



# Health Care Solutions

for

ACCESS Alberta Primetime

Alberta Public Opinion Study – Fall 2009

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[www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl](http://www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl)

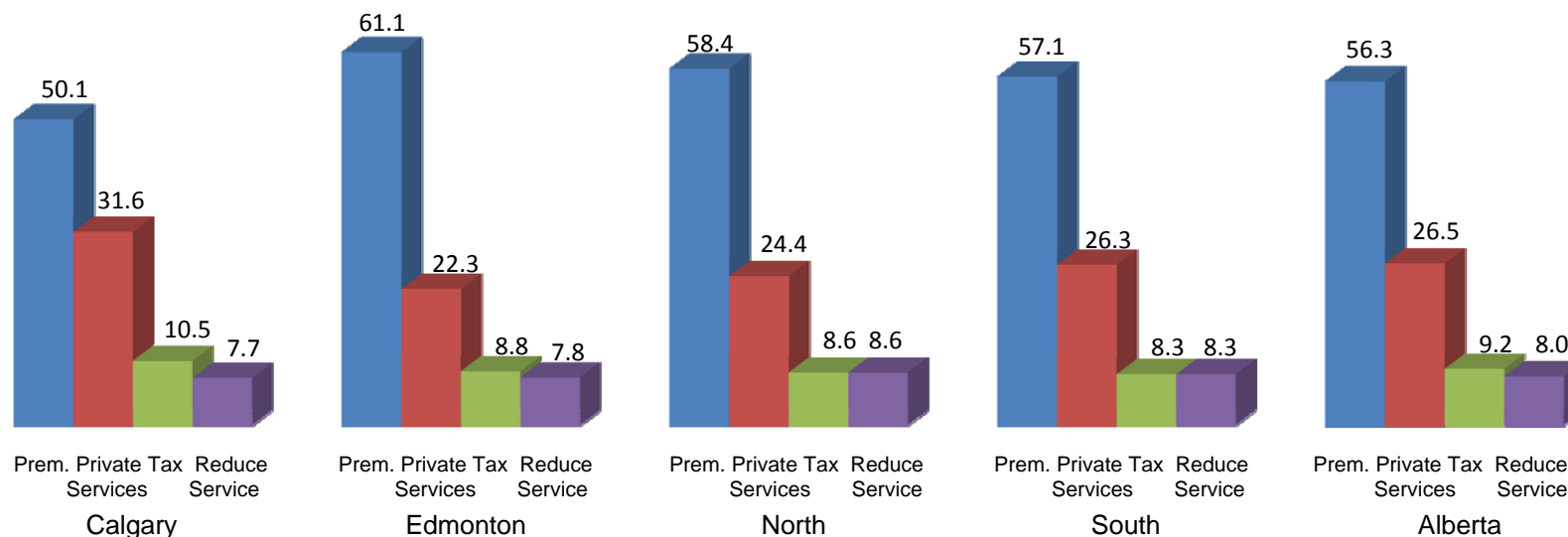


# Methodology





-  **Population** The province of Alberta has a total population of 3,687,662 residents (July 1, 2009) approximately 77% of which are 18 years of age or older for an adult population of approximately 2,839,500.
-  **Sample** Data were collected by Lethbridge College and Athabasca University students enrolled in STS270 – Social Science Research Methods and PSC150 – Local Government in the fall of 2009. Students interviewed 1,201 adult Alberta residents by telephone from October 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> 2009 under the supervision of Canadian Studies faculty members Faron Ellis PhD and Marda Schindeler MA. Telephone numbers were selected from a sample drawn from InfoCanada directories. We sincerely thank all participants who took time out of their day to respond to our inquiries. Further results from this study and results from past studies can be accessed by visiting the CSRL web pages at: [www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl](http://www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl)
-  **Representativeness** Analysis of the demographic data indicates that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the adult population within the province of Alberta. The sample has been statistically weighted where necessary to even better reflect the demographic distribution of the population (gender).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of  $\pm 2.8$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data (Calgary 4.9, Edmonton 5.0, North 6.5, South 7.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20).
-  **IB Commons Call Centre** Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre and applications developed by the Open Source Learning Lab (OSLL). We thank Dr. James Manis and OSLL for their efforts in working with us to establish and maintain the IB Commons Call Centre.
-  **Sponsorship** These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Alberta residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at Lethbridge College. This particular set of questions was Sponsored by the ACCESS network's Alberta Primetime nightly news program. We thank ACCESS and Alberta Primetime for their support of our research endeavors.

## Health Care Solutions

- When considering four options that the Alberta government may adopt as a means to addressing health care issues in the province, Albertans would prefer to see health care premiums reinstated (56.3%) over allowing more opportunities for people to pay for private health care services (26.5%). Least popular among the options are reducing some services that are covered under Alberta health care (8.0%), and increasing personal taxes (9.2%).
- Calgarians distinguish themselves as both the least supportive of reinstating health care premiums (50.1%) compared to 61.1% of Edmontonians, 58.4% of northern Albertans, and 57.1% of southerners who state that premiums would be their preferred option. Calgarians (31.6%) are also significantly more supportive of allowing more private health care services than are other Albertans. Little support exists in any of the cities or regions for either increasing personal taxes or for reducing health care services.
- Women (61.3%) are more supportive of reinstating premiums than are men (51.3%), while men (11.6%) are almost twice as likely to support increasing personal taxes as are women (6.8%).



