

Rural VIP No. 4: Mental Health

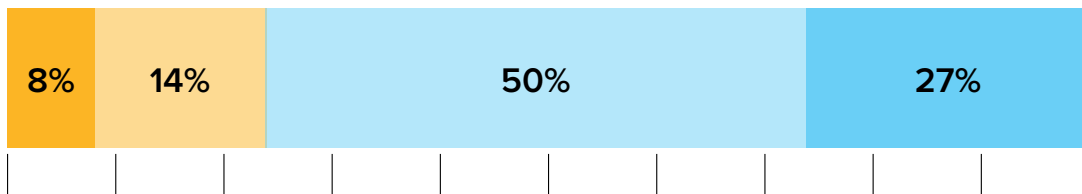
The fourth survey for the members of the Rural Voice Information Panel (Rural VIP) was sent out January 9, 2020 to 161 members. When the survey closed on January 17 a total of 48 panel members (30%) had completed the four-question survey. This document provides a summary of the responses.

1. Please rank your level of agreement with the following statements:

Good to know

- The majority of respondents know how to access mental health services.
- Mental health is discussed in nearly 85 per cent of respondents' communities.
- Fifteen per cent of respondents strongly disagree that their community has mental health supports available.

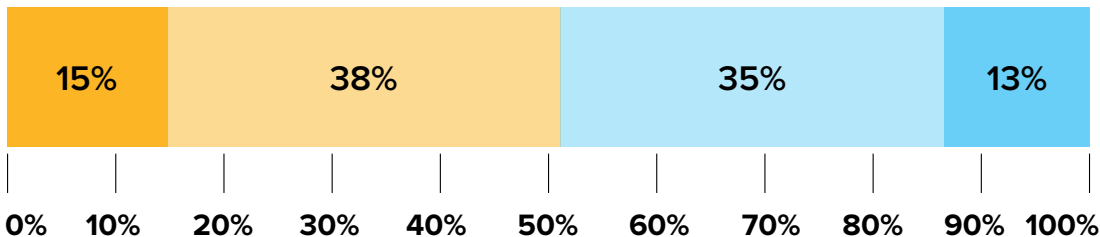
I know how to access mental health services in my community.



Mental health is a topic of conversation in my community.



My community has mental health supports available to residents.



● Strongly Disagree
 ● Somewhat Disagree
 ● Somewhat Agree
 ● Strongly Agree



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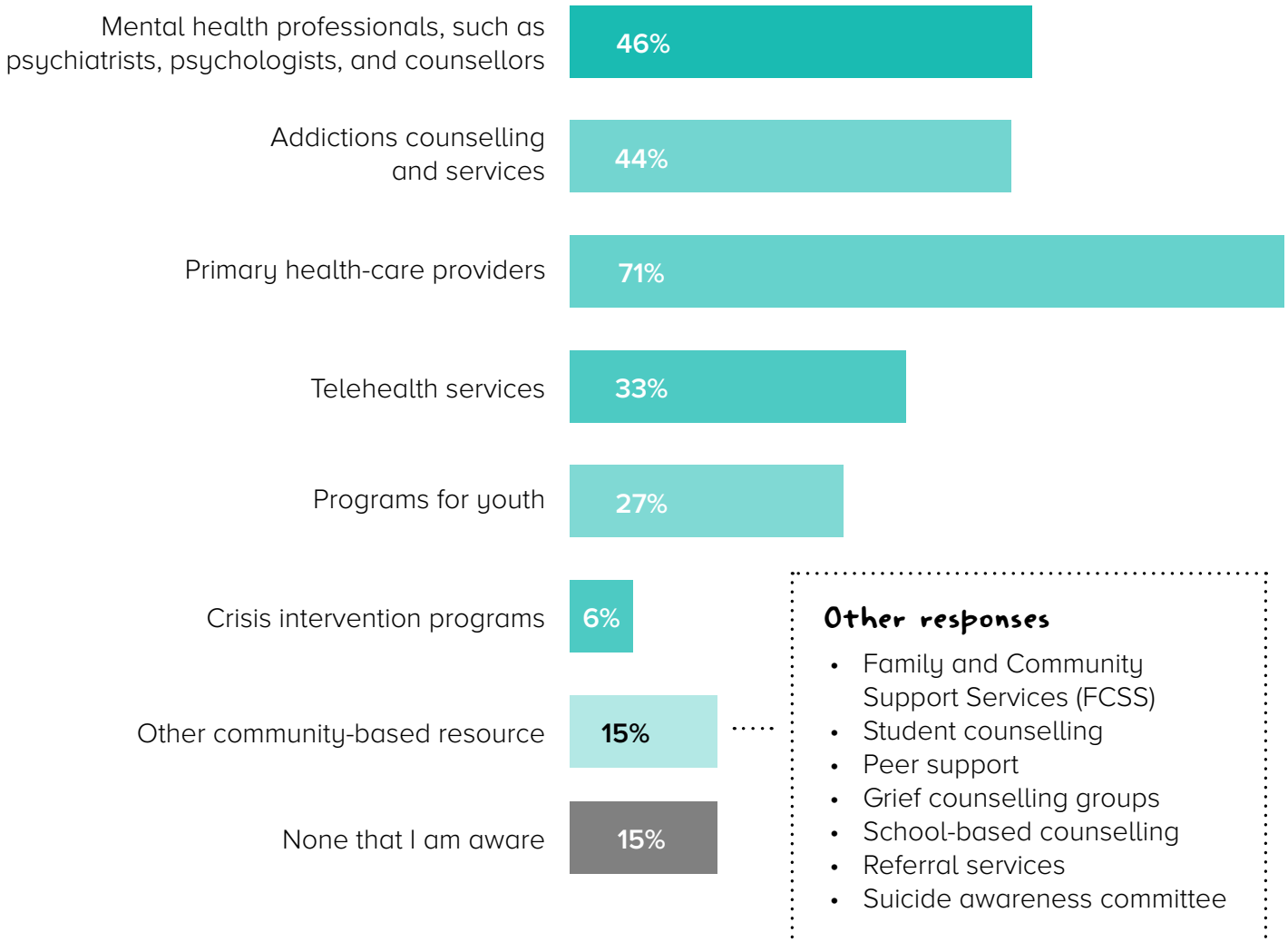
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2. What mental health supports does your community currently have in place? (multiple responses permitted)

