

2023 HEALTH AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY REPORT



Results and key highlights from the eighth annual
Doctors of BC Health Authority Engagement Survey

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Message from the President.....3
- Executive Summary5
- Introduction8
 - How Do We Interpret the Data on Engagement Levels?8
 - What Was the Survey’s Goal?9
 - How Did We Seek Member Input?9
 - Provincial Engagement.....10
 - Group Insights 12
 - Provincial Health and Safety..... 14
- Member Comments..... 16
- Regional Overview 19
 - Fraser Health..... 19
 - Interior Health..... 21
 - Island Health 23
 - Northern Health 25
 - Provincial Health Services Authority 27
 - Vancouver Coastal Health..... 29
- Methodology, Response Rates, and Demographics..... 31
- Concluding Remarks..... 35

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

As physicians, we understand that a collaborative and trusting relationship between physicians and health authorities is crucial to providing optimal patient care and ensuring we have workplaces where physicians are engaged and feel physically and psychologically safe. Doctors of BC is focused on physicians being trusted leaders and partners in health care system transformation, and this is only possible with the highest levels of engagement.

At Doctors of BC, our annual Health Authority Engagement Survey is a crucial way for us to gauge your candid thoughts and feelings about your health authority, so that necessary improvements can be made to help build a better system for all. Your feedback provides us with important insights on how we can better advocate for you, within your health authority and across your communities. This year, more than 2,600 members participated in the survey and shared more than 6,000 comments.

The survey reflected the ongoing challenges faced by physicians across the province, showing an overall decrease in physician engagement and a decline in overall workplace satisfaction. We heard that physicians are feeling less safe, primarily in relation to patient interactions. Physicians continue to struggle with the resources necessary to provide adequate care to patients. Even more concerning, physicians are feeling less and less like they belong to a collaborative team. The survey results clearly show that physicians are frustrated and tired with their day-to-day work environments, their inability to influence change in their workplaces, and the ongoing strains of an overburdened system.

Doctors of BC recognizes the extraordinary challenges members are facing. Going forward, we will continue to advocate for you and, as outlined in our new Strategic Plan, increase the influence of your voice and work to position physicians as leaders in the health care system. We will be reaching out to meet each health authority shortly to provide further context regarding these results, and to discuss opportunities to address the important changes you are calling for.

Your feedback helps shape decision-making at Doctors of BC and has been instrumental in the work we have accomplished to date, including the development of the [Physician Health and Safety Agreement](#) and expansions to our [Physician Health Program](#), among others. It is also used to help inform our work with the Divisions of Family Practice, Medical Staff Associations, and other physician groups, which is crucial in laying the groundwork for safe, trusting, and collaborative workplaces. We are here to offer support when needed and to collaborate with stakeholders to see the changes you seek become reality.

Thank you again to all members who took the time to share your thoughts with us. Your voice is incredibly valuable, and we are committed to representing it across the healthcare system, particularly as we navigate the current challenges as individuals, and together as a profession.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Karimuddin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr Ahmer Karimuddin
President, Doctors of BC

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year marks the eighth annual Doctors of BC Health Authority Engagement Survey (“the survey”). The survey received a 20% response rate with 2,625 members across all health authorities participating.

Members also shared more than 6,200 open-ended comments and ranked 17 unique statements regarding their engagement with their health authority and local facility. This included responses on issues such as health and safety, trust with medical leaders, and overall satisfaction in their workplace. The survey was independently conducted by TWI Surveys.

This year’s survey showed an overall decrease in results, which reflects three main challenges identified by members based on what they are seeing in their day-to-day work environment. First, physicians expressed that in some workplaces they face difficulties in their ability to adequately care for patients—expressed in terms of drops in lack of resources. Second, they identified ongoing issues in being able to work in an environment where doctors feel safe to come to work and practice medicine. A safe environment is critical for BC’s health care system. However, our members have shared that this is not always their reality, unsafe interaction with some patients is a top concern raised this year. Third, there were recurring themes and drops in engagement results relating to opportunities to influence care. In most places physicians expressed decreases in their



Overall Engagement Score Averages	2023	2022	2021
Provincial Averages	33%	36%	42%
Vancouver Coastal Health	42%	41%	46%
Provincial Health Services Authority	37%	33%	39%
Interior Health	33%	36%	42%
Fraser Health	32%	36%	42%
Northern Health	30%	39%	40%
Island Health	25%	30%	37%

**Due to a small sample size (<5) and for comparative purposes, First Nations Health Authority data has been removed in this report.*

ability to influence change where they work. These factors contributed to an overall decrease in provincial satisfaction with their region as a place to work. At a regional level most, but not all, health authorities saw a drop in overall scores. Further discussions and analysis is warranted to see why some regions saw significant decreases, whereas others saw actual improvements.

The results of this year’s survey shows that members have identified clear challenges they hope to see addressed. Doctors of BC will continue to advocate for its members, and Doctors of BC’s new Strategic Plan outlines this as a key priority. Following the release of these results, Doctors of BC will be meeting with senior leaders in each health authority to address many of the issues identified by physicians. These results will also be used to help local physicians and their Medical Staff Associations (MSAs) to collaborate with local and regional health authority leadership on necessary changes.

While most scores showed an overall decline, one key score is to be noted. This relates to the question of whether physicians feel like they belong to a collaborative, patient-centered team/unit. In recent years, these scores tended to be the most resilient, showing steady increases. However, this year the scores showed a 4% overall drop. This is likely a reflection of an increase in workload and a shortage of staff across the province.



In most regions, senior leadership questions relating to transparency, communication, and seeking input also saw a decline. Based on the comments, this can likely be attributed to physicians not feeling heard or feeling like they are not having key challenges addressed. Provincial Health and Safety results follow the same downward pattern, with one exception: balancing the demands of work and personal life has improved by 3% from last year. This is a positive shift considering the 7% drop in the previous survey. This finding will need more analysis, but a reasonable interpretation based on member comments is that while this is a small increase, it may signal that more physicians are setting boundaries regarding their work.

Regionally, most health authorities saw reductions in overall agreement scores, but there were also those that saw noteworthy increases. PHSA was the only health authority that saw notable improvements across most questions. Vancouver Coastal also held a relatively consistent overall score from last year. Other regions experienced significant reductions in scores of 3% or more, with some as much as 9% drops overall.

Members were very forthcoming with their comments on engagement and their working environments. As outlined, more than 6,200 comments from physicians were received. Physicians shared that they are working in challenging environments, where they are doing their best despite staff shortages, overcrowded emergency rooms and hospitals, and frustrated patients. They also identified areas of hope where physicians, nurses, and other team members are working with their local health authority leaders to manage the best they can. However, it was clear that in many workplaces physicians face limited staffing combined with insufficient infrastructure or resources to provide the care they feel is necessary for British Columbians. More details on each specific health authority can be found in the Regional Section of this report.



