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**PANDEMIC WITHIN A PANDEMIC:  
MOST BELIEVE THERE IS A MENTAL HEALTH PANDEMIC IN CANADA**

As Canada joins the World Health Organization (WHO) and countries around the globe in recognizing World Mental Health Day on October 10, a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences (Ontario Shores) has revealed a majority of Canadians believe we are in the midst of a new pandemic. The global pandemic called on March 11, 2020 as a result of COVID-19 has brought national media attention to physical healthcare needs of Canadians. Meanwhile, amid physical distancing, isolation protocols and lockdown measures, the mental health of Canadians has been negatively impacted. According to the study, 28 per cent of Canadians admit their mental health has deteriorated during the pandemic, while 69 per cent believe Canada is currently experiencing a mental health pandemic. "To know Canadians are suffering from a mental health standpoint is heartbreaking, but, unfortunately, not surprising," notes Karim Mamdani, President and CEO of Ontario Shores, a specialty mental health hospital which has been treating mental illness for more than a century. "This should serve as a warning for policy and decision-makers that the demands for mental health services will continue to increase at an alarming rate as we continue living through the COVID-19

pandemic and long after it is over." Canada is not alone in this discovery. According to WHO, the pandemic is increasing demand for mental health services around the world. Bereavement, isolation, loss of income and fear are triggering mental health conditions or exacerbating existing ones. Many people may be facing increased levels of alcohol and drug use, insomnia, and anxiety. "Ontario Shores, like so many other mental healthcare providers has witnessed an increased demand for services over the last 18 months," says Mamdani. "We believe this is just the beginning and even greater pressure to support the mental health of the communities we serve is right around the corner." In addition to decreasing mental health, many Canadians are concerned they will not be able to easily access care should they need help managing their mental

health. The study found that two-thirds (66 per cent) of Canadians believe there are not enough mental health services and supports available in their local community. "Confidence in knowing you can access quality mental health care within your own community will encourage people to reach out for help early in their journey with mental illness," says Lori Lane-Murphy, a speaker, writer and mental health advocate who lives with Bipolar II Disorder. "When you are struggling with your mental health, any barrier is too big a barrier. Being able to access care when you need it will help Canadians manage their mental health and help them live meaningful lives." About Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences: Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences (Ontario Shores) is a leader in mental health care, providing a range of specialized assessment and treatment

services for people living with complex mental illness. Patients benefit from a recovery-oriented environment of care, built on compassion, inspiration and hope. Ontario Shores engages in research, education and advocacy initiatives to advance the mental health care system. **FACTUM** Pandemic Within A Pandemic: Most (69%) Believe There is a Mental Health Pandemic in Canada. Nearly Three in Ten (28%) Admit Their Mental Health Has Deteriorated, Over the Course of the Pandemic. Toronto, Ontario, October 4, 2021 — As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to wreak havoc across Canada, the results of a new Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services suggests that we may be dealing with another pandemic, within the coronavirus pandemic. The poll reveals that most (69%) Canadians believe

there is a mental health pandemic in their country. Millennials and Gen Xers are among the most likely to believe that Canada is facing a mental health pandemic (75% vs. 61% of Gen Zers & Boomers). The COVID-19 pandemic has been a transformative event, as four in five (81%) Canadians think it has changed life forever, with Boomers (56+) among the most likely to feel this way (88% vs. 78% of all other Canadians aged 55 or younger). In fact, it has been so significant that half (50%) admit they are now anxious about going back to "normal" life in a post-pandemic world. Just one-third (34%) of Quebecers report feeling anxious about going back to "normal" life in a post-pandemic world, compared to well over half (55%) of all other Canadians. After months of lockdowns and restrictions, job loss, anxiety, and isolation from family and friends, it is perhaps not surprising that many Canadians are now experiencing mental health issues. Nearly three in ten (28%) admit that their mental health has deteriorated, over the course of the pandemic. To end Canada's mental health pandemic, it is important to have sufficient mental health services and supports available in communities across the country. Unfortunately, the results of this poll suggest that many



communities are underserved in this area, as two-thirds (66%) of Canadians feel as though there are not enough mental health services and supports available in their local community. The youngest generation, Gen Z (aged 18-23) are less likely to feel as though there are not enough mental health services and supports available in their local community (45% vs. 69% aged 24+). These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between September 14th and 16th, 2021 on behalf of the Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services. For this survey, a sample of 1,001 Canadians aged 18+ were interviewed. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ±3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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