

POR Registration Number: POR-043-16
Contract number: 51019-164009/001/CY
Award date: January 23, 2017
Delivery date: June 2, 2017



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A large graphic of stylized paper figures holding hands, arranged in a circular pattern. The figures are in various shades of green and yellow, creating a sense of community and unity.

VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA NATIONAL SURVEY 2017

Executive Summary

Presented to Veterans Affairs Canada

Ce rapport est aussi disponible en français

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JUNE 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – CONTEXT, OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY



CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES The current project has two objectives:

- Gather information on Veteran health and well-being and the extent to which programs are effective in meeting client needs.
- Gather information in support of improvements to service delivery and policy development.

PROJECT EXPENSES This project required a total budget of **\$70,440** (includes HST).

POPULATION VAC clients (18+).

SAMPLING 1508 respondents (non-proportional stratified sample). The sample frame used a list supplied by VAC and it included War Service Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and Members, RCMP Veterans and members and survivors who were either in receipt of benefits or who had applied for a benefit in the previous 12 months. This included Veterans who applied for benefits in the previous 12 months but who had been declined or who were still waiting for a decision.

Segment	Total	CAF Case Managed	CAF Not Case Managed	War Service Veteran	Survivor	RCMP
Completed	1508	204	503	200	401	200

DATA COLLECTION 30 pretest interviews conducted on February 16, 2017 (16 in English, 14 in French)
 Telephone interviews conducted from February 27 to March 23, 2017
 Response rate: 33 %
 This response rate is considered good compared to response rates generally observed in similar contexts.
 It is up 4 points compared to the 2010 study.
 The average duration of the questionnaire was 17 minutes and ranged from 7 minutes (shortest interview) to 52 minutes (longest interview).

DATA VALIDATION To ensure valid data throughout the research process, all interviewers were specifically trained on the questionnaire and had to read the questions exactly as they appeared on their computer screen. 10% of all interviews were entirely monitored by our supervisors and other interviews were also conducted under supervision. The data collected was directly transferred into our tabulation software to avoid any transcription errors. It was then read directly by our proprietary software to produce the diagrams, graphs and tables that appear in the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – CONTEXT, OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY



WEIGHTING To ensure that the respondents sampled were representative of VAC’s population, results were weighted according to the number of clients in each of the five segments and also according to program participation (statistics provided by VAC).

Clients in each category	
CAF Case Managed	11,271
CAF Not Case Managed	73,815
War Service Veteran	20,495
Survivor	59,888
RCMP	11,680

Program participants	
Health Care Benefits	71,535
Veterans Independence Program (VIP)	82,913
Case Management	11,699
Disability Benefits	90,619

MARGINS OF ERROR The margin of error observed on a result depends on:
 1) the number of respondents
 2) the result itself

For example, if half (50%) of the 1508 respondents to a question say that they are satisfied with a VAC service, the margin of error associated with the result of 50% will be $\pm 4.1\%$. This means that we are 95% confident that between 45.9% and 54.1% of clients are satisfied. If we look at the same result (50%) but for a specific client segment (Survivor), the margin of error will be higher ($\pm 8.0\%$). This means that we are 95% confident that between 42.0% and 58.0% of survivors are satisfied. As we move away from 50%, the margin of error decreases. For example, if 95% of clients are satisfied with a service, the margin of error will be $\pm 1.8\%$ overall and $\pm 3.5\%$ for survivors.

	Total	CAF Case Managed	CAF Not Case Managed	War Service Veteran	Survivor	RCMP
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	1508	204	503	200	401	200
50% (MAXIMUM MARGIN)	$\pm 4.1\%$	$\pm 12.2\%$	$\pm 6.2\%$	$\pm 12.0\%$	$\pm 8.0\%$	$\pm 11.3\%$
95% or 5%	$\pm 1.8\%$	$\pm 5.3\%$	$\pm 2.7\%$	$\pm 5.2\%$	$\pm 3.5\%$	$\pm 4.9\%$

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - RESPONDENT PROFILE



AGE DISTRIBUTION BY SEGMENT % of Yes

	Overall n:1508 %	Veteran			War Service Veteran n:200 %	Survivor n:401 %	RCMP n:200 %
		Overall Veteran n:907 %	CAF Case Managed n:204 %	CAF Not Case Managed n:503 %			
Less than 55	24	36+	78+	39+	0	1-	34+
55 to 64	16	18	19	23+	0	11-	26+
65 to 74	15	14	3-	19+	0	13	28+
75 to 84	17	13-	0	16	11	26+	11
85 or more	28	19-	0	3-	89+	49+	1-
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

When consulting this report, the reader should keep in mind that War Service Veterans and Survivors are on average much older than other clients (the opposite is true of Case Managed CAF clients). Of course, this can have an impact on some of the results and on VAC's reported performance in these segments.