2,625
responses



20%
response rate

INTRODUCTION

Doctors of BC has asked the same nine core questions regarding overall satisfaction, engagement, and senior leadership to track trends over time, for eight years in a row.

New to the 2023 Survey were open-ended questions asking physicians about their priorities in their specific hospital, and about their work-life balance. Continuing from 2022, were questions regarding the number of physical and psychological safety incidents physicians experienced—to get a more fulsome understanding, open-ended questions were added asking physicians to describe the physical and psychological incidents. Significant efforts were taken to respect individual privacy with regard to physicians' comments.

This report outlines a summary of both provincial and regional data, organized by the following sections, which also indicate how long Doctors of BC has asked these questions:

- HSO's Work Life Pulse Tool questions: Provincial & Regional Breakdowns (8 years)
- Physician Health and Safety questions from the Guarding Minds at Work assessment tool (5 years)
- Incidents Related to Physical and Psychological Safety (2 years)
- Methodology, Response Rates, and Demographics, including expanded questions on gender and background (3 years) to better understand certain issues.

HOW DO WE INTERPRET THE DATA ON ENGAGEMENT LEVELS?

When answering questions in this survey, members select a response from a five-point Likert scale that ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. All nine core engagement questions are worded using neutral or positive language. Agreement (either strongly or somewhat) is considered a positive indicator of engagement.

WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THE SURVEY?

This annual survey has measured engagement between BC physicians and their respective health authority for the last eight years and is used as a tool to improve engagement and inform discussions at provincial, regional, and local levels. It provides an ongoing opportunity for members to share their thoughts with their health authority on key factors such as their level of satisfaction in their work, how engaged they are with their leadership, and whether they feel they have a healthy and safe working environment, through a validated survey tool. The survey provides the ability to compare engagement results for regions and facilities over time and allows the opportunity to learn from areas in the province that are doing well and to help address concerns where scores are low.

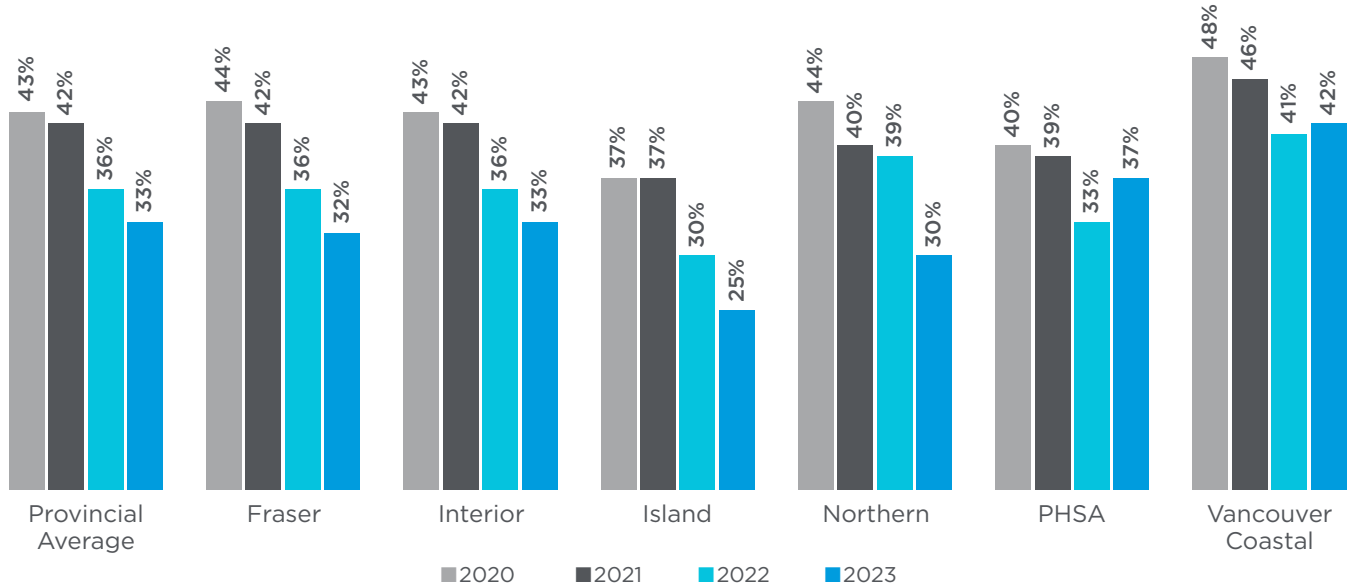
HOW DID WE SEEK MEMBER INPUT?

All members received an email inviting them to participate in the online survey conducted by external polling firm TWI Surveys. The survey was sent by email and was open from September 12 to October 11, 2023.



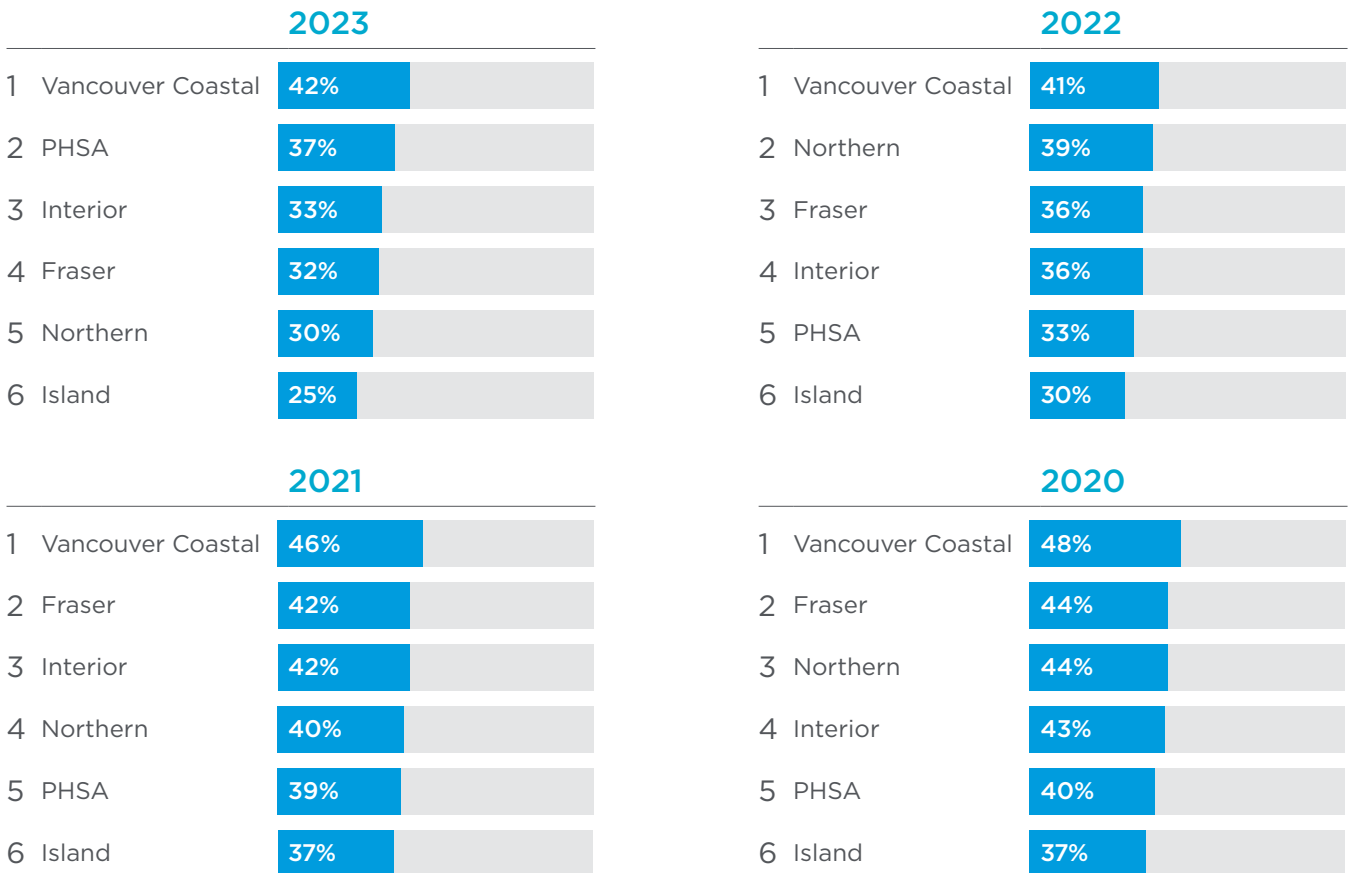
PROVINCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Average scores for the same nine engagement questions asked in previous years.



