

*The Canadian
Association of
Optometrists*



*L'Association
canadienne des
optométristes*

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For Immediate Release

Can We Make Our Health Care System Better Without Spending Billions More?

Health Council of Canada Launches Forum Where All Canadians Can Speak Up

[OTTAWA | FEBRUARY 23, 2009]- The Health Council of Canada has launched a major initiative designed to engage Canadians in a national dialogue about value for money, to open a conversation about how to get 'the biggest bang for the buck' in health care.

This is an important discussion, and we encourage our members to get involved.

Last year, Canadians spent \$172 billion on health care, and this spending is outpacing inflation and population growth. Nearly 40% of provincial budgets now go towards health care.

It's time to ask ourselves: Are we funding the right things? Are we getting the best value for our money? Are we investing in the programs and services that will yield the greatest health improvements for Canadians?

The Council has created an online forum for Canadians can speak up on these issues. We urge you to visit www.CanadaValuesHealth.ca where you'll find an array of interactive tools that will allow you to participate fully in the debate. Join the discussion on the message board, take part in polls, watch the video, listen to podcasts, read the blog, and more.

The Council's paper, *Value for Money: Making Canadian Health Care Stronger*, is also posted on the site. Check it out.

The Canadian Association of Optometrists will be participating in this national dialogue as well. We will be reviewing the *Value for Money* paper, providing commentary, and developing a position paper and surveying our own members.

This is NOT a discussion about cutbacks or service reductions, says the Council. *Value for Money* is about keeping our health care system alive and well. It's about maintaining and enhancing the system by making smart spending choices.

Over the course of the year, the Council will release a series of follow-up papers on specific aspects of *Value for Money*. It will capture and summarize the views, research, and positions of those who participate in the national dialogue, and present the findings back to the public and their governments.

Major stakeholder groups as well as the general public will be involved – patients and health care consumers, professional associations, frontline workers, research institutes, delivery organizations, and others. We hope members of the Canadian Association of Optometrists will be an integral part of this national dialogue.

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For Further Information:

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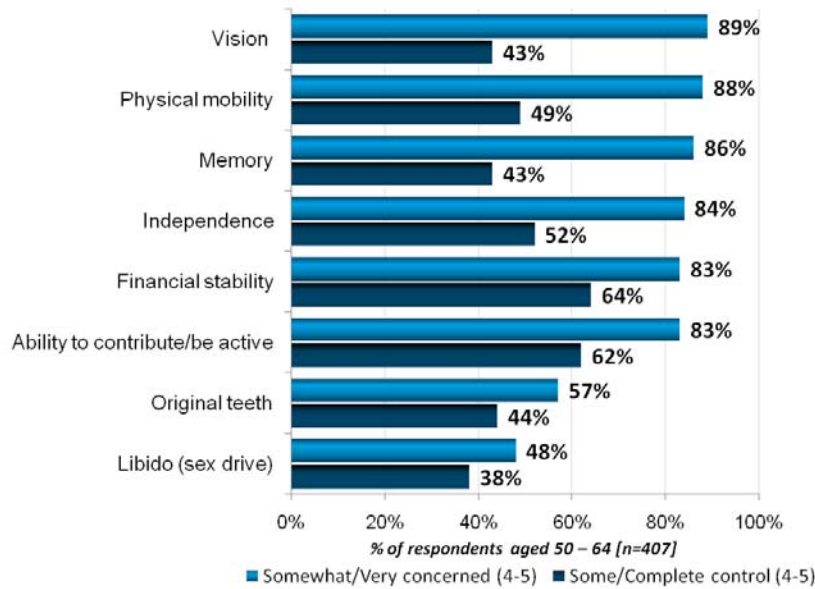
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About the Canadian Association of Optometrists

