

# HONOURING OUR SENIORS

*A Survey of Canadians Impacted  
by the COVID-19 Pandemic*



*Compassionate*  
Community Care

© 2023

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Honouring Our Seniors Survey and Program.....	3
Participants.....	3
Methods.....	3
Overview of Results.....	4
Results and Outcomes.....	5
Questions and Responses.....	6
Conclusion.....	71
Follow-Up and Contact Information.....	73

# CCC OVERVIEW

Established in 2010, Compassionate Community Care (CCC) is a registered Canadian charity comprised of professionals and volunteers who provide support to vulnerable persons and their families during times of illness and crisis, especially at the end of life. We aim to provide a complete circle of care that recognizes and respects the physical, social, psychological, and spiritual needs of those involved.

CCC believes that all human life has equal dignity and that every person deserves to be treated with respect and compassion while receiving the care they need and deserve. Whether you are facing a chronic condition, disability, or end-of-life situation, we are here to help.

At CCC, our charity works to assist individuals and communities in Ontario and across Canada with our free and confidential helpline: 1-855-675-8749. This service provides advice, help and support regarding euthanasia and assisted suicide prevention and/or end-of-life treatment issues.

If you or someone you know need assistance on end-of-life matters, please do not hesitate to contact us today. We can help.



# Honouring Our Seniors



## Seniors who fared well through the Covid-19 pandemic

Seniors who continued on with their daily life as per usual, acted no different, carried on like normal and remained socially connected with others in their community.



## Loneliness, isolation, frustration and depression

Common experiences amongst seniors who were isolated and socially withdrawn or abandoned by others as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Occasional loneliness

Some seniors managed by having a single person/companion to check in on them, such as a spouse, friend, or visitor. For some seniors, a pet or their faith/beliefs helped to carry them.



# Honouring Our Seniors Survey and Program

Thanks to a grant from the Government of Canada in 2022, Compassionate Community Care was able to survey over 500 Canadians. The survey touched on issues important to the elderly as well as their experience during and since COVID-19. The lockdown restrictions were still in place in some areas across Canada during the time of the survey. This was indicated in the prevalence of answers participants gave which included COVID-19. The survey included questions that addressed issues of elder abuse, neglect, depression, self and social isolation, those who are vulnerable, as well as disabilities among the elderly.

Through the results of the survey, Compassionate Community Care was able to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic affected Canadians personally both during and since the pandemic. The statistical correlations and trends that emerged from the responses of the survey are summarized in this report.

## **Participants**

Eligible participants of the survey were those aged 55 years and older. These individuals were screened based on their age at the start of the survey. Participants were included from across Canada, from the Maritime provinces to the West Coast and Territories.

## **Methods**

The survey was conducted and responses were gathered by a team of callers from JMJ Communications. Canadians surveyed were contacted from lists obtained from sympathetic contacts and organizations. Individuals were contacted by email, mailed newsletters, and by phone. Those who responded to the invitation and completed the survey were able

to do so online via a survey link to answer the questions themselves as well as by telephone with someone who recorded their answers. Responses were entered into a confidential database; the results synthesized from the responses were used to generate this report.

## **Overview of Results**

The survey was a great success; responders often made this comment at the conclusion of the survey. Some remarks included, “Thank you for this survey and experience,” speaking to someone who cared was “delightful” especially around COVID-19, and that this was a welcome and appreciated experience.

The results of the survey are shared here with summary points highlighted, as some answers were more detailed than others were. Most of the surveys took ten to fifteen minutes to complete.

A strong majority of survey responses were more elaborate, with longer and more detailed answers given on open-ended questions. Due to the general nature of the survey and the vastness of responses, not every response is captured in this report. A shorter summary report is available. Some of the more relevant, insightful, sympathetic, and humorous responses are featured in the descriptions provided herein.

For brevity purposes, we have summarized the statistical points first, then provided a summary of the main trends with anecdotal evidence and the most interesting responses given during the surveys. Some survey participants were reluctant to go into detail about their experiences and others decided not to answer certain questions. The survey was voluntary; the only request made was that each person interviewed completed it to the end.

When questions referred to family relations and/or children, some survey participants went into detail that included reflections on faith, family, community life, and opinions on living through COVID-19. The pandemic affected participants in different ways—the magnitude, severity, and influence varying across responders.

## **Results and Outcomes**

Compassionate Community Care (CCC) has published this report and made it available to each participant in digital form. As mentioned previously, CCC is also providing a shorter synopsis as a handout. Both are available online at [www.beingwith.org](http://www.beingwith.org) under Resources. A brochure summarizing the various types of elder abuse and how to prevent them will also be provided on the website. The brochure will be available both as a printed resource and digitally.

CCC will host online and in-person *Honouring Our Seniors* events to show our appreciation for the participants' time and commitment to being a part of this project. Thank-you to Alex Schadenberg for your time, dedication, and support with the survey. Your commitment to protect the elderly and most vulnerable is unmatched. We greatly appreciate Sarah Denstedt and her team of callers from JMJ Communications who conducted this survey and gathered responses.

We sincerely thank every person who was part of this survey, including those who helped conduct it, completed the survey online or by phone, and those who helped to compile the results. We thank the Government of Canada for the grant that provided the means to host this valuable survey.

The survey's importance was summarized well by a participant:

“This was so special, a great experience and survey. I have not only shared what has been on my mind over the past two years, but what

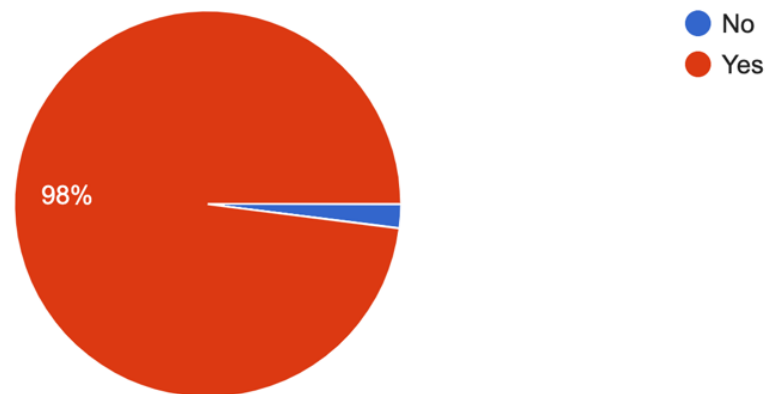
my heart felt. Thank you for taking the time to speak to me about how the pandemic affected me. Thank you for caring to do this work, its important work, I felt forgotten, now I know I am being heard.”

The following are the questions and results of the survey, in a summarized form.

## Questions and Responses

Do you consider yourself a senior? (55+)

499 responses

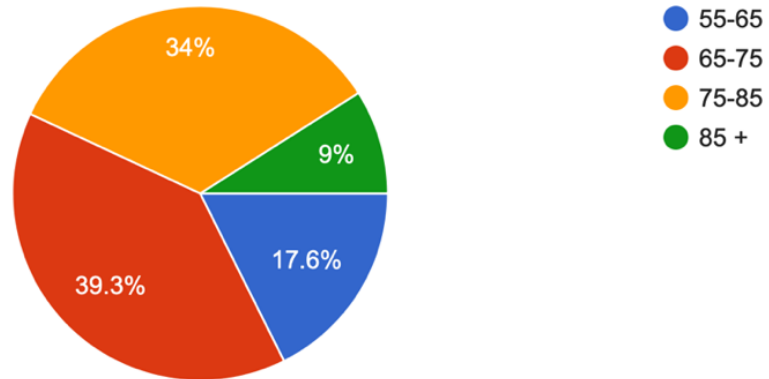


CCC decided to focus on seniors, anyone aged 55 years and over. Although the current identification is that anyone over 55 years of age is considered a senior, some who responded “No” to this question did not feel they belonged in this category.



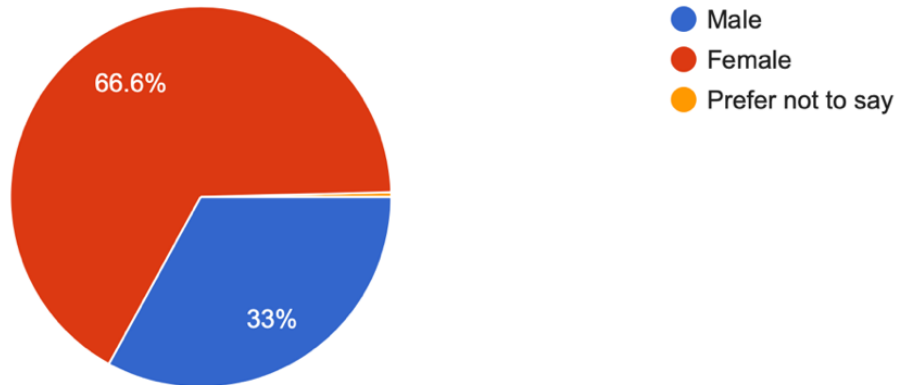
### What age group would you put yourself in?

488 responses



### Gender identity

491 responses



***During the past few years, many Canadians have experienced loneliness and isolation because of the COVID pandemic. How have the last two years been for you?***

(This could include frustration, neglect, mistreatment, mismanagement, physical or psychological abuse...)

There were three groups within the study. The first two were those who were isolated from others and did not see their family or friends, and those who did not change their daily routines. The third was a smaller group who felt isolated to a certain degree, but due to living with a spouse or partner, pet or supportive faith community, endured fairly well through the lockdowns. While they expressed some feelings of loneliness, it seemed manageable because they had a companion. The following is a summary of the feedback received from all three groups.

Group one: Those who felt isolated due to separation from loved ones.

“From March 2020 to March 2022, my life was quite different. I spent much more time at home, and we did not see our children or friends as much as usual.”

“Yes, I couldn’t go out and felt isolated.”

“Boredom, isolation, reflection of my life goals, sedentary lifestyle, lack of ambition to move about.”

“Worried about loved ones.”

“Frustration. Diminished trust in political leaders, government in general, media.”

“Mistreatment, psychological abuse.”

“Depressed and isolated from family and friends—exaggerated response”

“Challenging. Restrictive.”

“Frustrated by conflicting reports of the severity of epidemic. Irritated by people who are anal about the need to wear masks.”

“Lonely and frustrated, anxious, neglected, stressed, very isolated.”

“Fear and loneliness. A feeling of hopelessness as the world seemed to have gone mad.”

“As Mass for me is the most important part of my day I missed getting to my parish church (even though we could ‘attend’ online that’s more like watching a meal being prepared but not partaking in it (smile). Other than that, I was able to go for walks, enjoy the seasons, and communicate with my large family by phone and email. We all pray for each other’s intentions and share our concerns. Two elderly relatives (a married couple) whose health was compromised got COVID and died separated from each other and from everyone else but the medical staff. For them it must have been a surreal experience, but they are together again, and God will compensate them for the suffering they endured.”

“Division in relationships. Life is very stressful as I try to process the information that is now available to us and the many lies that were conveyed by the government in relation to mandates, the vaccines, and all things COVID-related. It’s very sad and unbelievable that our government is so corrupt and has taken away so many of our freedoms.”

“I lost my job because I wouldn’t get the jab.”

“Isolation from friends due to opposing views.”

“Terrible, missed family.”