Overall Engagement Averages 2020-2023

The following ranks the overall average engagement scores by health authority. Rankings from previous years are included for comparison.



Provincial Engagement Scores	2023	2022 Difference
I am satisfied with this health authority as a place to practice medicine.	48%	-2%
I feel I belong to a collaborative, patient-centered team/unit.	58%	-4%
I have access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources I require to meet patients' needs.	39%	-3%
I have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety.	41%	-1%
I have meaningful input into changes affecting my practice environment.	32%	-2%
Senior leaders communicate the health authority's plans to physicians in a clear and timely way.	23%	-4%
Senior leaders seek physicians' input when setting the health authority's goals.	19%	-3%
Senior leaders' decision-making is transparent to physicians.	13%	-2%
This health authority values physicians' contributions.	26%	-2%

Several themes from previous years continue in 2023. However, notable this year is the decrease in feelings physicians have of belonging to a collaborative team/unit, along with the other score changes. This downward trend combined with the general tone of members' open-ended comments reflects the ongoing and daily challenges physicians experience when delivering care. Their frustration is reflected in how they perceive their health authority and its leadership in responding to these concerns.

Scores that were on the rise in recent years have declined in 2023, particularly those focusing on relationships, collegiality, and a sense of belonging. In addition, survey comments indicate staffing shortages and retention issues, a lack of resources, and inadequate support from leadership play key roles. For example, physicians feeling like they have appropriate access to resources dropped 13% across the province since 2021. This is not the case in every hospital or region, but it is significant.

Provincial and regional results for each survey question are included in this report. For a detailed breakdown of all the hospital/facility level information, please see the [supplemental report](#).



GROUP INSIGHTS

Practice Type and Environment

Family physicians (FP) and specialists (SP) continue to see declines in engagement from the previous year.

- Family Physician overall engagement score—33% agreement (2% decline)
- Specialist overall engagement score—34% agreement (3% decline)

While these declines are not considered large drops, the scores are significantly lower than they were during the height of the pandemic (44% FP and 42% SP, 2020).

Similarly, community-based (CB) physicians and hospital/facility-based (FB) physicians are also seeing small decreases from 2022 and continue to report the same levels of engagement. However, when compared with 2020 scores, the change in agreement levels is also quite steep (-10% CB and -11% FB).

- Community overall engagement score—33% agreement (3% decline)
- Hospital/facility overall engagement score—33% agreement (3% decline)

Please see the [supplemental report](#) for detailed data breakdowns for each of these practice types.

Medical Leadership

In the face of these declines, two health authorities saw improvements to engagement scores as reported by their medical leaders—PHSA and VCH scores increased by 4% and 2%, respectively. All other regions dropped between 1% to 10% from 2022. Front-line physicians followed a similar pattern, with PHSA scores improving by 4% and VCH remaining the same. Other regions saw declines from 2022 ranging from 3% to 9%. Similar to previous years, results show higher engagement scores for medical leaders compared to non-medical leaders. For example, the most significant variance in scores between these two groups was present in Northern Health with a 21% difference.

	Leadership Position	2023			2022		
		Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Fraser Health	Yes	39%	18%	43%	40%	25%	35%
	No	31%	24%	46%	35%	24%	41%
Interior Health	Yes	40%	20%	40%	45%	19%	35%
	No	31%	25%	44%	34%	24%	42%
Island Health	Yes	38%	19%	43%	43%	23%	34%
	No	23%	22%	55%	28%	24%	48%
Northern Health	Yes	47%	17%	37%	57%	18%	25%
	No	26%	20%	53%	35%	19%	46%
Provincial Health Services Authority	Yes	42%	19%	39%	38%	18%	44%
	No	35%	24%	41%	31%	19%	50%
Vancouver Coastal Health	Yes	53%	24%	23%	51%	19%	30%
	No	39%	26%	34%	39%	26%	35%

PHYSICIAN HEALTH AND SAFETY

Physician Health and Safety Trends

A continuing downward trend of most health and safety scores shows physicians are feeling unsafe in their workplace and unsupported by leadership. Physicians report even lower agreement scores this year with regard to their hospital/facility taking effective action to prevent violence or promote a healthy and safe workplace.

- The four-year trend has dropped 12% since 2020, showing that physicians are significantly less likely to agree that their hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace.
- Fewer physicians feel that people treat each other with respect and consideration at their workplace, 70% agree (-4%).
- However, more physicians believe they are able to balance the demands of work and personal life 47% (+3%).

