

83% SUPPORT MAKING ASSAULT AGAINST PARAMEDICS A MORE SERIOUS OFFENSE IN THE CRIMINAL CODE: ABACUS DATA POLL

On behalf of the Paramedic Association of Canada, Abacus Data conducted an extensive online nationwide survey of Canadians' views of healthcare and the role of paramedics. This is the second release from that survey. The sample size was 3,150 adult Canadians and the survey was conducted from April 24 to 28, 2023.

Background

Cariboo-Prince George Conservative MP Todd Doherty introduced Bill C-321, a private member's bill that seeks tougher penalties for people who attack first responders. If passed, the bill would modify the Criminal Code of Canada, introducing an amendment that considers assaults targeting health-care workers and first responders as an aggravating factor in sentencing. Consequently, this provision has the potential to extend the duration of incarceration for offenders.

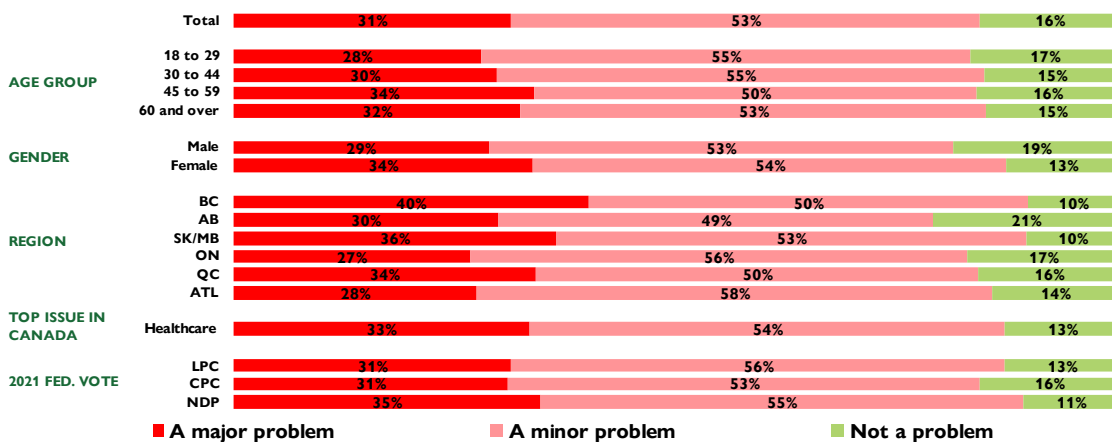
In our national survey, we asked Canadians their views on the issue and whether they support amending the Criminal Code. Here's what we found:

Eight in ten Canadians believe violence towards paramedics is a problem in Canada

Overall, 84% of Canadian adults believe that violence towards paramedics is a problem in Canada, including 31% who believe it is a major problem. This view is consistent across the country, across demographics, and is shared by Liberal, Conservative, and NDP voters.

Do you think that violence and assault towards paramedics is a problem in Canada or not a problem?

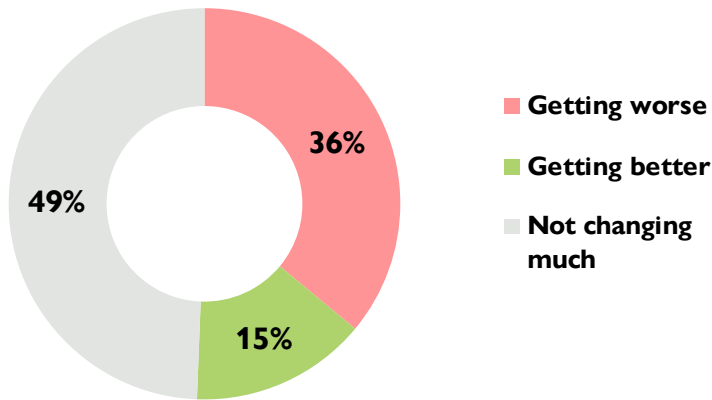
ASSAULT TOWARDS PARAMEDICS IN CANADA IS..



Moreover, by a 2 to 1 margin, Canadians are more likely to believe assault towards paramedics is getting worse than getting better. In total, 36% believe violence against paramedics is getting worse, 15% think it is getting better, and 49% think it is not changing much.

Do you think violence and assault towards paramedics are getting worse, getting better, or not changing much?

NOW, ASSAULT TOWARDS PARAMEDICS IS...