“Isolating, hasn’t seen Grandma for two years.”

“Difficult because was not vaccinated.”

“More angry than lonely, felt we were lied to.”

“Husband died, she felt isolated.”

“Angry at the government (misinformation).”

“Felt mistreated because she is unvaccinated.”

Group two: Those who continued as usual and met with others as if nothing had changed.

“Not bad, because I have been very active. I am involved with the Knights of Columbus, and we did meetings over Zoom during COVID. I found COVID quite peaceful; we did fine through it; there were fewer distractions. I entertain so it hasn’t affected me too much.”

“We didn’t stay indoors or obey those directives. We got COVID thanks to our grandkids, minimally affected, slight flu-like infection. Took Vitamin D and other medicines and did well. Our experience was very different from others sad experience in our peer group. The fear experienced was profound even from the perspective of little children. My husband and I decided not to be affected by COVID, not vaccinated, we took vitamins and minerals to stay healthy and not to go overboard but just to take care of ourselves. We did not isolate, as little as possible. We minimized the affect COVID had on us.”

“Surrounded by my family.”

“I had no problems with loneliness. I kept busy.”

“Frustrating, manipulative media, boring without communities.”

“They have been fine, but I missed the social contact, but we survived.”

“Very exciting doing Christian Refugee Relief work for the Knights.”

“Not that bad, we coped with it. We helped others. Very active in community.”

“Experienced discrimination because of unvaccinated status, but not lonely, generally very good.”

“Fine, ignored COVID, highly involved in community.”

“I’m active as I’m a trustee on a school board, so I had a fair number of meetings on zoom, and it was hard not to see people in person, it was depressing without contact. I am going to see one of my sisters who I have not seen in three years. There was a certain amount of loneliness and depression. Now things are better.”

“They were not too bad because I had friends from church. We would go to Mass and then have coffee at the house.”

“Things didn’t change that much for her.”

“Frustrated that they couldn’t fly, couldn’t go to restaurants, but not lonely; spends a lot of time with ten kids, ignored COVID restrictions.”

“Positive—really involved in church, lots of family, felt very blessed.”

“Frustration with our Federal Government, some isolation from family but we did our best to overcome it and abide by the rules, happily could work through the whole time except for the first three months.”

“I don’t have time to be lonely—however, I have experienced true loneliness in my teen years along with a deep depression (nothing since then).”

“Actually fun... spent time meeting new people on Zoom, learning from courses, walking more, and meeting some neighbours... praying more.”

“Have close family, so have not experienced loneliness.”

“Not lonely... have family near me but frustrated at silliness of government decisions.”

“Overall good, as I continued to see family and go to church.”

“I live in a close community, so I was not alone.”

“They have been frustrating in the same way as for most Canadians, but I have fared well thanks to many opportunities and the ability to continue to be active.”

“Lives in retirement housing, so wasn’t lonely.”

“Basically fine, haven’t seen family which lives in Europe, couldn’t go to sisters’ funeral. However, I live with my family and haven’t followed most the COVID rules, so it hasn’t affected me much.”

“Generally good. Have lots of family that checks in a lot.”

“Not great, lost my job, felt discriminated, but well-supported by family.”

Group three: Those who had a spouse or partner, visitor and/or friend, a pet, or felt at peace with their beliefs/faith, which ultimately helped them to carry on.

“Actually, very good! In August 2020, I got married and I think having a partner saved me from the loneliness and depression I would have experienced if I had been alone. The wedding was planned prior to COVID so not as a result of it.”

“It’s been a bit lonelier as I couldn’t visit my relatives as much, and I am single. It has been frustrating not to be able to go out to dinner and have fun with friends. Yes, it has been a bit isolating however, I still have a business, and so I keep busy working online. Too much time spent working though, so it caused some added stress and health problems, like back ache and knee pain etc.”

“Became more self-absorbed.”

“Frustrated with lack of social activities but has a good support system.”

“Occasional frustration—periodic amusement—wonder at the work of the Holy Spirit opening new doors of opportunity.”

“Personal Support Worker (PSW) care, hospital situation—because of COVID it has affected many people in different ways. New ‘breed’ of PSWs may not have the same dedication as previous. Hospital situation is terrible. PSWs did not want to go to his house but avoided going to the hospitals. Now, he is experiencing the shortage because sometimes they did not have any PSWs to send you to help with personal care, homecare. Is especially concerned about the new PSWs coming in with more demands, less compassionate, less patient (mainly what he has been hearing).”

“Rather quiet—without visitors; but lucky I have a dog to keep me company.”

“I have fared very well. My husband is a stroke survivor living at home. As a caregiver, I am given three hours per day for respite. This allows me time to run errands, visit family etc.”

“Some isolation. My husband and I live together in our home, which we enjoy. However, our children and grandchildren live far from us.”

“Really, none of these except for maybe frustration with people’s conspiracy theories, unwillingness to believe in pandemics and the utter violent behavior to medical staff who worked so unselfishly and above the call of duty.”

“During the isolation period, I stayed home and ordered prepared food online. When it was okay to go out, I went to church, out to do shopping. There is a bit of loneliness, but I am able to contact friends via phone or email.”

“I’ve been blessed to have a close friend with whom I have coffee once a week. I live in a strata complex (55+) with lovely neighbours. I have not been that adversely affected.”

“No because she still has her husband but there were times of isolation.”

“Felt isolated from the world and a little lonely but it wasn’t that bad because he had his wife.”

“The only people I saw were my sisters, they’re all busy, but the only people I saw were those at the bank, pharmacy, people at the park. It felt very isolating.”

“It has not been as difficult for her as others, because I don’t have any parental obligations. I participate in two outdoor exercise groups, so has been able to maintain connection through that and church services. There have been some negative effects.”

“Hell. Limited areas, limited time, we cannot do whatever we want. We lost our freedom these last two years. Very frustrating. My Christian faith, prayer, staying in touch with others, going to church when it was ‘allowed’ by our governments. I have stayed sane by being angry at the totalitarian lengths our governments have gone to in order to keep us isolated from one another. My mother (RIP July 31, 2022), also a senior, was isolated in her seniors’ residence, and from 2020 to 2021, her mental and physical health went into a precipitous decline. During the lockdowns, I got into my car and went wherever there were people: Costco (we were not socially distanced; why were our churches shut down when we were socially distanced?), went for walks, prayed, and stayed as active as I could. Went on the internet and Facebook to share my frustrations and what I knew about what was going on: global totalitarianism being imposed by our governments, public health



‘experts’ and officials, doctors. I learned as much as I could about what was going on with COVID by paying attention to the scientists and doctors who were de-platformed and demonetized by our governments and Big Tech. I was forced to take two vaxes in order to visit my mother in her seniors’ residence and had a rather severe adverse event after my second shot in June 2021: a red, itchy rash all over my trunk, arms, and groin area, which lasted for over six months. I reported it to Toronto Health.”

“A time to press in even more to God and to look around me to see how I could be of help to others.”

“I’ve been ok, my faith keeps me anchored. I am accustomed to living alone. I have limited contact with others. I’ve been ok, coping quite well.”

“Frustration over discrimination, hard to visit sister-in-law.”

“It was an opportunity to grow with God.”

“Disappointed with government—lockdowns.”

“Not too bad, has a TV.”

“Lives on a farm so felt a little cooped up.”

“Lives on a farm, strong church family, so okay.”

“Difficult, his wife and mother passed away.”

“Cruel for elderly people because isolated.”

“Difficult not being able to see grandchildren.”

“Frustrating due to having to get vaccination.”

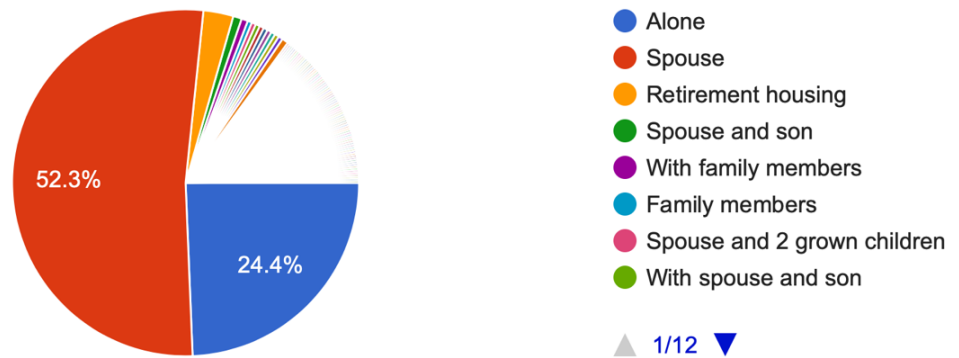
“I have not minded being alone, myself, but I have been appalled by the near ‘imprisonment’ of seniors in their homes and, especially, in

institutional settings, including being denied access to family members and loved ones when critically ill and dying. It has been unconscionable that loving, caring human contact has been illegal, and seniors have been isolated and unable to receive compassionate respectful involvement from those who love them.”

“Really lonely since my wife died a month ago. COVID wasn’t a big deal.”

Do you live alone, with a spouse, retirement housing or with family members?

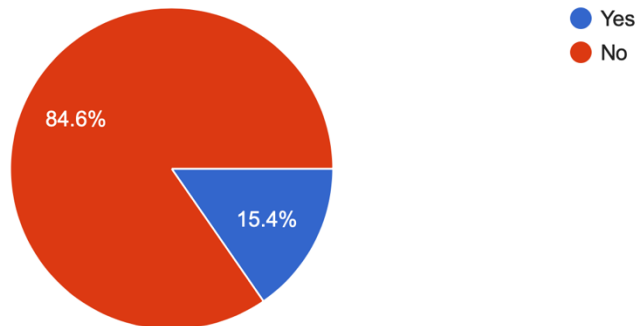
501 responses



Responses here include 24.4% (122 people) who lived alone, 52.3% (262 people) who lived with their spouse, and the remaining 23.3% responded that they were living with someone else which included a child(ren), grandchild(ren), retirement housing, sibling(s), other family members, pets, etc.

Has your living situation changed in the last two years?

501 responses



***If yes, how has it changed?***

Responses of those who replied “Yes” included: moving/relocating, downsizing from a house to an apartment accommodation, children moved back in, spouse passed away, medical/health problems or issues, taking care of family, landlord raised rent, moved to retirement housing, moved in with children, family moved out/back in, partner moved to nursing home, moved from city to rural area, as well as ex-spouse moved back in.

Some mentioned “moved from house to be closer to my children,” as well as “moved closer to church,” or into “an accessible apartment.” Other interesting mentions include, “moved to cottage during COVID,” “took care of our uncle who is 90 years old,” “stopped working,” “retired,” “have a walker now,” “installed a lift for her husband,” “could not go south for the winter,” “her children convinced her to move from her hosue to an apartment during COVID,” and “budget tighter due to rising costs.”

Do you currently rely on anyone or need assistance for any daily activities such as getting groceries, bathing, laundry, cooking, pharmacy, banking, self-care, paperwork...?

500 responses



Most replies here mentioned specific instances of help from others which included: Children would help—not now but during COVID, still order groceries via pick up, person uses a scooter, banking, cooking, or ironing as they don't do it. Husband/wife would assist their spouse with common chores and errands like cooking, cleaning, etc. Common responses included the following from those who replied "Yes":

"Friends help me get groceries and meals are prepared for me."

