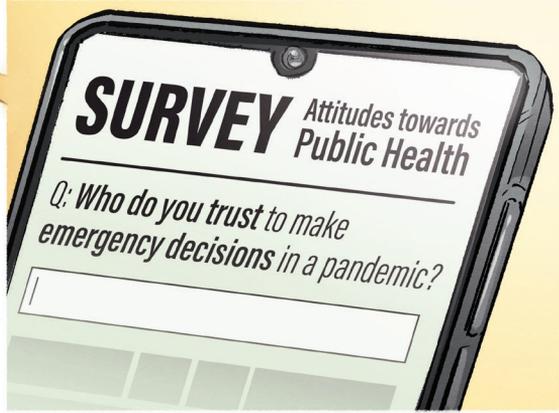


# ADRIFT

## Losing Public Trust



## PROBLEM

People have lost trust in wider systems and said that they could only rely on those in their communities who they know have experience. An unease has grown about where the 'evidence' comes from, the extent to which experts may or may not be biased, and whose interests are being advanced.

## EVIDENCE *Our focus group participants said:*

*"I don't know who can be trusted."*

*"It's going to take a long time before people trust systems again. During COVID, people[']s lives were touched because somebody gave a shit. And they took food to their house or they made sure that they had interactions when they were in their most vulnerable, most isolated. But it wasn't formal programs that [cared for people], it was people that cared that somehow had access to something they could share."*

And see: S Harmon, 'Vaccine Procurement: The changes needed to close access gaps and achieve health equity in routine and pandemic settings' (2024) 52 J Law, Med & Ethics 467-479; H Herati, et al. 'Canadians' trust in government in a time of crisis: Does it matter?' (2023) 18 Plos One e0290664; S Driedger, et al., 'There's a little bit of mistrust: Red River Métis experiences of the H1N1 and COVID-19 pandemics' (2024) 18 Risk Analysis 1.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Political leaders need clear limits of authority; public health officers were subject to unlawful political interference informed by unreliable evidence. Mechanisms are needed to enhance reliable evidence, transparency, and accountability, to improve the trustworthiness of actors.



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