



British Columbia Public Opinion Poll on Health and Medical Research January 2015



MICHAEL SMITH FOUNDATION
FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

Discover. Connect. Engage.

Contents

Foreword	1
Methodology	3
Leadership and Priorities:	5
Investments	13
Public & Private Health Information	17
Public Engagement	23
About the Partners	29



Foreword

The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) is pleased to have collaborated with Research Canada, other national partners and our provincial counterpart, the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, on the fifth national public opinion poll in the *Canada Speaks* series. For the first time, we commissioned BC-specific results and we are encouraged by the fact that British Columbians are committed to health research and health innovation in Canada despite the economic challenges our country faces in 2015.

In fact, 89% of British Columbians view health and medical research as making important contributions to the Canadian health-care system. And three quarters of British Columbians say health and medical research makes important contributions to the Canadian economy. For an organization like ours that is focused on supporting a thriving health research community in BC that works together to improve the health and well-being of our citizens, this level of support validates and affirms the work we do.

According to the *Canada Speaks* survey, seven out of 10 British Columbians are interested in participating in health research and three-quarters would allow researchers to use their health information as long as their personal information is held privately. That's great news. However, only 16% of British Columbians say they have heard "a lot" or "something" about patients and the public participating in health research, including efforts to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding.

We have a tremendous opportunity to leverage the high level of public interest in health research, but we need to do more to help British Columbians channel their interest into tangible contributions to BC's vibrant health research community.

We have mechanisms at our disposal to move the needle. BC has a strong foundation of patient involvement in health-care improvement through the work of the Patients as Partners|Patient Voices Network, a Ministry of Health initiative administered by ImpactBC, a not-for-profit organization that advances improvement by bringing together public, health care and government to work as partners in building a sustainable health care system in BC.

Work is already underway to expand patient involvement in health research through the BC SUPPORT Unit, a partnership involving MSFHR, the BC government, other members of the health research community and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. The BC SUPPORT Unit will provide services



and connect patients, health-care providers, researchers and decision makers to ensure that more research is focused on and informed by patients.

BC has also recently published Directions for Health Research in BC, a health research strategy that outlines strategic directions and actions that we believe are vital to establishing a strong, coherent and effective research enterprise. Key among those actions is facilitating more public involvement in health research.

I'm confident that the next time we do this poll, our results will show that not only are British Columbians interested in participating in health research, but that an increased larger percentage will know how they can get involved.

The detailed BC results are presented in the rest of this document. The two provincial polls and the national poll may be downloaded from <http://rc-rc.ca/polling/2015-poll>

Diane T. Finegood, PhD
President & CEO, MSFHR



Methodology

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

A total of 652 randomly selected British Columbians, aged 18 years and older, were interviewed as part of this survey.

The margin of error – which measures sampling variability – is +/- 3.8%, 19 times out of 20. Results are statistically weighted according to Statistics Canada's current age and gender Census data to ensure a representative sample of the adult population of BC. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

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



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Leadership and Priorities:

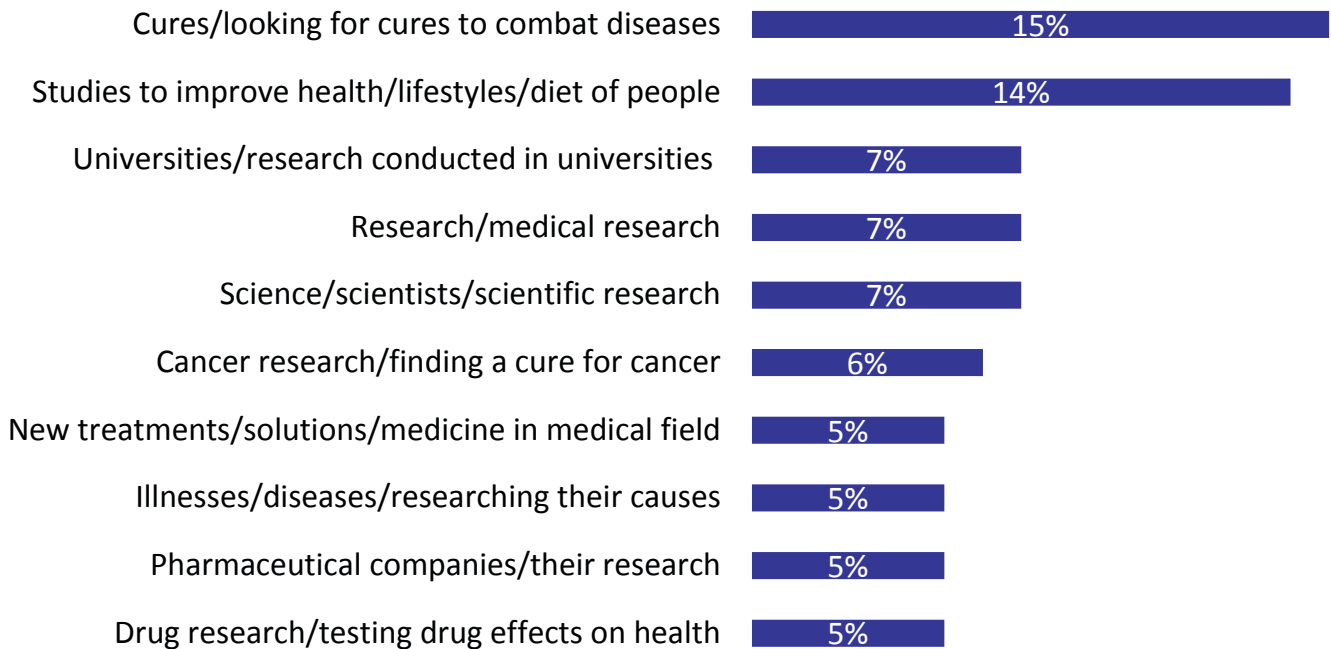
Ninety percent of British Columbians would vote for a candidate who supports improving the delivery of health care, while 81% say they would vote for a candidate who supports health and medical research.

Almost three-quarters of British Columbians say health and medical research makes an important contribution to the Canadian economy.



Top of mind associations with health research

British Columbians first think of looking for cures to combat diseases and studies to improve the health, lifestyles and diet of people when they hear the term, "health and medical research."