Provincial Physician Health and Safety Scores	2023	2022 Difference
I have been involved in, or impacted by a physical safety or psychological safety issue or incident at my current hospital/facility/practice.	49%	0%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace.	48%	-3%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to promote a healthy and safe workplace.	47%	0%
This hospital/facility deals effectively with situations that may threaten or harm employees (e.g., harassment, discrimination, violence).	40%	0%
People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.	64%	-1%
People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.	70%	-4%
I am able to reasonably balance the demands of work and personal life.	47%	+3%
Physicians and medical leaders trust one another in my health authority.	33%	-2%

Physical and Psychological Safety

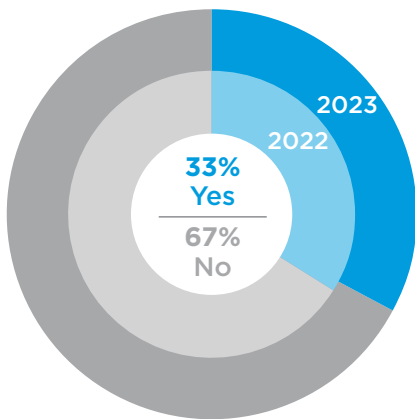
In addition to asking members about the number of physical and psychological incidents they experienced, we asked them to describe these experiences. The number of incidents experienced overall this year went down in both categories, when compared to last year. However, it is important to note that even though the gross number declined, more members reported experiencing incidents more frequently, indicating that these are disturbingly becoming the norm.

There continues to be a lack of consistent processes and structures for data collection, reporting, and follow-up from the health authority when a safety incident occurs. Yet, the results indicate incidents do in fact occur, but there are not sufficient systems to effectively and routinely report them. This should soon change given Doctors of BC and the Ministry of Health are actively working with health authorities to create physician incident reporting systems to allow for better tracking, and more importantly, follow up when incidents occur.

See [supplemental report](#) for additional details.

Provincial Averages

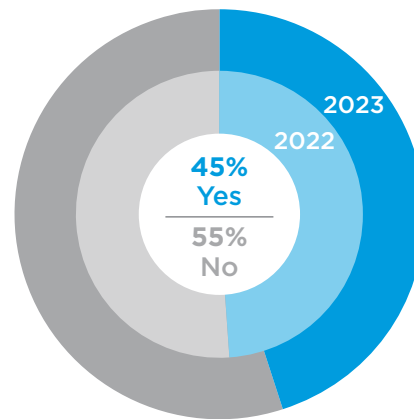
Experienced a **physical** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 621 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 101 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 113 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 35 experienced 51+ incidents

Experienced a **psychological** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 714 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 172 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 200 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 84 experienced 51+ incidents

MEMBER COMMENTS

This year, physicians provided more than 6,200 comments for the open-ended questions that asked about their priorities in their local hospital, about their work-life balance, and experiences with physical and psychological incidents.

One of the striking themes that emerged is that while physicians were forthcoming about the priorities and needs in their hospitals, they also spoke of the impact and moral injury that the many challenges have on them. Numerous physicians spoke about the impact of working in facilities amid staffing and resource shortages, combined with high workloads.

The following provides a summary of the themes found in members' comments, as well as some of their verbatim examples.

Priorities for Their Hospital

Members provided more than 2,200 comments outlining their top priorities at their hospital/workplace, and included:

- **39% Staffing Needs:** Members cite shortages across all levels of staffing including doctors, nurses, and support staff.
- **32% Specific Care Needs:** Access to specialists, community care, diagnostics, and other care needs are extremely limited.
- **25% Resources and Infrastructure:** Resources that assist physicians to adequately provide care is lacking, e.g. beds, CT scanners, ultrasound machines.

"We are fighting to maintain a standard of care with fewer and fewer resources. I see this most acutely in the lack of operating room time and in the lack of family physicians and primary care for my patients."

"Community access to imaging has been abysmal. The wait times for CT scans, ultrasound and MRI are causing significant negative impact on patient health."

"I simply work too many hours. I'm upwards of 12 hour every day (5 days a week) including email and work on weekends The electronic medical record has added 20 percent workload. And I'm Always on email."

Challenges with Work Life Balance

Members provided 2,103 comments related to the challenges achieving work-life balance.

Top themes identified include:

- **30% Workload and Demand:** Members indicate overwhelming workloads and demands to provide patient care in situations where there are constant challenges in staffing needs and availability of resources.
- **26% Inadequate Staffing and Resources:** Limited resources and capacity along with ongoing challenges related to lack of staff to provide a high standard of care.
- **15% Administration and Technology:** There is an increase in administrative burdens on physicians including demanding paperwork, and new systems in place with limited training.

“Overwhelming burden of work with not enough doctors to meet the load, not enough nursing/allied health/mental health services/home supports/transportation/not enough of any of the things I need to care for my patients adequately.”

“Short-staff medical practice, feeling the responsibility to maintain a high-standard of clinical care and putting in extra time to do so at the expense of work/life balance.”

“Demands from patients, administrative burden all demanding time and mental energy that bleed into non-work hours.”

Safety Incidents Reported by Members

We asked members to describe the nature of the physical and psychological incidents they are experiencing, and we received more than 1,900 comments. Among the top themes for both include:

- **59% Workplace Violence:** Attributed mostly to patient and family member interactions.
- **33% Verbal Abuse:** Aggression and threats from patients being disrespectful are increasing.
- **30% Bullying and Harassment:** Physicians attest to intimidation and bullying behaviour from leadership.
- **24% Violence from Vulnerable Populations:** Patients with mental health and addiction challenges are negatively impacting physicians with growing acts of violence.
- **20% Unsafe Occupational Conditions:** Members share that they do not always have safe/working equipment, that there are issues with overcrowding and tripping, falling over obstacles like beds in the hallway, and unsafe wiring.

“Psychological safety as a new staff in a crumbling health care system isn’t a thing. I have moral distress most days about the quality of care that I can provide due to such limited resources.”

“If you consider “moral distress” as psychologically unsafe, then this is a frequent occurrence working in obstetrics, as we are often not able to provide the recommended standard of care to our patients, which is very psychologically distressing to health care workers.”

“We are prevented from speaking up or communicating frankly with patients about the working conditions, or the reasons for the long ER wait times as the health authority has previously threatened a response to the college.”

“Angry violent patients to front staff or in the room when they don’t get what they want. Yelling and throwing of things. Property damage at my office . Online harassment via reviews on different websites.”





REGIONAL OVERVIEW

FRASER HEALTH

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Engagement:** All nine metrics assessing physicians' engagement with their Health Authority dropped by an average of 4% from 2022.
- **Access to Resources:** Only 33% of physicians reported having access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources required to meet patients' needs, a 10% decline since 2022.
- **Senior Leadership:** 23% agree that senior leaders communicate the health authority's plans to physicians in a clear and timely way, down 5% from 2022.
- **Health and Safety:** Agreement that the health authority takes effective action to promote a healthy and safe workplace (46%) or prevent workplace violence (48%) dropped significantly since 2020 (58% and 61% respectively).
- **Trust Levels:** Trust between FHA physicians and medical leadership continues to decline, hitting 34% this year from 36% last year.



