



News

New poll shows majority of N.J. residents experiencing mental health issues

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By [Brianna Kudisch | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

A [new poll](#) released Friday showed a majority of New Jersey adults or someone they know has experienced mental health issues, and the problems have gotten worse during the [pandemic](#).

Out of 640 respondents in the state, 58% reported that they or someone close to them has experienced [mental health issues](#), according to the poll taken by the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University.

Thirty-nine percent said they have not and 2% said they were unsure.

Of those saying they experienced problems, 68% said their mental health worsened during the pandemic. Only 7% said the problems had improved, and 20% said they have not changed.

“The public is confirming what experts have been saying about the pandemic, that mental health has taken a beating as we try to manage the coronavirus,” said John Froomjian, the director of the Hughes Center.

“The pandemic has increased stress levels on multiple fronts: economic, social, employment, health care, schooling, loss of loved ones,” he added. “It all takes a toll.”

The poll also asked residents to weigh in on other public health areas, including smoking in casinos, opioid and drug addiction, and homelessness.

Sixty-two percent of respondents supported prohibiting smoking on casino floors in Atlantic City, 31% opposed the proposal, and 6% were unsure. Fewer South Jersey residents supported the ban (59%) compared to residents in those living in the northern part of the state (66%).

Nearly four in 10 (39%) of poll respondents said they or someone they know personally has been affected by the opioid crisis. Thirty-five percent said drug addiction is a big problem in their community, while 40% said it's a minor problem where they live. South Jersey residents showed the highest rate of people impacted by the crisis, at 46%.

And on homelessness, 38% of poll respondents said homelessness was not a problem at all in their communities. Thirty-five percent said it was a minor problem and 23% said it was a big problem.

The poll was conducted April 4-13, and its margin of error is +/- 3.8 percentage points at a 95% confidence level. The margin of error is higher for subsets.

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Brianna Kudisch may be reached at bkudisch@njadvancemedia.com.