"A lady comes in twice a week to help with my husband so I have three to four hours on those days to go out and do things."

"Health care worker ten to fifteen minutes daily and help with cleaning, bathing, etc."

Orders groceries online and he picks up at the store.

"Children-in-law help with groceries and other activities."

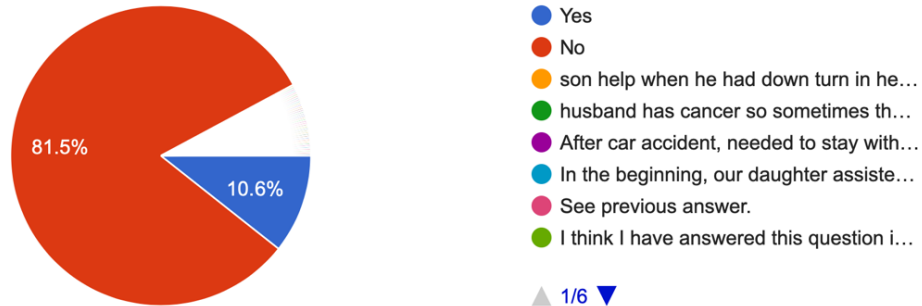
"Family buys groceries for me."

"Personal support worker comes in to help."

"I do not drive so I rely on friends and family for rides."

Did you rely on anyone or need assistance for any daily activities DURING COVID such as getting groceries, bathing, laundry, cooking, pharmacy, banking, self-care, paperwork...?

498 responses



Responses to this question included:

“Husband has cancer so sometimes the Canadian cancer organization would help us.”

“In the beginning, our daughter assisted us with groceries (March to May), left groceries on the porch. June was busy for her as a teacher, so we started to get our own groceries. We had visits with people in a garage, etc. It was so unreal.”

“Last house was group home, so the staff helped with all of that stuff.”

“Thank God, I was able to assist others, mainly seniors, in getting groceries, driving them to church, appointments and to the train.”

“Had a lot of delivery of groceries.”

“Friends brought groceries.”

Neighbour bought his groceries and left outside for him.

“Family helps out with different things.”

“Had someone come in to clean once a week.”

“Relied on friends and family for rides.”

“Partially, I needed help at the beginning, but then it came back to normal.”

“Learning and getting all the new apps.”

“Just free time to carry out outside necessities: banking, shopping, medical supplies.”

“I have mobility issues, so some household chores I cannot do. Also, I had cancer last year, so my husband drove me to my treatments in the city.”

“Volunteered to assist others in our senior apartment building with errands, etc.”

“We need help maintaining the property and preparing meals.”

“Finances, transportation, groceries, house maintenance, gardening, pulling plants, seeding, weeding.”

“Needed grocery delivery for first months of COVID.”

“I have vision problems; I rely on my sister to help.”

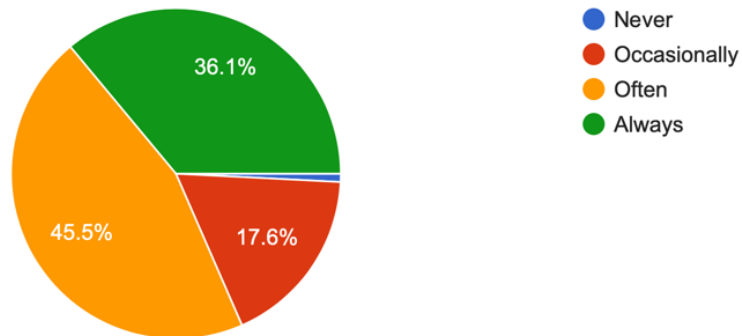
“Meals; I have Meals on Wheels deliver food.”

“Shovel snow, yard work, cut grass.”

“Banking, pharmacy, translation, paperwork, groceries, transportation, cooking and cleaning.”

### How often are you contacted by relatives or friends?

499 responses



### Is there anyone you try to avoid? (Calls from or visits? Why?)

493 responses



Those who answered “Yes” responded with the following:

“I try to face the issues head on.”

“Duct cleaners, Bell, and Rogers.”

“Anyone with an autoimmune problem, like my sister in Toronto because it was a distance for us. There was no vaccine and there was a lot of fear.”

“People who had their shots.”

“Certain neighbours; they have abused me because of my disability, ‘don’t like to see a guy in a wheelchair’.”

“Visits—I am undergoing cancer treatments.”

“Begging calls from candidates for election.”

“The vaccinated are anxious to be with the unvaccinated; fear separates people.”

“But I have no work in my field (film industry) because of my vaccination status and I’ve lost friends due to the same reasons.”

“Phone calls: plague of robocalls, it’s a lot. This is not right; people have a right to their privacy and anonymity.”

“Scammers, fundraisers, telemarketers, politicians, soliciting phone calls.”

“Ex-husband.”

“Those who are vaccinated because of shedding.”

“Some family members due to different opinions on vaccines.”

“Friends avoided us during COVID, so bit awkward now.”

“There has been a fracturing with some people over different views on COVID.”

“Avoid only those who have COVID.”

“Two family members cut her off due to different views on vaccinations.”

“Avoided some family and friends who were angry she didn’t get vaccinated.”

“I don’t answer the phone to numbers I don’t know.”

“Public spaces.”



How often did your relatives or friends stop by to check on you DURING COVID?

501 responses



Additional answers to this question included:

“No contacts because of social distancing.”

“They didn’t have to as we were not incapacitated whatsoever.”

“We tried to avoid contact by others during COVID.”

“We all live together.”

“Not usually stop by but they came by. I didn’t expect people to check in on us.”

“It was by phone since no one wanted to pass COVID on to us.”

“They know very well that my capable daughters and sons are willing and able to help in any way they can, and I welcome their concern and their help.”

“Very occasionally, usually the other way around.”

“During the first phase, they were not allowed to come and visit me.”

“Rarely; sometimes happened through email if I missed a fitness class.”

“No need. I am very fortunate to be an active 73-year-old who lives with my husband. I still supply teach, which has also kept me sane,

because as an extrovert, seeing and being interactive with others in the schools I teach in, helped me not feel isolated.”

“No one ever stopped by but they sometimes phoned.”

“I could not see my son’s U.S. family for two-and-a-half years, but my daughter I saw occasionally. I met with one friend, church ‘family’ weekly or more often.”

“I received daily phone calls from my sister-in-law.”

“A friend called once in a while.”

“Daughter called me every day.”

“When sick with COVID our son and daughter in law gave us drink and soup etc., helped us take care of ourselves.”

“Kids would call, but no one needed to stop by. We live in the country.”

“My children would phone. At least someone came by every week and stand outside; the kids (daughters) would alternate. My son lives further away and lives with boarders, so we didn’t think that was safe.”

***Who normally checks on you?***

“Parents, spouse, children, friends, siblings, and nieces and nephews.”

“I have my grandchildren over every week.”

“I am in contact by phone with many people—relatives and friends across Canada.”

“Your assumption is that I need to be checked—in fact it’s the other way around—you have to watch bias in your questions.”

“A couple of different neighbours, tenants that I live with.”

“My stepmother.”

“Nephew and niece Power of Attorney.”

“No one in particular checks on me; if someone doesn’t hear from me that day, they contact me.”

“My daughters call regularly.”

“Nobody. I call my sisters or my cousin, but they don’t call me.”

“Co-workers, church family.”

“Both myself and my husband are totally independent and self-sufficient, so not in need of checking in on. However, we do live in a small rural community where us neighbours we keep track of one another.”

“Within the complex, if your curtains were not open by 10 a.m., they would check on you.”

“I used to have cleaning lady so she would check on me.”

Do they ask any questions or help you with anything?

469 responses



Answers to this question included:

“They ask her if she needs help with anything and then they help her.”

“They want to know what is going on.”

“They phone to see if we answer the phone.”

“They help a lot because they ask us how we’re doing and if we need anything.”

“Most ask how we are managing or how we are, and we reciprocate.

“Often, we initiate the contact with others to enquire how they are doing.”

“My daughters help me with computer questions and my grandchildren know much more than I do about the computer (which keeps updating—just when I’ve learned what it expects from me (smile).”

“We helped each other with shopping and conversation outdoors, phone and FaceTime or Zoom calls.”

“They need help themselves.”

“My sister helped me buy a new mattress.”

“Sister-in-law and I discuss any issues we’re facing in our lives, discuss options to deal with them.”

“When I had a medical emergency, my daughter and a friend brought food and drove me to Emergency. But thank God, normally my health is excellent.”

“If I ever needed anything I could call my neighbours or my church girlfriends.”

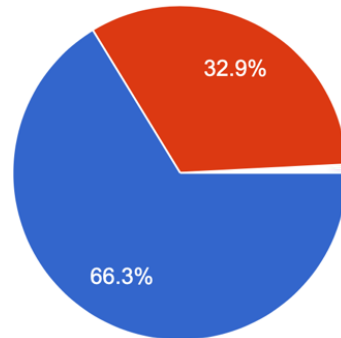
“There is a senior’s support group led by a lady from church and she calls us regularly and asks us questions.”

“They ask for childcare.”

“Help with groceries.”

### Do you currently take medication?

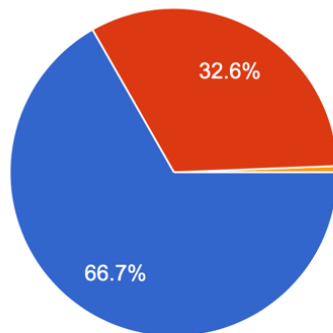
492 responses



- Yes
- No
- Regular medications
- Only vitamins
- Did not want to answer
- Did not want to answer question

### Did you take medication during COVID?

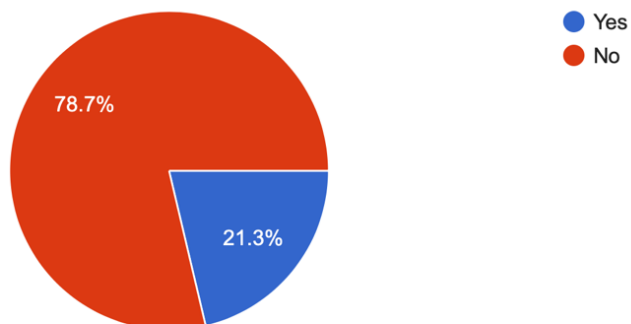
487 responses



- Yes
- No
- Maybe

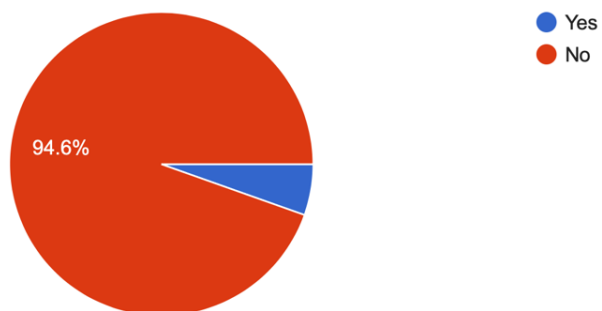
Does someone deliver them to you?