- +: Throughout the report, the + sign indicates that the result is significantly **higher** than those of all the other segments combined
- : Throughout the report, the - sign indicates that the result is significantly **lower** than those of all the other segments combined

How to read the results

All results represent percentages. For example, 78% of CAF Case Managed clients are less than 55 years old. This percentage is significantly higher than the proportion of clients aged under 55 in all other segments combined.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – AVERAGE RESULTS BY TOPIC OR PROGRAM



Average satisfaction levels per topic

For each of the ten topics included in the survey, an average satisfaction score was calculated. This score represents the average percentage of satisfied clients (very satisfied or satisfied / strongly agree or agree) for all questions related to the topic. The average scores for six of the ten topics had moderate to good results while four of the ten topics had results considered moderate to poor.

Note that the number of questions per topic varies from one topic to another. The average scores provide an overview of results across topics but are not complete without a thorough analysis of each question.

Good performance in terms of recent contacts, experience with VAC and service delivery

The 2017 edition of the VAC satisfaction survey shows that a vast majority of clients are satisfied with the following aspects:

- Veterans Independence Program (92%)
- Treatment Benefits Program (84%)
- Experience with VAC in the past 12 months (84%)
- Satisfaction regarding contacts with VAC (83%)
- Overall satisfaction with programs and services (78%)
- Commemorative initiatives and Funeral and burial program (76%)

Performance varies from moderate to good

Although the average results for each of these six topics can be considered moderate to good, there is still room for improvement to achieve a level of excellence. VAC should continue to work to improve these results.

The aspects to follow more closely

The following four aspects need to be followed more closely by VAC since their average satisfaction levels can be considered moderate to poor.

- Application process (75%)
- Case management (73%)
- Disability benefits (65%)
- Rehabilitation services (45%)

Different segment, different service

In the past 12 months, 3 client segments generally felt that VAC went beyond their expectations.

- Survivor* (96%)
- War Service Veteran* (90%)
- CAF Case Managed (77%)

CAF (not case managed) and RCMP clients were much more critical (respectively 60% and 59% felt that VAC went beyond their expectations).

*For Survivors and War Service Veterans, we will use the singular throughout the report when we refer to the segment. Survivor means the Survivor segment and War Service Veteran means the War Service Veteran segment.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY- BEST AND WORST RESULTS BY QUESTION



Respectful staff above all

If we exclude service in the official language of choice (99%), which is mandatory, the following aspects obtained the best results in VAC's 2017 satisfaction survey.

- Staff were respectful (95%)
- I have been able to find people to help me with the VIP services I need (93%)
- I am satisfied with the number of service providers or pharmacies who accept my VAC Health Identification card - Treatment Benefits Program (91%)
- Letters I received in the past 12 months were clear and easy to understand (88%)
- Satisfaction with contact at a VAC service location in the past 12 months (88%)

Access to services and benefits a concern as well as speed of delivery

On the other hand, the following aspects obtained the lowest results.

- It was easy for me to understand what I had to do to apply for a service or benefit (72%)
- Staff went beyond expectations to make sure I got what I needed (72%)
- Satisfaction with the time it takes to obtain information or a service (72%)
- My case management plan has helped me make progress toward reaching my goal (72%)
- My case manager and I had regular discussions about my progress, my achievements and any problems I was having (71%)
- I found all the services or benefits for which I may be eligible (70%)
- My participation in the Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Assistance program has helped improve my situation at home (63%)
- I was given the opportunity to involve my family in developing my case management plan (53%)
- My participation in the Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Assistance program has helped improve my situation in the community (41%)
- My participation in the Rehabilitation Services and Vocational Assistance program has helped improve my situation at work (32%)

Going in the right direction

Fourteen aspects of VAC service have improved significantly compared to the last measure in 2010, while no aspect has lost ground. To show the evolution, the difference in the proportion of « very satisfied » clients was calculated. The increases range from +7% to +28%. They are presented next in decreasing order:

- My case manager and I have worked together to develop a plan to best meet my needs (+28%)
- As a result of working with my case manager, I am better informed on how to access services/support I need (+27%)
- My case manager and I had regular discussions about my progress, my achievements and any problems that I was having (+19%)
- I received service in the official language of my choice (+19%)
- Letters I received in the past 12 months were clear and easy to understand (+14%)
- Staff were respectful (+13%)
- I was given the opportunity to involve my family in case management plan (+13%)
- Overall, the Treatment Benefits program meets my needs (+12%)
- I was treated fairly (+12%)
- Staff were knowledgeable and competent (+10%)
- I was able to get through to an agent without difficulty (+10%)
- I have been able to find people to help me with the VIP services I need (+10%)
- I am satisfied with the time it takes to get reimbursed for health care benefits and services (+9%)
- I found out everything I had to do to apply for a service or benefit (+7%)

Although some aspects of case management received moderate to poor results in this survey, they have improved significantly since the last measure in 2010. VAC should continue its efforts to improve the results for case management services. This also applies to the question « I found out everything I had to do to apply for a service or benefit » (access issue) which also had moderate results in this survey but improved significantly since 2010. VAC should continue to improve access to information to ensure that clients can easily find the information they require.