

NEWS RELEASE

Atlantic Canada wait times among longest in the country

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For immediate release

HALIFAX—Atlantic Canadian patients continue to endure some of the longest health-care wait times in the country, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Consistently long wait times remain a defining characteristic of the patient experience in Atlantic Canada,” said Bacchus Barua, Director of the Fraser Institute’s Centre for Health Policy Studies and co-author of *Waiting Your Turn: Wait Times for Health Care in Canada, 2023*.

The study, an annual survey of physicians across Canada, reports a median wait time of 27.7 weeks—the longest ever recorded, longer than the wait of 27.4 weeks reported in 2022—and 198 per cent higher than the 9.3 weeks Canadians waited in 1993, when the Fraser Institute began tracking wait times.

More than 1,200 responses were received across the 12 specialities and 10 provinces.

Results from the same survey found that patients waited an estimated 20.9 weeks for medically necessary elective care in 2019—before the pandemic started.

The study examines the total wait time faced by patients across 12 medical specialties from referral by a general practitioner (i.e. family doctor) to consultation with a specialist, to when the patient ultimately receives treatment.

Among the provinces, Nova Scotia recorded the longest wait time in Canada at 56.7 weeks, followed by Prince Edward Island at 55.2, and New Brunswick at 52.6.

“Long wait times aren’t simply minor inconveniences, they can result in increased suffering for patients, lost productivity at work, a decreased quality of life, and in the worst cases, disability, or death,” said Mackenzie Moir, Fraser Institute policy analyst and study co-author.

Median wait times by province (in weeks)

PROVINCE	2022	2023	PROVINCE	2022	2023
British Columbia	25.8	27.7	Quebec	29.4	27.6
Alberta	33.3	33.5	New Brunswick	43.3	52.6
Saskatchewan	30.1	31.0	Nova Scotia	58.2	56.7
Manitoba	41.3	29.1	P.E.I.	64.7	55.2
Ontario	20.3	21.6	Newfoundland and Labrador	32.1	33.3

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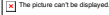
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