366 responses



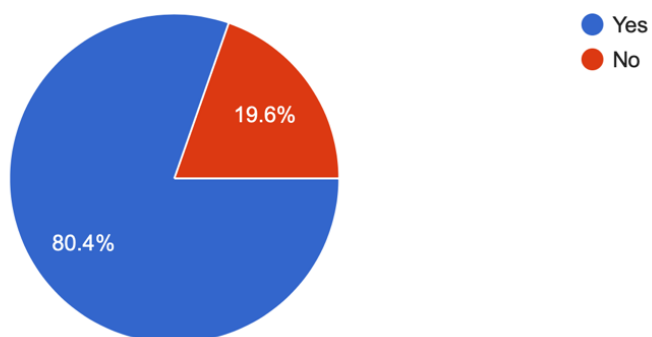
Does someone help you manage the medications?

369 responses



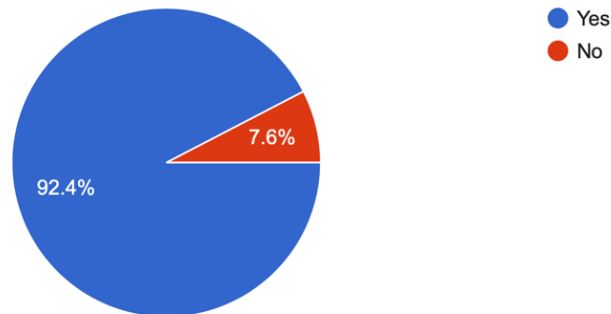
Do you perform daily/weekly exercise?

499 responses



Were you able to go out for a walk to get some fresh air? (During Covid) ?

499 responses



***How often were you able to go out for walks or when was the last time you went for a walk?***

Answers varied between two times a day, every day, last year, two times per week, and variations in between.

Some participants replied:

“Not often but I get air.”

“Don’t walk because of bears nearby.”

“Don’t go out unless I have to, but try to get exercise in my home.”

“I stuck out my head but if during the winter, I didn’t go out during COVID. No not really; I became a more stay-at-home person rather than before.”

“Not really; I can’t remember the last time I went outside on a walk.”

Others partake in various sports or activities that include:

“Curling a few times a week.”

“Swimming.”

“Plays golf three times a week, walks once a week.”

“When the weather is warm and sunny, I go out in my power wheelchair. As an indication of how often, there is now over 4200 km on the chair’s odometer.”

“Three times each day; just finished my afternoon walk with dog.”

“During the lockdowns I pretty much went on [very] long walks every day. I was extremely frustrated by what our government was ‘doing’ to us. I knew that the lockdowns were unnecessary and very damaging and that there was a global ‘Great Reset’ agenda at play.”

“I am unable to go out for walks because I shattered my hip and displaced some vertebrae last year, so I am still recovering from that, but I do garden in my backyard as much as I can.”

“I live in an apartment building so if I go for a walk, I make sure I stay close to home. I use a walker when I go out.”

“Often ignored COVID rules.”

“I climb stairs in my building instead of walks.”

“Farmers, so get a lot of exercise.”

“I do line dancing, yoga, 10K steps per day.”

“Bikes.”

“Gym.”

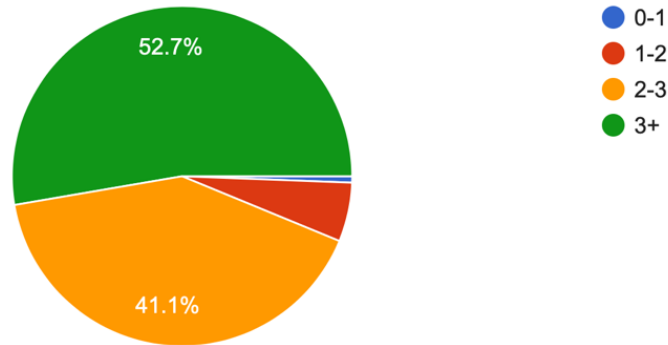
“I cannot walk without the use of a cane(s). Sometimes I use a transport chair when the weather is inclement and in dry weather, I use a power wheelchair.”

“I did not count the times I went for walks. I walk about two to three times during the week. I have to get back to my daily walks. In this daily walk, I have become lazy. This has nothing to do with the last two years.”



### How many meals are you eating a day?

499 responses



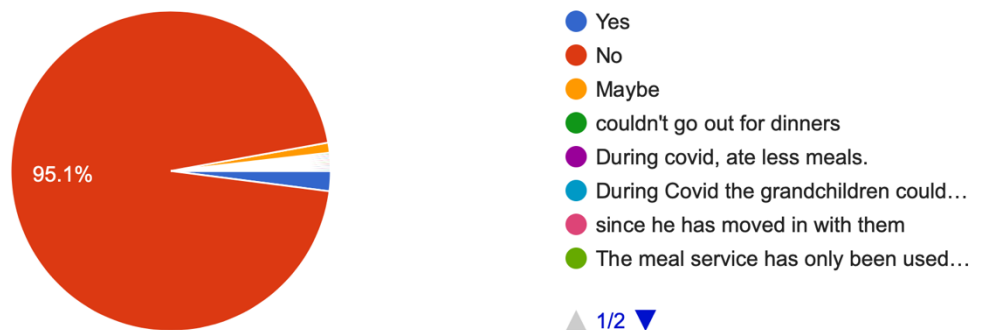
### ***Are you the one preparing the meals? If not, who prepares them?***

Responses included the person being interviewed, their spouse/partner, kids, a cook comes into cook for them, live in housekeeper/helper, or they have ready-made frozen meals to just heat up for main meal, order prepared meals or go buy from the food court, granddaughter or grandson, occasionally picked up takeout/restaurant delivery, Meals on Wheels, care home.

Other responses included no, retirement support in her building helps her.

### Did that change during COVID or after?

494 responses



***Did that change during COVID or after?***

“Couldn’t go out for dinners.”

“During COVID, ate less meals.”

“During COVID the grandchildren could not come. Now they do!”

“The meal service has only been used recently; in the past four months.”

“I cook and freeze them. I don’t eat junk food; I eat a balanced diet.”

“During COVID they would leave the food in the basement lobby, so less accessibility.”

“I started making bread, so we ate more and gained weight.”

“Yes, but not COVID-related; I developed mobility problem with left leg in January 2021.”

***How did you get your daily essentials like groceries?***

Answers included: drove themselves, spouse/child(ren) bought them and dropped off, ordered online and then picked up/curbside or delivery, taxi, sibling(s), stepmother, other family member, neighbours, friends and volunteers helped, shopped for others, etc.

Other feedback included:

“By doing major shopping once a month as limiting the number of times entering stores.”

“PSW who comes to look after my husband... my respite time.”

“If I am feeling up to it, I will go, if not I put in an order at my local Co-op and they bring it to me.”

“Close friend takes me to get groceries and the seniors’ meal program delivers meals.”

“We went out and bought our own. The fear was greater than the infections.”

“Did our own shopping... or friends/family when in isolation.”

“I went into the store at non-busy times.”

Has the increased cost of food affected your eating habits?

500 responses



Responses included:

“Sometimes I cannot buy the things I once loved because it is so expensive.”

“We’re concerned and appalled by it. Extra expenses from grandson who is being paid for with school, which eat into our savings.”

“It affected how many times I got to the store, and how much I let go to waste.”

“I noticed the prices went up, but I can still get what I need.”

“Eat more lentils and less meat.”

“I go to the food bank now, have never done this before.”

“Not eating as many fresh vegetables.”

“Has to borrow money for groceries.”

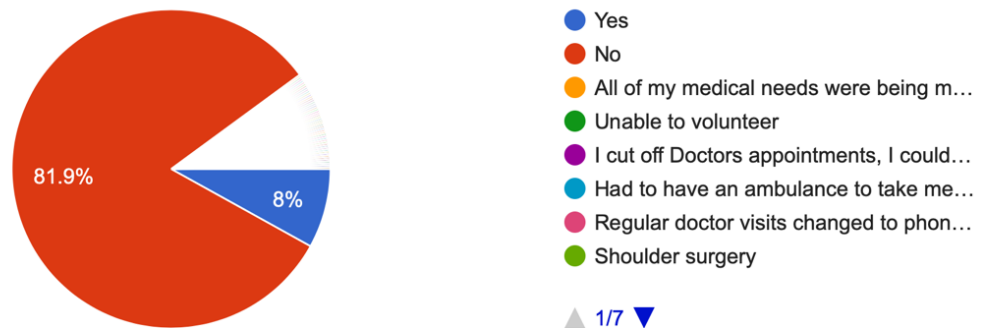
“Cannot buy as many organic foods as before.”

“I noticed; I watch what I buy, and am more careful with purchases.”

“We took more greens and veggies than we used to.”

Did you require any medical assistance for any needs that were not being met? (During COVID; for example appointments, exams or procedures that ne...ere not able to due to lockdowns and closures.)

497 responses



Additional feedback included:

“My psychiatrist only has virtual appointments to this day. Sad state of affairs for the mentally ill.”

“Two awkward falls required lengthy emergency room waits but my daughter or son drove me there and stayed the course with me, sometimes for many hours stayed.”

“The frustration, I tried to book appointments for blood work but it took too long and there were protocols that were still in place.”

“Overdo for physical check-up.”

“Had to drive six hours to NB for medical appointments.”

“Health declined due to not being able to see doctor in person”

“Had to go to Emergency often.”

“I was fortunate I was able to go to a neurologist and get the tests done.”

“Some tests were delayed.”

“Had a back injury and couldn’t get seen in public healthcare; went to private clinic.”

“Doctor neglected me, switched me to another doctor.”

“I had to beg to get surgery on my arm during COVID.”

“Appointments further spaced apart so had to go to Emergency due to this.”

“Believes my cancer was diagnosed later than if things were normal.”

“Appointment cancelled with family doctor and dentist.”

“Found it upsetting that it took so long to get appointment with family doctor.”

“Chiropractor was closed.”

“My husband’s appointment with a specialist was cancelled.”

“Had to wait longer/harder for appointments.”

“Was not able to get procedure done.”

“Minor surgery was delayed, still hasn’t been done.”

“I have asthma, takes too long to my doctor.”

“Difficult to get a family doctor and to be referred to a specialist.”

“Elective surgery was delayed.”

“Waiting list.”

“Waited a year for an appointment.”

“Couldn’t get seen because of vaccination status but found another doctor.”

“I have deferred some things that probably should have been looked into.”

“All of my medical needs were being met. I have a surgery and oncology appointments, I had everything done right away. I’m OK now.”

“I cut off doctors’ appointments. I could call in but didn’t need to go.”

“Had to have an ambulance to take me to Emergency for a kidney stone issue.”

“Regular doctor visits changed to phone calls or Zoom. Cancer treatment was not affected, as far as I could tell. I was very impressed by the service I received.”

Do you currently require any medical assistance for any needs that are not being met?

498 responses



Specific answers included:

Scooter for his back.

“I can’t find a GP. My old one was retiring. Where have all the doctors gone? Is it that they don’t want to be involved with MAID?”

“Doesn’t have a doctor.”

“Needs a prescription and waiting for doctor appointment to get it signed.”

“Cannot get a family doctor so drives an hour to see one.”

“Still waiting for elective surgery.”

“Still difficult to get appointments.”

“Long wait times for needed surgery.”

“Rehab and OT for hand surgery recovery.”

Are there any areas of concern for you? Your health, mental wellbeing, spiritual life, family or relationships, finances, estate planning?

