



Mental Health and Substance Use Short-Stay Inpatient Experiences in British Columbia

2011 Survey

British Columbia’s Mental Health and Substance Use Short-Stay Inpatient Experience Survey

In 2011, British Columbia undertook a survey of short-stay mental health and substance use inpatients at 102 service locations across the province to ask for feedback about their experiences with the care and services they received. The survey is the first of its kind in British Columbia.

Patients and clients can tell us a lot about how we are doing relative to the goal of providing accessible and high quality health care services that meet their needs. A survey that includes appropriate safeguards for patient consent and confidentiality allows patients to be more candid than they might be if they spoke directly to a health care professional or administrator.

The mental health and substance use short-stay inpatient experience survey is a “snapshot” of care in British Columbia. It provides health care providers, hospital administrators, health authorities and the Ministry of Health with valuable information about how the province’s mental health and substance use programs and services are performing. The results provide insight into what is working and how the quality of care can be improved.

What the Survey Measured

The survey evaluated short stay inpatients’ experiences of mental health and substance use care and services across eight areas or dimensions of care:

- stigma
- access to care
- relationship/empowerment
- information/rights
- environment
- continuity
- outcome and recovery
- patient safety

The survey also considered patients’ and clients’ overall impressions of the care they received. Additional questions were asked about demographics and self reported physical and mental health status.



What We Found

Participants

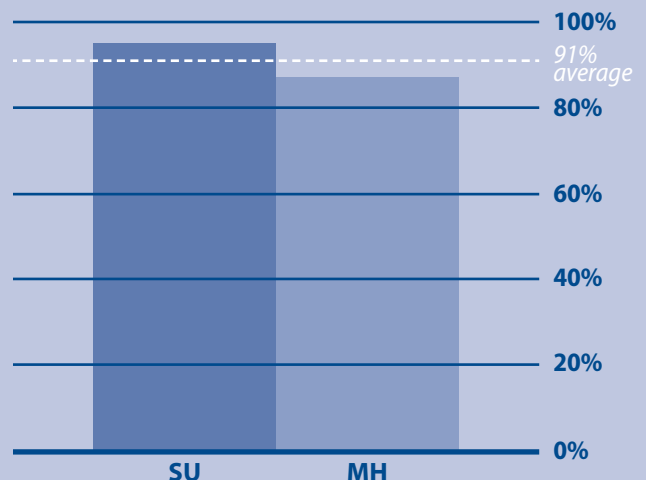
All six health authorities and the 102 service locations that provide mental health and substance use services across the province participated in the survey distribution. The survey was offered to all short-stay inpatients and clients over the age of 13, who received care between October 12, 2010 and April 11, 2011 at the point of discharge.

Overall Quality of Care

Percentage of British Columbian respondents who rated their overall quality of care as good, very good, or excellent:

- 87% of mental health patients
- 95% of substance use clients

Figure 1: Overall Quality of Care for mental health (MH) patients and substance use (SU) clients



(Q42. Overall, how would you rate the quality of care and services you received?)



How British Columbia Mental Health and Substance Use Facilities are Doing

The results tell us that, overall, the majority of B.C.'s mental health and substance use patient/clients are satisfied with the quality of short-stay inpatient services. While there are some areas for improvement, 87 per cent of mental health patients and 95 per cent of substance use clients rated the overall quality of their care as good, very good or excellent.

In general, the findings highlight the following about mental health and substance use inpatient experiences in British Columbia:

- Most patients/clients reported positive ratings when asked about the quality of care and services they received.
- Results at the health authority level were similar to the provincial average.
- Stigma, access to care and relationship/empowerment domains received the highest per cent positive composite scores.
- The lowest dimension scores were reported for safety, outcome/recovery and continuity.
- Substance use clients consistently provided more positive ratings than mental health patients across all eight dimensions of care.

What the Results Mean

These results represent mental health and substance use patient and client voices and experiences. They provide vital information about what is working in B.C.'s mental health and substance use system and what can be improved. For example, both mental health patients and substance use clients gave high ratings for facility cleanliness, feeling safe in the facility, being treated with dignity and respect, staff support of improvement/recovery, getting answers they understood, knowing who to talk to if they had questions or concerns, and feeling that their needs, preference and values were respected in treatment. These results testify to the outstanding work of the health care providers in these sectors.

Some of the areas mental health and substance use inpatients would like to see change include how staff address patient safety, the quality of the food, the amount of leisure activities available, discharge planning, and information about services and treatment options.

