



May 6th, 2020
Memorandum

To: Jake Williams, Healthier Colorado
Jace Woodrum, Colorado Health Foundation
Fr: David Flaherty, Courtney Sievers, Magellan Strategies
Re: Colorado Coronavirus Survey - Mental Health Addendum

This document is an addendum to a survey summary of 1,000 adult residents in Colorado that was conducted from April 15th to April 21st, 2020. The overall margin of error for the survey is 3.10% at the 95% confidence interval. Survey response data was weighted to reflect the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 estimated demographics of the adult population in Colorado.

Survey Objectives and Addendum Focus:

The primary objective of this research project was to measure and understand the concerns, needs, experiences and viewpoints of Coloradans regarding the coronavirus pandemic. This addendum focuses specifically on insights and observations related to the mental health impacts of the coronavirus.

Key Findings:

- Among all respondents 53% said the stress and worry of the coronavirus has had either a major (19%) or minor (34%) negative impact on their mental health.
- Population subgroups that are experiencing higher levels of stress and worry due to the coronavirus include younger adults aged 18-29 (69%), suburban women (65%), all women respondents (61%) and households with a child or young adult aged 18 or younger (64%). Other at-risk subgroups include people who have lost their jobs, lost income or had paid hours reduced (62%) and people without health insurance (69%).
- With the exception of Denver (62% negative impact on mental health), there is little variance from the overall percentage of 53% by region including Congressional Districts, suburban, urban or rural areas.
- The percentage of seniors aged 65 or older experiencing negative impacts on their mental health due to the virus, 32%, is lower than the statewide measurement of 53% and much lower than the 18-29 measurement of 69%.

Profile of People Who Say Virus Has Negative Impact on Mental Health

The survey measured the negative impact on respondent’s mental health caused by the worry and stress related to the coronavirus. Among all respondents 53% said the stress and worry had either a major (19%) or minor (34%) negative impact on their mental health. The biggest difference among different population subgroups regarding the negative impact on mental health is by age group. Among individuals aged 18 to 29, 69% say the stress and worry related to the coronavirus had a negative impact on their mental health compared to only 32% of seniors aged 65 and older.

Despite being a high-risk coronavirus subgroup, seniors may be less worried about the virus than younger populations because they no longer need to work or generate as much income to support a family or a more expensive family lifestyle. In contrast, people in their twenties and thirties are at a different stage in their lives than seniors. Younger individuals are also much more likely than seniors to be the first to be let go or furloughed from a job or had income or paid hours reduced. Therefore, their mental health is more likely to be taxed from stress and worry in paying the rent, mortgage, food and everyday expenses.

Another population subgroup that stands out is women with 61% saying the stress and worry related to the coronavirus has had a negative impact on their mental health compared to 46% of men. Looking closer at women subgroups, we find 61% of urban women and 65% of suburban women having their mental health negatively impacted. The survey also finds 64% of households with a child 18 or younger are more likely to feel stress and worry than other population subgroups. Their increased stress may be due to the burden of guiding children through remote learning while working from home. Another possibility is stress and worry due to childcare services no longer being available.

Other population subgroups that have had their mental health negatively impacted include Denver residents (62%), people who have lost their job or income (62%) and people that do not have health insurance (69%).

*“Do you feel that worry or stress related to the coronavirus has had a negative impact on your mental health or not?” **

Response	All	Men	Wom	18-29	65+	Rent HH	Own HH	Have Child 18 HH	No Child 18 HH	Lost Job/ Inc.	Still Have Job
Total Yes	53%	46%	61%	69%	32%	63%	49%	64%	49%	62%	50%
Yes, Major	19%	15%	24%	30%	11%	27%	16%	24%	17%	28%	12%
Yes, Minor	34%	31%	37%	39%	21%	36%	33%	40%	32%	34%	38%
No Impact	46%	54%	38%	30%	68%	36%	51%	36%	50%	38%	49%
Refused	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%

*Population subgroup margins of error: all respondents 3.1%, men 4.4%, women 4.4%, age 18 to 29 6.6%, age 65 or older 7.1%, rent home 5.9%, own home 3.8%, household with at least 1 member under the age of 18 5.9%, household without individual under the age of 18 3.7%, lost job, paid hours or income from coronavirus 4.5%, still have job after coronavirus 5.4%.



Concerns of Lasting, Negative Impacts on Mental Health

Just under half, or 46% of respondents were very concerned (13%) or somewhat concerned (33%) about lasting, negative impacts the coronavirus may have on their mental health or someone in their household. Twenty-seven percent of respondents were not too concerned about lasting, negative impacts on their mental health and 26% were not concerned at all.

Some population subgroups where a majority feel either very or somewhat concerned about the lasting impacts on their mental health include suburban women (53%), households with \$30,000 annual income or less (55%), African Americans (51%), individuals that do not have health insurance (62%), and people who have lost a job, lost income or had paid hours reduced (56%). One striking observation is that 67% of the respondents who feel that worry or stress related to the coronavirus has had a negative impact on them, say they are very or somewhat concerned about the lasting, negative impacts to their mental health.

