

# Public Health Goals for Canada

A Federal, Provincial and Territorial Commitment to Canadians

## Workbook



[www.healthycanadians.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.ca)  
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# HEALTHY CANADIANS

## Population Forest



# MESSAGE FROM THE CO-LEADS ON PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PUBLIC HEALTH GOALS

Working together, Canada's governments are committed to helping Canadians become the world's healthiest people. We are convinced we can achieve this objective and allow each of us to live as healthy as possible, for as long as possible!

But the task is not solely one for governments. We all have a role to play – as individuals, groups, organizations and employers. Good health doesn't just happen; it is created in our homes, communities, schools and workplaces, through organizational actions and supportive policies that contribute to healthy social and physical environments and influence the choices we make as individuals.

Sustaining and improving the health of Canadians will require more than just raising awareness about healthy lifestyles. It will require more than just ensuring timely access to quality medical care services. And it will require more than just setting rules to protect human and environmental health – as important as these things are. It will also require us to better take account of how the health dimension of our individual actions and public policy decisions affect such things as housing, childcare, justice, education, employment and taxation, and impact our well-being.

Committing to improving the health status of all Canadians and to reducing health disparities among Canadians is the first step towards the goal of making Canadians the world's healthiest people. But while the ends we are pursuing may be self-evident, the means for getting there are less so.

For example, how much emphasis should Canadian society place on promoting healthy lifestyles, disease prevention and improving public safety? How, in public policy terms, should governments take account of the clear link between health and culture and background, where we live, upbringing, income, education, career and sense of self-worth? What criteria should we use in choosing from among competing – and often equally compelling – alternatives? More to the point, what is the precise role of individuals, employers and community groups in this equation? How can we advance our collective well-being while encouraging individual self-reliance?

*“All governments recognize that public health efforts on health promotion, disease and injury prevention are critical to achieving better health outcomes for Canadians and contributing to the long-term sustainability of medicare by reducing pressures on the health care system... For the first time, governments will set goals and targets for improving the health status of Canadians through a collaborative process with experts.”*

First Ministers Conference Communiqué, September 2004

These are important and challenging questions, and we are looking to you to help us find the answers! By completing this workbook, you will be supporting the federal, provincial and territorial governments to weigh these choices, become informed about the issues and importance of this initiative, and at the same time helping to shape the future of public health in Canada.

This workbook is also a guide to help you to find out more about public health in Canada, why it matters and the benefits likely to flow from governments agreeing to establish common public health goals. It outlines an initial set of themes for your consideration as a way to help organize our thinking around developing public health goals for Canada. These goals will become the basis for governments to establish public health targets that reflect their jurisdictions distinct priorities and capacities.

We have established an interactive website, [www.healthycanadians.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.ca), to provide you with additional information on public health. We encourage you to check the website for updates on our broader consultation activities, to monitor the progress we are making, and to participate in special events in your own community or on-line.

Thank you for agreeing to contribute to the development of public health goals for Canadians. As the co-leads for this initiative, we feel privileged to have your support and interest in this national dialogue that will help us realize our goal of helping Canadians become the world's healthiest people.

**The Honourable Carolyn Bennett**  
**Minister of State (Public Health)**  
**Government of Canada**

**The Honourable Theresa Oswald**  
**Minister of Healthy Living**  
**Government of Manitoba**

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# I. OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

## A. What Is Public Health?

Many Canadians are familiar with the health care system and how it works. However, fewer Canadians have a good understanding of what public health is, how it is organized and where it fits within the overall health system in Canada.

Having the medical services we need when we are sick are vital, but public health focuses on what we need to do as a society to help everyone stay healthy. Public health is part of every aspect of our lives, from our homes to our workplaces, and our schools to our communities. It encompasses everything we do, from the food we eat to the safety of our environment, and from access to safe walking/biking trails to preventing the outbreak of disease. Public health is about the way we live.

