



Rural VIP No. 9: Health and Wellness in Rural Communities

The ninth survey for the members of the Rural Voice Information Panel (Rural VIP) was sent out June 4, 2020 to 184 members. When the survey closed on June 15, a total of 49 panel members (27%) had completed the three-question survey. This document provides a summary of the responses.

1. What are three aspects of your community that contribute the greatest to better health and wellness for yourself and your community?

Good to know

- Respondents identified a range of factors that contribute to healthy and vibrant communities and residents, from caring health professionals to a strong sense of community, access to parks and recreational spaces, and the ability to participate in diverse groups and activities.

of comments

Theme of the comments

44

Health-care providers, facilities, and services

Local clinics and hospitals, physicians, allied health providers, seniors' care, medical services

34

Community connections and lifestyle

Social activities, calm lifestyle, supportive neighbours, community groups, caring people

20

Health and safety during COVID-19

Public health awareness, continued essential services, safety precautions, physical distancing

18

Recreational facilities and programs

Health and wellness initiatives, exercise, recreation activities, local gym, rec centre, pool

16

The great outdoors

Walking trails, access to nature, parks, lakes, open spaces

13

Other

Information sharing/social media, elected officials, fresh produce, local charities, COVID-19 challenges

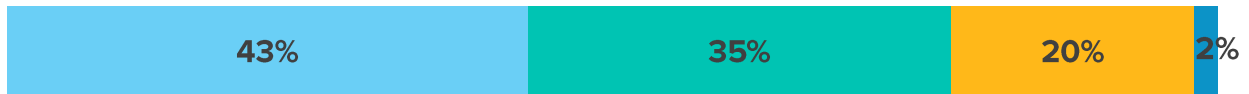
What you said about health and wellness

(Q1 sample comments)

- “Excellent health-care workers.”
- “Community groups with volunteers that care about residents’ well-being.”
- “Access to a rural hospital with an ER.”
- “My community’s health-care team reached out to community members to educate on COVID-19 prevention.”
- “Easy access to parks, walking trails, and [the] recreation centre.”
- “Complete support from local elected officials.”
- “Other health care support - physio, nurses, home care, public health.”
- “New access to virtual healthcare options.”
- “People care about each other.”
- “A good community health center.”
- “Concerted effort at distancing by town folks!”
- “Access to health-care providers/services.”
- “An abundance of recreational facilities for young and old.”

2. Reflecting on how you, your neighbours, and your community have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, what is your level of agreement that:

My community rallied together.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Don't know/not sure

My community's health-care team rallied together.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Don't know/not sure

Good to know:

Communities and health-care teams rally together:

- Overall, 98 per cent of respondents strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed that **their community rallied together.**
- 98 per cent of respondents also strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed that **their community's health-care team rallied together** during COVID-19.

My community identified gaps that we are/will work on filling in terms of crisis mitigation.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Don't know/not sure

My community is prepared for a second wave of the coronavirus.



■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Somewhat Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Don't know/not sure

Good to know:

Crisis mitigation:

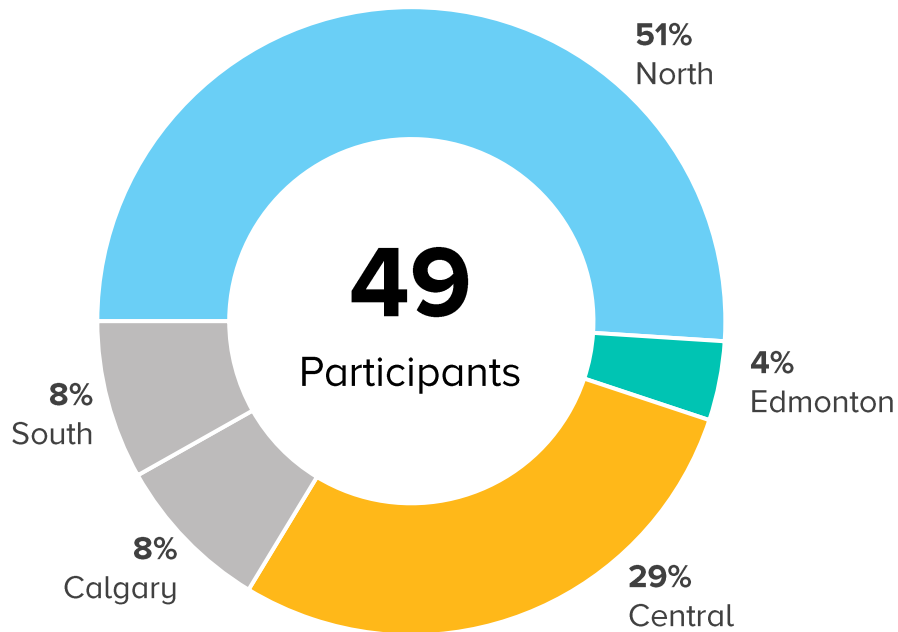
- Overall, 80 per cent of respondents strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed that **their community identified gaps** that they would work to fill in terms of crisis mitigation.

Community preparedness:

- Nearly 90 per cent of respondents strongly agreed, agreed, or somewhat agreed that **their community is prepared for a second wave of COVID-19.**



3. 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 uses your feedback to inform health leaders and stakeholders about the priorities, perspectives, and experiences of rural Albertans and rural community health-care needs and accomplishments.

Visit rhpap.ca/COVID-19 to read our Rural Health Beat coverage of rural Alberta during the pandemic.

Questions about RhPAP's Rural Voice Information Panel?

Email us at ruralVIP@rhpap.ca