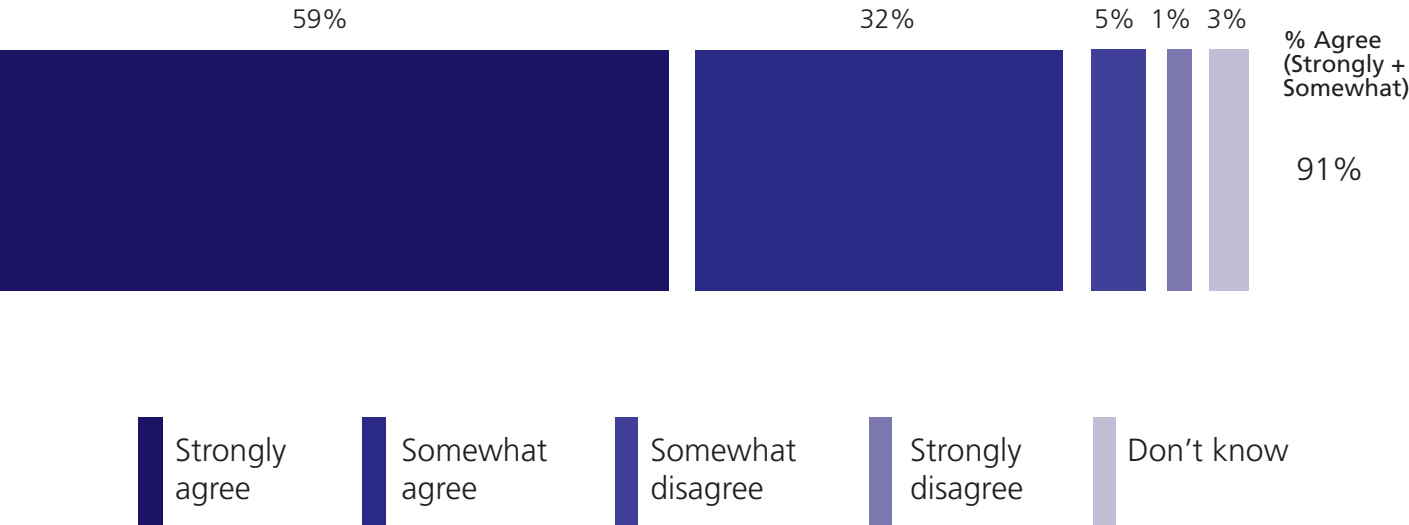
Question 1.

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



Federal support of medical research

A very strong majority (91%) of British Columbians agree that basic research should be supported by the federal government, with a majority (59%) strongly agreeing.



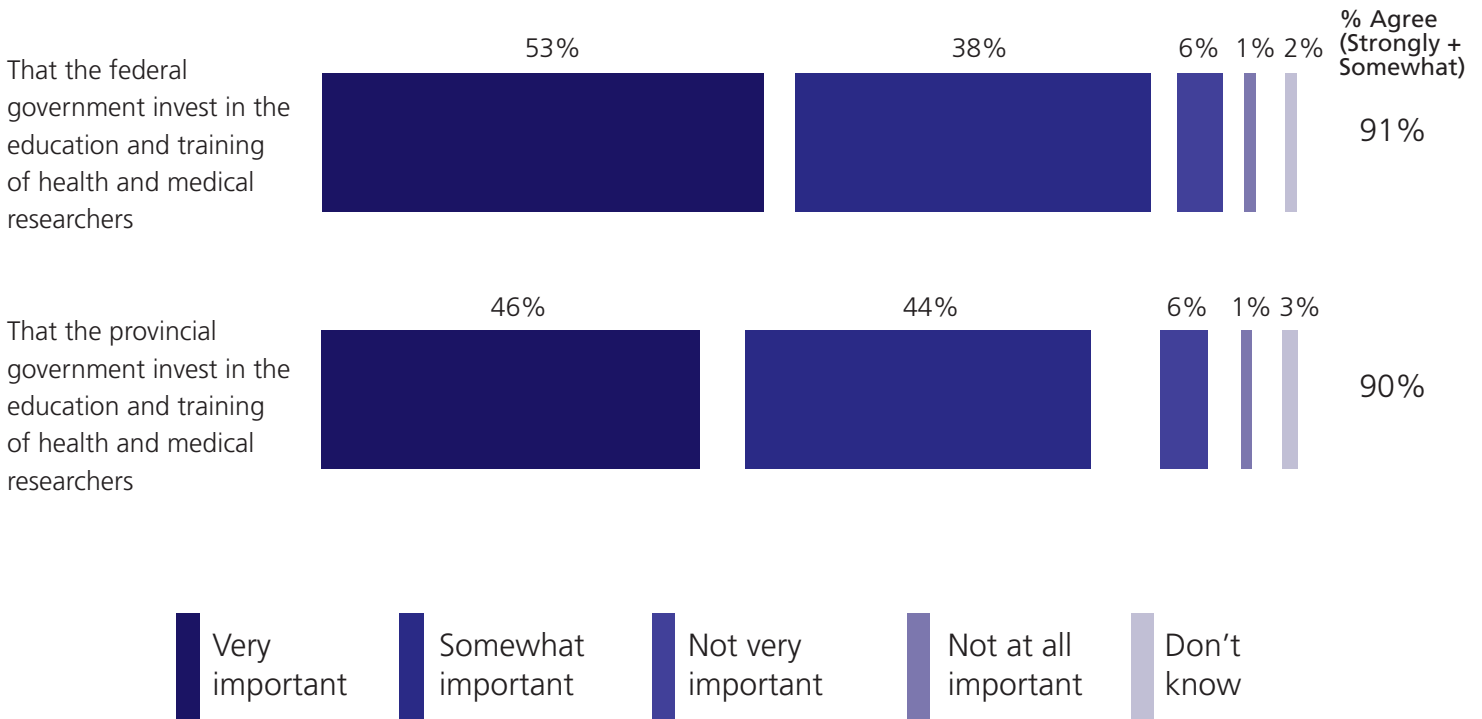
Question 2.

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



Training for researchers

A very strong majority of British Columbians think the federal and provincial governments should be investing in the education and training of health and medical researchers.

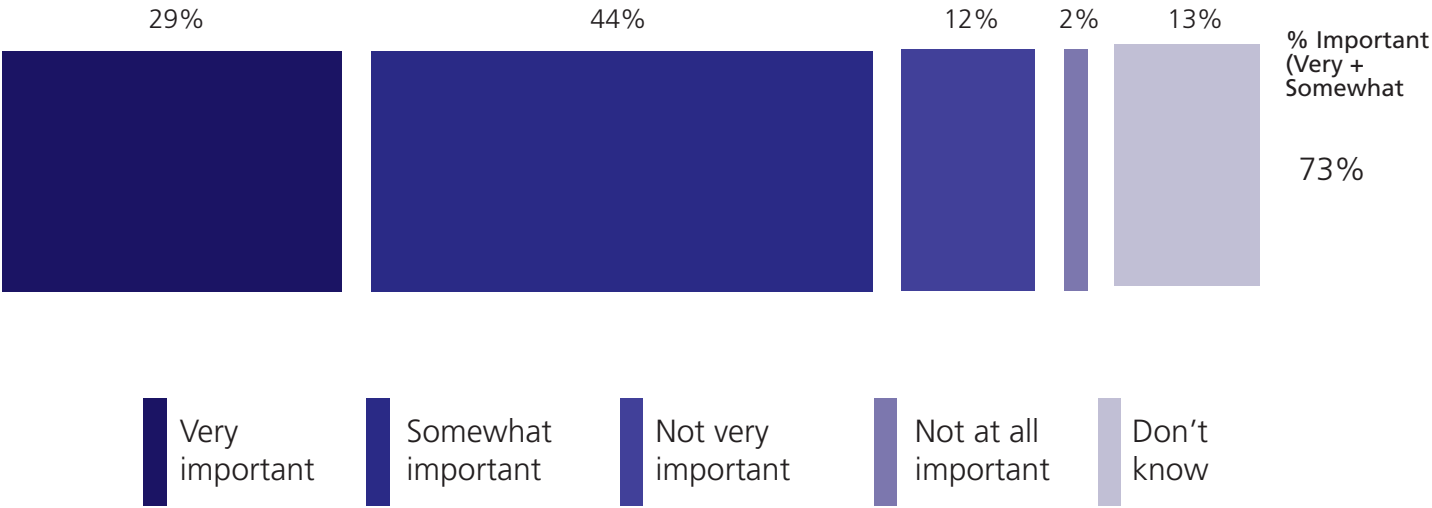


Question 3.
Is each of the following important...



