

Sustainability & Resilience in the Canadian Health System

Healthcare for All: What It Will Take to Support Care Across Canada



A decline in life expectancy, along with increases in infant mortality and COVID-19 becoming a common cause of death, are just some of the worrying indicators around the state of Canadians' health. To properly address the health system's future, new research from The Partnership for Health System Sustainability and Resilience (PHSSR) in Canada highlighted ongoing inequities and social determinants that policymakers and healthcare stakeholders need to keep top of mind.

Blind Spots We Need to Start Checking

Without the right data, we risk operating our health systems in the dark. This includes data that isn't broken down by race, gender or socioeconomic status to conduct proper analysis, and creates difficulties in comparing data sets by jurisdiction or communities.

Here's what we know for sure: Entrenched social, economic and political determinants, including anti-Indigenous racism, have put Indigenous communities on an unequal footing in regard to health outcomes and healthcare access and quality. There are similar blind spots or lack of recognition of racialized communities living "under the curve," where COVID-19 has only exacerbated structural inequities.

How to Begin Answering the Call to Pursue Greater Equity in Health

Systemic challenges such as racial discrimination are not easily overcome, but these recommendations are a step in the right direction:



Inform interventions to improve health with deeper research

The move towards more rapid data collection and reporting is already underway, but it's not enough. The number and scope of national longitudinal surveys should expand to deepen our understanding of population and social determinants of health.



Invest in efforts that will enhance the level of health literacy

Improved health outcomes and better paying jobs are just some of the potential outcomes that stem from educating the population on how to obtain, understand and act on the health information they need. This needs to start during childhood and continue across older demographics.



Confront the structural determinants of health with collaborative, consultative policy approaches

Health system stakeholders need to meaningfully engage, support and partner with Indigenous communities to improve equity, informed by self-determination approaches. This should be coupled with meaningful action to eliminate poverty, such as targeted cash transfers.

There are **seven domains** researched in this study:

- GOVERNANCE
- FINANCE
- WORKFORCE
- TECHNOLOGY & MEDICINE
- SERVICE DELIVERY
- **SOCIAL DETERMINANTS**
- ENVIRONMENT

Learn more about the research findings and key recommendations by reading the full report, *Sustainability and Resilience in the Canadian Health System*, or contact the PHSSR at PHSSR@hkstrategies.ca

