

Rural VIP No. 6: Mobile Health Care

The sixth survey for the members of the Rural Voice Information Panel (Rural VIP) was sent out March 4, 2020 to 172 members. When the survey closed on March 14, a total of 63 panel members (37%) had completed the four-question survey. This document provides a summary of the responses.

1. Rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

Good to know

- 86 per cent of respondents **somewhat or strongly agreed that they are aware of mobile health programs and services** in Alberta.
- 95 per cent of respondents reported that **transportation is a barrier** to some residents in accessing health care-services outside of their community.

I am aware of mobile health programs and services that are offered in Alberta.



Mobile health programs and services are/have been available to residents in my community.



Key health services (i.e. diagnostics, public health units, physiotherapy, etc.) are available in my community.



Transportation is a barrier to some residents in accessing health-care services outside our community.



0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

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

What you said about awareness and availability (sample comment):

“Not all services are available in our community. **Travel an hour away is often required** for tests, CT, MRI, ultrasound, surgery and various tests.”





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2. If applicable, describe transportation barriers that residents in your community face when trying to access health care:

Good to know

- Rural residents face barriers surrounding the cost and availability of transportation to access health care.
- While physical and financial barriers can result in missed or delayed services, other barriers include weather and unsafe travel conditions.

**# of
comments**

Theme of the comments

28

Distance and Travel

health services are outside of the community, far distances to travel for care, weather and road conditions, leaving the community and navigating new/large cities

27

Transportation Options

lack of public or community transportation services; reliance on others to access care; no access to a vehicle

20

Costs

fuel, transportation services, accommodations, meals, lost wages, difficult for fixed or low income residents

12

Senior Residents

some seniors do not drive, may not have family or friends to provide transportation, lack of seniors' transportation services and supports

8

Access

cancelled, missed, or delayed appointments, challenges getting to appointments both within or outside of the community, residents may have physical limitations to drive or travel

5

Other

time off work to take family to appointments, limited health services in the community



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What you said about transportation barriers: (sample comment)...

“I live in a rural community two hours from the nearest tertiary centre. **We no longer have bus service in the community.** To hire someone is typically \$300 and up to get taken to the city. Something many seniors and limited income residents struggle with, especially if they don't have family supports. **I have continually seen people cancel medically necessary investigation and specialist appointments due to transportation issues.** It is incredibly sad.”





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3. If applicable, list the mobile health programs and services that are/have been in your community in the past two years:

Good to know

- Overall, respondents identified mobile services that support women’s health, such as breast cancer screening, and men’s health, such as prostate exams.
- A respondent reported that dialysis used to be available through a mobile program but had since been made fully available in the community.
- Another respondent thought that mobile programs could be better advertised in some visiting communities.

**# of
comments**

Theme of the comments

49

Women’s Health

breast cancer screening, mammograms, cervical screening

13

Men’s Health

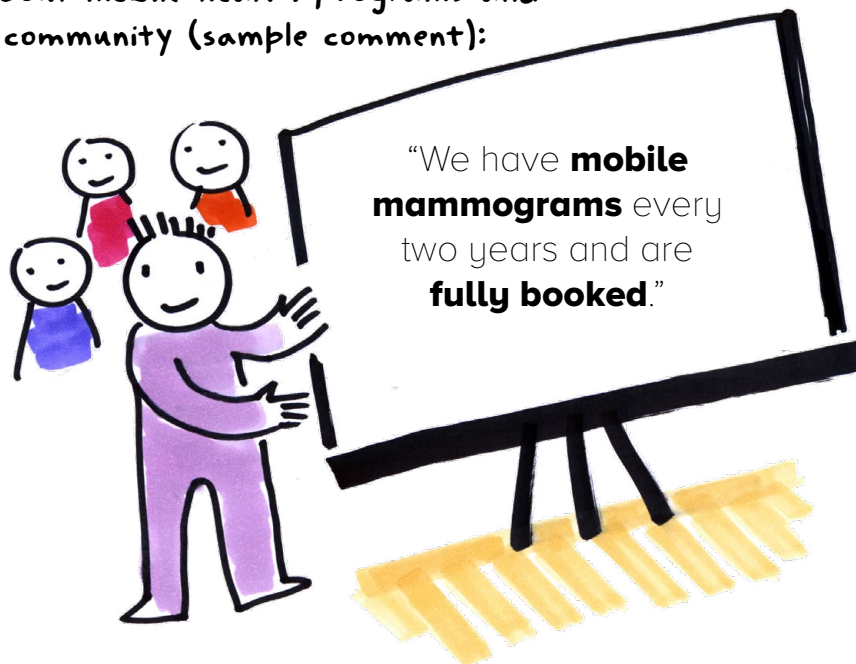
Man Van program, prostate exams, prostate specific antigen testing

