

Canadians feel "drained"

A Gallup poll released last month shows that most Canadians agree with CMA warnings that the country is experiencing a brain drain to the United States.

Just under three-quarters (73%) of those polled said that a large number of Canadians are leaving the country to work in the US. That figure jumps to almost 80% (79%) among respondents over the age of 65.

Across the country, British Columbia residents were most likely to believe there is a brain drain to the US, with 81% answering in the affirmative. That number drops gradually across the country, bottoming out at 61% in the Atlantic provinces.

When asked why they thought people were leaving Canada to work in the US,

the top two reasons were better and more plentiful employment opportunities and lower taxes. Other reasons given were better job incentives and bonuses, better chances for career advancement and a lower cost of living.

The poll was conducted in late August and the results are based on interviews with 1014 adults across Canada. The results are considered accurate to within a 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

The CMA has followed the brain drain issue as it applies to physicians very closely, most recently pressing federal Health Minister Allan Rock and the provincial/territorial ministers of health to develop a plan to encourage physicians, and other health care professionals to stay in Canada.