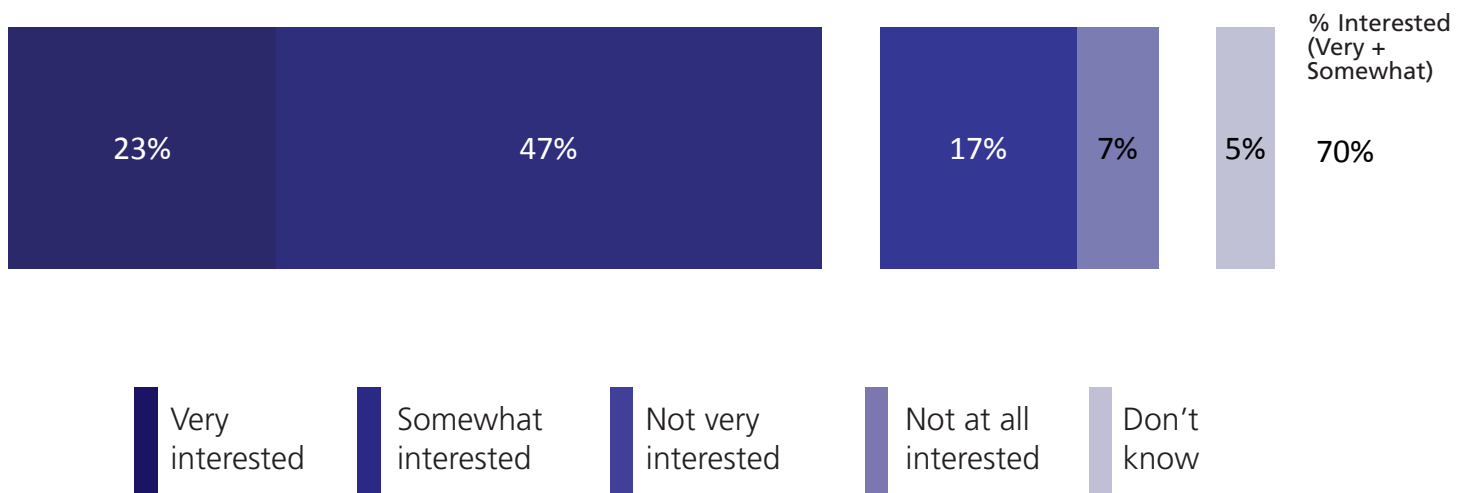
Participation opportunities (by region)

Awareness of opportunities is much higher in Quebec than in other regions.



Interest in research participation

A majority of Canadians (70%) say they are interested in participating in health and medical research.



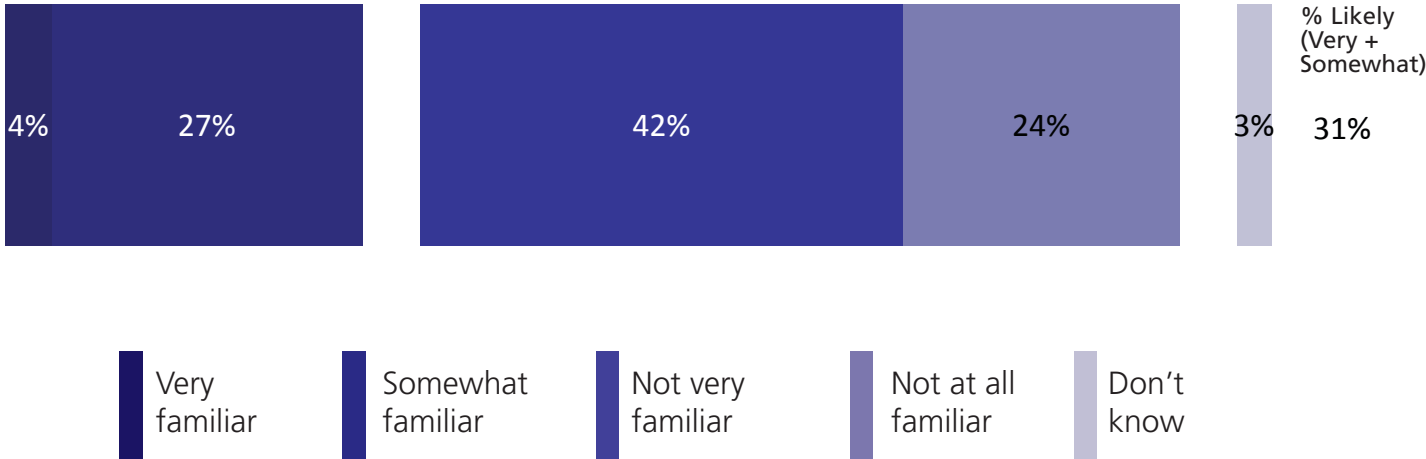
Question 19.