Contribution to the economy

Almost three-quarters of British Columbians say health and medical research makes an important contribution to the Canadian economy.

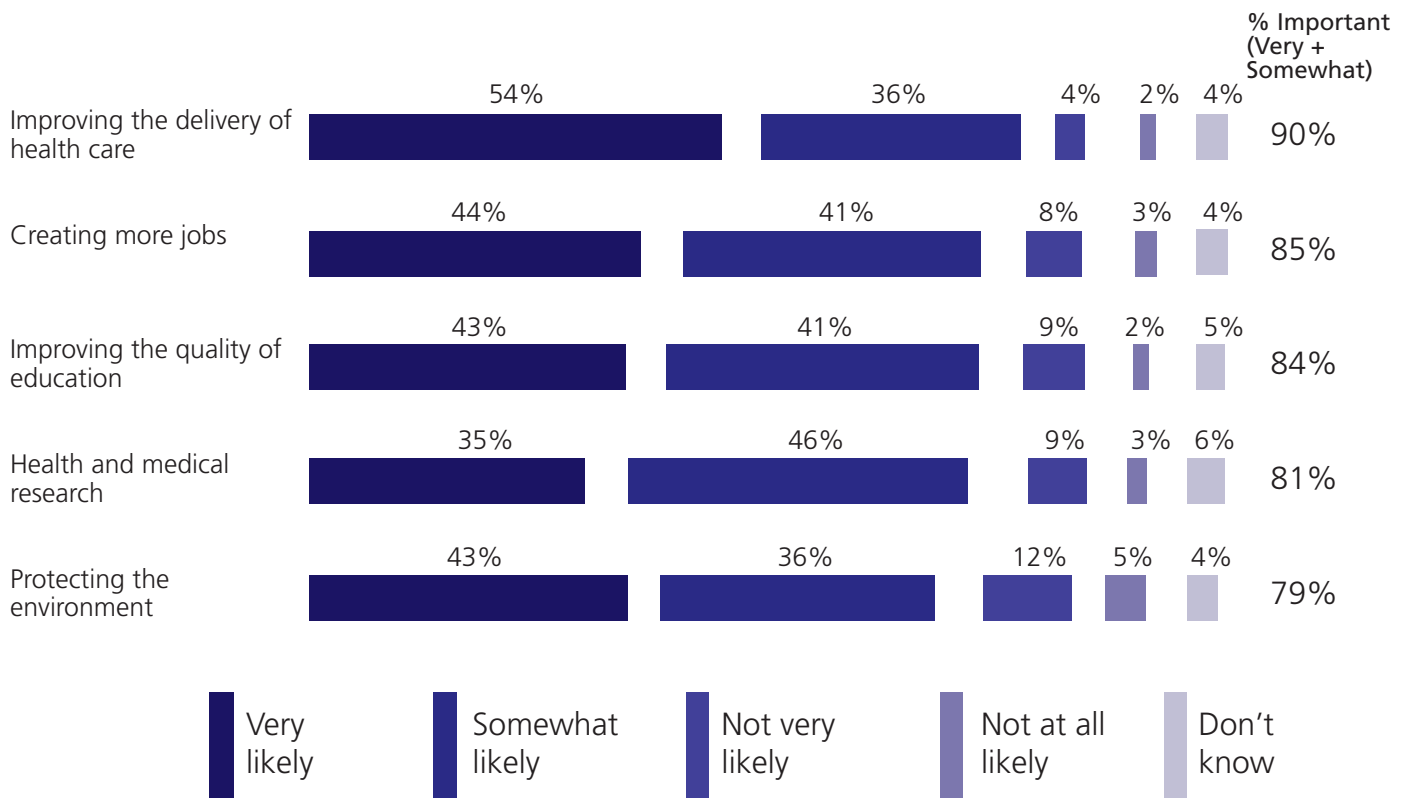


Question 4.
Would you say that health and medical research makes an important contribution to the Canadian economy?



Voter support for funding areas

Ninety percent of British Columbians would vote for a candidate who supports improving the delivery of health care, while 81% say they would vote for a candidate who supports health and medical research. Older residents (55+), who are more likely to vote, are also more likely to vote for a candidate who supports health and medical research than younger Canadians (76%, 18-34).



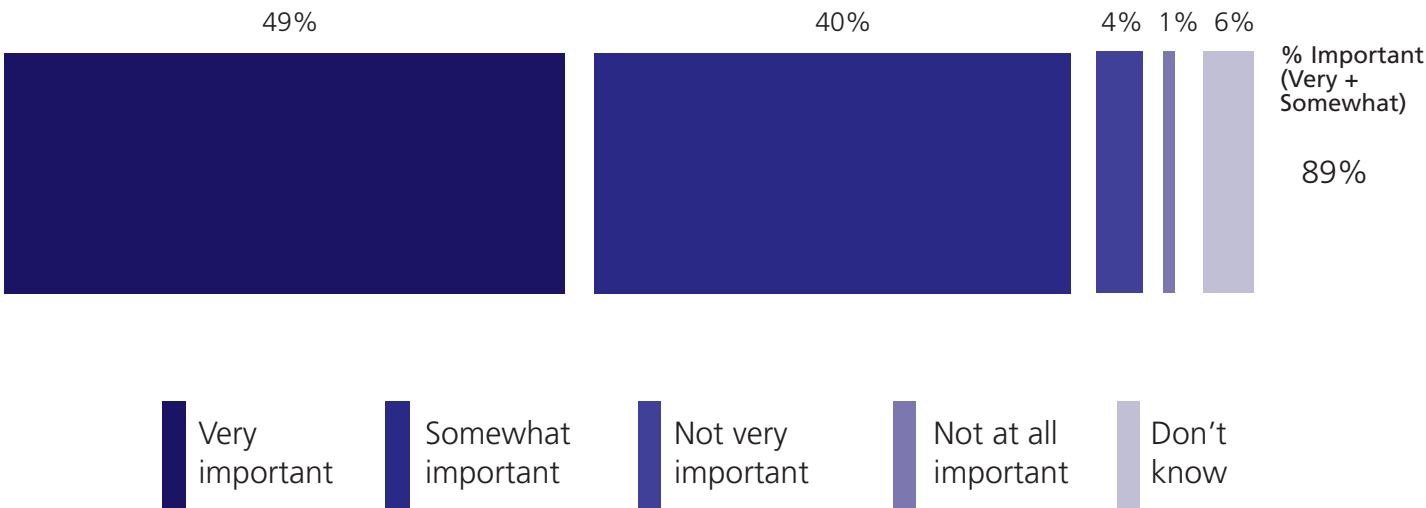
Question 5.

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



Importance to health Care

Eighty-nine percent of British Columbians view health and medical research as making an important contribution to the Canadian health care system.