12

Other

vaccines and immunizations, bone density screening, hearing tests, foot care

What you said about mobile health programs and services in your community (sample comment):



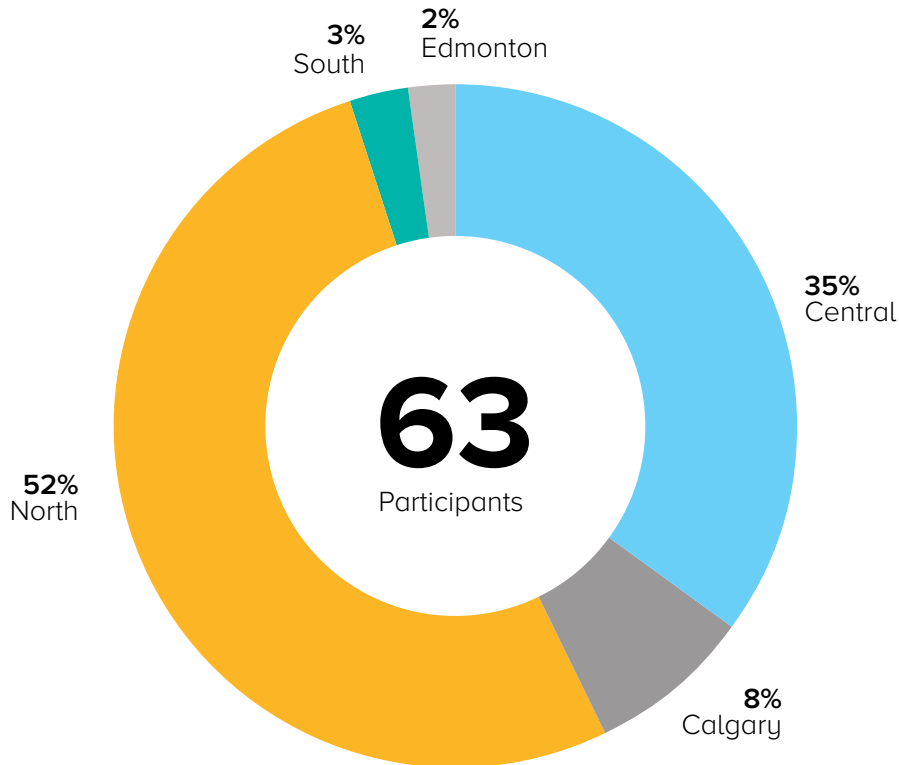


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4. In which AHS (Alberta Health Services) zone do you live?



** Totals may not add due to rounding*

What will we do with this feedback?

RhPAP will use these survey results to inform our discussions with partners and stakeholders in health care. Supporting the coordination, availability, and expanded use of mobile care for specialized services, such as MRI and CT scanning, dialysis, and ultrasound, as well as basic health services, can help to increase health-care access while minimizing the transportation and travel barriers that rural residents face. In the coming months, RhPAP will feature stories about mobile health care programs and providers across rural Alberta. Stay tuned!

Questions about RhPAP's Rural Voice Information Panel?

Email us at ruralVIP@rhpap.ca