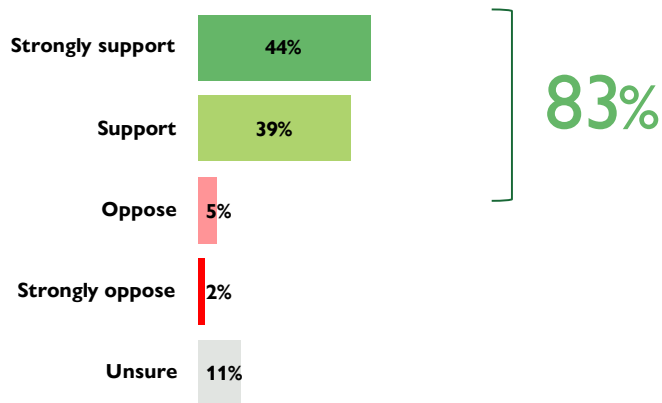


83% support changing the Criminal Code of Canada to include violence and assault against paramedics a more serious offence.

There is widespread support for changing Canada’s Criminal Code to make violence against paramedics a more serious offence. 44% strongly support this move while 39% support it. Only 7% are opposed.

Right now, Canada’s Criminal Code makes assaulting a police officer a more serious offense than other types of assault. Would you support or oppose including paramedics in the Criminal Code?

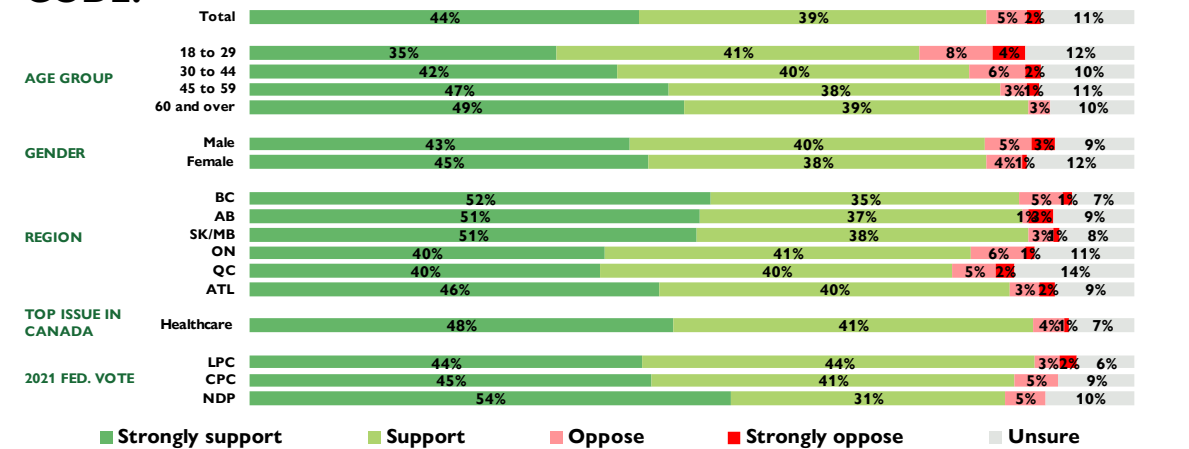
OPINION: INCLUDING PARAMEDICS IN THE CRIMINAL CODE?



Support for amending the Criminal Code to make violence against paramedics a more serious offense is consistent across the country, across demographic groups and is supported by close to 90% of Liberal, Conservative, and NDP supporters.

Right now, Canada's Criminal Code makes assaulting a police officer a more serious offense than other types of assault. Would you support or oppose including paramedics in the Criminal Code?

OPINION: INCLUDING PARAMEDICS IN THE CRIMINAL CODE?



The Upshot

Survey results we released back in June of this year finds widespread respect and trust in paramedics. Canadians believe they are ready to do more to deliver healthcare services.

At the same time, there is also a widespread belief that violence against paramedics is a problem and there's widespread, cross-partisan support for Parliament to amend the Criminal Code to make assaulting a paramedic a more serious offence. There is almost no resistance to the idea.

Methodology

The survey, commissioned by the Paramedic Association of Canada, was conducted online with 3,150 Canadians aged 18 and over from April 24 to 28, 2023.

A random sample of panelists were invited to complete the survey from a set of partner panels based on the Lucid exchange platform. These partners are typically double opt-in survey panels, blended to manage out potential skews in the data from a single source.

The margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is +/- 1.8%, 19 times out of 20.

The data were weighted according to census data to ensure that the sample matched Alberta's population according to age, gender, educational attainment, and region. Totals may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Paramedic Association of Canada

The Paramedic Association of Canada is a voluntary professional organization of paramedicine practitioners in Canada. Its missions is to provide quality care for the public through leadership in the advancement of the profession of paramedicine. For more information, contact Pierre Poirier at pierre.poirier@paramedic.ca, or visit their website at <http://www.paramedic.ca/>