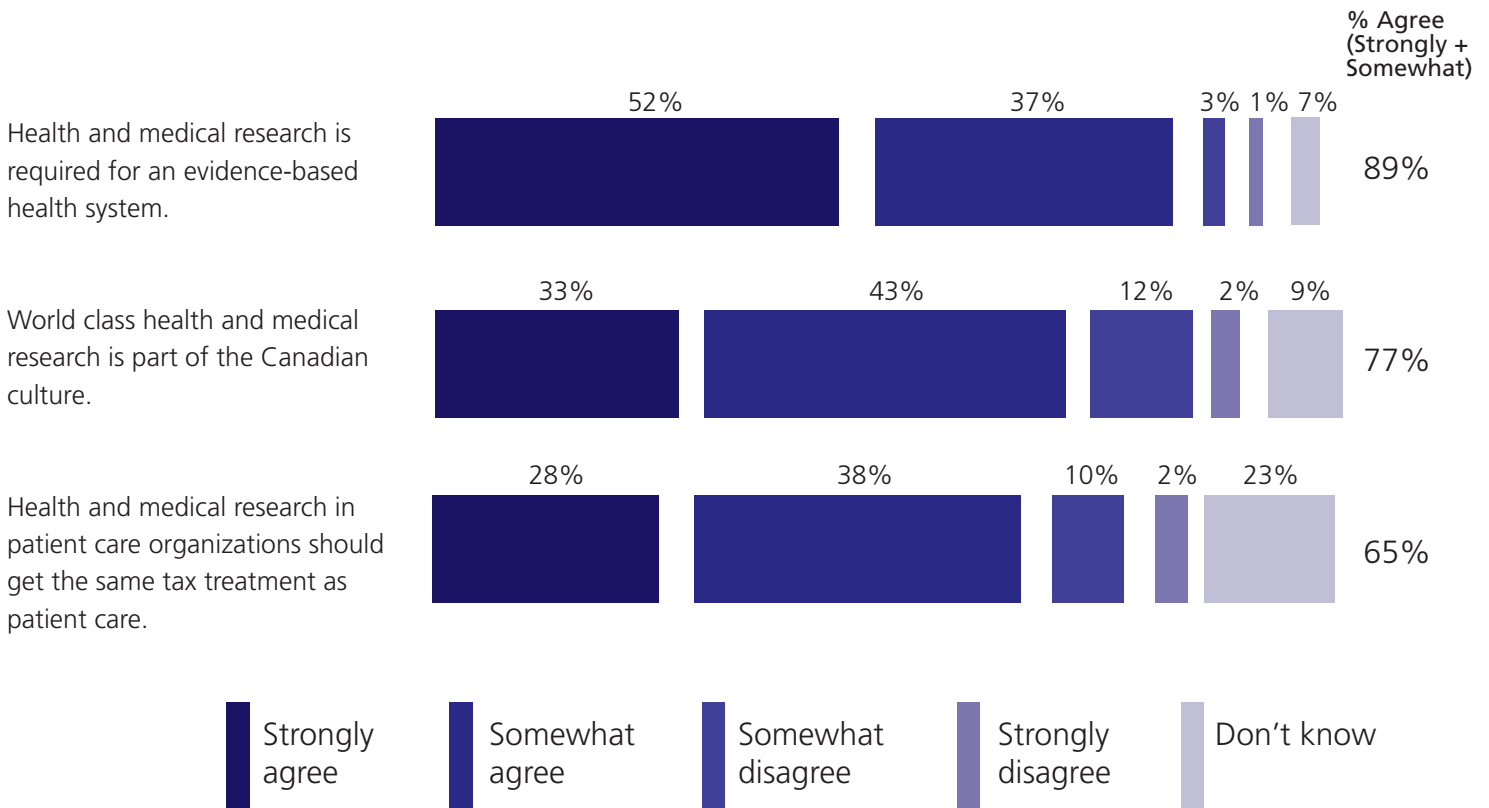


Question 6.
Would you say that health and medical research makes an important contribution to the Canadian health care system?



Agreement on statements related to health and medical research

A very strong majority (89%) of British Columbians agree that health and medical research is required for an evidence-based health system. A strong majority (77%) agree that health and medical research is part of Canada’s culture while a majority (65%) say that tax treatment should be on par with patient care.



Question 7.
To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

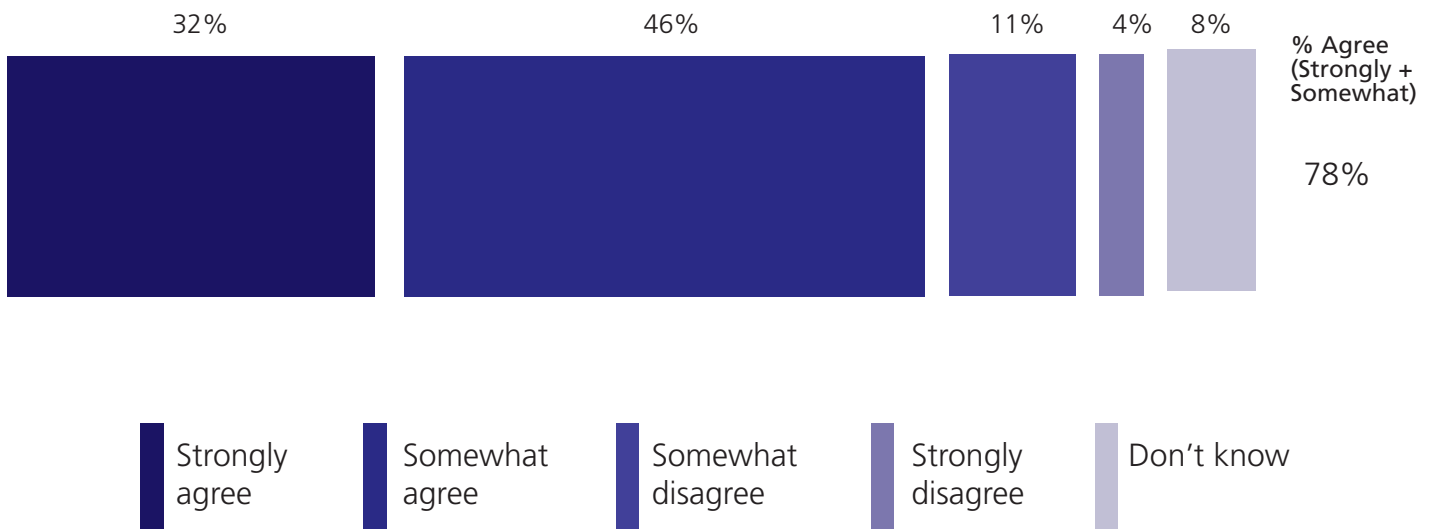
Investments

Almost four in five British Columbians agree that the federal government should support tax and regulatory policies encouraging private industries to conduct more medical research.



Regulation encouraging private industries

Seventy-eight percent of British Columbians agree that the federal government should support tax and regulatory policies encouraging private industries to conduct more medical research.