Good to know

- The top mental health supports identified by respondents were: primary health-care providers (71 per cent); mental health professionals (46 per cent); and, addictions counselling and services (44 per cent).
- Other community-based resources identified include referral services, grief counselling groups, peer support, and Family and Community Support Services (FCSS).





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3. What is the greatest challenge your community faces today regarding mental health or addictions?

Good to know

- Overall, respondents identified insufficient resources as the greatest mental health challenge in their communities, including access to services and specialists, appointment wait times, treatment options, and travelling for care.
- Respondents face challenges attracting and retaining mental health professionals in their communities. Stigma surrounding mental health and addictions prevents some individuals from seeking help. More awareness, information, and education about how to navigate services and reach out for help is needed in some communities.

# of comments	Theme of the comments
27	Insufficient Resources (getting an appointment / access / distance / frequency)
10	Awareness / Stigma (knowing what is available, embarrassment in accessing services)
7	Attraction & Retention of Mental Health Professionals (consistent support, bringing in specialists)
7	Economic Stress (loss of jobs, crops still in the field, general anxiety)

What you said (sample comments)...

- “The inability to keep mental health workers in the rural community”
- “Access is a huge problem.”
- “We don’t have enough professionals to cover the need.”
- “People don’t know where to go for help.”
- “We technically have access to mental health professionals, but those services are only available one day a week maximum, and must be booked quite a ways ahead of time.”

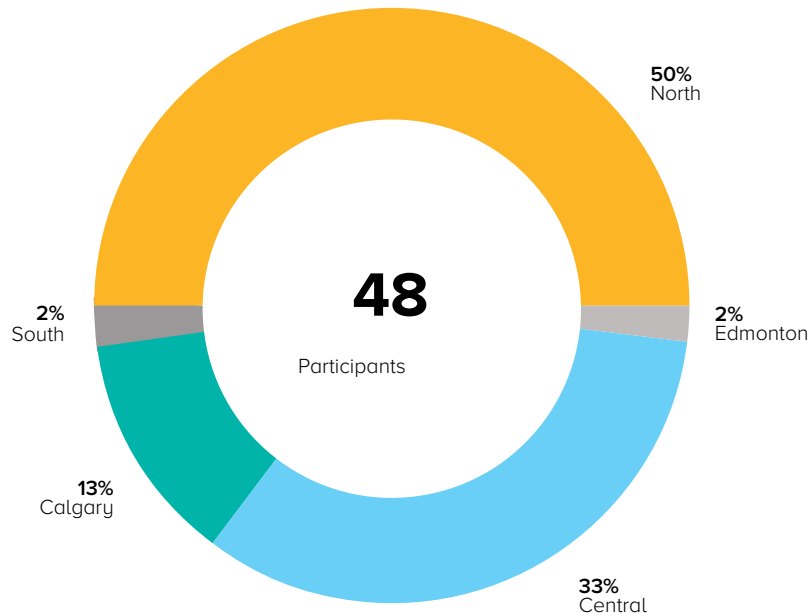


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4. In which AHS (Alberta Health Services) zone do you live?



** Totals may not add due to rounding*

What will we do with this feedback?

The feedback we receive helps us support health care in rural Alberta by informing our discussions with government, stakeholders, and health-care institutions. Specifically, we will use this survey's feedback to **inform our discussions with partners such as the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) on how to increase resources and access to mental health supports in rural Alberta.**

Did you know?

RhPAP is supporting the CMHA's Rural Mental Health Project to build local mental health capacity across rural Alberta. Key elements involve training community animators, developing local action plans, and supporting connections through the Rural Mental Health Network.

Visit ruralmentalhealth.ca if you would like to learn more about the project and how to get involved to support mental health in your community.

Questions about RhPAP's Rural Voice Information Panel?

Email us at ruralVIP@rhpap.ca