

2026/27 People with Lived or Living Experience Survey (PWLLES)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is this survey about?

A: The survey looks to better understand substance use trends and experiences among racialized and Indigenous youth. Youth who use substances will be recruited to participate and share their substance use experiences, including experiences with stigma and discrimination, access to supports and treatment, and their ideas on ways to better address their needs.

Q: What types of substances are of interest for this survey?

A: The survey is looking for youth who used substances in the past 12 months including:

- any street drugs/illegal substances (e.g., methamphetamine, MDMA, ketamine),
- any hallucinogens (e.g., acid, shrooms),
- any use of the following either without a prescription in your name or in different ways than what it was prescribed for (e.g., in larger or more frequent doses):
 - opioid painkillers (e.g., Percocet),
 - prescription stimulants (e.g., Adderall),
 - prescription sedatives (e.g., Xanax), and/or
- any other opioid painkillers such as low-dose codeine products, used in different ways than what they were intended for

Q: Who is running the survey?

A: This survey is developed by Health Canada. Health Canada has hired [Malatest](#), an independent Canadian research and evaluation company, to help with data collection for the survey. You can learn more about Malatest at their website www.malatest.com.

Q: Why is this site asking me to participate in the survey?

A: Organizations that run community-based public health services or other services/programs for youth have been asked by Health Canada to recruit eligible youth and if they are interested, to support youth in completing the survey.

Q: Do I have to complete the survey?

A: You are under no obligation to complete the survey. If you do not want to participate in the survey, you do not have to. Your decision to not participate in the survey will not affect any of the services you receive from this site, or from Health Canada.

Q: Will I be paid for completing the survey?

A: You will receive a \$50 gift card for completing the survey.

Q: How will I complete the survey?

A: The survey is available online. The staff at this site will open the survey, read you the questions out loud and record your answers in the survey form. They do not enter your name into the survey, so your answers are not linked to you personally. Once the “submit” button is selected at the end of

the survey the staff at the site cannot go back into the survey to look at your answers. The data that is collected will be kept confidential by the interviewer.

Q: What kind of questions does the survey ask?

A: The survey asks questions about you, your life experiences, and your history with substance use and accessing supports.

Q: What if a question in the survey upsets me?

A: You can choose to not answer or skip any question in the survey by selecting “Prefer not to answer” or “Don’t know”. At any point you can stop the survey. Staff at the site can provide you support or link you to support services if any of the content in the survey upsets you.

Q: How will the information I provide in the survey be protected?

A: The information you provide is governed in accordance with the Privacy Act. Malatest houses the data on its secure data servers in Canada and adheres to the highest standards of protection of privacy, including following all provincial and federal laws concerning the protection of information. Visit this website to learn more about Malatest’s Privacy Policy: <https://www.malatest.com/privacy-policy>. The final data set will be given to Health Canada for analysis and reporting purposes.

Q: Does PWLES follow best practices surrounding ethical collection of data and informed consent?

A: The Health and Public Health Agency of Canada Research and Ethics Board has reviewed and approved the survey and methodology. Additionally, a Youth Engagement Committee made up of youth with lived and living experience, has reviewed the survey and the data collection process, and their feedback was incorporated into the survey and the approaches used. You will be asked to review an informed consent form with a staff member at the site prior to starting the survey. They will explain the form and all the terms to you before you can decide to consent to taking part in the survey.