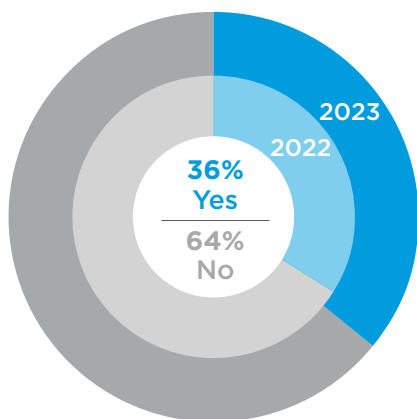
565
responses

Fraser Health Engagement	2023	2022 Difference	Provincial Average
I am satisfied with this health authority as a place to practice medicine.	45%	-5%	48%
I feel I belong to a collaborative, patient-centered team/unit.	59%	-1%	58%
I have access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources I require to meet patients' needs.	33%	-10%	39%
I have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety.	39%	-2%	41%
I have meaningful input into changes affecting my practice environment.	31%	-2%	32%
Senior leaders communicate the health authority's plans to physicians in a clear and timely way.	23%	-5%	23%
Senior leaders seek physicians' input when setting the health authority's goals.	20%	-2%	19%
Senior leaders' decision-making is transparent to physicians.	14%	-1%	13%
This health authority values physicians' contributions.	24%	-4%	26%

Fraser Health Physician Health and Safety	2023	2022 Difference
I have been involved in, or impacted by a physical safety or psychological safety issue or incident at my current hospital/facility/practice.	50%	+3%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace.	48%	-2%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to promote a healthy and safe workplace.	46%	-4%
This hospital/facility deals effectively with situations that may threaten or harm employees (e.g., harassment, discrimination, violence).	41%	-1%
People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.	66%	-1%
People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.	72%	-5%
I am able to reasonably balance the demands of work and personal life.	48%	+4%
Physicians and medical leaders trust one another in my health authority.	34%	-2%

Fraser Health Authority Averages

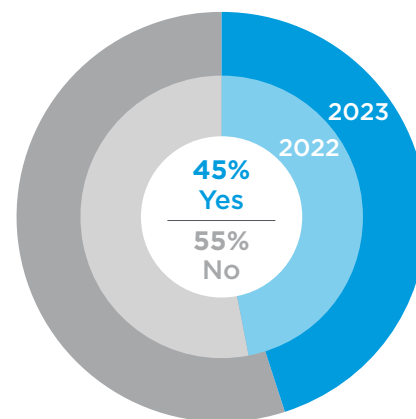
Experienced a **physical** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

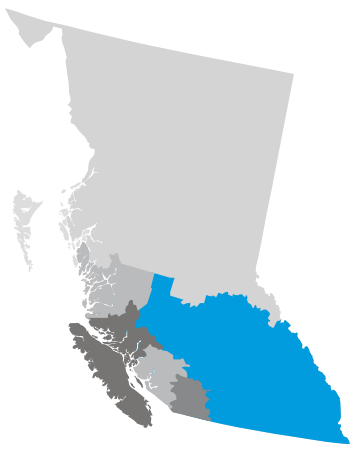
- 146 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 21 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 27 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 7 experienced 51+ incidents

Experienced a **psychological** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 143 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 39 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 53 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 22 experienced 51+ incidents



REGIONAL OVERVIEW

INTERIOR HEALTH

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Satisfaction:** Measures remain consistent from 2022, with half of our members agreeing that they are satisfied with their health authority as a place to practice medicine (50%).
- **Engagement:** Physicians report considerably lower rates of agreement concerning access to resources (41%) compared to 2020 (55%).
- **Senior Leadership:** All three measures have dropped significantly since last year with decreases between 4% and 8%.
- **Health and Safety:** Fewer physicians report being involved or impacted by a safety incident this year (46%) compared to (50%) in 2022.



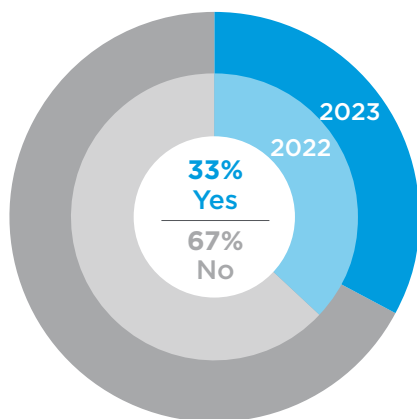
477
responses

Interior Health Engagement	2023	2022 Difference	Provincial Average
I am satisfied with this health authority as a place to practice medicine.	50%	+1%	48%
I feel I belong to a collaborative, patient-centered team/unit.	56%	-8%	58%
I have access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources I require to meet patients' needs.	41%	0%	39%
I have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety.	42%	0%	41%
I have meaningful input into changes affecting my practice environment.	34%	-1%	32%
Senior leaders communicate the health authority's plans to physicians in a clear and timely way.	19%	-8%	23%
Senior leaders seek physicians' input when setting the health authority's goals.	15%	-7%	19%
Senior leaders' decision-making is transparent to physicians.	11%	-4%	13%
This health authority values physicians' contributions.	23%	-5%	26%

Interior Health Physician Health and Safety	2023	2022 Difference
I have been involved in, or impacted by a physical safety or psychological safety issue or incident at my current hospital/facility/practice.	46%	-4%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace.	48%	-3%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to promote a healthy and safe workplace.	48%	-2%
This hospital/facility deals effectively with situations that may threaten or harm employees (e.g., harassment, discrimination, violence).	39%	-1%
People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.	65%	-2%
People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.	72%	-5%
I am able to reasonably balance the demands of work and personal life.	49%	+3%
Physicians and medical leaders trust one another in my health authority.	35%	-1%

Interior Health Authority Averages

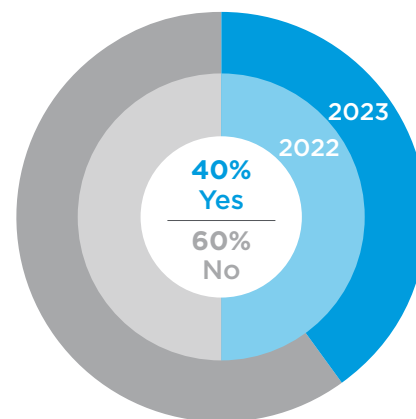
Experienced a **physical** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 117 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 16 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 22 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 2 experienced 51+ incidents

Experienced a **psychological** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 109 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 33 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 40 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 9 experienced 51+ incidents



REGIONAL OVERVIEW

ISLAND HEALTH

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Engagement:** 51% of physicians feel they are part of a collaborative, patient-centred team—a 9% decrease from 2022.
- **Senior Leadership:** Transparency in decision making dropped to a low of 6%, the lowest value since the survey began.
- **Health and Safety:** Effective action being taken to promote health and safety in the workplace rose 3% from 2022 to reach 41%.
- **Trust:** The downward trend continues with 25% of members agreeing that physicians and medical leaders trust one another, a sharp drop of 11% since 2020.