494 responses



Specific answers included:

“It’s wonderful.”

“Health, I have some skin cancers which I am recovering on.”

“I’m pretty content. I do worry a little a bit about healthcare as I’m in my 70’s so will I have access if anything should happen.”

“I have no reliable next of kin. I wish I could make arrangements for my affairs—even if I am hospitalized—what about my dog. But can’t find anyone willing or whom I trust.”

“During COVID, even the church that I attend was closed. I was able to watch the Mass on television, but I was very isolated.”

“Estate planning.”

“Work.”

“The churches were closed for months; I need to be close to a church. That was awful. I found that really difficult; it changes your outlook.”

“Because I’m not a public worker, I didn’t have any many issues.”

“I’m not making enough money in my business, so my finances are really tight, as I only get CPP and OAS, and it’s barely enough for rent.”

“Not really, but I wish I were closer to family—they live in other provinces.”

“I deal with depression.”

“Would be nice to have someone to talk to more often.”

“Have started doing online counselling.”

“Trying to keep my mom healthy.”

“Very worried about our country and the direction it is going.”

“Finances.”

“Rent is going up, needs to look for another place.”

“Concern because of my age, arthritis etc., but I feel I have more aches and pains. I am concerned about the future, I do not want to live with my sons or live in a nursing home. I do what I can to stay back to normal. “



“I do not have family doctor.”

“Mental wellbeing; down periods come and go since wife passed away.”

“We have many kids and concerns around that but otherwise we’re ok.”

“I am looking for a job.”

“Waiting for knee surgery (will take approximately two years).”

“Everything is better now. During COVID it was lonely. Very. I wasn’t sick, or anything, but I felt so left alone.”

She is concerned about grandson’s mental health.

“Yes, everyone should have ‘areas of concern’.”

***If “Yes,” please explain.***

General and most common answers included: concerns over one’s health, specific health issues, chronic health conditions, deteriorating health, family difficulties, health and well-being of spouse, child(ren), family and friends. Other family concerns include grief over loss of loved one(s), and care for spouse if primary becomes ill as well as concern for the future.

Financial concerns included worry over the economy, inflation, recession, their personal or family finances, having to work to meet expenses, estate planning, launching a business, etc.

The verbatim included the following:

“Finances since my spouse was terminated due to COVID mandates and is still not employed. I experience stress in my marriage and other personal relationships caused by differing views on COVID vaccine, mandates, etc.”

Medical health concerns mentioned doctors and specialists not being available, aging, mental health, mental fog or “long COVID,” vaccination

discrimination, family separation due to health or mandates, family doctors not taking new patients, MAID (medical aid in dying/euthanasia), medical health system, vaccines for children.

Social concerns included lack of hugging and going out with people for lunch or theatre, concerns for widowed persons to establish new friendships, interests, hobbies, being in touch with others and not feeling alone or lonely, etc. Additional social health concerns included being separated from family, not being able to see family, family relationships and breakdowns over COVID, not being able to help family, worried about family member with disability.

Such accounts encompassed the following:

“Would like to be in touch with a seniors group near my location so that I could get together and meet with others my own age in my own area.”

“Insufficient contact with grandchildren. Used to be with them often. Now not as much.”

Spiritual concerns included churches being closed, spiritual well-being impacted due to closures and separation from faith life, desiring more of a faith-based community, family’s spiritual life, enhancing one’s spiritual life.

A senior recounted the grounding her faith brings her: “I’m fortunate to have an active prayer/spiritual life (I’m a Catholic) and praying about my frustrations, handing my concerns to the Lord, has been very helpful for my mental health. I am fortunate to be quite physically healthy and I have insisted on personal visits to my doctor. Online is not acceptable to me.”

Concerns over future included:

“I worry ahead but I try not to. My husband says to live in the present; I think mental health did suffer during COVID. When you are not in front of people directly, human contact gets lost, so you do not have as much

human contact. This also has passed. I worry about the training that medical staff are getting based on the standards of health care. People having to pass exams and cannot pass, how will this affect health care. I worry politicians are making decisions about health care that are really crucial. They have to tell the truth, science matters.”

“Worried about the direction the country is going.”

Worried about grandbabies.

“I am worrying for my freedom in the future.”

“Concern about the lack of trust of our leaders and the disunity being created amongst our friends explained earlier—tight finances due to lack of regular work.”

“Worried about the well-being of the world.”

“I sometime question what is my purpose in life now?”

“Government corruption.”

“Life always has areas of concern, but these are not specifically COVID-related.”

***Has anyone asked you to sign strange documents or have they been acting different around you?*** 99% responded “No,” 1% responded “Yes.”

Specific responses included:

“We have a will and POA and continuing care, so we’re taken care of.”

“Frequent spam emails that I ignore.”

“My job locked me out of my workplace. I went to court and was not heard by the judge. Very disappointed in our court system.”

“I am terrified of nursing homes and most hospitals. I don’t trust doctors or other medical staff anymore.”

“I am increasingly forgetful. Unless I write names down, they go in one ear and out the other.”

“They pressured me to get a COVID shot, but I didn’t.”

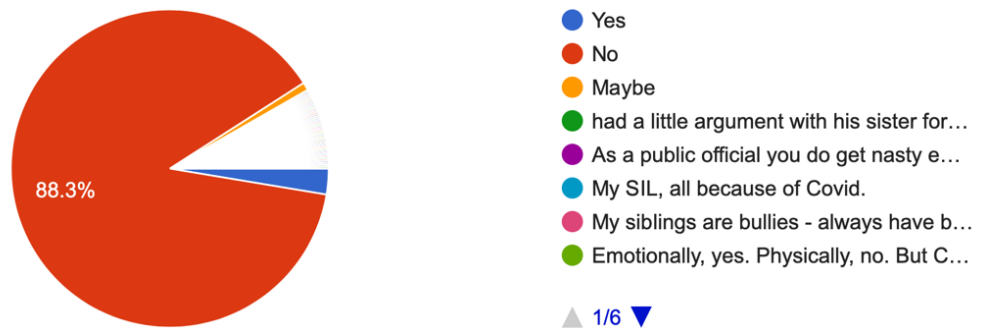
“Some family disagree with my stance on COVID.”

“Feel that there are so many scammers out there that you need to be really careful especially on the Internet and with people that do sometimes come to your door and approach you. Try to be very careful of this but it is getting so they are getting harder and harder to spot as scammers. Very careful not to give my information to anyone.”

“What are ‘strange documents’? Is this a strange document?”

Has anyone harmed or hurt you? Do you feel hurt by anyone?

497 responses



Specific responses included a predominance of answers relating to COVID-19: hurt by friends and family over different opinions on COVID, discriminated against because not vaccinated, “the divisiveness has been hard,” feelings hurt because of things said about masks, mandates / discrimination measures, seeing exclusion at church due to masks, lost friendships due to differing views on COVID, etc.

Specific phrases provided to the surveyors were as follows:

“The only hurt or harm I’ve experienced is at the hands of our government officials and health care officials. We have been lied to about early treatment (there IS early treatment which people with COVID were denied) and ‘safe and effective’ vaccines, in reality ‘experimental drug therapies.’ I also feel hurt by our mainstream media who bought hook, line, and sinker, and disseminated, a mendacious narrative about COVID which, even though, according to Bill Gates who said a month or so ago, COVID is ‘only a bad flu.’ I had COVID in February 2020 and April 2022: a nasty flu that lasted in both cases about a month. I take Vitamin D every day and when I feel a cold coming on, zinc and massive doses of Vitamin C. Why have our public health officials not made known these preventative measures to stave off COVID?”

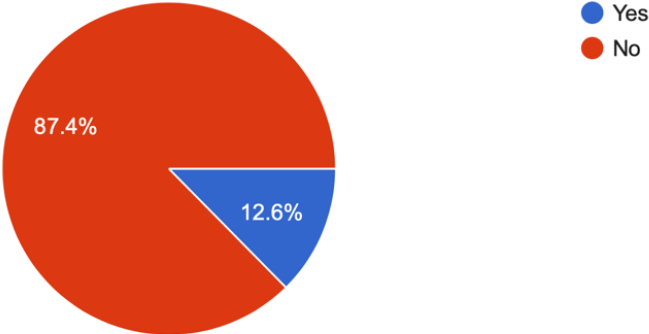
Additional specific feedback included: strained family relations, siblings being bullies, rejection, “normal, everyday hurt from insensitive people”.

“As a public official you do get nasty emails, but that would be all.”

“No one ever attempted to hurt me PHYSICALLY. I feel hurt by little in-person contact with children and grandchildren. Some relationships cause me pain at times, but that has been the case for years and has not really been impacted by COVID.”

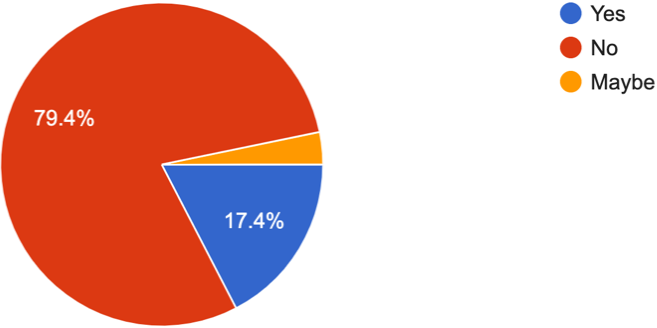
Does anyone help you with your finances?

499 responses



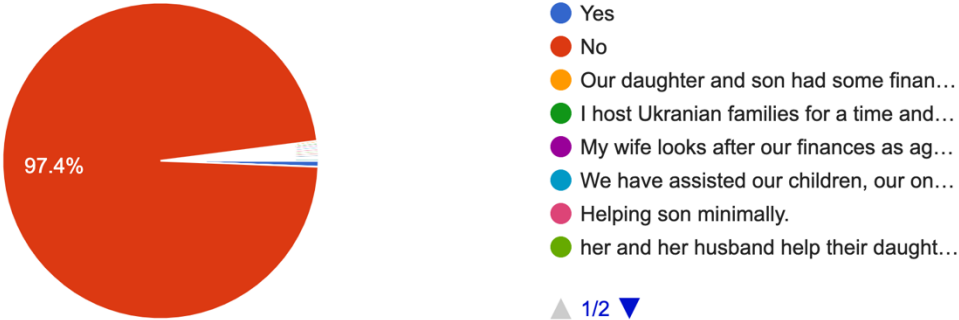
Is there anyone who depends on you or relies on you for financial support?

495 responses



Is anyone using your financials for themselves?

495 responses



Specific responses included: “Helping kids sometimes,” “a son’s medical bills (had a stroke),” one person said “I host Ukranian families for a time and give them money for what they might need.”

There has been an increase in reports of financial scams and fraud during COVID. Have you been a victim of a financial scam or fraud during COVID?

498 responses



Specific answers included:

“Some years ago, long ago. Not recently.”

“I’m quite cautious around phone calls and strange emails, etc.”

“They are getting smarter, the scammers, so it does bother me. It makes me suspicious of people. I used to canvas for Cancer Society, but I wouldn’t do that anymore.”

“I had calls from strange places. But I don’t have a computer and so can avoid those that come online.”

“A scammer over the phone had my credit card info, but I changed my card immediately and nothing was stolen.”