While there is no consensus on essential public health functions, the following describes the activities that are normally associated with public health practices across the country.

- **Health surveillance** – Surveillance includes collecting, interpreting and communicating health data and then acting on this information. It helps in the early recognition of outbreaks, disease trends, cases of illness, and health factors. For example, surveillance can help identify and deal with immediate situations such as contamination of public water supplies, and it can also be used to track data over the longer term, such as smoking and cancer rates.
- **Health promotion** – Public health practitioners work with individuals, agencies and communities to understand and improve the health of the population. Health promotion includes strengthening the skills of individuals to encourage healthy behaviours and it also includes building the healthy social and physical environments to support these behaviours.
- **Disease and injury prevention** – We know that many diseases can be prevented or delayed. There are measures to prevent infectious diseases, and much can also be done to prevent or delay chronic diseases, for

example, by ensuring access to healthy food and opportunities for physical activity, and supporting smoking cessation. Many injuries can be avoided through measures such as ensuring safe equipment in playgrounds, and seat belt and bicycle helmet use.

- **Health protection** – A long-standing core function of public health, protection includes ensuring safe food and water supplies, providing advice to national food and drug safety regulators, protecting people from environmental threats, and having a regulatory framework for controlling infectious diseases in place. Ensuring proper food handling in restaurants and establishing smoke-free bylaws are examples of health protection measures.
- **Population health assessment** – By understanding the factors that influence good health and those that create health risks, we can ensure the appropriate services and policies are in place.

*“Public health is often described as the science and art of promoting health, preventing disease, prolonging life and improving quality of life through the organized efforts of society.”*

*Learning from SARS, Renewal of Public Health in Canada, 2003*

## B. Determinants of Health

We've learned a lot in the past several decades about what determines health and where we should be concentrating our efforts. At every stage of life health is determined by complex interactions between social and economic factors, the physical environment and individual behaviour.

There are a range of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that influence, or determine our health and well-being. These are related to our living conditions, including whether we are rich or poor, our social networks, how much education we have, where we live, the types of jobs we hold, and if we have opportunities for physical activity and available healthy food. Our access to health services, and our gender and cultural backgrounds also influence our health.

Not everyone in Canada enjoys the same level of health or shares the same risk of ill-health. Certain vulnerable groups, for example, low-income families, some aboriginal communities, and disabled people are more at risk. There is a growing body of evidence that suggests that addressing inequalities in society is key to helping improve the health outcomes of all Canadians. To address those health disparities, we need to ensure that those living on the lowest incomes, for example, have the same access to and can make the same use of the information, programs and services as those in the highest level. Public health should not be a "have" or "have-not" issue, it is a concern of the whole of Canadian society.

*By far the greatest share of health problems is attributable to broad social conditions. Yet health policies have been dominated by disease-focused solutions that largely ignore the social environment. As a result, health problems persist, inequalities have widened, and health interventions have obtained less than optimal results.*

World Health Organization Commission on  
Social Determinants of Health

We expect that the discussions on public health goals currently taking place will address what factors citizens consider most vital in promoting public health. These determinants may be different for individual communities or even cultural groups. This is why it is so important that we hear from all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, individuals, business, industry, cultural groups and other community organizations regarding health determinants and other concerns.

### Key Determinants of Health

- Income and social status
- Social support networks
- Education and literacy
- Employment / working conditions
- Social environments
- Physical environments
- Personal health practices and coping skills
- Healthy child development
- Biology and genetics
- Health services
- Gender
- Culture

## 2. BUILDING ON A STRONG FOUNDATION

*“Good health is the bedrock on which social progress is built. A nation of healthy people can do those things that make life worthwhile, and as the level of health increases so does the potential for happiness.”*

Marc Lalonde, Minister of National Health and Welfare, 1974

In 2004, the First Ministers of Health committed to a collaborative process with experts to develop a Public Health Strategy for Canada. Part of this exercise includes drafting a set of goals for improving the health status of Canadians.