*“How concerned are you about any lasting, negative impacts the coronavirus may have on your mental health or someone in your household?” **

Response	All	Hispanic	Non Hispanic	Afric. Amer.	18-29	65+	Rent HH	Own HH	Care-taker	Have Disability	On Medicaid
Very conc.	13%	17%	13%	21%	16%	15%	18%	12%	23%	24%	22%
Somewhat	33%	38%	32%	30%	43%	28%	38%	31%	36%	35%	34%
Not too con.	27%	25%	27%	20%	24%	26%	25%	28%	20%	16%	27%
Not at all	26%	19%	27%	29%	17%	30%	19%	29%	21%	25%	17%
Refused	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*Population subgroup margins of error: all respondents 3.1%, Hispanic 6.6%, Non-Hispanic 3.5%, African American 8.3%, age 18 to 29 6.6%, age 65 or older 7.1%, rent home 5.9%, own home 3.8%, caretaker for someone with disability or senior citizen 7.3%, respondent has a disability 8.1%, on Medicaid 9.4%.

Respondents Describe Their Moods, Emotions & Mental Health

Respondents were asked to describe how their mood, emotions and mental health have been affected by the response to the coronavirus. Many respondents described being very stressed and having increased anxiety. They mention being depressed from isolation and being afraid to interact with other people and being anti-social. Several respondents described their emotions as being on a roller coaster, sometimes feeling up and positive, then feeling depressed and down. The following is a selection of responses that provides an understanding of what people are experiencing regarding their mental health.



“In your own words, please describe how your mood, emotions or mental health have been affected by the response to the coronavirus.”

- (Among respondents who say stress and worry has had a negative impact on their mental health.)

“I have been seriously affected. My son was affected. He is single. He lost his job, and it affects him emotionally. My second son is a first responder. He is firefighter, and he is exposed to the patient, so he is endangered.” – Married female, 65+, African American, Grand County

“I have become extremely depressed since the outbreak due to loss of financial funds and being unsure of where I will get money for food.” Single female, 18-29, white, Larimer County

“I have extreme anxiety and it has increased due to the situation. I am scared of what will happen to jobs, to my roommates, to me, to my college.” Single female, 18-29, other race, Arapahoe County

“My mood changes day to day. Spending too much time with my significant other in close quarters is exhausting, makes me want to go nuts at times. The house got boring after the first week during the stay home order. I have been struggling to find work so that I can get out of the house.” Female unmarried living with partner, 18-29, white, El Paso County

“I am already a very anxious person, so this has dramatized my anxiety severely. I worry constantly and get very antsy.” – Female unmarried living with partner, 18-29, white, Douglas County

“My emotions are terrified scared for my life I will be very affected by asthma which this virus affects breathing.” Single female, 18-29, African American, City and County of Denver

“I think in response to the corona virus my mood became irritable, and my emotions became more stressed and raw. I think everybody is on the edge, and it is a very scary time right now.” Married female, 30-34, white, Mesa County

“It's been all over the place. Some days things feel doable and hopeful, but then others it just seems like a bad dream you can't wake up from. Depression sets in, stress, fear, overall anxiety and the worst comes from hearing the national press briefings. That just makes you want to pack it all in.” – Single female, 30-34, white, City and County of Denver

“I have kids at home, and we are trying to do remote schooling. I'm trying to work full-time at home. It has been very challenging, and it has taken a toll on us. I'm becoming a little short-tempered about it.” Married female, 40-44, white, Jefferson County

“My mood has been affected because I was not able to socialize. I live alone, so basically, I'm stuck here, and I can't date.” – Single male, 35-39, white, Larimer County



"There is depression because I can't go to the gym or go to the movie house, and no entertainment. I didn't have a social life." Single female, 40-44, white, El Paso County

"Depressed, struggling, afraid for our health and financial future. Concerned about my family and friends." Married female, 55-59, white, Teller County

"Being a 60-year old black man, I have a high-risk category to die from this disease. I'm very nervous whenever I leave my house." - Married male, 60-64, African American, City and County of Denver

"It is very hard. I'm a bipolar person. With the depression, I'm having a hard time holding it together. It is either you are depressed or anxious. It is very hard for me. It is just bipolar, also known as manic depressive. Some people don't understand what bipolar is." - Married female, 60-64, white, Routt County

"Anxiety level has increased greatly, making me physical ill and very stressed which is dangerous to my health." - Widowed female, 60-64, white, City and County of Denver

"I'm bored you know. I'm afraid to go out. I'm afraid to catch the virus. I'm tired of cooking. I want to go to the restaurant." - Separated female, 65+, white, Larimer County

"You have to take it as it is. You have to take the good with the bad. It all depends on how you look at it as it is. We have no control. There is no control around this." - Married female, 65+, white, Summit County

"Not working in an office has made me miss the familiar faces and friendships with my co-workers. Not leaving the house has made the gravity of the situation really sink it. I have not been depressed but have been sad overall thinking about the ramifications of this virus's presence." - Married female, 30-34, white, Boulder County

Conclusion

The purpose of this survey addendum was to provide a more detailed analysis of the negative impacts of the coronavirus on respondent's mental health. The full survey summary, topline, crosstabs, verbatim responses and presentation can be found at www.HealthierColorado.org.