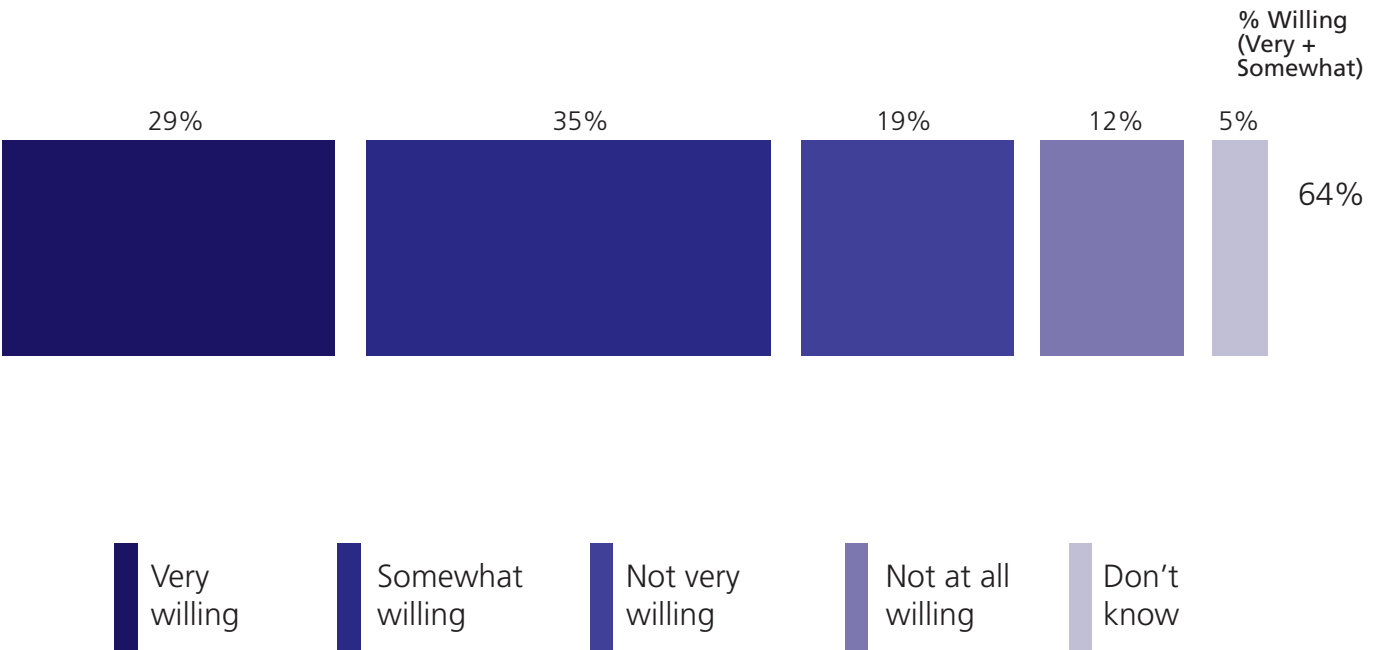
Question 8.

Do you agree or disagree that the federal government should support tax and regulatory policies that encourage private industries to conduct more medical research?



Support for taxes investing in health technology

Almost two-thirds of British Columbians are willing to pay \$1 more in taxes if they know the revenue supports government investment in Canadian health innovation.

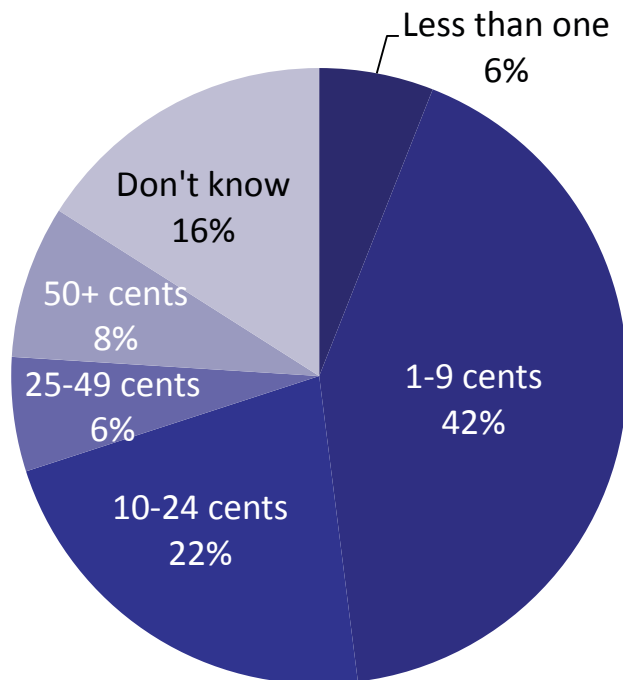


Question 9.
How willing would you be to pay \$1 more a week in taxes if you knew the revenues would pay for government investment in Canadian-made health science innovations and technologies?



Spending allocated to research

The majority (64%) of British Columbians say the government should allocate between 1-24 cents on the healthcare dollar towards health and medical research.



Question 10.

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

Public & Private Health Information

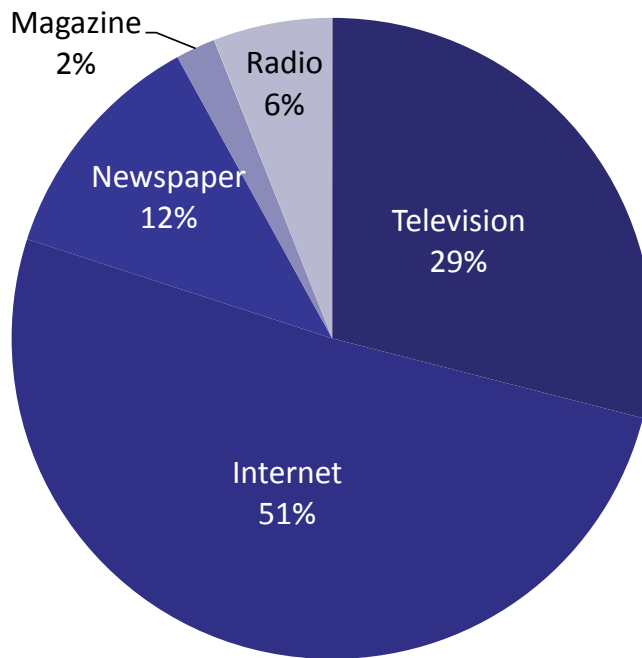
Four out of five British Columbians made at least one behavioural change due to a health report in the media.

Health and Medical Researchers are highly trusted. Four in ten British Columbians rank their trust in health and medical researchers 8 or higher on a 10-Point scale, while almost half of Canadians overall ranked researchers at 8 or above.



Research in the Media

Just over half of British Columbians prefer to hear about advances in health research through the internet; however, preferences vary by generation. While 71% of younger British Columbians (18-34) prefer the internet, those 55+ are split between the internet (35%) and TV (34%).

