

HEALTH SURVEILLANCE INDICATORS: SELF-RATED MENTAL HEALTH



Public Health Relevance

The World Health Organization defines positive mental health as:

"A state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community." (2014)

Mental health is not merely the absence of mental illness. Mental wellness encompasses an individual's ability to adapt to change and to cope with life's stressors while being able to carry out productive activities and maintain fulfilling relationships.

Positive mental health is essential for the well-being of individuals and communities. Poor mental health, including conditions such as anxiety and depression, can lead to decreased productivity at work, greater use of alcohol and drugs to cope, and can contribute to the risk of chronic physical disease. People living with poor mental health are at greater risk of experiencing a wide range of physical health problems and other negative outcomes such as suicide.

Highlights

1. Nearly 7 in 10 people in Toronto rated their mental health as 'excellent' or 'very good'.
2. The percent of people that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' in Toronto remained fairly stable from 2007 to 2014.
3. Perceived mental health amongst people in Toronto was not significantly different than in the rest of Ontario.
4. Socio-demographic factors such as age, education, and income level were associated with significant differences in perceived mental amongst people in Toronto.

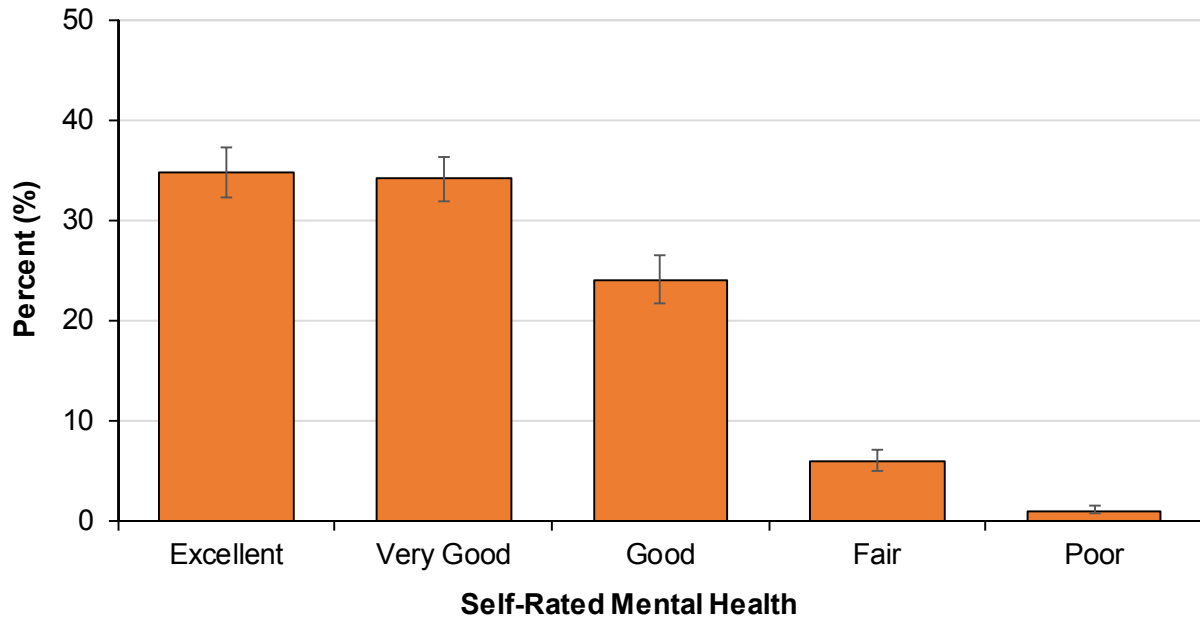
Overall Self-Rated Mental Health

Nearly 7 in 10 people in Toronto rated their mental health as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Figure 1 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent', 'very good', 'good', 'fair', or 'poor' in Toronto in 2013/2014.

Nearly 7 in 10 people in Toronto rated their mental health as 'excellent' or 'very good' whereas less than 1 in 10 people (7%) in Toronto rated their mental health as 'fair' or 'poor'.

Figure 1: Percent of Self-Rated Mental Health, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2013/2014



Error bars (I) represent the 95% confidence intervals.

Data Source: see Data Notes.

