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Media Release – For Immediate Distribution

COVID-19 Worsening Access to Psychologists in NL

With the significant impact COVID-19 is having on the mental health of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), the Association of Psychology Newfoundland and Labrador (APNL) in partnership with the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) and the Council of Professional Associations of Psychology (CPAP) asked Nanos Research to survey over 3000 Canadians including over 200 NL residents to better understand how they are managing their mental health and accessing care provided by psychologists.

“We are very concerned about the global pandemic’s impact on the mental health of resident of NL, now and into the foreseeable future. Newfoundland and Labrador had a crisis of access to mental health care before the pandemic. Now, more than ever, we need to implement innovative and sustainable solutions – in the public and private sectors – to improve timely access to mental health care provided by psychologists when the people of NL need it”, said Dr. Janine Hubbard, President APNL. APNL is committed to working collaboratively with all levels of government, employers, and insurers so that NL residents receive evidence-based care where, and when, they need it.

“We advocate for the needs of Canadian psychologists and they are voicing increasing concern for the people that they support”, said Christopher Cameron, Executive Director of the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists (CPAP, of which APNL is a member). “Psychologists, highly trained in evidence-based practices, play a vital role in accessing and treating health”.

60% of NL respondents (and **56%** of Canadians) report that COVID-19 has had a negative (**33%**) or somewhat negative (**27%**) impact on the ability of NL residents to access mental health care provided by psychologists.

Nationally, when psychological care was accessed during COVID-19, **26%** report it was provided through the public system, **47%** through private insurance, and **26%** paid out of pocket.

In a pandemic environment where face to face human contact is more limited, NL residents had a strong preference (**73%**) to be treated face-to-face by a psychologist. The APNL however, is encouraged that there is an openness to using technology (**83%**) (**71%** nationally) and increasing access via telehealth to all in the province, including those in rural and remote communities.

Provincial results are available at www.apnl.ca and national results at www.cpa.ca

About this Survey:

Nanos Research conducted a representative online survey of 3,070 Canadians (204 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians) 25 September – 2 October 2020, a sample which was also geographically stratified to be representative of Canada. The research was commissioned by CPA and CPAP and was conducted by Nanos Research.