
Introduction

2014 Survey on Living with Chronic Diseases in Canada—Mood and Anxiety Disorders Component

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Mood and anxiety disorders are the most common types of mental disorders in Canada, yet there has been a lack of up-to-date information on the impacts of these disorders and approaches used to manage them. To address these gaps, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), in conjunction with Statistics Canada and other external experts, developed the 2014 Survey on Living with Chronic Diseases in Canada—Mood and Anxiety Disorders Component (SLCDC-MA).¹

The 2014 SLCDC-MA is the only national survey to collect information on the experiences of Canadians with professionally diagnosed mood and/or anxiety disorders. This survey provides detailed information on a wide variety of topics related to mood and anxiety disorders including disorder-attributable impacts on usual and work-related activities; medical and individual approaches used to manage them; and barriers to care and self-management. Furthermore, as a cross-sectional follow-up survey to the 2013 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), responses were linked to those from the CCHS, creating an even richer dataset that includes additional health-related information such as comorbidities, lifestyle behaviours, and health determinants.

By way of this special theme issue on mood and anxiety disorders, we are pleased to introduce three original articles that PHAC, in collaboration with external experts, has developed using data from the 2014 SLCDC-MA. These articles provide new information on the experiences of Canadian adults with professionally diagnosed mood and/or anxiety disorders, with a specific focus on the key

sociodemographic factors known to influence health-related outcomes.

*The 2014 Survey on Living with Chronic Diseases in Canada—Mood and Anxiety Disorders Component: a methodological overview*², by O'Donnell et al., is a methodological overview of the 2014 SLCDC-MA that includes a description of the survey's objectives, content development, qualitative assessment, target population, sampling strategy, data collection and processing, data quality, confidentiality and ethical considerations. In addition, it includes an examination of the sociodemographic characteristics of the final sample. The information presented is intended to enhance the reader's interpretation and understanding of the results found in other original articles that use 2014 SLCDC-MA data.

*Health status, activity limitations, work-related restrictions and level of disability among Canadians with mood and/or anxiety disorders*³, by Loukine et al., provides a comprehensive overview of the general and mental health status, usual and work-related activities and level of disability among Canadian adults with mood and/or anxiety disorders. The findings shed light on the magnitude of the health-related impacts of these disorders and identify subpopulations at greatest risk of severe disability. Furthermore, the results support the role of public health policy and programs in improving the lives of those living with these disorders with particular emphasis on those with co-occurring (concurrent) mood and anxiety disorders.

*Correlates of well-being among Canadians with mood and/or anxiety disorders*⁴, by Orpana et al., examines factors associated with well-being (measured by self-rated mental health and life satisfaction) among Canadian adults with mood and/or anxiety disorders. The results provide a better understanding of these factors and demonstrate that well-being is achievable even in the presence of a mood and/or an anxiety disorder. In addition, the findings show that healthy coping strategies and strong perceived social support are important correlates of positive well-being.

Future analyses will deal with topics related to the management of mood and/or anxiety disorders including time to diagnosis, self-management through exercise and/or physical activity and use of prescription medication and psychological counselling. The topics chosen for this issue and future studies were informed by PHAC's surveillance priorities and Canada's strategic priorities as outlined in *Changing Directions, Changing Lives: The Mental Health Strategy for Canada*.⁵

The 2014 SLCDC-MA is the first survey to provide information about the experiences of Canadian adults with professionally diagnosed mood and/or anxiety disorders using a population-based household sample. We anticipate that the original articles in this special theme issue will be of interest to a wide audience, including policy and decision makers, mental health and mental illness professionals, non-governmental organizations, members of the general public and people living with a mood and/or an anxiety disorder, as well as their families and caregivers. Furthermore, the findings offer insights into areas

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where further support or interventions may be needed and provide additional information for future public health research in the area of mental illness.

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