

2024 Specialist Waitlist Survey Results

How waitlists are impacting patients and doctors in BC

Almost 900 specialists across the province participated in this survey about how waitlists are impacting patients and doctors in British Columbia. Waitlists and wait times continue to grow at an unmanageable rate, and patient's care is being compromised across the province.

~1.2 million waiting in BC

282 average specialist waitlist size*

*(this AVERAGE is taken only from the specialists who filled out the survey while their EMR was open)

Average Wait Times

4 Weeks

urgent cases

10 Weeks

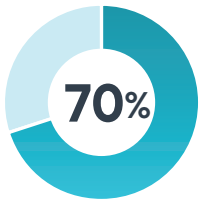
semi-urgent cases

10 Months

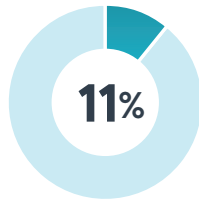
non-urgent cases



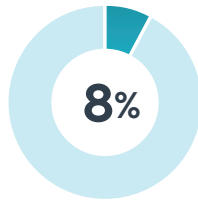
63% indicated that wait times for access to consultations are getting worse. A further 25% report no improvement.



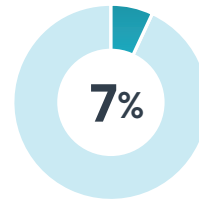
70% of specialists report an increase in their waitlist size over the last 2 years



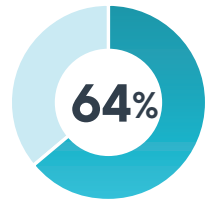
Only 11% of specialists surveyed feel that patients have appropriate access to Specialist Care.



Only 8% of survey respondents feel that the system can support the timely patient access to specialists.



Only 7% of the respondents feel there are enough specialists in BC to meet the population needs.



64% of respondents agree waitlists are causing them moral distress as they can't provide the care that their patients need.

In Your Own Words

"I think about slowing down every week... My community needs me, my patients need me and there is no one else behind me able to take over the work I do. The burden of work is physically and emotionally draining and makes me want to work less, not more. I don't know how to maintain this. I love my speciality, I am committed to my patients but I think about retiring early several times a month. I still have hours of work to do charting and calling patients back this week. I don't catch up week after week. I spend my vacation catching up when I should be recuperating."

"I strive to be available to my patients when they need something urgently, however, this often comes at a detrimental cost to me because I have to work more than I wanted or intended in order to meet this patient demand. I have started declining many new referrals, so as not to overwhelm my practice."

"Incentivization of team based care, including compensation for allied healthcare professionals working under FRCPC trained specialists, could help to immediately address this crisis. There are no options for remuneration to reply to non urgent consults/questions from primary care in writing only – these patients end up getting triaged as routine referrals and 'bloat' the waitlists overall."

"We have taken on the burden of referrals beyond our usual catchment as some surrounding communities have been experiencing critical specialist shortages, resulting in exceedingly long wait times and prompting more referrals to those of us with relatively more capacity in surrounding communities."