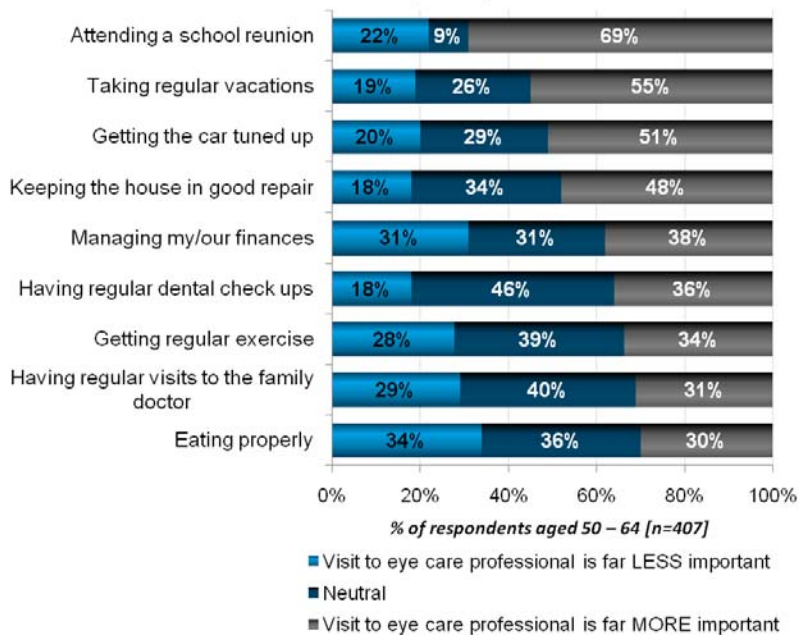
The Canadian Association of Optometrists is the professional association that represents Doctors of Optometry in Canada. It is also the national federation of ten provincial associations of optometrists and represents over 3,700 members across Canada.

Detailed Charts

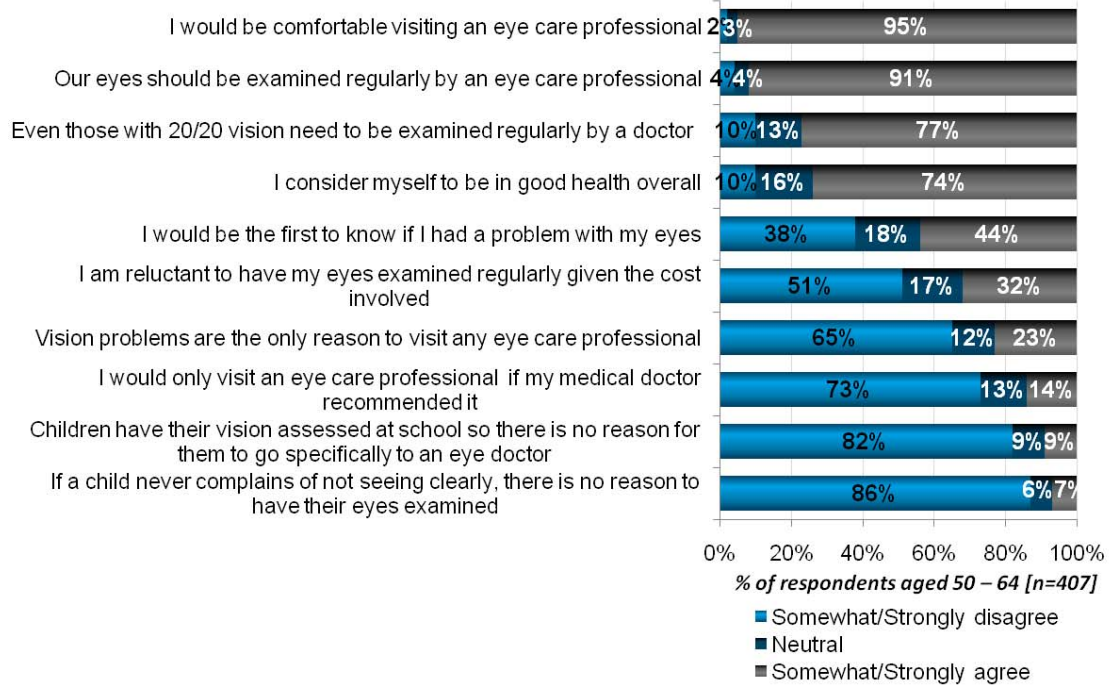
As you get older, how concerned would you be about a decline or loss of function in the following?
To what extent do you feel you will be able to control these same factors as you get older?



In comparison to the following things in your life, how important is a regular visit to an eye care professional?



Here are some statements that people have made about their general attitudes toward eye health and wellness. For each statement, please indicate how much you agree or disagree.



Before today, did you know that...?