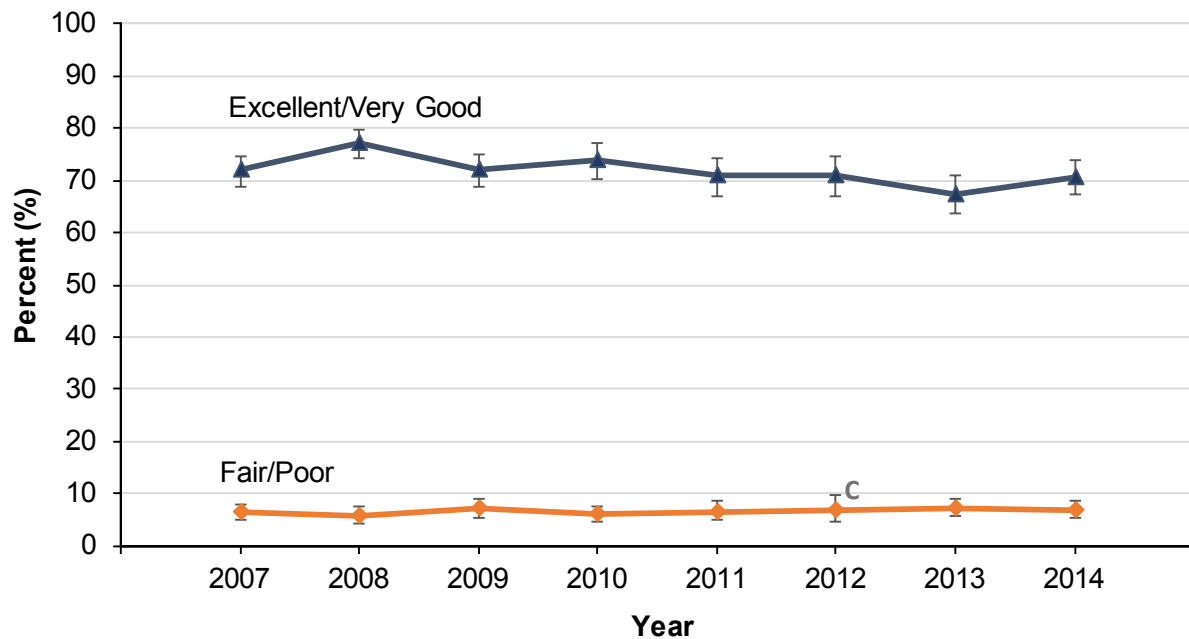
Trends Over Time

The percent of people that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' in Toronto remained fairly stable from 2007 to 2014.

Figure 2 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' and 'fair/poor' in Toronto from 2007 to 2014.

The percent of adults that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' remained fairly stable from 2007 to 2014 when it was 70.5%, as did the percent of people that rated their mental health as 'fair/poor', which was 6.8% in 2014.

Figure 2: Percent Rating their Mental Health As 'Excellent/Very Good' and 'Fair/Poor', People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2007 to 2014.



- C** Moderately high sampling variability, interpret with caution.
Error bars (\bar{I}) represent the 95% confidence intervals.
Data Source: see Data Notes.