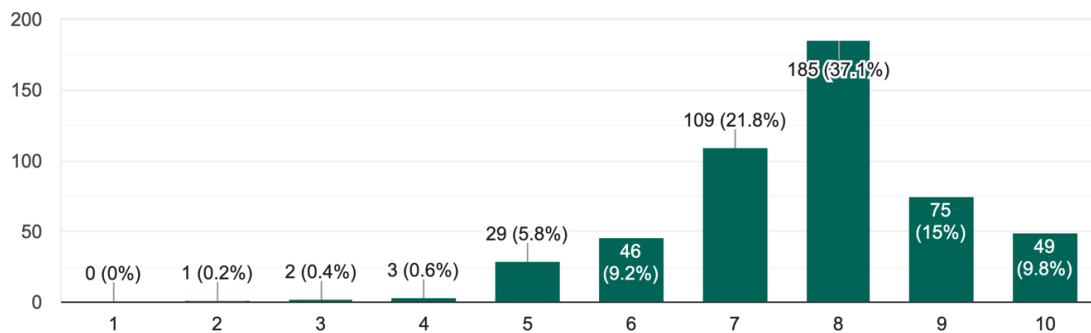
Her daughter intervned before she was scammed.

“There have been many telephone and email attempts to defraud me. These have not been successful because I am aware of these scams.”

“This is why I don’t answer the phone. I called the police.”

How would you rate your daily mood?

499 responses



***How would you describe your mood?*** (Happy, excited, alone, sad, frustrated, mad, etc.) Scale rated on a level of one to ten: ten being the highest and best. Majority of responses were positive in feedback.

Feelings included: happy, normal/average/OK, sad, positive, contented, joy, excited, mixed emotions, good, grief over loved one passing, alone/lonely, peaceful, frustrated, joyful, hopeful, worried, uncertain, grateful.

Other quotes included:

“I have to get a new SAD lamp. I am usually OK. Things would be a lot better if I could find one true friend I could sit down with and have a true heart-to-heart. I had that in Ottawa. I could hop on the bus and we would talk on the bus and I would be alright. There was a friend who was a spiritual director of mine. They were good friends. There are people who are worse off. There are many things I am thankful for which I think about it. “

“Frustrated and angry at how our government and public health officials have handled COVID; I am still angry at how COVID negatively affected those who were not able to work from home, those who lost

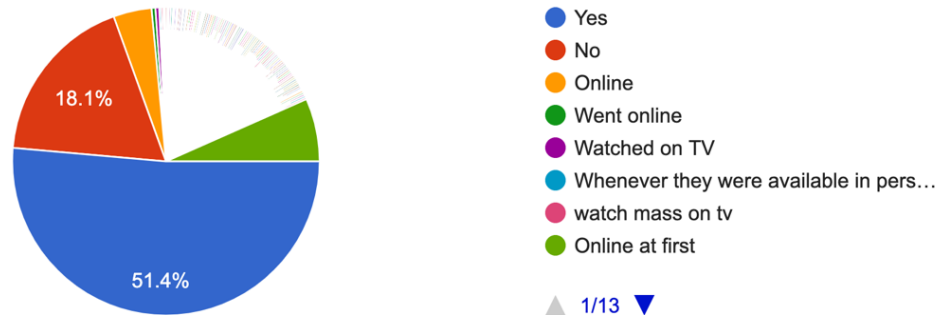


their livelihoods with nowhere near enough support from government officials who didn't lose one pay cheque."

"Would be happier with more in-person contact with grandchildren."

If you do, were you able to attend your religious/spiritual activities during COVID?

498 responses



These responses included the following:

"During COVID no since could not go to Mass. Would watch Mass on TV, online or via Zoom."

"I never missed church; I ushered people into church during COVID. I never let COVID get ahold of me."

"Mass daily on TV."

"I don't attend religious services or activities."

"I could go to church during COVID. We have a community building and we had church there."

"To a large degree, although there was that time of complete lockdown, which was absurd when you consider that Costco never shut its doors. Going to Mass is an essential service!"

"Only online which was terrible. When malls were open to 25% capacity, our churches were only allowed 10% capacity, even though we

were socially distanced, masked, and stringent disinfecting protocols were in place. It's clear to me that Christian churches were targeted by the powers that be."

"Not at first but switched churches."

"Church was closed down for about six months."

"Services were held outdoors, and they sat in their cars during winter."

"Found an excellent church that was not shut down during COVID."

In response to the question whether their faith community helped them in any of their needs: "78.1% replied "Yes" and 15.6 % replied "No," the remaining 6.3% included the following responses:

"My faith has helped me in all my spiritual needs; we had a Franciscan priest and he helped me very much over past two years."

"Feel closer to God as I get older."

"I think there would have been a huge vacuum in my life if there hadn't been services via Zoom."

"It has been helpful for sure, but it's a big social part of community so I ran a social every month over Zoom. I sing in the choir."

"Unsure what this question is asking? Religion and prayer always helps me in my struggles."

"We check up on each other; offer what help we can; and pray for the well-being of those entrusted to our prayers, and for the whole world of the living and those who have died."

"My beliefs keep me strong and positive, for the most part."

“The church was a place of support or fellowship; but during COVID it was closed. When my husband passed away I tried to connect with people at church but that was also not a great experience.”

“I attend Zoom Mass and discussion group.”

“A few delivered meals when I broke my shoulder during COVID.”

“I wouldn’t have been able to cope if I didn’t have that. My faith keeps me anchored.”

“Online helped but not the same, Holy Communion is not there.”

“Found it very hard to attend church online, missed being at church.”

“Good friends want to help but I am a tough old Scot.”

“Yes, but only when the churches were open.”

“Mostly I find strength in God by myself.”

“Online streamed services helped some.”

Have you had any thoughts of leaving this world, during COVID?

496 responses



Specific responses included:

“Didn’t get worse but didn’t get better.”

Once when his doctor took him off a certain medications.

“I pray constantly. I leave it to God when is His timing.”

“My mother lived to 95. We were with her when she passed. She used to say, ‘I’m ok if I go, but you can’t help it,’ but you know you have less time ahead of you then before. Negative self-talk is not good. I tell myself I have reasonable health and I have to stop the idea that I always need to help, do something i.e. volunteering. My father died in a car accident when he was 58, so life can do that to you as well. If my husband comes late, or I get a strange call, immediately I tense up. I absolutely think about it, but I don’t dwell.”

“I am in no hurry to depart from this life. As a matter of fact, I hope my life lasts another 30 years or more, God-willing: so that I may bring many people back to the roots of their faith and to bring other people to the Church.”

“I believe in reincarnation, so I sometimes think it would be easier to start over. But I would never commit suicide.”

“I was unconcerned about getting COVID. It is very nice here, but what is to come is better. No hurry.”

“Thought about space flight but cannot afford it.”

“Only, if God should call me home.”

“Tried to pre-plan funeral during COVID restrictions. Prepared will and documentation for executor. However, there was no suicidal ideation.”

“When a friend died of COVID, I thought a lot about heaven.”

He thinks about heaven/afterlife, but would not consider taking his life.

“I’m always aware that this life is temporary, but other than that, no.”

“No more than at other times. It’s not a nice world.”

“Only as part of my thoughts of meditation and consciousness.”

***If yes, how often were those thoughts?***

Specific responses included: often/regularly, not often, sometimes, not suicidal, every now and then, never, a couple times, once a week.

The persons interviewed had the following to report:

“During the pandemic it depended on how bad it was getting at the time.”

“Fairly often, because you hear about people dying, especially in the nursing homes. We were called elderly, ‘65-year-old’ person. That was considered elderly, and yet it is not that old. I certainly don’t dwell on it.”

“As a teenager, when deeply depressed, I would ask God to take me in my sleep. I have had no such thoughts since that time.”

Often, because she thinks of heaven.

Often, but she could not do that to her daughter.

“Sometimes. I missed my grandchildren so badly. I felt unfulfilled. I wondered if it was ok for me to go to the other realm.”

“Thought the pandemic was going to kill us all.”

***How did you deal with feelings of depression or negativity during COVID?***

Spiritual responses included: put faith in God, talked to God, prayed, meditate, expressing gratitude, read Scripture/Bible, attended Mass/church, read devotionals.

Social responses included: spending time with family, child(ren), friends, call each other, nurturing relationships, went for a drive, joined a ladies group at church and watched movies, having grandkids over.

Physical activities included: walking, reading, playing guitar, learned piano, drawing, time in nature, biking, listened to music, Polka dancing, exercise, webinars, tried to keep busy, baking, gardening, knitting, sewing, crocheted, puzzles, swimming, hockey, baseball, go to YMCA.

Other responses included: struggled through it, sleeping/slept, took medication, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), spoke to a professional/psychiatrist/psychotherapist, watched TV/YouTube, ate chocolate, played board games over Zoom, audio books, reading old letters and albums, tea, anti-depressants, learned Spanish, worked, cried, talked to daughters.

Seniors recounted the following:

“When the news got overwhelming and caused anxiety, I cut back on listening and reading the news.”

“I ate—and spent money doing it. Gained a lot of weight. The food was my comfort—not to say that I didn’t pray and practice my faith, but I was deeply troubled about the lies and scary misinformation that was being forced on us by the media and everywhere.”

“I certainly reprovved invoking the War Measures Act—juvenile, dangerously repressive behavior for a statesman... prayed for all concerned.”

“Positive thoughts. Tried to deal with like-minded people.”

“Prayed for the Spirit to change my mindset and provide hope, patience, understanding and God’s guidance during these unprecedented and uncertain times.”

“My husband died in December of 2020, after nine months of restricted activities. I was not able to see him in the hospital, except for one hour a day for the last six days of his life. That was extremely difficult, and I was angry, but not really depressed!”

“If problems arose, I contacted my prayer partner for prayer support and the Lord delivered me. I put on a mantle of praise for a spirit of heaviness. There is always something for which to praise God.”

Has made other friendships with people who have similar views.

Got rid of their TV five years ago, got information from other sources.

As long as she took time with God each morning and read The Bible, she would be fine.

“Met friends outside in the parking lot to spend time together.”

Did not buy into the fear. Lived her life normally; so was not depressed.

“Did nothing, stopped watching the news, too much confusing information.”

“Remind myself I am worth a lot.”

“Sewed 220 masks to give away.”

“Choosing gratefulness.”

***How do you presently manage when you are feeling depressed or lonely?***

Answers herein overlap with answers from previous questions. Additional answers include:

“Drink beer and water to brighten mood, when I ask God to take me...”

“I’m comfortable with myself, I am not lonely often. My day is very structured, so I am very busy. I’m a Grand Knight and have taken a new direction of my Knights, especially on life issues.”

“Faith, prayer, family, volunteering with my church and other groups keeps me going.”

“My emotional state is relatively stable and even-keeled.”

“I have 13 grand and four great-grandchildren. I am in great demand when other childcare arrangements are needed. I am fortunate to still be physically able to help out. I am active in my parish as well. and other than feeling sad about the state of the world right now I don’t believe I have feelings of depression and I really am never lonely... perhaps too busy at times.”

“Watch a funny TV show or movie.”

“Get grandkids to come, visit with grandkids.”

“Presses on.”

“Share experiences with spouse.”