Much work has already been done across Canada to help set the stage for developing these common public health goals and further strengthening public health. Almost all of the provinces and territories have in some manner identified public health goals for their jurisdictions (Appendix A). Work has also progressed at the federal level for over 30 years including:

- The landmark Lalonde report in 1974, *A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians* broadened our understanding of the factors that determine good health.
- *The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion and Achieving Health for All: A Framework for Health Promotion*, both released in 1986, expanded the emphasis in health promotion from factors controlled by individuals to societal factors and conditions.
- In 1994 the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health (ACPH) sponsored a project to propose a framework and process for developing national health goals.
- *First Report on the Health of Canadians* in 1996 identified health goals, referring to them as “challenges.”
- In 1997 the strategic directions set out in *National Health Goals for Canada: Analysis of Feasibility and Options* by ACPH were accepted by the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Health.

- *Toward a Healthy Future: Second Report on the Health of Canadians* was released in 1999, examining the major determinants that influence the health of Canadians.
- *Directions Towards Health for All in Canada in 2000*, presented to the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Health by ACPH, was an update of the 1997 strategic directions. It includes new directions and a minimum indicator set.

We can also gain some knowledge and inspiration by looking beyond our own borders. Many countries, including Sweden, U.S., U.K., Australia and New Zealand have identified public health goals for their populations and we can learn from their varied experiences. The U.K., for example, targeted five key health conditions in the early 1990s, but over time found its preoccupation with diseases ineffective and shifted its focus to addressing the broader determinants of health. Australia’s experience was the opposite. It began with a program to address broad determinants of health, but later narrowed its focus to a set of health priorities. One of the barriers to the broader vision was its difficulty in addressing issues that fell outside the health sector, such as the environment, housing and income disparity. The overarching aim of the Swedish goals is to create “the conditions for good health on equal terms for the entire population.” The objectives were developed using a collaborative approach and they address the “upstream” key determinants of health (Appendix B).

Links to all of the resources and studies cited above can be found on our public health goals website, at [www.healthycanadians.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.ca).

Public health goals allow all levels of government to focus their public health efforts and identify new opportunities for collaboration. Only we can decide what the appropriate public health goals are for Canadians in the 21st century and the best approaches for arriving at them. But it is clear that whatever goals we finally adopt, for those goals to be accepted and endorsed by Canadians, all sectors of society must be intricately involved in the process and their adoption. Hence, this exercise.

# 3. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

## A. How the Consultation Process Will Work

Phase I of the consultation process, launched on March 29, 2005, focuses on developing common public health goals. The second phase will start in the Fall and will focus on each provincial and territorial jurisdiction, as well as the Government of Canada, developing targets aligned with the agreed upon goals.

Several different activities are being carried out in this first phase to encourage public health experts, interested Canadians and others to make an informed contribution to the discussions around developing Canadian public health goals. Our website [www.healthycanadians.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.ca) provides a more detailed summary of the consultation phases and the various activities, as well as additional background information. The website will also include updates on the results of the various activities as they become available.

### Phase I – March to September 2005

#### Engaging Canadians in consultations on public health.

Interested Canadians will have the opportunity to participate in the process in several ways, including by providing input through this workbook and through an online survey at [www.healthycanadians.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.ca). However, we encourage you to share this workbook with your friends, associates and colleagues or to use it and the materials available through our website to organize your own consultation activities!

