

ACROBAT
R E S E A R C H

OMNITEL

NATIONAL TELEPHONE OMNIBUS

Topline Research Findings 2009 Living Assistance Services Study



October 1, 2009

Methodology

This study was conducted by Acrobat Research, using our national telephone omnibus, Omnitel. Interviewing was conducted from September 17th to 24th, 2009. A new random sample is drawn for each wave of Omnitel. On a sample of 1000 adults, interviewing is disproportionately allocated by region as follows:

- Atlantic 125 interviews
- Quebec 250 interviews
- Ontario 250 interviews
- Manitoba/Saskatchewan 125 interviews
- Alberta 125 interviews
- British Columbia 125 interviews

The sample is weighted by age and gender to replicate actual population distribution within region. For a base of 1000, the margin of error for the study is $\pm 3.2\%$ 19 times out of 20. All figures presented in this summary of findings are based on weighted results.

Key Findings

- 1. A strong majority of Canadians want either their parents or themselves to stay at home as aging takes place, with almost 70% taking this position.**
 - a. Residents in provinces bordering an ocean are significantly more likely to feel this way than those in the interior of the country (77.9% in Atlantic Canada and 78.9% in British Columbia versus 63.0% in Québec and 69.6% in Ontario).
 - b. The desire to remain in the home is positively correlated with age – the older people become the more likely they are to want to stay in the home as they age (65.4% of 18-29 year olds versus 68.0% of 30-49 year olds versus 71.8% of those 50 years of age and older).
 - c. Those having completed at least some college or university are significantly more likely to want to stay at home as they or their parents age, as opposed to those with no post-secondary education (72.4% for post-secondary respondents versus about 65% for those without post-secondary education).

- 2. Reasons cited by respondents to want to stay in the home as one ages include, in order of descending popularity: enhanced comfort, greater independence, more familiarity with surroundings, a general dislike of nursing homes, and the desire to be close to family.**
 - a. Those surveyed in Québec and Alberta indicated the desire to remain independent more frequently than any other, whereas other geographies place other concerns at the top of the list.
 - b. Home owners are more than twice as likely as non-home owners to mention familiarity with surroundings as a reason to stay in the home (16.5% homeowners versus 6.2% of non-home owners).

- 3. Amongst the minority of Canadians who do not want their parents or themselves to remain at home as they age, a number of underlying rationale were provided. These include a desire for independence/freedom/desire to be unencumbered, not wanting to be a burden to other family members, and a need for special care not available in the home.**
 - a. Canadians in Ontario, Québec, and the Atlantic provinces are significantly more likely to mention a desire to remain independent of additional responsibilities (22.0%, 21.6%, and 36.9%, respectively) than those in Alberta and British Columbia (1.9% and 4.4%, respectively).

- 4. The vast majority (79%) of Canadians believe they or their parents will live longer and enjoy a greater quality of life if they age at home.**
 - a. There is a significant variation in this outlook between some regions. While 86.2% of those in British Columbia believe this to be true, only 73.9% of those living in Manitoba/Saskatchewan and 74.6% of those in Ontario agreed.
 - b. Those who are 50 years of age or older express this opinion stronger (84.1%) than those who are in the 18-29 and 30-49 year old ranges (78.8% and 73.6%, respectively).

- c. Those Canadian households comprised only of adults and containing no children under the age of 19 are more likely to agree with this belief (81.9%) than households where children are present (72.5%).

5. When asked if they are concerned about their potential role as a caregiver for aging parents or relatives, Canadians are generally split, with 43.4% of respondents indicating they are concerned, and 53.3% answering that they are not.

- a. Amongst Québécois, however, a slim majority indicate that they are concerned about their potential role as a caregiver (51.7%). No other region in the country registers over a 42.3% level of concern, with Alberta having only 1 in 3 (33.8%) being concerned.
- b. Older Canadians (those over 50) exhibit lower levels of concern (36.0%) than those who are younger.
- c. The presence of children under 19 years of age living in the home is positively correlated with concern for a potential role as a caregiver to an aging parent or relative. 52.1% of households with children were concerned, as opposed to 39.4% of households that were made up of only adults.

6. Canadians who are concerned about their potential role as caregivers provided a number of ideas that explain their concerns. These include a sense of responsibility for parents or family members, time pressures and constraints, a lack of qualifications to deliver proper care, and the financial impact of becoming a caregiver.

- a. Québécois are considerably less concerned about the financial impact of their potential caregiver role (15.7% mentioned this in Québec) than the Prairie provinces and British Columbia (26.7% in Manitoba/Saskatchewan, 29.9% in Alberta, and 23.2% in British Columbia).
- b. Over half of those employed part time (51.0%) indicated that they feel it's their responsibility to be a potential caregiver to an aging parent or relative – suggesting that many people are opting to work part time in order to provide care for aging parents and relatives.