“I tell myself I am not going in that direction. I have been married 59 years and we continue to prop each other up. We like to make sure we stay strong and positive. I taught at a Bible college for 40 years and I still teach one class a week which keeps my mind active and engaged.”

“Adoration.”

“Listen to Christian choirs.”

Spoke to his pastor; will start seeing someone.

“Talk to my spiritual director. Talk to friends.”

“Helping others.”

“Go to our U.S. home.”

“Antidepressants, socializing with friends, listening to Baroque music. If really depressed, I visit my excellent family physician.”



“Regular exercise. Watch my diet. Volunteer. Contact a friend. Attend Mass. Read emails.”

“Rest, therapy, prayer, sunshine, nourishment, supplements, medication.”

“Change my activity.”

Do you currently have any thoughts of leaving this world?

491 responses



Specific responses included:

“I look forward to eternity with Jesus but want it to be His timing.”

“40 years of thoughts.”

“I’m on His time. I listen to Lectio Devina, which recently had a focus topic of not knowing when our time will come. I pray to be faithful to the end.”

“If I do, they’re not frightening.”

“Nothing negative. I would like to prearrange my funeral to ease that burden on my children.”

“Of course, but He will decide when I am ready to leave. My life is in His hands.”

“Just considering how it may go when my time comes.”

“Only, if God should call me home.”

“Not recently/often. Very rarely. It is a passing thought, to think: ‘wouldn’t it be great if I had a great friend or a person to talk to’. People who are close to me make a big difference.”

“Aware of my own mortality but have no suicidal ideation.”

“I look forward to eternity with Jesus, but want it to be in His timing.”

“I am ready to leave this world if I have to, but it is not out of fear.”

“No, but when the time comes I know where I’m going. I’m not ready to leave yet.”

She thinks of going to heaven.

Thinks of it but could not do that to her daughter.

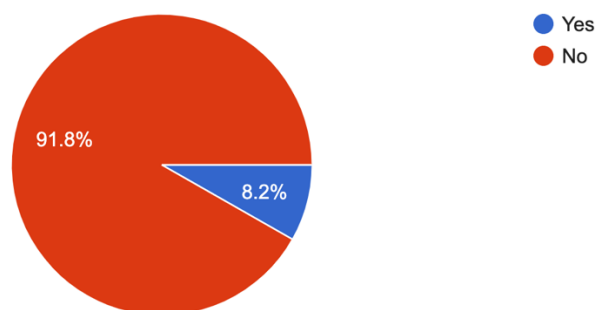
“Is happy in this world.”

“As above, always aware that none of us knows when our time will come.”

“No more than at other times.”

Are you registered with any agency/business to help you with any personal needs?

498 responses



***If yes, what do they help you with?***

Specific answers include: PSW (mostly daily activities: dressing, bathing, groceries, cleaning, meals, medications), help for spouse, supplements, alert button if I fall, Intermittent Fasting Group, Veterans Affairs hearing aids, housekeeping/household maintenance, personal care, Caregivers Connections, mental health and wellness, CBT, financial planning, mental health, transportation, Meals on Wheels, leg braces, diabetes medication delivery, and mowing the grass/yard work.

Additional mentions included:

“Poirier & Associates handles my finances, well-recommended by my eldest and checked out by one of my grandsons’ daughter.”

“VON (Victoria Order Nurses). For working out online classes.”

“Public health worker helps with medical needs.”

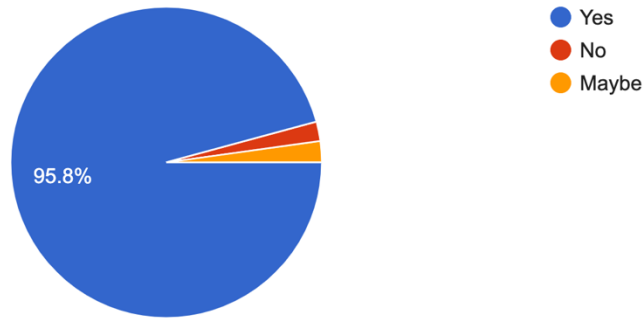
“Retired teacher, there’s a helpline.”

***What is the agency/business?***

Paramed	Mana Tech
Cancer Clinic	Veterans Affairs
Senior’s Home Supports Programs	Attendant Service Program – governmental agency
Recovery College Canadian – mental health and wellness	Doctor
Bank	Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)
Seniors of Stoney Creek	Prairie Mountain Health
Home care	Victorian Order of Nurses
Interior Health	St. Elizabeth’s
Home health	Paratransit
Fraser Health	Voila
All-inclusive retirement home	Meals on Wheels
Service for Seniors	Personal Support Worker

Catholic Women’s League (CWL)	Bayshore
Personal use – for a book to be distributed to family members	Interior Health BC
Diabetes wellness	Knights Of Columbus
Shoppers Drug Mart	

Do you feel you have an adequate support system in your life?  
498 responses



***How do you feel your needs could be better met, with what type of support (if any)?***

Most common responses included:

Contacts lists of adequate nursing homes	Health agency contacts
Senior support in doing taxes	Housecleaning
Getting together with other seniors	Better-trained PSWs
Financial assistance	Family doctors nearby
Job opportunities	Assistance in managing day-to-day life
Doctors contact list	Mental health support and contact list
Women’s Bible study group	Free or low cost housekeeping
Better support from government pensions, exemptions, WSIB, etc.	Transport assistance/driver
Disability access to veterans’ services	More social interaction with seniors

Information on seniors programs and support services	Information of free help to move furniture, take heavy items away from the house, or sometimes clean hard places, or take big garbage items to dumping grounds, etc.
Organization benefits	Grocery delivery
Financial and estate planning	Activity programs for seniors
Stronger church connections	Government funding for medicines/treatments
Phone lists for seniors relating to quick emergencies, e.g. flooding issues	Rides to church/visits
Talking to likeminded individuals	Activity programs for seniors
Prayer group/prayer line	Assistance in light housekeeping
PSW, respite, companionship, physio and exercise	Home care options or referrals to suitable organizations
Local social interactions	Financial support
Snow removal/shoveling assistance	More wheelchair accessibility in general
I want my doctor to be more available	Social opportunities

Additional feedback included:

“To establish freedom in Canada this is only what I need.”

“Getting rid of vaccine mandates altogether.”

“If governments kept inflation down, end recession, stop lockdowns.”

***Are there any ways that seniors could support other seniors? If so, in what ways and how?***

“Phone calls are amazing. Texts and emails are fine but nothing like another voice on the other line. We should be old fashioned and use the phone more.”

“By meeting virtually to discuss and share.”

“It’s important to continue to have contact with those who are in senior homes as well as those in the community. If seniors are allowed and capable of visiting nursing homes, this is very much needed. If not able to visit the homes make arrangements with the home to compile a list of seniors who would really benefit from a weekly phone call. Even though seniors in homes are surrounded by many people they are still very lonely. They have many people around them but still feel invisible. For them to have someone just to listen to them without judgement is very consoling to them.”

“The volunteer work we’re doing is very helpful: helping seniors get groceries and driving seniors from Elliot Lake to Sudbury/ Sault Ste Marie, etc. It’s a 200 km drive, for some to get medical services, which we are part of a group to help them get there.”

“Last night, at this Abbamania event, with a raffle, for older adults, is excellent. That is really good to be around other seniors. When I am around younger people, including my younger children, how could we get here? I always thought I was cool, after church we go for breakfast with a group. I always feel judged by my kids, and grandkids. I feel supporting myself is very important. Our kids get tired of hearing about us.”

“Socializing.”

“Stay in touch, keep an eye on people that might need your help.”

“Seniors could help each other by getting together, go out for coffee and get together.”

“I suggest seniors get involved in their local seniors association. Most held online programs during COVID and are anxious for people to get back to meeting in person for various activities.”

“Make a conscious effort to keep in touch with seniors within your neighbourhood. I volunteer at seniors’ care residences. I plan to start a seniors’ lunch and Learn within my church once a month which we had pre-COVID or something similar.”

“It is necessary to keep seniors occupied with challenging activities to keep their minds sharp, or else their intellectual abilities will have a tendency to deteriorate.”

“Praying together. Talking/listening. Zoom calls.”

“Some could get a residence together so as not to be alone.”

“Social situations and volunteer company.”

“Share time and listen to seniors. Volunteer. Joy shared is doubled. Trouble shared is halved.”

“Yes, and I try to visit, or phone other seniors, to organize an outing, even to Tim Hortons, is sometimes a very pleasurable experience. Transportation is often a big thing.”

“Social events. Volunteer together. Teas. Social. In person get-togethers even if just for coffee.”

“Discussion groups, activity and interest groups, phone circles.”

“Visit with them.”

“I am member of a senior’s social club. Seniors help each other with rides to the centre. Phone calls during COVID. Online yoga classes during COVID. The seniors centre arranges education from useful parties such as police, telephone company regarding scams, first aid class, monthly \$6. Meal cooked by seniors, weekly movie. Outings pre- and post-COVID.”

“We grow food and share tips; we visit places in small groups. Travel together.”

“Serving is much better than being served and is also the best anyone can do for their own mental and spiritual health. So I would encourage anyone to serve in any way they can!”

“Having been recently widowed, connect with other widows.”

“Senior resource centres, church women’s groups.”

“Internal monitoring system that does not impose on privacy if this was possible.”

“Put God first. Praying for each other. Groups such as Bible studies.”

“Staying positive and active around one another and looking out for each other’s needs.”

“We need to address loneliness. Perhaps an increase in faith sharing groups or hospitality groups, not only between seniors but intergenerational as everyone seems to have some feelings of emptiness sometimes.”

“Seniors supporting seniors is important. This also makes me feel I am needed too.”

“Visit shut-ins.”

“Seniors groups at church and in the community.”

“Younger ones visit older ones.”

“We should support seniors who don’t have family nearby.”

“Sharing correct information on COVID. Share the truth about COVID so they can overcome the fear.”

She feels seniors need to hear the true news about vaccines.



“CCC’s *Being With* program is so important.”

“Reach out to others and live your life without fear.”

“Join groups: Meals on Wheels or Friends on Visiting, provide in-person services etc. People who live in town houses get together and have fun. Friendly visiting would be best.”

“Teach them how to use the phone, Zoom.”

“Tell them to stop watching the news.”

“Transportation help.”

“Healthier seniors who like gardening could help those who enjoy but can no longer do the heavier things in gardening. Companionship, drive to movies, dinner out, shopping, etc.”

“Removing visitor restrictions from nursing and retirement homes and from hospitals.”

“Reaching out to one another for social/mental/emotional/spiritual support. Planning times to be together.”

***Is there anything you would like to add or comment on this survey?***

“I’m glad you’re helping seniors. The more you age, the more you realize people need support. I realize our health care system needs more work. My elders like mother and mother-in-law need connection to be well. I hope because of the pandemic people will act and work on this.”

“Nice that people are checking in on seniors.”

“If people have faith, it will help them. We need to trust in Lord, especially before anyone else.”

“Not sure these questions will identify seniors who will need help. Add a question about how can seniors help other seniors.”

“Life is good.”

“The survey is too long.”

“My husband has early dementia, and we have an autistic granddaughter who we have been raising.”

“Seniors should keep active, working and helping one another.”

“I’ve enjoyed doing this. I think it is great you are doing this. People are getting evicted from rental locations, etc. I have little issues. What you’re doing with this survey is very important to help seniors and I know many who are suffering.”