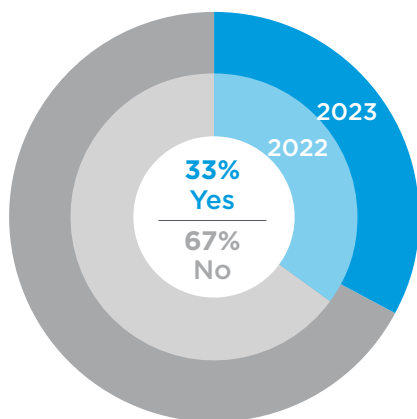
583
responses

Island Health Engagement	2023	2022 Difference	Provincial Average
I am satisfied with this health authority as a place to practice medicine.	35%	-5%	48%
I feel I belong to a collaborative, patient-centered team/unit.	51%	-9%	58%
I have access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources I require to meet patients' needs.	31%	-6%	39%
I have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety.	29%	-9%	41%
I have meaningful input into changes affecting my practice environment.	28%	0%	32%
Senior leaders communicate the health authority's plans to physicians in a clear and timely way.	16%	-2%	23%
Senior leaders seek physicians' input when setting the health authority's goals.	12%	-6%	19%
Senior leaders' decision-making is transparent to physicians.	6%	-3%	13%
This health authority values physicians' contributions.	18%	-2%	26%

Island Health Physician Health and Safety	2023	2022 Difference
I have been involved in, or impacted by a physical safety or psychological safety issue or incident at my current hospital/facility/practice.	48%	0%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace.	44%	-5%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to promote a healthy and safe workplace.	41%	+3%
This hospital/facility deals effectively with situations that may threaten or harm employees (e.g., harassment, discrimination, violence).	33%	0%
People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.	59%	-1%
People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.	68%	-5%
I am able to reasonably balance the demands of work and personal life.	43%	+2%
Physicians and medical leaders trust one another in my health authority.	25%	-5%

Island Health Authority Averages

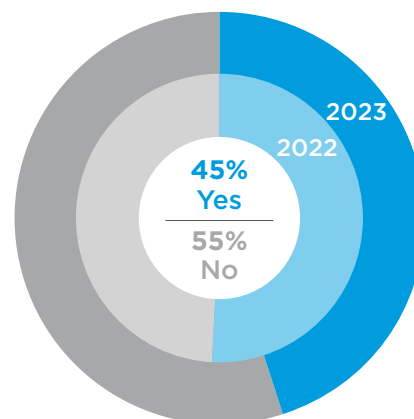
Experienced a **physical** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 127 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 28 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 23 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 14 experienced 51+ incidents

Experienced a **psychological** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 153 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 39 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 42 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 27 experienced 51+ incidents



REGIONAL OVERVIEW

NORTHERN HEALTH

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Engagement:** All nine engagement scores have declined considerably with an average overall decrease of 9%.
- **Satisfaction:** Overall satisfaction with Northern Health as a place to practice medicine decreased by 16% in one year, making this metric the largest drop among all health authorities.
- **Health and Safety:** 35% of physicians agree that their hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace, a decrease of 9% from last year.
- **Trust:** Physicians and medical leaders trusting one another has been declining over the last few years, down 5% from 2022 and down 24% since 2020.



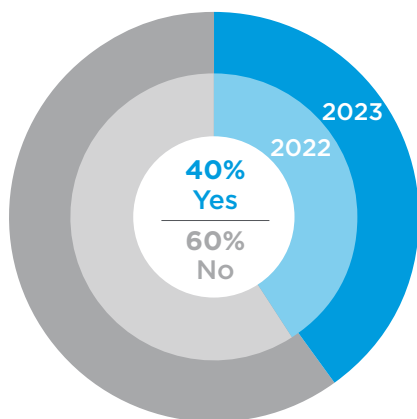
132
responses

Northern Health Engagement	2023	2022 Difference	Provincial Average
I am satisfied with this health authority as a place to practice medicine.	36%	-16%	48%
I feel I belong to a collaborative, patient-centered team/unit.	50%	-11%	58%
I have access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources I require to meet patients' needs.	37%	-3%	39%
I have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety.	36%	-10%	41%
I have meaningful input into changes affecting my practice environment.	33%	-14%	32%
Senior leaders communicate the health authority's plans to physicians in a clear and timely way.	21%	-9%	23%
Senior leaders seek physicians' input when setting the health authority's goals.	19%	-5%	19%
Senior leaders' decision-making is transparent to physicians.	15%	-5%	13%
This health authority values physicians' contributions.	26%	-7%	26%

Northern Health Physician Health and Safety	2023	2022 Difference
I have been involved in, or impacted by a physical safety or psychological safety issue or incident at my current hospital/facility/practice.	59%	-1%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace.	35%	-9%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to promote a healthy and safe workplace.	33%	-7%
This hospital/facility deals effectively with situations that may threaten or harm employees (e.g., harassment, discrimination, violence).	29%	-8%
People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.	61%	-3%
People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.	56%	-7%
I am able to reasonably balance the demands of work and personal life.	44%	+3%
Physicians and medical leaders trust one another in my health authority.	25%	-5%

Northern Health Authority Averages

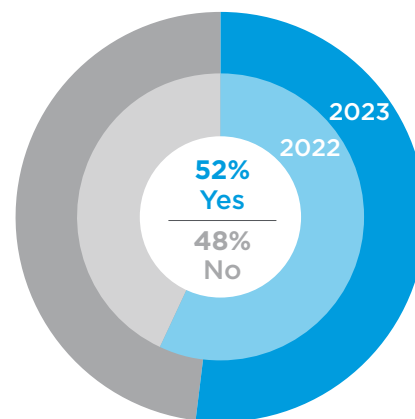
Experienced a **physical** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 42 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 5 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 5 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 1 experienced 51+ incidents

Experienced a **psychological** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 39 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 15 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 11 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 3 experienced 51+ incidents



REGIONAL OVERVIEW

PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Engagement:** 7 of the 9 core engagement questions saw increases between 3% and 11%, since last year.
- **Satisfaction:** More physicians agree that they are satisfied with PHSA as a place to practice medicine, increasing from 41% in 2022 to 52% in 2023.
- **Health and Safety:** All health and safety agreement scores improved, including fewer physicians experiencing a safety incident this year.
- **Trust:** 2023 saw a significant increase in scores regarding trust between physicians and medical leaders, increasing from 29% in 2022 to 41% in 2023.