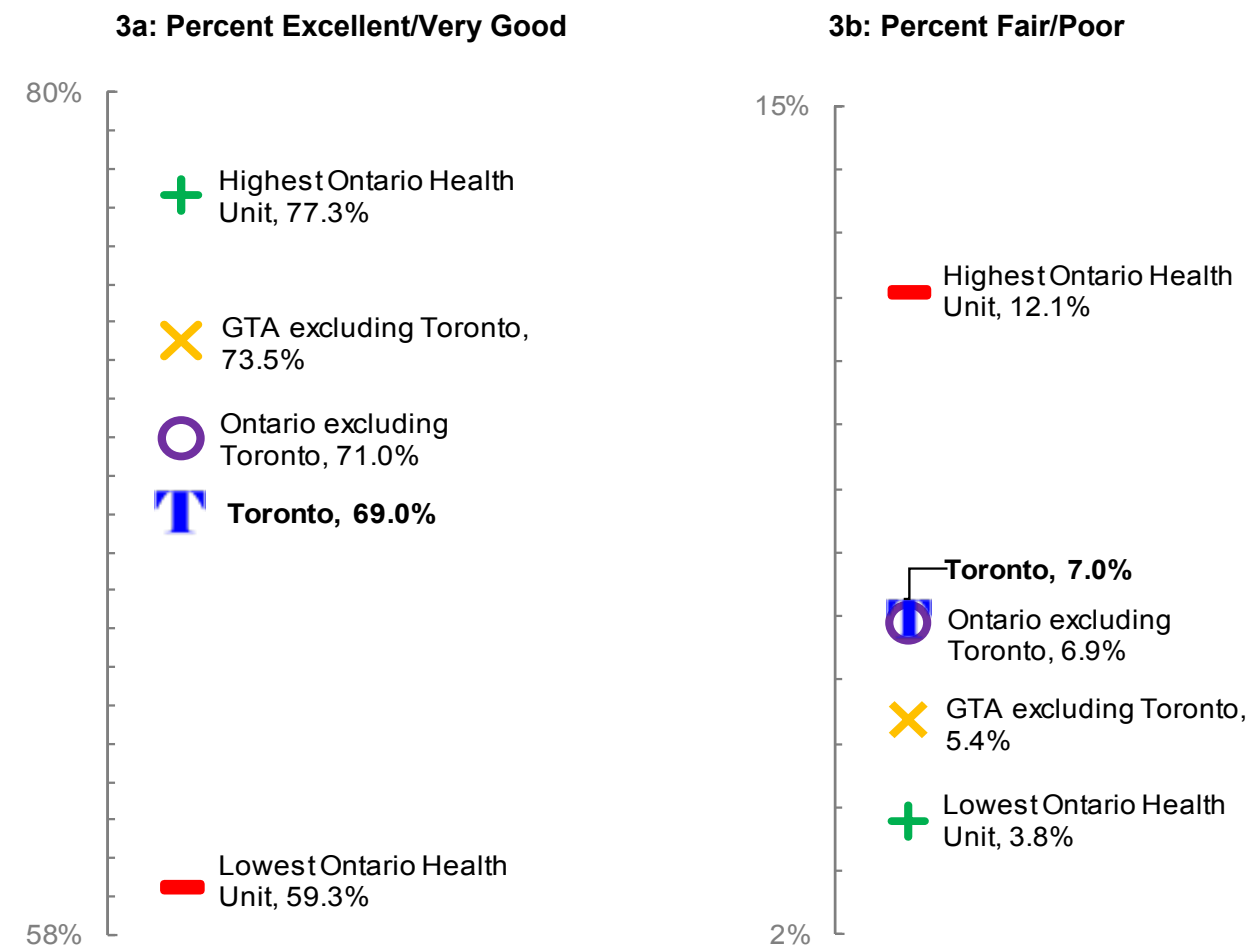
Regional Comparisons

Perceived mental health amongst people in Toronto was not significantly different than in the rest of Ontario.

Figure 3 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' and 'fair/poor' in Toronto compared to the rest of Ontario (Ontario without Toronto), the rest of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA without Toronto), and the health units (HUs) in Ontario with the highest and lowest percent in 2013/2014.

People in Toronto were significantly less likely to rate their mental health as 'excellent/very good' compared to the rest of the GTA and the Ontario HU with the highest percent. There was no significant difference in the percent of people that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' compared to the rest of Ontario. There was no significant difference in the percent of people that rated their mental health as 'fair/poor' compared to the rest of Ontario and the rest of the GTA.

Figure 3: Self-Rated Mental Health, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Selected Regions in Ontario, 2013/2014



Data Source: see Data Notes.

Toronto Neighbourhood Comparisons

People in Rexdale Etobicoke were significantly more likely to rate their mental health as 'excellent/very good' compared to Toronto as a whole.

Table 1 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' by Toronto Public Health's Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) for Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention in 2013/2014.

When compared to Toronto as a whole, people in Rexdale Etobicoke were significantly more likely to rate their mental health as 'excellent/very good'. There were no significant differences in the percent of people that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' in the other SDAs and Toronto as a whole. The estimates for the percent of people that rated their mental health as 'fair/poor' by SDA were suppressed due to high sampling variability.