“Cancel government and we will be happy and free.”

“Rather than wait for someone to go to you—other seniors—they need to go out and meet others.”

“Seniors who are relatively healthy and fail to seek others or visit with others, give the appearance that they have given up on life. It needs to be corrected by having others volunteer to visit with them to keep them engaged in conversation and companionship.”

“In hospice work we train our people to listen, listen, and listen even more and we try to match our people carefully—seniors listening to seniors works well etc. That’s not to say that it’s the only way, far be it, but I think that Alex [Schadenberg] is finally on the right track by moving to dealing with loneliness as a major way to deal with MAiD.”

“COVID was a struggle and we maybe worried too much about the safety of COVID and not enough about keeping spiritual needs rights of religion, rights to job security and mental health of the community.”

“Humans are social by nature and it was wrong to make family divided. It is illegal.”

“I am glad that you are doing this.”

“I know that I am one of the very lucky seniors. I am so very fortunate!”

“I think this survey and your work is important. We need to help each other.”

“I think it’s very kind of you to check up on the well-being of senior citizens like me and I thank you on behalf of all of us.”

“I feel so blessed... I am aware that I don’t fit the group you are concerned about except by age but felt I should complete the survey nonetheless.”

“I do know COVID has been extremely hard on many seniors, but we are in a blessed situation in many ways, and have not suffered much, although the social isolation has been a challenge for my husband. I still work relief at a group home, and that was a very important social outlet for me during the worst stay-at-home period of COVID.”

“There are truths hidden, re: experimental ingredients/mRNA in the jabs, how do you address?”

“Accentuate the positive—deal proactively with the negative.”

“It was totally unreasonable to expect anybody to spend every day by themselves, as happened during COVID. Nobody can live like that. I would rather take the risk of having COVID. And thank you for asking.”

“I am a member of a senior’s advisory committee which is a multi-agency group. We assess the needs of seniors and suggest remedies with the appropriate agencies. The library loaned out tablets to seniors in need to enable them to participate in online classes and socializing.

Telephone assistance was provided if necessary. The survey could be valuable for seniors who are housebound and may need a friendly visitor.”

“Many people don’t eat right later in life, like a handful of nuts or canned soup; often because they don’t have motivation. You need three meals a day, but when it’s not needed, you slip into haphazard cooking.”

“We are supposed to have more housing for the elderly. Sometimes in the villages and behind further locations, they are isolated. We need more people to treat them. We have security that goes around and checks on people.”

“Too many seniors, my mother included, were isolated for far too long during COVID. My sisters and I noticed a precipitous decline in our mother’s physical and mental acuity from 2020 into 2021. Then, after her booster shot in the summer of 2021, she had a heart attack at the age of 94. Hospital and rehab stays hollowed her out and we found that we had to do a great deal for her: banking, shopping, and taking her to medical and dental appointments. It was heart-breaking to witness her decline.”

“Just keep on doing good for the seniors.”

“Thanks for reaching out!”

“My wife and I are Christians. We have Christ and we know our eternal destiny. Those who do not are depressed and sad and suffered through COVID. We pray for them!”

“Is there a senior’s support group with shared resources?”

“I appreciate the questions—they can certainly help people to self-examine and to hopefully reach out for help when they acknowledge concerns and fears.”

“We are never too old to serve the Lord. ‘Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.’ I found that when I needed mercy, it was available to me in abundance, thank God. I reminded a dear housebound senior who was feeling useless that she could still pray for the needs of others.”

“Thank you for doing this survey. I hope it helps many people but you must realize that our hope is in the Lord who loves us and gave Himself for us. Also, we need each other. Life was not meant to be lived alone.”

“Thanks for asking these interesting questions.”

She said COVID was the worst time of her life; it was the first time ever that she spent Easter alone.

She feels wearing masks and getting vaccines are not effective.

She feels that Compassionate Community Care is special and helps many people.

He thought COVID was over managed.

“We are part of a community of faith. We have a great deal of help from our faith community, like calling someone to come sit with my wife, who has dementia, if I am out to an appointment.”

She is glad this survey is being conducted.

“People should get on with living instead of being afraid. We only have one life to live and we should not spend it being hunkered down alone and afraid.”

She thinks this survey is a good thing.

She thinks the media is evil. We have to capture the media lying to the public. There was an over obsession with our health during COVID.

She would encourage seniors to live in their own home as long as they can.

“People need more faith and Churches need to support their people in better ways to help feed them spiritually. Trust in God.”

Does not like what the government has done concerning euthanasia.

“I go to a chiro/osteopath/physiotherapist, etc. These are important ways to get the best of treatments. We need to look to see what type of help is out there and be aware of what is out there and how to get in touch with them.”

Is concerned with how the government has handled COVID.

“It was nice to chat with you and thank you.”

“When sick, should be written in chart to not approach this patient about MAID.”

“It’s been hard watching so many friends be gripped by fear.”

“People getting worked up over COVID is immature.”

“It is important that senior’s get together with others.”

“Keep your faith.”

“Felt COVID, especially the first wave, was not handled well.”

“We have a care facility at our church, but all the residents have to be vaccinated because of government. How can we push back on that?”

She was discouraged that she could not see family in States because not vaccinated.

What upset her is the control the government put on everybody.

“COVID caused a lot of fear and division among people.”

Many of the seniors she knows needed a lot of support during COVID because they could not see family.

She felt frustrated during COVID because the information kept changing.

She hopes they will not shut down churches again if another lockdown, feels they are an essential service.

“Lockdowns have been detrimental in so many ways.”

“This is great what you are doing. Helping many people. I know Alex, I support him.”

“Some people at homes are so forgotten and seniors could be if benefit. Music is wonderful.”

“I think you covered everything. Thank you!”

“I want seniors to be informed and skeptical of doctors, given our culture of MAID, euthanasia, etc.”

“I would like to help others and socialize more, but physically impaired.”

“I felt like a second class citizen because I wasn’t vaccinated.”

“Biggest worry is hospitals pushing people into nursing homes. Nursing homes put the most pressure to euthanize.”

“Annoyed that our lives are micromanaged by the government.”

“Lockdowns in assisted living homes were bad. Seniors could not see their families.”

“Seeing seniors in person is the most important way to help them.”

“Lockdowns have really hurt, so has inflation.”

“Better modes of transportation for seniors in small or rural communities. Most people will not drive others, including seniors, as their insurance companies will not cover in case of accidents. I checked with a few companies. Should allow for seniors to be transported especially in communities with little or no transportation.”

“A lot of seniors are looking after other seniors (spouse/in-laws). Assistance in this would be helpful.”

“Where to get information to have help; e.g. dementia, alcohol, both together, is there a call-in line for advice.”

“Keeping busy keeps my brain happy and my body healthy. So far I can still do that!”

“I think governments and other organizations already know the various needs of seniors. However, governments, in particular, are not prepared to provide the necessary funding. They think it is too costly. They say we (society, the taxpayers) cannot afford it. The wealthy can afford it, and so they provide the help that their own relatives need. Damn the poor! We shall all get our rewards in the end! In the next age! Story of Lazarus and the beggar!”

“We live in the country and are healthy and active outside. That has been a huge benefit/blessing during COVID. Also, I work part-time as relief in a group home for handicapped adults. This social outlet was a huge blessing during COVID.”

“I am pleased that you are there/available.”

“Many thanks for conducting this survey!”

“Hope more people take this survey.”

“Keep up the good work!”



# Conclusion

Just as with any age group, the *Honouring Our Seniors* survey captured how varied our elderly across Canada really are. It is truly beautiful to hear from so many Canadians about their lives and experiences during one of the most infamous and influential times in human history: a worldwide pandemic.

Through the survey, the lockdowns showed a wide range of effects on the elderly. Those who stayed isolated often felt depressed and lonely, whereas individuals who had regular contact with family and/or friends often replied they felt content, happy, and hopeful. Another group that was more fragmented consisted of seniors who had a single support person or friend that they connected with or lived with; this included a spouse, partner, pet, or belief in a higher being, which made their time alone bearable.

Each of these individuals had a story and realizations about how their decisions impacted them during and after the pandemic. The results were varied and yet a single theme remained: those who were able to “be with” others in some form or capacity had significantly better feelings about the pandemic, were generally more optimistic, and felt they had stronger relationships. This is meaningful in how we perceive, accept, or respond to calls for separation and its effect on others in the future when another pandemic or outbreak may occur.

The ramifications of COVID-19 were widespread and long lasting. Some attribute “long-COVID” to health affects after the physical disease itself. Others have referred to the emotional and psychological aftermath and its manifestation in people as depression months and even years afterwards. Some lives were lost to the COVID-19 illness, mental health challenges and inability to cope with the lockdowns and influence on their personal or

socio-economic status. Still, the majority were left to deal with the negative impact on close relationships.

The survey showed that those who were able to cope through the pandemic, and ultimately through one of the hardest periods of history, experienced a compounding issue: isolation. This created a foundational framework on how we can better care and provide for the elderly in all situations.

Being there for someone means caring for, providing compassionate support, and looking after his or her well-being, which can encompass social, mental, physical, and spiritual health. When one of these areas is deficient, the entire person is affected. If these needs are not addressed, a senior in particular is at risk of abuse, an issue that also appeared during the pandemic.

Abuse was an issue among vulnerable elderly populations before COVID. The pandemic brought more awareness of the issue.

Although many of the survey responses expressed a concern about the state of Canada due to lockdowns and mandates during the pandemic, seniors also expressed specific concerns about health care and end-of-life care. Some seniors expressed specific fears against MAiD (medical aid in dying/euthanasia). As well, a theme arose of genuine concern for the well-being of others, and the need to ensure individual human rights and freedoms are protected. A noteworthy response sums this up well in their final feedback:

“Seeing seniors in person is the most important way to help them.”

Many seniors expressed that there needs to be more support from other seniors, citing the need to obtain medical help, locate a suitable doctor, specialist, or practitioner who could help with their health challenges.

Many seniors requested help with transportation or travel, such as increased wheelchair accessibility, job/volunteer opportunities, information on seniors programs and activities, and community support services, or even simply having someone to connect with on a regular basis.

### **Follow-Up and Contact Information**

Compassionate Community Care (CCC) sincerely thanks all seniors who participated in this survey and welcomes any questions, comments and feedback. The reader can email CCC at [info@beingwith.org](mailto:info@beingwith.org) and visit our website: [www.beingwith.org](http://www.beingwith.org)

Compassionate Community Care is a Canadian charity located in London, Ontario. We help Canadians with euthanasia and assisted suicide prevention and concerns about end-of-life care/treatment issues via a toll-free, confidential helpline: **1-855-675-8749**.

With the increasing need for this helpline service, we need support to help more people caught in the throes of depression and neglect. There is a real need for truly compassionate whole-person care of those experiencing depression, people who are isolated, the elderly and the dying. If you would like to learn more or can support us in any way, please follow us on social media or contact our office at 519-439-6445. Thank you in advance for your support!

Compassionate Community Care:

383 Horton St. E, London, ON N6B 1L6

Office #: 519-439-6445

Email: [info@beingwith.org](mailto:info@beingwith.org)

Website: [www.beingwith.org](http://www.beingwith.org)

Charitable registration # 824667869RR0001