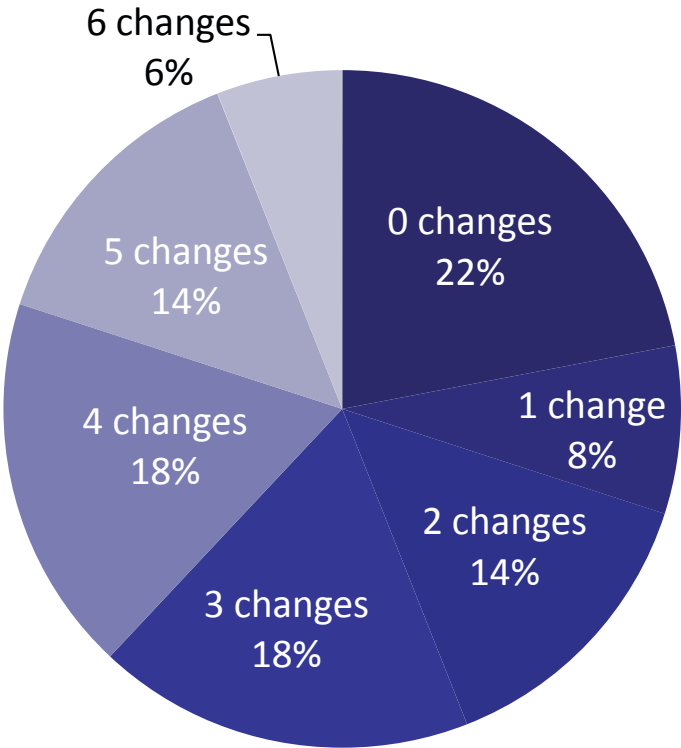


Question 11.
How do you prefer to read/hear about advances in health research in the media?



Number of Behaviours Changed

Health reports in the media had a widespread impact on British Columbians over the past five years, with 4 out of 5 making at least one behavioural change due to a health report in the media.

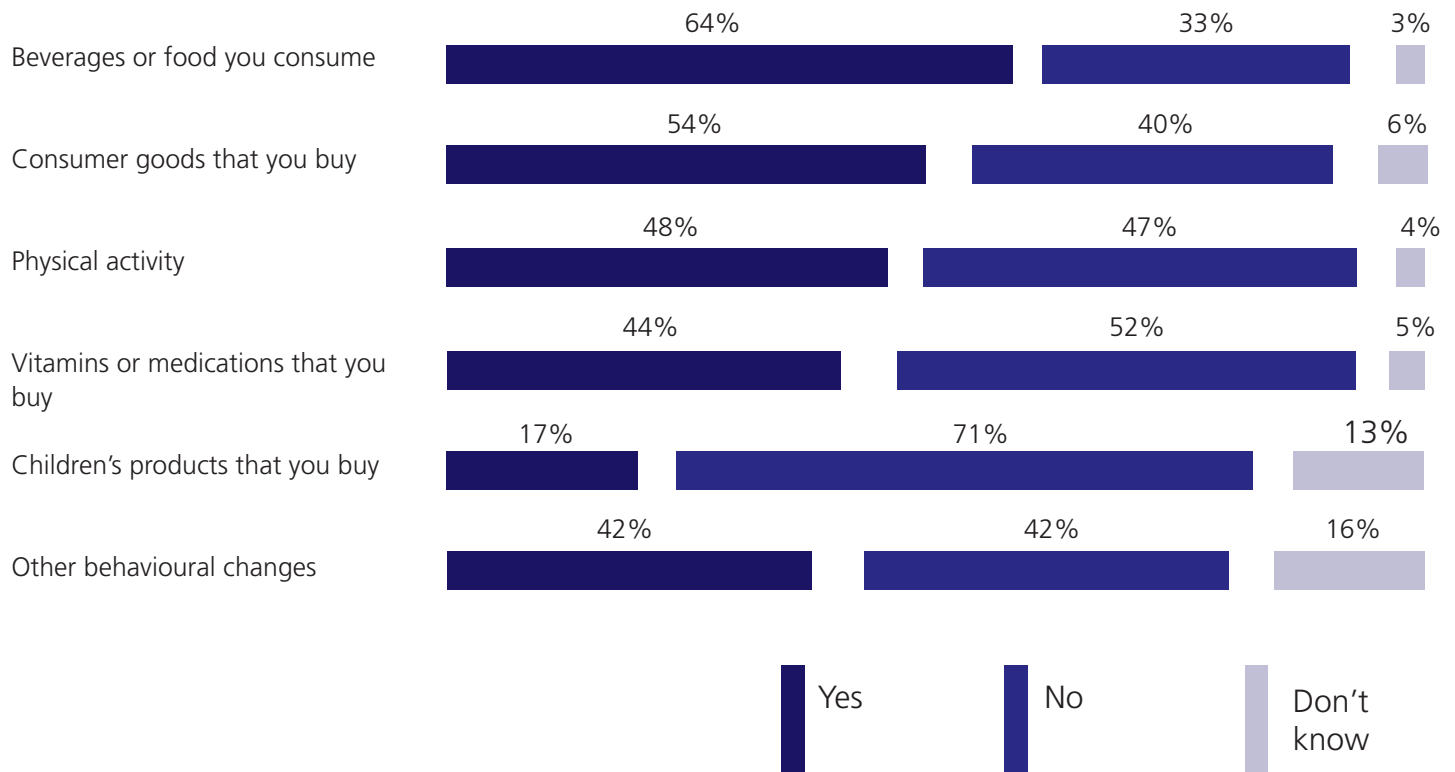


Question 12.
Within the past 5 years did you make a change to any of the following behaviours in response to a health report that you saw, read or heard in the media?



Impact of media Reports

Almost two-thirds of British Columbians altered the beverages and food they consumed while over half changed what goods they bought as a result of a health report.



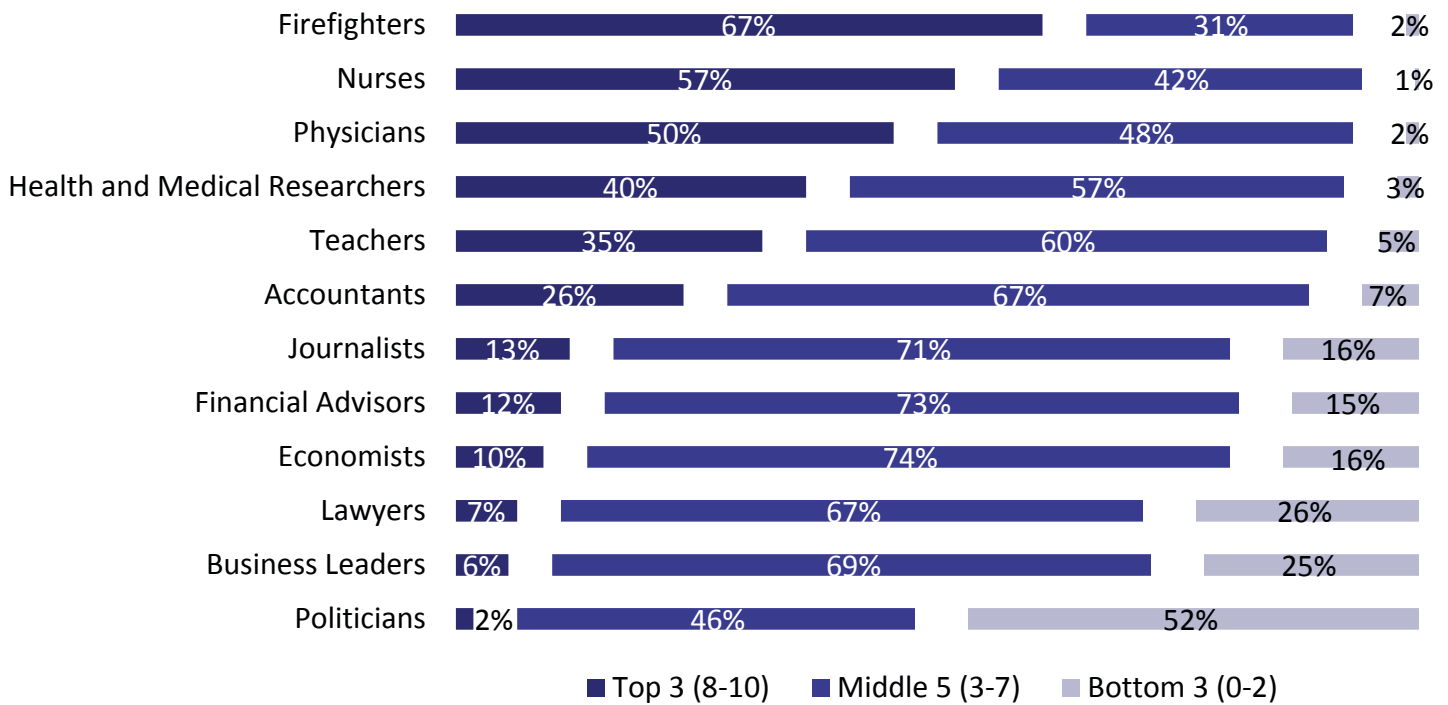
Question 13.

