

U.S. news is taking a toll on Ontarians mental health: new poll More considering psychological support to deal with anxiety, depression

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New research reflects what many people in Ontario have been feeling for months: the constant stream of unsettling U.S. news and political turmoil is taking a real toll on people's mental health.

In recognition of February as Psychology Month, the Ontario Psychological Association engaged Pollara Strategic Insights to survey Ontarians about their mental health in light of current events. The findings are striking. Nearly six-in-10 (57%) say the bombardment this past year of U.S. news and events has negatively affected their mental well-being. And among those feeling this impact strongly, 30% say they would consider seeking out a psychologist if their anxiety or depression worsened.

"In stressful moments like this, access to high-quality mental health care matters more than ever," said Dr. Laura Nichols, President, Ontario Psychological Association (OPA). "If they reach out for support, Ontarians can feel confident they will be accessing psychologists that are highly qualified through education and rigorous training and supervision.

Ontario's psychologists currently meet some of the highest education standards in the country — but that standard is now at risk of being lowered.

Ontario's regulator has recommended to the province to reduce those qualifications so that psychologists can pass more easily from province to province creating potentially dangerous consequences for patients.

"People deserve to know that when they reach out for help, they're getting psychological care from professionals with the training and experience to guide them safely using evidenced based interventions," said Nichols. "Ontarians need — and deserve — care that is both accessible and grounded in strong professional expertise."

The [OPA](#) can help people and families find the right care if and when they need it. The Association's patient referral service, AskForHelp.ca helps people easily find and connect with a psychologist or psychological associate within a day or two.

Further findings:

- If Ontarians need to seek out a psychologist in the next 12 months, most (57%) would ask their doctor for a referral, and about a quarter would ask friends/family (23%) and/or search online (23%).
- 17% would directly contact a psychologist they are aware of – whether through past personal or friend/family experience or some other way.
- 6% are unsure of how to find a psychologist.
- Amongst those who indicated they would seek out a psychologist if they experienced increased anxiety or depression in the next 12 months, far more (35%) would directly contact a psychologist – with most turning to a psychologist they have consulted in the past (22%).

Pollara conducted the online survey January 20-25, 2026, with a randomly selected sample of 911 adult residents of Ontario, 18 years of age and older.

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