## Health Care Solutions

-  Income impacts opinion on this issue in predictable and understandable ways. Lower income earners are more supportive of reinstating premiums (62.1%) than are middle income earners (55.7%) or upper income residents (48.5%). The inverse is true when considering more private health care options. Here, upper income earners (34.0%) much more supportive than are lower income earners (19.6%) and, to a lesser extent, middle income earners (27.9%).
-  It is interesting and noteworthy that education has no significant impact on opinion on this issue.
-  Age impacts opinion in a number of important ways. Initially, as age increases, so too does support for reinstating premiums. Only 46.3% of young Albertans support reinstating premiums. Support increases to 50.2% among gen-xers, further to 59.1% amongst boomers, and peaks with seniors at 63.9%. Support for increasing personal taxes follows a similar but inverse pattern. The youth are most predisposed to having their personal taxes increased. Seniors are least supportive of personal tax increases (5.3%), followed by boomers (8.4%) and gen-xers (11.0%). Gen-xers are slightly more predisposed towards increasing access to private health care (30.8%) than are other age groups,
-  Provincial vote intention does not have a significant impact on opinion but some interesting differences emerge from the data nonetheless. Liberal supporters (60.7%) are more supportive of reinstating premiums than are PC (51.2%), Wildrose Alliance (56.1%), and NDP supporters (56.3%). PC (35.2%) and Wildrose Alliance (31.7%) voters are much more likely to support more private health care options than are either Liberal (15.0%) or NDP (12.6%) supporters. Conversely, Liberal (15.6%) and NDP (20.7%) are more supportive of increasing personal taxes than are PC (5.6%) and Wildrose Alliance supporters (4.4%).

Health Care Solutions*	Calgary	Edmonton	North	South	All Residents
Reinstate Premiums	50.1	61.1	58.4	57.1	56.3
More private healthcare	31.6	22.3	24.4	26.3	26.5
Increase Personal Taxes	10.5	8.8	8.6	8.3	9.2
Reduce Services	7.7	7.8	8.6	8.3	8.0

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; \* sig < 0.05

# Healthcare Solutions

Gender*	Male	Female
Reinstate Premiums	51.3	61.3
More private healthcare	28.5	24.5
Increase Personal Taxes	11.6	6.8
Reduce Services	8.6	7.4

Household Income*	Under \$50,000	\$50-\$100,000	Over \$100,000
Reinstate Premiums	62.1	55.7	48.5
More private healthcare	19.6	27.9	34.0
Increase Personal Taxes	9.4	10.1	8.9
Reduce Services	8.9	6.3	8.6

Education	High School or less	Some Post Secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Reinstate Premiums	57.8	54.3	57.7	56.4
More private healthcare	25.9	29.0	27.8	23.6
Increase Personal Taxes	9.7	11.0	6.0	10.3
Reduce Services	6.5	5.7	8.5	9.8

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Reinstate Premiums	46.3	50.2	59.1	63.9
More private healthcare	24.8	30.8	25.8	24.0
Increase Personal Taxes	13.2	11.0	8.4	5.3
Reduce Services	15.7	8.1	6.7	6.7

Religious Participation	1-3 per month/more	Several per year	Rarely/never
Reinstate Premiums	57.2	52.0	57.9
More private healthcare	27.0	26.0	25.3
Increase Personal Taxes	7.6	10.4	9.8
Reduce Services	8.3	11.6	7.1

Provincial Vote Intention	PC	Wildrose Alliance	Liberal	NDP	Undecided
Reinstate Premiums	51.2	56.1	60.7	56.3	52.7
More private healthcare	35.2	31.7	15.0	12.6	27.1
Increase Personal Taxes	5.6	4.4	15.6	20.7	12.4
Reduce Services	8.0	7.8	8.7	10.3	7.8

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; \* sig < 0.05

## Demographics

Area of Province (%)		Gender (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Calgary	33.4	Male	50.1	Under \$50,000	28.1	H-School/less	19.4	18-29	12.4
Edmonton	31.8	Female	49.9	\$50-\$100,000	39.7	Some P-Sec.	20.9	30-44	26.3
North	19.3			Over \$100,000	32.2	Col-Tech-Grad	24.3	45-64	39.9
South	15.5					University Grad	35.4	65 or older	21.4
									Mean age = 50 year

Religious Participation (%)	
2-3/month-more	28.6
Several/year	19.5
Rarely-never	51.9

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

## Question

Which one of the following would you choose as the single most important way to address health care issues in Alberta?

- increase personal taxes
- allow more opportunities for people to pay for private health care services
- reduce some services covered under Alberta healthcare
- reinstate health care premiums