Mental Health

Top Strengths

Facility cleanliness	86%
Able to see staff as often as wanted	86%
Felt safe in facility	85%
Treated with dignity/respect in facility	84%
Staff supported improvement/recovery	82%

Top Areas for Improvement

Notice staff wash/disinfect hands	53%
Satisfied with food	55%
Rights under <i>Mental Health Act</i> explained in a way could understand	57%
Enough leisure activities in the facility	59%
Told about medication side effects in a way could understand	59%

Substance Use

Top Strengths

Wait time to access room	97%
Felt safe in facility	95%
Facility cleanliness	94%
Treated with dignity/respect in facility	93%
Needs/preferences/values respected in treatment	92%

Top Areas for Improvement

Enough leisure activities in the facility	61%
Noticed staff wash/disinfect hands	67%
Told whom to contact if had problem/crisis after discharge	68%
Family/supporters involved in decisions as wanted	71%
Told about medication side effects in a way could understand	73%

Survey Results

Respondents were surveyed about their experiences across eight aspects or dimensions of their care. Each dimension of care consists of a series of questions. The responses to each of these questions were averaged to provide an overall score for the dimension. Overall, the survey has a ± 1.2 per cent margin of error at the 95 per cent confidence level, which means the results at the provincial level are accurate within + or - 1.2 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

<i>Dimension of Care in B.C.</i>	<i>Mental Health</i>	<i>Substance Use</i>
<p>1. Relationship/ Empowerment</p> <p>Includes questions on perceptions about whether they felt comfortable asking questions about their treatment, whether they felt staff supported their improvement and recovery, whether they were involved as much as they and family members wanted in decisions about their treatment, and whether their individual needs, preference, values, cultural and spiritual needs were respected.</p>	77%	89%
<p>2. Environment</p> <p>Includes questions on perceptions about their satisfaction with the food, cleanliness and leisure activities in the facility, whether they felt they had enough privacy, and whether they felt safe.</p>	71%	83%
<p>3. Information/ Rights</p> <p>Includes questions on perceptions about whether they were told about possible medication side effects, whether staff explained their treatment options and the purpose of their medication, and whether their rights under the Mental Health Act were clearly explained.</p>	73%	86%
<p>4. Stigma</p> <p>Includes questions on perceptions about whether staff helped them feel that there is nothing shameful about having problems with mental health and/or addiction, and whether they felt they were treated with dignity and respect.</p>	81%	92%
<p>5. Outcome and Recovery</p> <p>Includes questions on perceptions of preparedness to deal with daily problems, their preparedness to participate in daily activities, whether their symptoms are bothering them less, and whether they were helped by their facility stay.</p>	68%	81%
<p>6. Continuity</p> <p>Includes questions on perceptions about whether staff told them about services and supports available in the community, whether they were involved as much as they wanted in planning their discharge, and whether they understood the plan for treatment after leaving the facility.</p>	70%	79%
<p>7. Access to Care</p> <p>Includes questions on perceptions about whether their admission process was organized, initial wait time to access their room, and if they were able to see staff as often as they wanted.</p>	79%	93%
<p>8. Safety</p> <p>Includes questions on perceptions about whether staff confirmed who they were before giving medication, treatments, counseling or tests, whether they noticed staff wash/disinfect their hands, and whether they experienced medical harm/error.</p>	69%	77%



How the Results Will Be Used

The Ministry of Health and health authorities are committed to acting on the survey results. The results will inform the ministry's work around the 10 year mental health and substance use plan. Health authorities will use results for quality improvement purposes, to support accreditation reporting, and to enhance services in this sector.

Dimension Scores for Mental Health and Substance Use Sub-Sectors

Results from patient/client experiences of care are reported in the form of per cent positive scores. Survey questions were aligned with one of eight dimensions of care.

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Mental Health</i>	<i>Substance Use</i>
Overall Quality	87%	95%
Relationship/Empowerment	77%	89%
Environment	71%	83%
Information/Rights	73%	86%
Stigma	81%	92%
Outcome and Recovery	68%	81%
Continuity	70%	79%
Access to Care	79%	93%
Safety	69%	77%

Sample Size

A total of 10,240 surveys were distributed, with a total of 6,615 surveys completed. The 65 per cent response rate exceeded the response rate for this sector for similar surveys in Canada and the United Kingdom.

Survey Method

A self-report questionnaire was offered to all patients and clients at the point of discharge and could be completed either onsite or offsite by paper, telephone or online. Translated questionnaires were available in eight languages, including: English, French, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Punjabi, Vietnamese, Spanish and Korean.

Survey Tool

The province used the Canadian Mental Health Client Experience Questionnaire (CMHCEQ) as the core survey tool. The CMHCEQ has been used previously in other jurisdictions, including Ontario. The survey was adapted and cognitively tested for use by adult and youth patients and clients in British Columbia, including the addition of questions about patient safety and stigma.

Survey Administration

R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd was selected as the vendor to perform the survey. Malatest was selected from among five bidders who responded to a Ministry of Health request for proposals in April 2010.

Cost

The total cost of the survey is estimated to be about \$390,000. This cost is shared by the six health authorities.



Opportunities for Improvement

Survey results indicate both what is important to patients and how satisfied patients were with the services provided. The higher the correlation between satisfaction and performance, the more important this aspect of care is to overall satisfaction. The questions with the lowest performance ratings and the highest correlation with overall satisfaction become the key priority areas for improvement. Focusing on priority areas has the greatest potential to impact satisfaction with overall quality of care.

Top Four Priority Areas for Improvement:

B.C.'s Mental Health Sector

1. Staff helping patients and clients deal with their problems.
2. Staff explaining treatment options.
3. Involving patients and clients in decisions about treatment.
4. Providing answers that are understandable to patient and clients.

B.C.'s Substance Use Sector

1. Staff helping patients and clients deal with their problems.
2. Staff telling patient and clients about services and supports available in the community.
3. Providing answers that are understandable to patients and clients.
4. Staff explaining treatment options.



Ministry of
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