

# Harm Reduction Client Survey 2024: Hesitation to Access Services

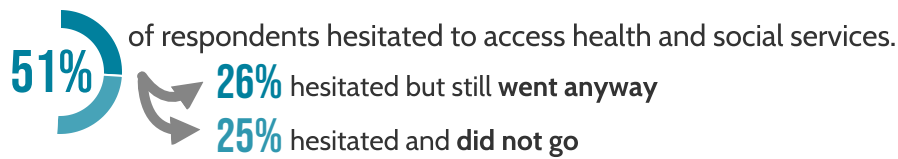
Since 2012, the BC Centre for Disease Control has asked people who use substances about their health and access to harm reduction and healthcare services. Between September and November 2024, we asked participants why they hesitated to access health and social services in the last 6 months.

British Columbia

## Who took part?



## Hesitation to access services



### What type of discrimination were people worried about?

- 1 Substance use
- 2 Housing
- 3 Race/ethnicity

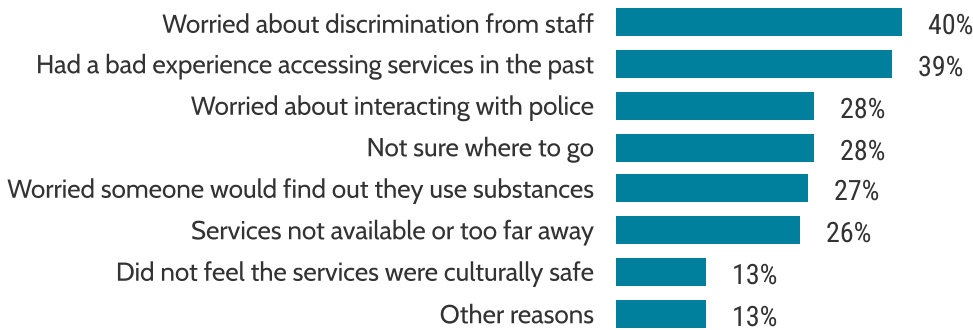


### Who did people worry would find out they use substances?

- 1 Friends and family
- 2 Community members
- 3 Police
- 4 Family services



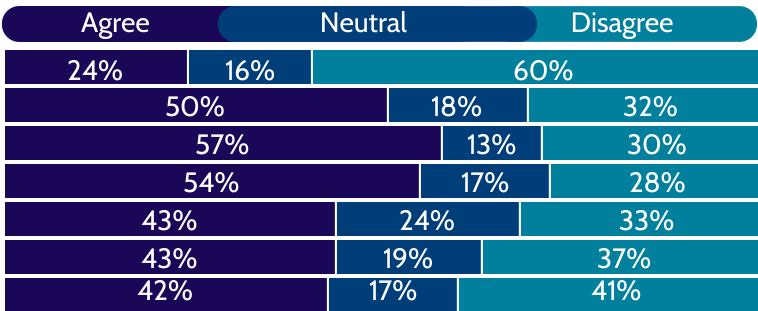
### Reasons for hesitation:\*



\* Percent reported among respondents who hesitated to access services in the last 6 months.

## Using public services and spaces

- I worry about calling 9-1-1 when someone has an overdose
- I do not want to go to the emergency department
- I feel worried about withdrawal if admitted to hospital
- I feel worried about interacting with law enforcement
- I feel welcome in outdoor public spaces
- I feel welcome using public services
- I feel welcome in most local businesses



## Key takeaways



**1 in 4 respondents did not access health or social services because of hesitation.** Stigma, discrimination, and structural barriers contribute to hesitation.



**Many respondents feel unsafe or unwelcome using emergency services, and being in public and community settings.** This can make people reluctant to reach out for help.