Table 1: Percent Rating their Mental Health as 'Excellent/Very Good' by Service Delivery Area*, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2013/2014

| CDIP Service Delivery Area | % |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Danforth East York | 66.5 |
| East Scarborough | 66.8 |
| Humber Downsview | 66.7 |
| Rexdale Etobicoke | 78.5 ^H |
| Toronto Centre | 67.7 |
| West Scarborough | 65.4 |
| Willowdale Don Mills | 68.0 |
| York South Humber | 73.7 |
| Toronto | 69.0 |

*Toronto Public Health's Service Delivery Areas for Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention (CDIP).

^H Significantly higher than the Toronto total indicating a favourable result for that area.

Socio-demographics

Socio-demographic factors such as age, education, and income level were associated with significant differences perceived mental amongst people in Toronto.

Table 2 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' and 'fair/poor' by sex in Toronto in 2013/2014.

There were no significant differences in perceived mental health by sex.

Table 2: Percent Rating their Mental Health as 'Excellent/Very Good' and 'Fair/Poor' by Sex, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2013/2014

| Sex | Excellent/Very Good (%) | Fair/Poor (%) |
|--------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Male | 70.9 | 5.8 |
| Female | 67.2 | 8.1 |

Data Source: see Data Notes.

Table 3 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' and 'fair/poor' by age group in Toronto in 2013/2014.

There were no significant differences in the percent of people that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' by the three age groups that were 64 years and under. Adults in the 65 years and older age group were significantly less likely to rate their mental health as 'excellent/very good' compared to adults in the 20 to 39 years age group.

Table 3: Percent Rating their Mental Health as 'Excellent/Very Good' and 'Fair/Poor' by Age Group, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2013/2014

| Age Group | Excellent/Very Good (%) | Fair/Poor (%) |
|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 12 to 19 Years | 70.5 | 10.3 ^C |
| 20 to 39 Years | 71.4 | 5.5 |
| 40 to 64 Years | 69.2 | 7.7 |
| 65 Years and Older | 61.8 ^L | 6.7 ^C |

^C Moderately high sampling variability, interpret with caution.

^L Significantly lower than the age group with the highest percent.

Data Source: see Data Notes.

Table 4 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' and 'fair/poor' by education level in Toronto in 2013/2014.

People with high school education or less were significantly less likely to rate their mental health as 'excellent/very good' compared to those with post-secondary education.

Table 4: Percent Rating their Mental Health as 'Excellent/Very Good' and 'Fair/Poor' by Education, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2013/2014

| Education Level | Excellent/Very Good (%) | Fair/Poor (%) |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Less than High School | 61.4 ^L | 11.5 ^C |
| High School Graduate | 63.3 ^L | 7.5 ^C |
| Post-Secondary Education | 73.7 | 5.7 ^L |

^L Significantly lower than the education level with the highest percent.

^C Moderately high sampling variability, interpret with caution.

Data Source: see Data Notes.

Table 5 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' and 'fair/poor' by immigrant status in Toronto in 2013/2014.

There were no significant differences in perceived mental health by immigrant status.

Table 5: Percent Rating their Mental Health as 'Excellent/Very Good' and 'Fair/Poor' by Immigrant Status, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2013/2014

| Immigrant Status | Excellent/Very Good (%) | Fair/Poor (%) |
|------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Immigrant | 67.9 | 6.0 |
| Canadian-born | 70.1 | 8.3 |

Data Source: see Data Notes.

Table 6 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' and 'fair/poor' by income level in Toronto in 2013/2014.

People in the low income group were significantly less likely to rate their mental health as 'excellent/very good' compared to people in the middle and high income groups.

Table 6: Percent Rating their Mental Health as 'Excellent/Very Good' and 'Fair/Poor' by Income Level, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2013/2014

| Income Level | Excellent/Very Good (%) | Fair/Poor (%) |
|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Low Income | 60.2 ^L | 9.4 |
| Middle Income | 70.3 | 6.1 |
| High Income | 76.1 | 5.6 |

^L Significantly lower than the income group with the highest percent.

Data Source: see Data Notes.

Table 7 shows the percent of people aged 12 years and older that rated their mental health as 'excellent/very good' and 'fair/poor' by ethno-racial identity in Toronto in 2013/2014.

