

# 2021 HEALTH AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

Supporting engaged and  
safe workplaces

## WHAT WE HEARD

All Doctors of BC members were invited to participate. Across the province, **3,301 members (27%)** shared **2,539 comments**, and ranked statements that encompassed **19 questions**.

Many of the 2021 Health Authority Engagement Survey results have been impacted by the ongoing pandemic and reflect what Doctors of BC and health authorities have been hearing:

- Overall, physicians are feeling less satisfied with their health authority as a place to practice medicine.
- More physicians have difficulty accessing resources to meet their patients' needs. Areas of concern include inadequate staffing levels, which includes nurses, locums, specialists, and technicians.
- Physicians feel their workplaces are less safe, and that the workload is impacting their ability to find balance.
- Several questions regarding senior leadership remained stable in 2021.

### Engagement trends

Each year, Doctors of BC asks members benchmark questions, which are indicators of engagement. Although overall engagement levels dropped slightly from last year, results are generally higher than 2019 levels. The declines for most regions are the result of:

- Fewer physicians feeling they have adequate opportunities to improve patient care, quality, and safety.
- More physicians feeling dissatisfied with their health authority as a place to practice medicine.
- Fewer physicians feeling they provide meaningful input into changes affecting their practice environments.

The following chart outlines the overall average of each of the 9 engagement questions, along with trends over time.

	Provincial Average	Fraser	Interior	Island	Northern	PHSA	Vancouver Coastal
2021	42%	42%	42%	37%	40%	39%	46%
2020	43%	44%	43%	37%	44%	40%	48%
2019	35%	37%	35%	30%	44%	38%	36%

### Physicians in their own words



*"Listen to what we say."*

*"Do not make decisions for our patients, and for us, without consulting us."*

*"I'm also much more engaged than I was as a result of Facility Engagement and Physician Quality Improvement."*

*"It is really nice that the senior medical leader in our area is a rural family physician like me. I feel like they will understand the issues that we face."*

*"Burnout is everywhere and will only get worse due to the extra load from the pandemic."*



**2,539**

total comments received

## Value and Trust

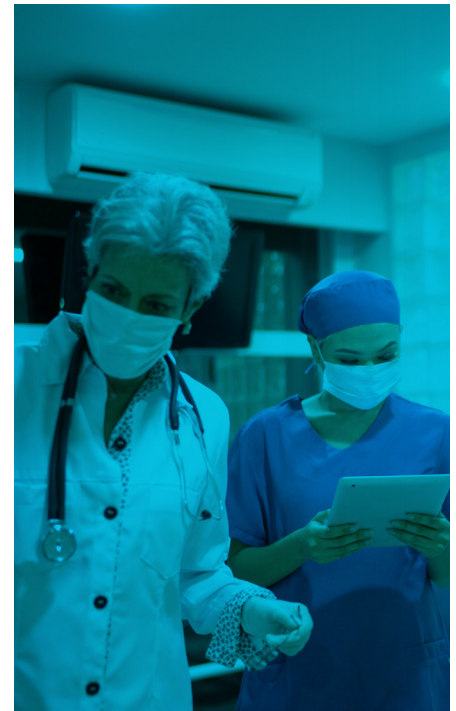
Previously we asked about value and trust at the regional level, and this year we have also included the local level.

- Trust in local leadership (54% agreement) is greater than trust in leadership at the health authority level (37% agreement). This observation is consistent with physician comments related to personally knowing, or not knowing, the leaders at the health authority level.
- Valuing physician contributions is higher at a local (51% agreement) than regional level (37% agreement). However, across all health authorities, this question generally increased.

## Physician Health & Safety Trends

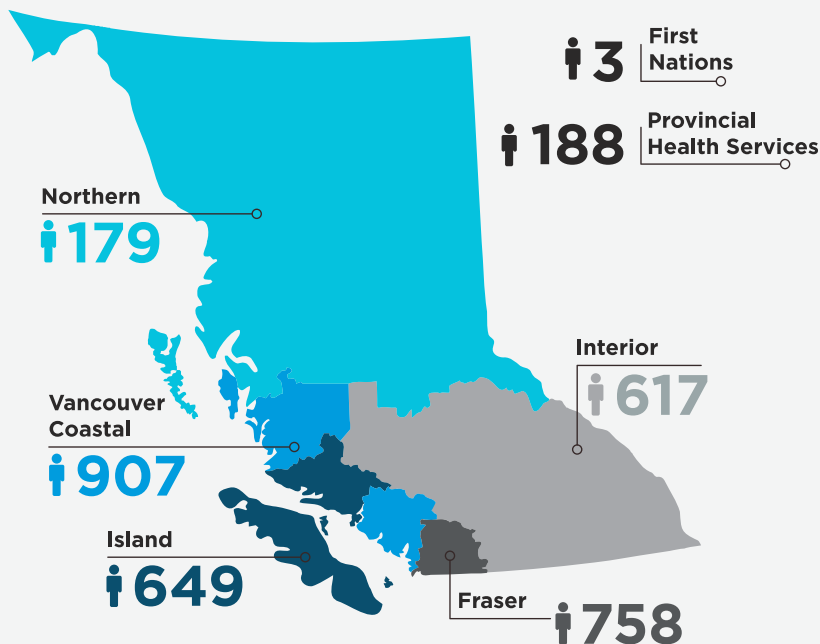
Results show that physicians are less likely to feel the hospital/facility will take action to keep them safe:

- Half of the surveyed physicians believe effective actions are not being taken to prevent violence in the workplace and feel health authorities are not taking the actions to promote a healthy and safe workplace.
- Half of the surveyed physicians report not having the ability to balance the demands of work and personal life.



## Who participated in the survey?

Regional health authority breakdown:



**3,301** members

**27%** response rate

### Type of Practice

Family physician 49%  
Specialist 51%



### Practice Setting

Hospital/facility based 48%  
Community based 52%



### Geographic Setting

Rural 22%  
Urban 78%



**doctors  
of bc**

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# WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THE SURVEY?

We have been measuring levels of engagement between BC physicians and their respective health authority for the last six years. The largest of its kind in Canada, the Health Authority Engagement Survey provides the opportunity for members to share their thoughts on health and safety, trust, and leadership in the workplace, that in turn will help inform important discussions between Doctors of BC, the Ministry of Health, and BC's doctors.



## What did we ask?

The same set of questions have been asked annually since 2015 to benchmark results and track trends over time. Topics include: senior leadership transparency, opportunities for input and collaboration, and satisfaction with workplace and patient care. We also include a set of questions specific to Physician Health and Safety with topics including promoting a healthy and safe work environment, preventing violence, and work/life balance.

This year, some new questions were added to better understand value and trust at a local level:

- This hospital/facility values physicians' contributions.
- Physicians and medical leaders trust one another in my hospital/facility.

## What's next?

- Detailed Summary and Supplemental Reports will be released in early January 2022 providing robust responses to the survey questions and include breakdowns by health authority, facility/hospital, community/divisions, medical leadership, along with other useful demographics.
- Doctors of BC staff members will present the results of this year's Survey to members, health authorities, and the Ministry of Health over the next several months.
- Doctors of BC will continue to use these survey results to inform our ongoing advocacy efforts on behalf of our members, to help foster positive change in the healthcare system.



## How did we seek member input?

*All members received an email inviting them to participate in the online survey, conducted September 13 - October 13, 2021 by external polling firm TWI Surveys.*

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