



**FIGHTING
BLINDNESS
CANADA**

Ontario Patients Experiencing Worsening Eyesight Due to Lack of Access to Care During COVID-19

Increased wait times, postponed surgeries and postponed eye injections among the impacts the pandemic has had on eye care in the province

TORONTO, (Date, Month, 2021) – The COVID-19 pandemic has had dire consequences for Ontario patients living with eye diseases leading to an inability to access care, according to the latest polling released by IPSOS and commissioned by AbbVie Inc.

The survey of 75 ophthalmologists practicing in Ontario reported that 95 per cent of respondents agree that access to procedures and care has been impacted by COVID-19, leading to 84 per cent of ophthalmologists reporting seeing patients experiencing deteriorating eyesight.

Eighty per cent of the ophthalmologists report postponed surgeries and 55 per cent report postponed eye injections for retinal conditions such as diabetic macular edema. In addition, 76 per cent of the surveyed ophthalmologists report seeing fewer patients due to COVID-19, 73 per cent are seeing wait times increase by a few weeks or even months, and 83 per cent report seeing a drastic decrease in monitoring of patients' vision health.

“May is Vision Health Month. With Wave III causing elective surgical procedures to be cancelled again in Ontario, COVID-19 continues to disrupt the landscape of eye care in Ontario. It's integral for patients living with conditions such as cataracts, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and diabetic macular edema (DME) to have access to treatment options that will provide them with the best vision health outcomes and reduce the number of times they have to go in to see their doctor in this difficult time.” said Doug Earle, President and CEO of Fighting Blindness Canada.

The full results of the survey are available here: <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/ontario-patients-experiencing-worsening-eyesight-due-lack-access-care-during-covid-19>

About Fighting Blindness Canada

Fighting Blindness Canada (FBC) is the largest charitable funder of vision research in Canada. We offer hope to Canadians by funding the best, most promising research that is driving treatments and cures for blinding eye diseases. Over our 47-year history, we have contributed over \$40 million to the development of sight-saving cures and treatments for blinding eye diseases. All the research we fund supports our goal of understanding why vision loss occurs, how it can be slowed or stopped, and how sight can be restored, and when its approved as a treatment in Canada, people have access to these innovative treatments.

About IPSOS

Ipsos is the world's third largest Insights and Analytics company, present in 90 markets and employing more than 18,000 people. The company's research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

About AbbVie

AbbVie's mission is to discover and deliver innovative medicines that solve serious health issues today and address the medical challenges of tomorrow. The company strives to have an impact on people's lives across several key therapeutic areas: immunology, oncology, neuroscience, eye care, virology, women's health and gastroenterology, in addition to products and services across its Allergan Aesthetics portfolio.

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