

Alberta Doctors' Digest

Highlights from the AMA Member Tracking Survey

Alberta physicians: Committed to care, concerned about the system

Alberta physicians remain deeply committed to providing high quality care for their patients, even as confidence in the health system's performance and leadership remains low. That is the central finding of the Alberta Medical Association's December 2025 Member Tracking Survey, which captured the views of just over 1,000 physicians across specialties, regions, and career stages.

The survey offers a snapshot of how physicians are experiencing the health system today – and how those experiences have evolved over time.

A system struggling to meet patient needs

Physicians continue to express concern about how well the Alberta health care system is meeting patients' needs. On a 10-point scale, the system earned an average score of 4.6. Nearly half of respondents (44%) scored the system below the midpoint of 5, and another 32% rated it a 5 – meaning 76% did not rate it on the positive side of the scale (6–10). Overall, the results indicate substantial room for improvement.

When asked to reflect on how the system compares to previous years, more than eight in 10 physicians said it is either the same or worse, with a significant proportion saying it has become worse over time. Very few respondents felt the system is improving.

These views were consistent across most specialties and regions, suggesting that dissatisfaction is not limited to any single practice environment.

Confidence in leadership remains low

Physicians reported very low confidence in the overall management of Alberta's health system and in the system's ability to maintain high quality care in the future. Ratings on these questions were among the lowest in the survey and have remained consistently low across multiple survey waves.

Similarly, most physicians do not feel that the health ministries or Alberta Health Services understand the day-to-day realities they face when caring for patients. These findings point to a persistent disconnect between frontline clinical experience and system level decision making.

Physicians still delivering quality care – at a cost

Despite these challenges, physicians overwhelmingly believe they are still able to maintain a high quality of care for their patients. Nearly nine in 10 respondents agreed with this statement, underscoring a strong sense of professional responsibility and resilience.

At the same time, many physicians questioned whether the stress associated with managing a practice is reasonable. Responses on this issue were mixed, with a large proportion indicating that administrative, financial, and operational pressures remain significant.

Compensation also remains a concern. Fewer than half of respondents agreed that their compensation model aligns with what their patients need, and opinions were divided on whether current compensation provides long term financial security. Support for business costs – such as staffing, leases and technology – was similarly seen as insufficient by many respondents.

Strong confidence in the AMA's role

While confidence in the broader system is low, physicians expressed strong confidence in the Alberta Medical Association. More than 90 per cent agreed that the AMA is effectively supporting physicians to influence a patient centred health system.

Physicians also reported high levels of trust in the AMA's governance structures, particularly the Representative Forum, and agreed that the AMA understands the issues they face in caring for patients.

Support was especially strong for the AMA's role in advocating on physicians' behalf, including representing the profession in matters involving government legislation, compensation equity, and evolving models such as dual practice. Many respondents also agreed that the AMA should provide practical business guidance as the system continues to change.

Looking ahead

Taken together, the December 2025 survey results paint a clear picture: Alberta physicians remain committed to their patients, but they are increasingly concerned about the health system's direction and leadership. At the same time, they continue to place strong trust in the AMA to represent their interests, advocate for meaningful change, and support them through ongoing transformation.

One note of caution: physicians' low confidence in health system leadership and limited belief that government decision makers understand the realities of patient care may dampen perceptions of how effective advocacy can be. It remains important that members feel represented – and that they see their voices heard and acted on – to sustain the legitimacy of physician input. At the same time, the strong support reflected across other measures for the AMA's representative role underscores members' desire for continued physician leadership through their chosen representative body.

As the health system undergoes further restructuring and policy shifts, these findings reinforce the importance of meaningful physician engagement – and of ensuring that the voices of those delivering care every day are heard.

About the survey

The AMA Member Tracking Survey was administered in December 2025 and completed by 1,011 physicians across Alberta. The survey tracks physician sentiment over time on

system performance, professional well-being, compensation, and the AMA's advocacy and governance role.