



# 2020 Veterans Affairs Canada National Client Survey

## Executive Summary

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For more information on this report, please contact Veterans Affairs Canada at: [info@vac-acc.gc.ca](mailto:info@vac-acc.gc.ca)

***Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français.***

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**2020 Veterans Affairs Canada National Client Survey**

Final Report

Prepared for Veteran Affairs Canada

Supplier name: Forum Research Inc.

January 2021

This public opinion research report presents the results of a CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviewing) survey conducted by Forum Research Inc. on behalf of Veteran Affairs Canada. The research study was conducted with 3268 VAC clients, in two waves: February 12th–March 19th, 2020 and August 6th–October 9th, 2020.

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Sondage National auprès des clients 2020.

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# Executive Summary

## Research purpose and objectives

The purpose of this research project is to measure VAC clients' levels of satisfaction with Service Delivery and to measure VAC client health and well-being. The survey provides valuable results on program effectiveness, Veteran well-being, satisfaction with Service Delivery and various service elements, and preferred service channels.

The research results of the VAC National Survey allow VAC to strengthen its performance measurement and ensure that its work is informed by evidence and feedback from Veterans and all of those served by VAC.

The objectives of the VAC National Survey are to:

1. Assess satisfaction with Service Delivery;
2. Determine preferred service channels;
3. Measure client health and well-being; and
4. Support improvements to Service Delivery.

## Summary of key findings

In general, respondents are satisfied with VAC programs, services, and benefits. Between the six key strata of VAC clients—Veterans 85+, Veterans 65–84, Veterans under 65 (case-managed), Veterans under 65 (not case-managed), RCMP, and Survivors—a consistent pattern emerges. Survivors and Veterans 85+ tend to be the most satisfied of the six strata. Veterans under 65, particularly case-managed clients, report being the least satisfied. This striking pattern holds throughout much of the survey and shows up as a recurring sideways “U”-shaped pattern in the stacked bar charts visualizing elements of client satisfaction.

There are also interesting trends regarding clients who are members of marginalized groups. Throughout the survey, Indigenous and visible minority respondents are generally less satisfied and less well-off compared to other groups. Whether it be service experience, programs, or

health and well-being, Indigenous and visible minority respondents tend to rate their VAC experience more negatively across the board.

Notable gender differences are also prevalent in the data. Compared to their male counterparts, women are more likely to give positive responses about their satisfaction with VAC programs, experience with VAC staff, and access to services and benefits. This is likely connected to the high satisfaction among Survivors, a stratum which is predominantly women.

Often, there is a positive relationship between age and satisfaction, with older respondents generally feeling more positively than younger respondents across a range of different areas. This is consistent with the paradox of aging, in which older people report higher levels of life satisfaction despite declining health and income.

There are no major declines in satisfaction or other metrics when comparing those who took the survey pre-pandemic and those who took it during the pandemic. When comparing respondents from these two groups, there are no notable negative differences. Clients are not reporting increased wait times or lower satisfaction due to the pandemic. In some cases, there even appears to be a slight “COVID bump,” where satisfaction improves post-COVID. This may be because VAC staff have helped clients navigate some COVID-related difficulties, or that services and benefits have become even more helpful in the context of the pandemic.

## Methodology

Forum Research administered a quantitative study to 3268 VAC clients 18 years of age and older. The sample frame used a file supplied by VAC which included six strata of interest: Veterans 85 and over, Veterans 65–84, Veterans under 65 (split between case-managed and not case-managed), RCMP, and Survivors who were either in receipt of benefits or who had applied for a benefit in the previous 12 months. This included Veterans who applied for benefits in the previous 12 months but who had been declined or who were still awaiting a decision.

The margin of error for the full sample is  $\pm 1.7\%$ . For the six aforementioned strata, the margins of error are  $\pm 4.7\%$  for Veterans 85 and over,  $\pm 3.7\%$  for Veterans 65–84,  $\pm 4.1\%$  for case-managed Veterans under 65,  $\pm 3.4\%$  for Veterans under 65 who are not case-managed,  $\pm 4.9\%$  for RCMP,  $\pm 5.3\%$  for Survivors.

Fieldwork was conducted in two waves: February 12th–March 19th, 2020 and August 6th–October 9th, 2020. Throughout the report, “pre-COVID” refers to responses collected February–March 2020 during the first wave, and “post-COVID” represents responses collected August–October 2020, during the second wave.

The survey was conducted using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) and respondents were reached using contact information from a sample file provided by VAC.

As shown in the appendix, it does not appear that non-response bias significantly impacted the results, and this data is can be generalized to populations with the same characteristics as the sample file of VAC clients.

### **Contract value of the POR project**

\$199,478.90

# Political neutrality certification

This certification is to be submitted with the final report submitted to the Project Authority.

I hereby certify as Senior Officer of Forum Research Inc. that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the *Policy on Communications and Federal Identity* and *Directive on the Management of Communications – Appendix C: Mandatory Procedures for Public Opinion Research*. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

Signature:



William Schatten  
Vice-President, Research & Analytics  
Forum Research

Date:

November 26, 2020