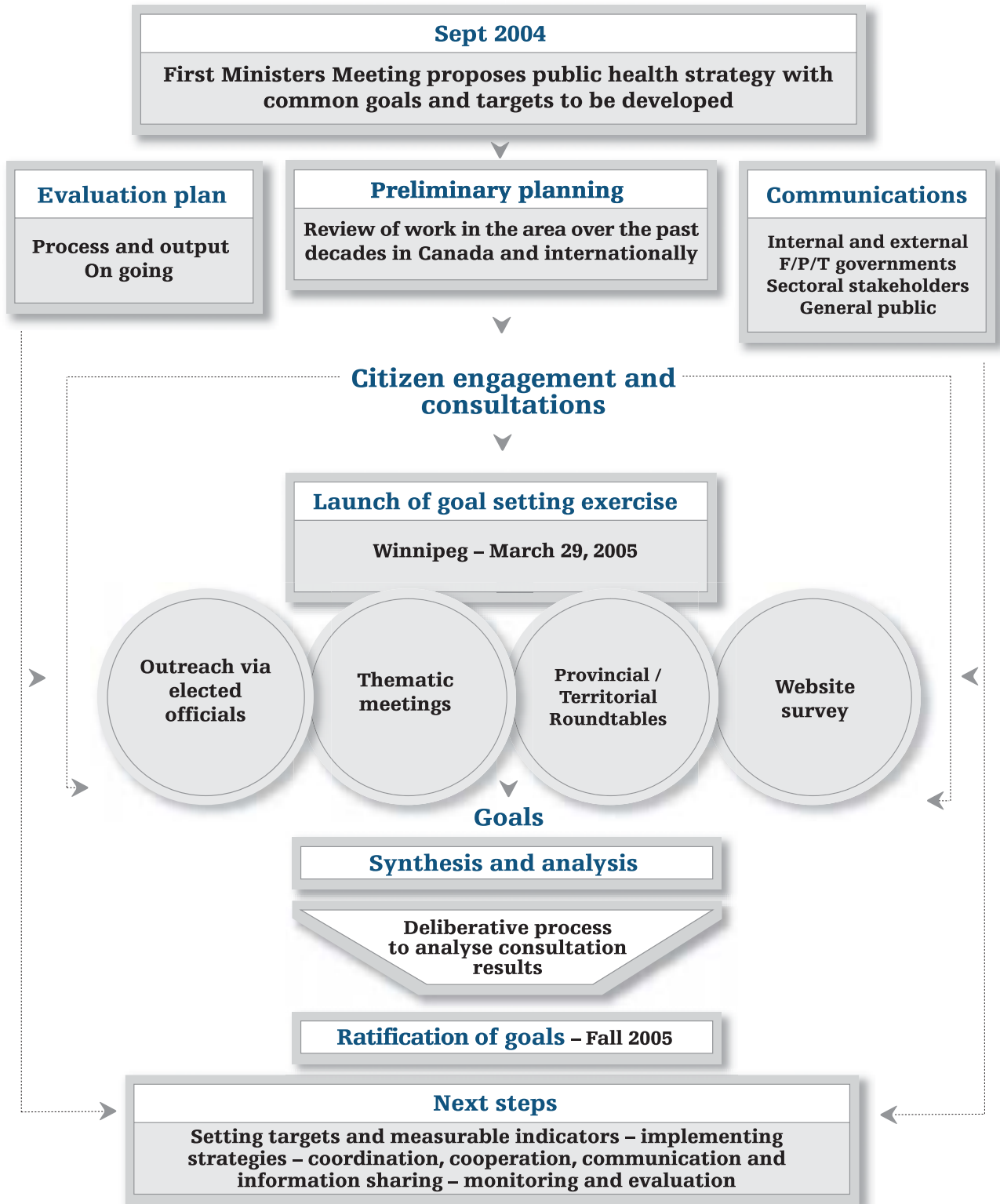
**Provincial-Territorial Roundtables.** Taking place in locations across the country, these roundtables will bring together public health stakeholders, experts and concerned Canadians to discuss the 6 public health themes outlined in Chapter 4 of this workbook. In addition to commenting on the appropriateness of each theme and whether additional ones are warranted, participants will also be asked to develop a “public health goals statement” that speaks to the overarching public policy objectives associated with each theme. Participants will also be encouraged to engage their networks in the process.