There were no significant differences in perceived mental health by ethno-racial identity.

Table 7: Percent Rating their Mental Health as 'Excellent/Very Good' and 'Fair/Poor' by Ethno-racial Identity, People Aged 12 Years and Older, Toronto, 2013/2014

| Ethno-racial Identity | Excellent/Very Good (%) | Fair/Poor (%) |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| White | 68.4 | 7.5 |
| Racialized | 70.0 | 6.0 |

Data Source: see Data Notes.

Data Notes

Notes

- Significant differences were estimated using overlapping confidence intervals. Although this method is conservative ($\alpha \sim < 0.01$) and most appropriate when comparing mutually exclusive groups, it was chosen as an objective means of drawing conclusions on population-based data. Multiple comparisons performed in the analyses were not taken into consideration when choosing the level of significance to test.
- Toronto is compared to the rest of Ontario (Ontario with Toronto removed) as opposed to the Ontario total because Toronto comprises a large proportion of the Ontario population. Toronto is also compared to the rest of the GTA (Greater Toronto Area) for the same reason.
- Data used for the regional comparisons normally shows the percentage for the Ontario health units with the highest and the lowest percentage. The purpose of these comparisons is to show the percent for Toronto relative to other areas in Ontario.
- The estimates in this indicator page are from self-reported data from the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). Self-reported data have a number of limitations. People do not always remember their behaviours, and may under-report or over-report certain behaviours or characteristics based on their perceived social desirability. For example, people may rate their mental health higher because they perceive this to be a "better" response. In addition, surveys do not always provide a representative picture of the whole population. The CCHS under-represents people of low income, people with low education, and new immigrants. Also, individuals with serious mental health issues are unlikely to be captured in the survey data from which this report is created. As such, the estimates provided here may underestimate the percent of people in Toronto with 'fair' or 'poor' mental health. If a respondent did not respond to a survey question relevant to the analysis presented, they were excluded from both the numerator and the denominator.
- Time trend analysis is based on the most recent 8 years of data. This is because the CCHS changed from a two-year release cycle to an annual release cycle starting in 2007.

Definitions

95% Confidence Interval is the range within which the true value lies, 19 times out of 20.

'Excellent/Very Good' and 'Fair/Poor' Mental Health were established from the survey respondents' answer to the question: "*In general, would you say your mental health is: 'excellent', 'very good', 'good', 'fair', or 'poor'?*". The 'excellent' and 'very good' responses were grouped into the 'excellent/very good' category, and the 'fair' and 'poor' responses were grouped into the 'fair/poor' category.

Immigrants are those respondents whose country of birth is outside of Canada.

Income Level is derived as three equally divided parts of the weighted population based on the respondents' adjusted household income ratios. A respondent's adjusted household income ratio is calculated using the total household income, Statistics Canada's 2013-2014.

Low Income Cut Offs (LICO), and the CCHS income adjustment factor. Approximately 30% of survey respondents included in this analysis had their income level imputed based on other socio-demographic characteristics.

Racialized is used to define groups that do not identify themselves as White, recognizing that 'races' or 'visible minorities' are socially constructed but have real consequences for individuals and communities. Ethnic origins in this category include Black, Korean, Filipino, Japanese, Chinese, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Latin American, other racial/cultural origin, and multiple racial/cultural origins. Aboriginal respondents are not included in this category because of their unique identity, history, and experiences. They are excluded from the analysis by ethno-racial identity.

Sex defines people based on their biological characteristics, whereas 'Gender' is a socially constructed concept. From a social determinants of health perspective, certain health conditions can be associated with gender, and from a biological perspective, health conditions can be associated with sex. Although rating based on both concepts would be preferable, the data source used here only collects information on sex, and not gender.

Sources

Canadian Community Health Survey: Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), 2007 to 2014. Statistics Canada, Share File, Knowledge Management and Rating Branch, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Used in:

- Figures 1-3
- Tables 1-7

Health Surveillance Indicator: Self-Rated Mental Health

Category: Overall Health and Wellbeing

Prepared: November 2017

This indicator report is part of a series that informs the ongoing assessment of Toronto's health status. For a full list of the indicators, please go to: www.toronto.ca/health