7. Amongst the slightly more than 50% of Canadians that are not concerned about their role as potential caregivers, reasons cited were: they were already prepared/equipped to assume this role, responsibilities could be shared with others such as siblings, and they are in relatively good health.

- a. Part time workers are 2-3 times more likely than full time workers (29.4% versus 12.7%) to mention that they can manage these potential responsibilities as caregivers, and are therefore less concerned.

8. Almost 75% of Canadians would want to be involved in the selection of a caregiver for their aging parents or relatives.

- a. Québécois are significantly less likely to want to be involved in this selection as opposed to other geographies (59.5% versus national average of 72.5%).

- b. The desire for involvement in caregiver selection is positively correlated to income. In households making over \$60,000 per year, over 80% of respondents express a desire for involvement, as opposed to about 65% from households whose income is under this amount.
- c. Households that include children below 19 years of age living at home are significantly more likely to want involvement in the selection of a parental caregiver (79.5%) than households that are comprised only of adults (69.3%).

9. Reasons cited by Canadians for wanting to be involved in the selection of a caregiver for an aging parent or relative, in order of importance, are: to ensure adequate quality of care, to choose the most appropriate match for the patient, to establish a personal relationship with the caregiver, and to ensure that the caregiver exhibits a responsible attitude.

- a. Québécois are the least likely of any region to specifically mention the quality of care provided by the caregiver (15.4%) as a reason for involvement in the selection of a caregiver, a rate of about half as often as this is mentioned in all other regions.
- b. Residents in Central Canada, Québec and Ontario, are about twice as likely (19.5% and 16.6%) to mention concerns about the caregiver's responsibility and reliability as in other regions, all of which respondents mention this less than 10% of the time.

10. The minority of Canadians who do not want to be involved in the selection of a caregiver for aging parents or relatives do so because they want to be the caregiver themselves, they defer the decision to the person receiving the care, or they don't feel qualified to make that decision.

11. When considering a hypothetical scenario where the respondent would have to move into a nursing home or senior care home, quality of life and personal care issues would be most concerning to Canadians. On average they would be most concerned about loss of control or independence, abuse, and lack of personalized care. On the other hand, some areas of life in senior care or nursing homes are perceived as relatively benign, such as communal dining and organized group social events. Concerns around financial considerations and lack of privacy resulting in fewer opportunities for intimacy fall somewhere in between.

- a. Females register more concern about abuse and lack of personalized care than males.
- b. Those living in Québec and Alberta are significantly less likely to be concerned about abuse than in every other region of the country.
- c. Those in the 30-49 age cohort are more concerned about abuse and lack of personalized care than those who are younger or older than they are.

- d. Atlantic Canadians are more concerned about the loss of privacy than Canadians who live in points west of them.
- e. Home owners are more concerned about organized social activities than those who do not own a home.
- f. Men are more concerned than women about the loss of privacy, resulting in fewer opportunities for intimacy (mean of 7.65 versus 7.48 on a 1-10 scale).
- g. Concern over the loss of privacy, resulting in fewer opportunities for intimacy, was negatively correlated to age, i.e., each ascending age group exhibited lower levels of concern about this than the one previous (mean of 7.97 for 18-29 year olds versus 7.63 for 30-49 year olds and 7.33 for those aged 50 and above).
- h. Concern about the loss of privacy and the resultant decrease in opportunities for intimacy declined moving across the country for East to West (mean of 8.03 in Atlantic Canada versus 7.13 in British Columbia).
- i. Those who are native French speakers demonstrated a higher level of concern about the loss of privacy, resulting in fewer opportunities for intimacy, than those whose first language is English (7.71 versus 7.53).

12. When thinking about the healthcare system in Canada, about 7 out of 10 Canadians (68.9%) do not feel it will be adequate to meet their or their parents' needs as they age.

- a. Females are significantly more likely to feel this way than males (76.1% of females versus 60.9% of males)
- b. Those in the 30-49 year old age range are more likely to be concerned about the healthcare system than those in both the lower and higher age cohorts.
- c. Ontarians are significantly less concerned (61%) about the healthcare system than those in provinces such as British Columbia (82%) and Québec (73%), as well as Atlantic Canada (74%)
- d. Higher educated Canadians are also more likely to believe the healthcare system will be inadequate as compared to those with elementary and secondary education levels (71.8% of those with at least some post-secondary education hold this view as opposed to about 63% of those with lower levels of education).
- e. There are relatively few variations in opinion on this subject by income level.