

## Press Release

For immediate release

# Nearly one in four men psychologically distressed

**Montreal, November 12, 2018** – A SOM survey of 2,000 Quebec men has revealed that nearly one-quarter (22%) may be experiencing psychological distress, yet generally do not seek professional support. The survey was conducted at the request of Regroupement provincial en santé et bien-être des hommes (RPSBEH) and Pôle d’expertise et de recherche en santé et bien-être des hommes, two Quebec organizations devoted to men’s health issues. Only 29% of the men experiencing mental distress say they have asked for help from mental health resources over the past year.

“If we want to improve the quality and availability of services for men in distress, we have to better understand what would help men ask for support and what kind of services they are looking for,” says Janie Houle, PhD, professor of psychology at Université du Québec à Montréal and researcher at the Research Centre at Institut universitaire en santé mentale de Montréal.

### Highlights of the survey:

- 22% of the men interviewed were most likely in a state of psychological distress, based on a six-item scale that measures the perceived frequency of certain mental or physical states: feeling nervous, so tired that everything is an effort, depressed, restless or fidgety, worthless, or hopeless.
- Men rarely ask for help, especially about psychosocial matters. While nearly three-quarters say they’ve seen a family doctor or medical specialist over the past year, only 10% report having consulted a therapist. Even among those who were found to have psychological distress, 29% say they had not asked for professional help.
- Men are most likely to ask for help when they notice the issue is affecting their children or if they find themselves thinking about suicide. Respondents estimated their likelihood of consulting a professional at 80% in the first scenario and 75% in the second.
- The other scenarios asked about in the survey had a much smaller impact on their likelihood of consulting a professional: their spouse threatening to leave them (52%), marital separation (50%), depression (49%), loss of libido (48%), or loss of a job (38%).
- For men, the most important factor that would convince them to seek help is feeling like the therapist can really help them solve their problem (48%). They don’t just want to be heard, they want to receive concrete tools and advice from credible professionals.
- If the services are free or low cost, that is considered “very helpful” by 58% of the men surveyed. The financial barrier must be removed wherever possible to encourage men to ask for help.
- For 78% of anglophone men, having services available in their native language is essential.

- How the request for help is met is also important. It is “very helpful” for some men to be able to walk in without an appointment (40%), or to be able to make an appointment online (34%).
- Friends and family can also lend a hand in the process. For many men, it’s helpful if a loved one makes the appointment for them (39%) or accompanies them to the first session (45%).
- Doctors have a strong influence. Men estimate their likelihood of consulting a psychological professional at 80% if their doctor recommends it. A doctor’s influence is even stronger than a spouse’s (70%) or their friends’ (60%).
- Finally, there needs to be more information and awareness about support resources, for example a specialized website presenting all the resources available for men. A website is the communication method preferred by 69% of the men surveyed.

“The survey clearly shows the importance of demystifying mental health, reducing barriers to access, and better publicizing the resources available,” says Janie Houle.

“These new findings will be useful in the rollout of the Men’s Health and Wellness Action Plan from Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, which was announced on August 22, 2017,” says Raymond Villeneuve, an RPSBEH board member.

**For the complete survey results visit:**

<http://www.rpsbeh.com/sondage.html>

**About Regroupement provincial en santé et bien-être des hommes (RPSBEH)**

RPSBEH is a consortium of non-profit community organizations devoted to men’s health and wellness working together to help establish and fund quality services that support the well-being not only of men but of the entire population. It is made up of 45 community organizations active in the field of men’s health and wellness. RPSBEH receives financial support from Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) through the PSOC community organization support program. For more information visit [www.rpsbeh.com](http://www.rpsbeh.com)

**About Pôle d’expertise et de recherche en santé et bien-être des hommes**

Pôle d’expertise et de recherche en santé et bien-être des hommes is a research cluster associated with CIUSSS de la Capitale-Nationale. It brings together 30 researchers from 11 universities. Its goal is to centralize and develop expertise in men’s health and wellness in Quebec, and to encourage knowledge transfer within healthcare, social services, and community networks.

Questions or interview requests:

Josephte Gagnon

Liaison Officer

Phone: 418-780-3613

Email: [communications@rpsbeh.com](mailto:communications@rpsbeh.com)