How interested are you in participating in health and medical research, including helping to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding?



Research at hospitals/universities

One-third of Canadians are familiar with health and medical research being conducted at universities and hospitals in their province.



Question 20.
 How familiar are you with health and medical research going on at universities and hospitals in your province?

About the Partners



The Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC) represents the country's 17 faculties of medicine and is the national voice for academic medicine. Our organization was founded in 1943 and functions to support individually and collectively Canada's medical schools through promotion of medical education, research, and clinical care.



The Health Charities Coalition of Canada (HCCC), a member based organization, is dedicated to advocating for sound public policy on health issues and promoting the highest quality health research. HCCC strives for excellence in health policy and seeks to ensure that the federal government and policy makers look to the Coalition and its members for timely advice and leadership on major health issues of concern to Canadians; and that they recognize the competence, commitment and contributions of health charities in improving the health and well-being of Canadians.



HealthCareCAN is the national voice of healthcare organizations across Canada. We foster informed and continuous, results-oriented discovery and innovation across the continuum of health care. We act with others to enhance the health of the people of Canada; to build the capability for high quality care; and to help ensure value for money in publicly financed, healthcare programs. Learn more about our solutions to health system challenges by visiting our website www.healthcarecan.ca. Follow us on Twitter: @HealthCareCAN



The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research empowers British Columbia's (BC) best and brightest Health Researchers to pursue world-class innovation and stretch the bounds of what health research can achieve. The Foundation helps BC's health research community discover solutions to our greatest health challenges; connect knowledge and action on provincial priorities; and engage partners to improve the research enterprise to address provincial priorities.



Canada’s Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies is the national association representing the voice of Canada’s innovative pharmaceutical industry. We serve our membership by advocating for policies that enable the discovery, development and delivery of innovative medicines and vaccines to improve the lives of all Canadians. We support our memberships’ commitment to being a valued partner in the Canadian healthcare system. We represent more than 50 companies investing over \$1-billion in R&D annually, fuelling Canada’s knowledge-based economy, while contributing over \$3-billion overall to Canada’s economy. Guided by our Code of Ethical Practices, we work with governments, private payers, healthcare professionals and stakeholders in a highly ethical manner.



Research Canada is a national, broad-based alliance dedicated to increasing investments in health research through collaborative advocacy. We believe health research is a shared benefit, shared responsibility and an investment in Canada’s future. We engage government, academia, industry and nonprofit sectors to build support for balanced and long-term health research funding – investments that strengthen Canada’s innovation system and lead to better health, sustainable health care, new commercialization opportunities, and skilled jobs for Canadians. Only through sustained and balanced investments in health research will Canada succeed in keeping its citizens the healthiest and most prosperous in the world.



The Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF) is the provincial agency responsible for funding, facilitating and promoting innovative, collaborative health research in Saskatchewan. SHRF works as a catalyst, driver, and leader to: build and broaden the province’s research capacity; expedite the production and sharing of knowledge; increase stakeholder engagement; generate new and diverse funding partnerships; and measure the impact of health research on our Saskatchewan communities.



Research Canada: An Alliance for Health Discovery

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