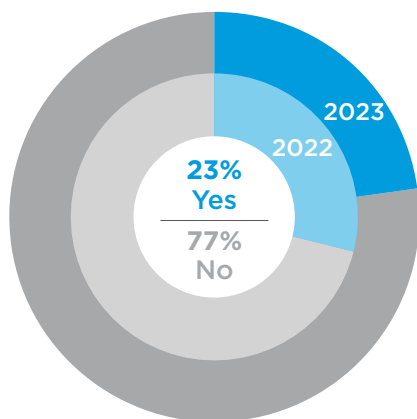
168
responses

PHSA Engagement	2023	2022 Difference	Provincial Average
I am satisfied with this health authority as a place to practice medicine.	52%	+11%	48%
I feel I belong to a collaborative, patient-centered team/unit.	71%	+7%	58%
I have access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources I require to meet patients' needs.	44%	0%	39%
I have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety.	44%	+5%	41%
I have meaningful input into changes affecting my practice environment.	27%	-3%	32%
Senior leaders communicate the health authority's plans to physicians in a clear and timely way.	28%	+5%	23%
Senior leaders seek physicians' input when setting the health authority's goals.	22%	+5%	19%
Senior leaders' decision-making is transparent to physicians.	16%	+3%	13%
This health authority values physicians' contributions.	27%	+3%	26%

PHSA Physician Health and Safety	2023	2022 Difference
I have been involved in, or impacted by a physical safety or psychological safety issue or incident at my current hospital/facility/practice.	51%	-3%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace.	60%	+3%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to promote a healthy and safe workplace.	52%	+6%
This hospital/facility deals effectively with situations that may threaten or harm employees (e.g., harassment, discrimination, violence).	47%	+5%
People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.	59%	+2%
People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.	69%	+2%
I am able to reasonably balance the demands of work and personal life.	41%	+7%
Physicians and medical leaders trust one another in my health authority.	41%	+12%

Provincial Health Services Authority Averages

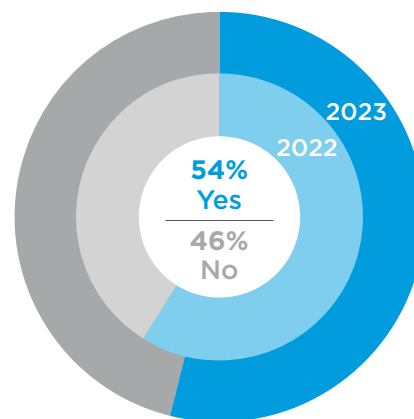
Experienced a **physical** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

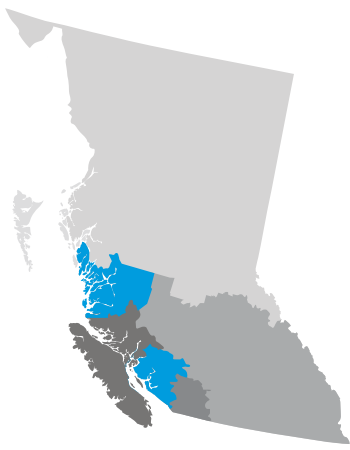
- 31 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 6 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 1 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 0 experienced 51+ incidents

Experienced a **psychological** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 68 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 9 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 10 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 3 experienced 51+ incidents



REGIONAL OVERVIEW

VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Engagement:** Overall engagement scores have remained relatively stable, with 5 of 9 metrics showing increase of 1% to 4%.
- **Improve Patient Care:** 51% of physicians feel that they have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety—an increase of 4% from 2022.
- **Value and Senior Leaders:** Physicians feeling valued for their contributions by their health authority increased 3% from 2022 to 36%.
- **Health and Safety:** A majority of physicians (73%) agree that people treat each other with respect and consideration, higher than the provincial average (70%).



696
responses

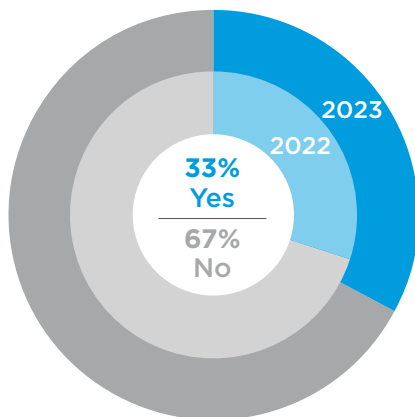
Vancouver Coastal Health Engagement	2023	2022 Difference	Provincial Average
I am satisfied with this health authority as a place to practice medicine.	61%	+1%	48%
I feel I belong to a collaborative, patient-centered team/unit.	64%	-1%	58%
I have access to the facilities, equipment, and other resources I require to meet patients' needs.	48%	+3%	39%
I have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety.	51%	+4%	41%
I have meaningful input into changes affecting my practice environment.	37%	-2%	32%
Senior leaders communicate the health authority's plans to physicians in a clear and timely way.	32%	-1%	23%
Senior leaders seek physicians' input when setting the health authority's goals.	27%	+1%	19%
Senior leaders' decision-making is transparent to physicians.	18%	0%	13%
This health authority values physicians' contributions.	36%	+3%	26%

Vancouver Coastal Health Physician Health and Safety

	2023	2022 Difference
I have been involved in, or impacted by a physical safety or psychological safety issue or incident at my current hospital/facility/practice.	47%	0%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to prevent violence in the workplace.	52%	-1%
This hospital/facility takes effective action to promote a healthy and safe workplace.	53%	0%
This hospital/facility deals effectively with situations that may threaten or harm employees (e.g., harassment, discrimination, violence).	45%	-1%
People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.	68%	-1%
People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.	73%	-1%
I am able to reasonably balance the demands of work and personal life.	51%	+4%
Physicians and medical leaders trust one another in my health authority.	39%	0%

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority Averages

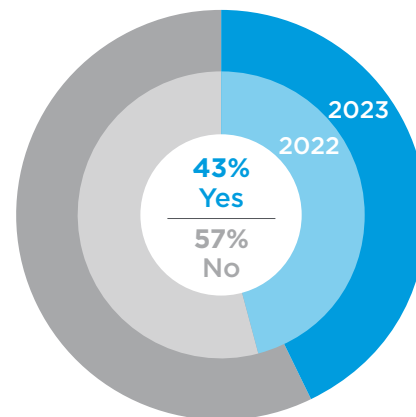
Experienced a **physical** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 158 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 25 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 35 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 11 experienced 51+ incidents

Experienced a **psychological** safety incident over the last 12 months



Of those who experienced an incident(s):

- 202 experienced 1-5 incidents
- 37 experienced 6-10 incidents
- 44 experienced 11-50 incidents
- 19 experienced 51+ incidents

METHODOLOGY, RESPONSE RATES, AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The survey was conducted by external polling firm TWI Surveys between September 12 and October 11, 2023. It was sent to 13,323 eligible members, of which 2,625 physicians responded, resulting in a response rate of 20%.

The survey was comprised of 17 questions using a 5-point Likert scale, adopting questions from the Health Standards Organization (HSO) Physician Work Life Pulse Tool and the Guarding Minds at Work assessment tool. The analysis is presented in an agree, neutral, disagree format.

The overall data is valid 19 times out of 20 with a margin of error of +/- 1.57%. All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Sample sizes for the demographic breakdowns are included in some of the charts and are outlined in detail in the [supplemental report](#).