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



Trust the work of...

Health and Medical Researchers are trusted in B.C. Almost four in ten (38%) BC residents rank Health and Medical Researchers as an 8 or higher on a 10-point scale. The majority (57%) rank them in the middle. Only 3% rank them below a 4 on this scale. Trust in Health and Medical Researchers was ranked higher than Teachers, Accountants and Journalists

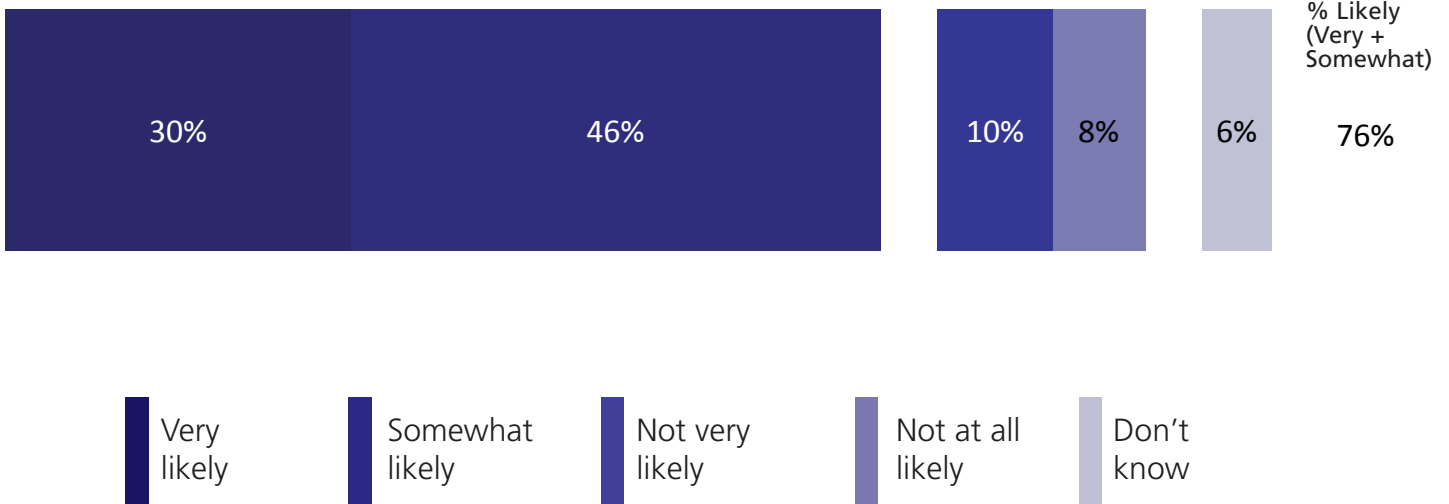


Question 14.
 On a scale of one to ten where 10 is most trusted and 1 is not trusted at all, how much do you trust the work of:



Health file information

Three-quarters of British Columbians would allow researchers to use their health information as long as their personal information is held privately. This increases to 82% among older residents (55+).



Question 15. Health services researchers often look at the relationship between patients' health and their use of the health system in order to inform future decisions. If your personal information were to remain confidential, how likely would you be to consent to the use of the relevant information from your file?

Public Engagement

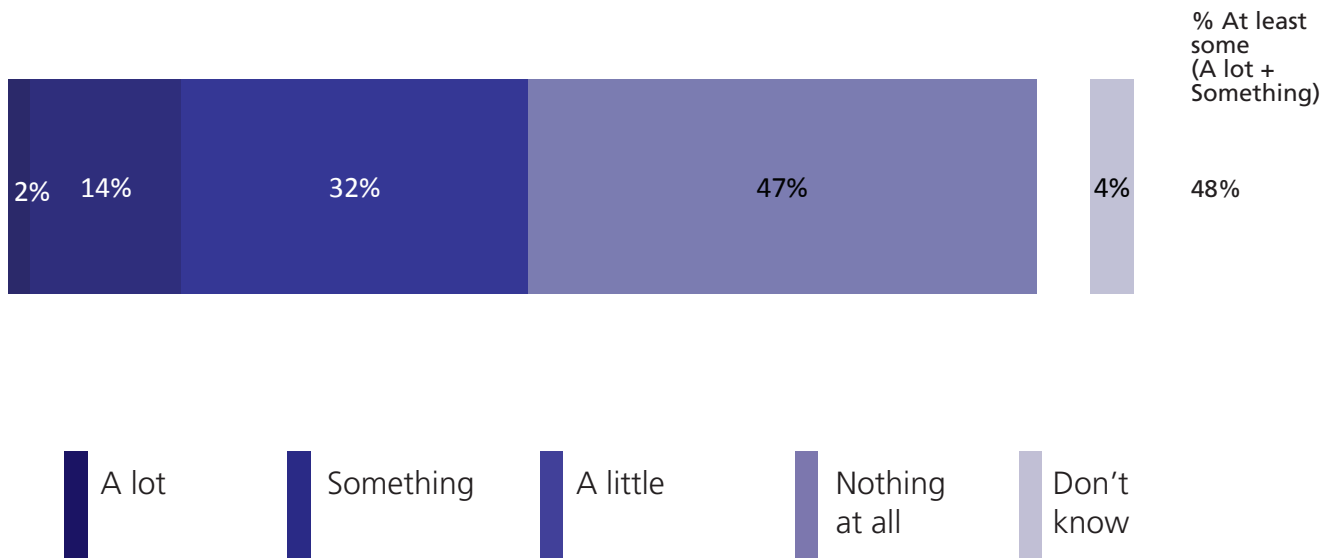
Fewer than one-in-three British Columbians are familiar with health and medical research being conducted at universities and hospitals in BC.

Seven out of ten British Columbians say they are interested in participating in health and medical research – including helping to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding – however, only one in six are aware of opportunities to do so.



Research decision-making

Almost half of British Columbians (48%) claim they have seen, read or heard about patients and the public being able to participate in health and medical research (2% claim a lot). Roughly the same number (47%) say they have not.



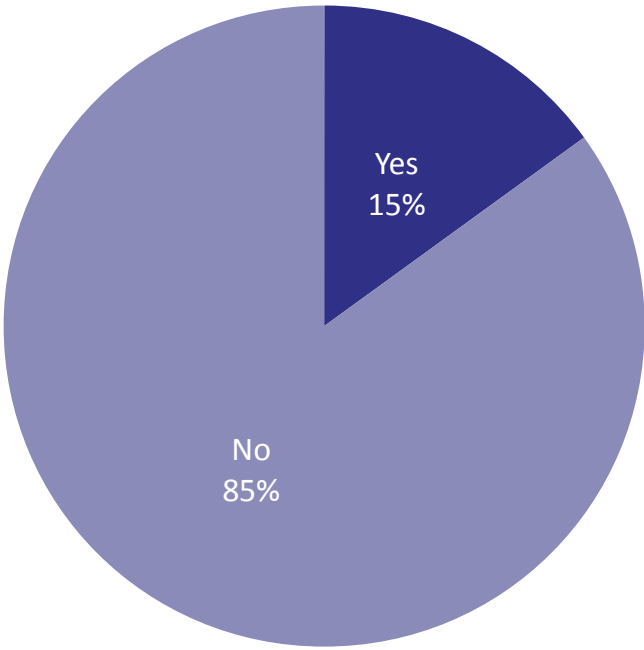
Question 16.

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



Participation opportunities

Only 15% of British Columbians are aware of current public participation opportunities in health and medical research.



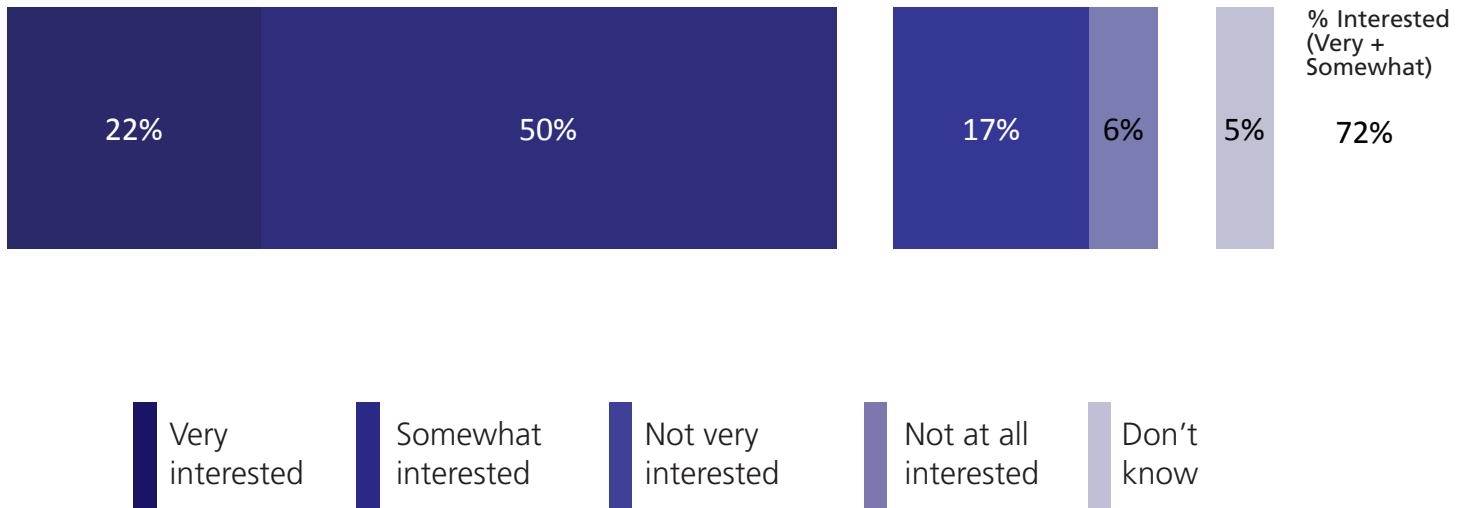
Question 17.

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



Interest in research participation

Seven out of ten British Columbians are interested in participating in health research. Interest also increases with age, with 81 per cent of those aged 55+ wanting to participate compared to 61 per cent of those aged 18-34.

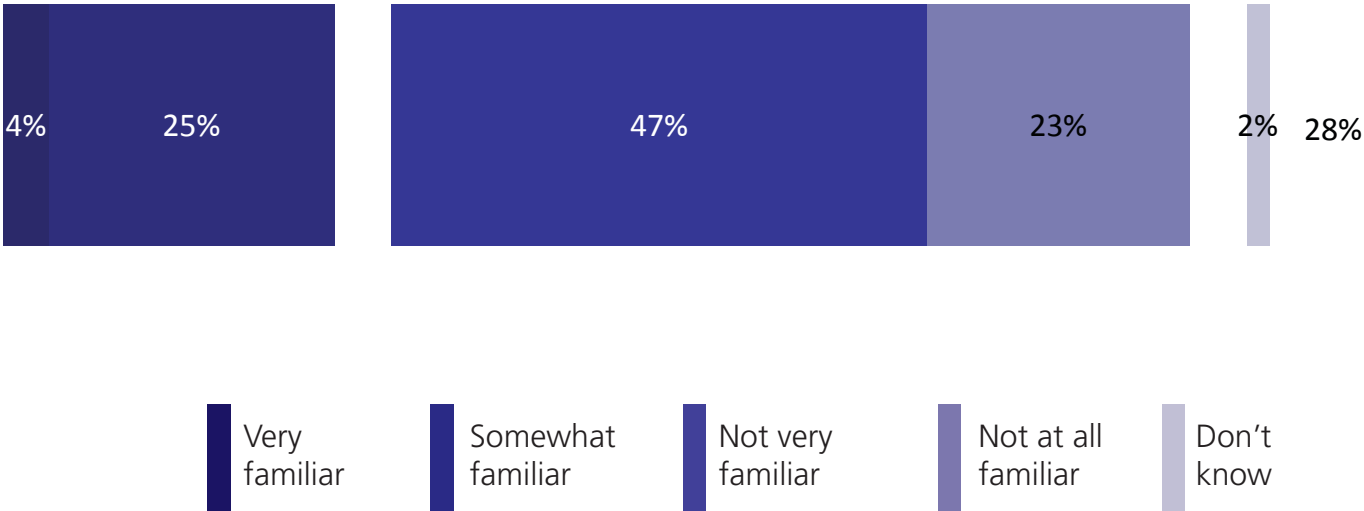


Question 18.
How interested are you in participating in health and medical research, including helping to determine priority topics and deciding on future areas of funding?



Research at hospitals/universities

Fewer than one-in-three British Columbians are familiar with health and medical research being conducted at universities and hospitals in BC.



Question 19.
How familiar are you with health and medical research going on at universities and hospitals in your province?



About MSFHR

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



About the Partners



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



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



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



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



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



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

The Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research

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