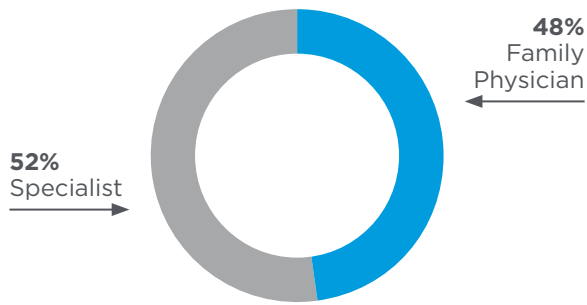
TWI Note: Due to the implementation of a new data system, the rounding of some 2022 scores may differ slightly from last year's report (+1%/-1%).

All individual responses and comments are anonymous and confidential. Open-ended comments have been themed to reflect physician feedback.

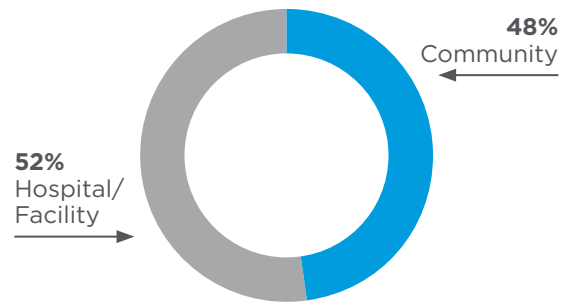
Health Authority Sample Sizes	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
First Nations Health Authority	4	4	3	5	2	3	4	6
Fraser Health	565	646	758	735	664	650	729	555
Interior Health	477	658	617	563	523	528	573	388
Island Health	583	564	649	650	574	496	524	486
Northern Health	132	136	179	152	154	169	164	121
Provincial Health Services Authority	168	168	188	175	180	138	168	159
Vancouver Coastal Health	696	807	907	920	831	672	836	693

Number of Surveys Sent	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total number of surveys sent	13,323	12,689	12,112	11,523	11,504	11,153	11,342	12,580
Responses	2,625	2,983	3,301	3,200	2,928	2,657	2,998	2,485
Response rate (%)	20%	24%	27%	28%	26%	24%	26%	20%

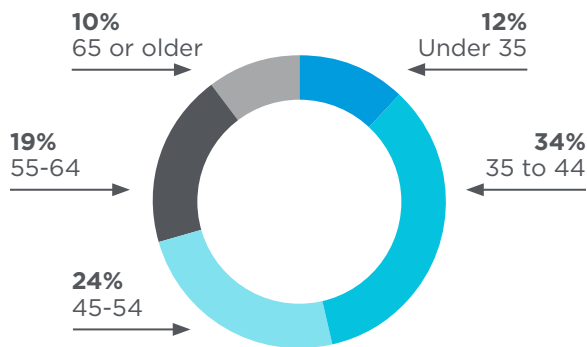
Family Physicians or Specialists



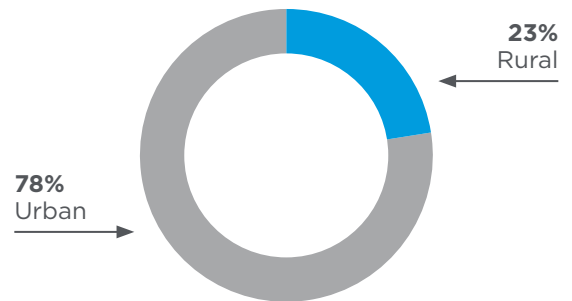
Hospital/Facility or Community Based



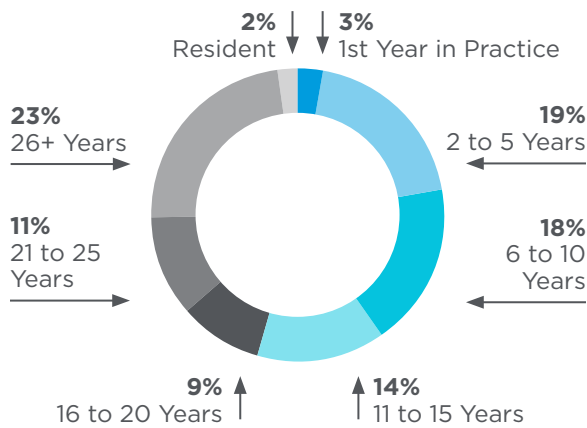
Age



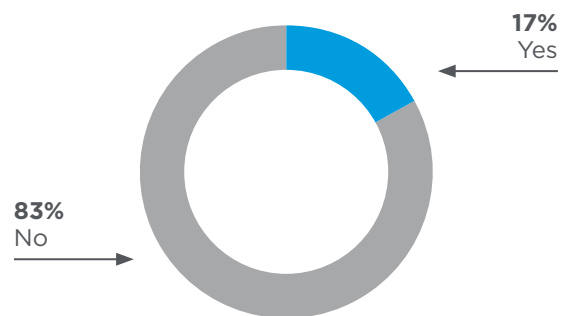
Setting



Tenure



Medical Leadership



DEMOGRAPHICS (OPTIONAL)

Gender Identity (N=2,453)

Select one	n	%
Male/Man	1,171	48%
Female/Woman	1,150	47%
*Transgender Male/Man	*	*
*Transgender Female/Woman	*	*
*Nonbinary	*	*
Another gender	*	*
Prefer not to answer	119	5%

*n<10

Background (N=2,452)

Check all that apply	n	%
Indigenous	31	1%
Black	33	1%
East Asian	332	14%
Southeast Asian	25	1%
Latina/o	21	1%
Middle Eastern	82	3%
South Asian	192	8%
White	1,595	65%
Another/specific identity	51	2%
Prefer not to answer	181	7%

CONCLUDING REMARKS

An integral part of the health system, physicians are an essential voice in advocating and influencing care. The results of the 2023 survey show the level to which physicians are concerned about their ability to deliver care in an environment that does not seem to value their input.

At the same time, some regions around the province are seeing increases in results, demonstrating that even in challenging situations there are solutions. The goal of this survey is to support quality conversations between physicians and their health authorities that will lead to better collaboration, and result in system improvement so that patients will receive the care they deserve.

As noted earlier, Doctors of BC will meet with all health authorities to talk about these results and address some of the pressing challenges and potential opportunities the survey results revealed. A major focus of the new Strategic Plan involves conversations between Doctors of BC, senior health authority leaders, and medical staff associations (MSAs) to work together to improve conditions for physicians.




We are thankful to our members for trusting us with their candid feedback. We are committed to sharing their views with all partners, for the betterment of patients and the wellness of our physicians.

A [supplemental report](#) with detailed regional, facility and additional breakdowns is available on the Doctors of BC website.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the survey results and next steps, please contact advocacy@doctorsofbc.ca.

Sincerely,
Doctors of BC

115 - 1665 West Broadway
Vancouver BC V6J 5A4
doctorsofbc.ca

 @doctorsofbc
 @bc doctors
 @doctorsofbc

doctors
of bc
Better. Together.