**Thematic meetings.** A series of roundtables focusing on specific public health issues will also be held with experts across the country (for example, a Youth Summit).

**Activities organized by elected officials, community groups and non-governmental organizations.** A public health consultation Activity Guide, that includes this workbook, has been developed to allow elected and government officials, community groups and non-governmental organizations to raise awareness about public health and to participate in the development of common public health goals. As with the Provincial-Territorial Roundtables and the thematic meetings, results from these discussions will be posted on the website.

**Deliberative Dialogue Process.** This will involve engaging groups of randomly selected Canadians in different regions of the country in in-depth discussions of potential public health themes and goals, using many of the inputs garnered from the processes outlined above. After an initial review of the results of these individual deliberative sessions, a sample of the participants would be invited to participate in a larger meeting along with public health experts and governments to work toward consensus on a series of common public health goals. This meeting would also mark the end of Phase I of the process, and position us for Phase II: setting jurisdiction-specific targets for these public health goals.

# Public Health Goals Initiative



## **B. How to Respond**

At the back of this workbook, you will find a detachable questionnaire that enables you to contribute to developing public health goals for Canada by answering questions on a set of the proposed themes. This questionnaire can be mailed or faxed back to us. We would also welcome any written comments or advice you or your group may have on the criteria governments should use to develop these public health goals. Contact details for our project team are set out below.

Alternatively, you can complete this workbook and submit any comments electronically by visiting our website at: [www.healthycanadians.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.ca).

Please complete our on-line survey, or send in your completed workbooks and suggestions by mail or fax on/or before September 15, 2005, to the address below. Please be sure to let us know whether you are affiliated with a public health organization, a government, a community or advocacy group, which province or territory you are from and whether you live in an urban, rural or remote/Nothern area.

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## 4. TOWARDS PUBLIC HEALTH GOALS FOR CANADA

Our past experience with discussing public health goals for Canada has taught us that the best way to proceed is through an inclusive consultative process. The process should build on past goal-defining deliberations and be guided by the experiences and practices of other jurisdictions in Canada and elsewhere.

We have learned that putting forward a list of possible goals would not be helpful at this stage; rather, we believe that goals should be built from a common vision of what health really means to and for Canadians, based on their understanding of the factors that are most important to their health and well-being. Therefore, this dialogue begins with a discussion of a number of overarching and interrelated themes.

The development of these themes was guided by a review and synthesis of the information from previous discussions about public health goals for Canada and existing goals in other jurisdictions. Further, they speak to the full spectrum of the determinants of health, including individual risk factors and behaviors and the social, economic, cultural and environmental influences on health that operate outside of the health system.

These themes are:

- Opportunities for healthy development and learning throughout life
- Supportive communities and healthy working environments
- Sustainable, diverse and safe environments
- Vulnerable populations
- Supports for personal choices, skills and capacities that enhance health
- An integrated, supportive health system

We believe that the themes provide a strong starting point for discussions and that they will contribute to a dialogue that will move us towards a set of common public health goals. We will consolidate and use the reports of these discussions and other input to develop groupings of possible goal areas, and ultimately public health goals, for the whole of Canada.

The following section presents the themes, beginning with a short introduction. This is followed by a list of some of the factors drawn from other goals exercises that have been associated with the theme and several questions that we would like you to consider. Some more general questions are also included at the end of this section. There is space after each question to jot down your thoughts. Each question is also repeated in the same order at the end of this workbook in a form that can be detached and faxed or mailed back to us, as explained in Chapter 3.

## **Theme I: Opportunities for healthy development and learning throughout life**

Early childhood development is a powerful determinant of health. The effects of early experiences on brain development, readiness to learn and health in later life are well documented. In addition, we are learning more about how the social and economic environments affect the physical, social, mental, emotional and spiritual development of children, youth and adults of all ages. For example, effective education for children and youth and lifelong learning for adults are important contributors to health and to the socioeconomic status of individuals. These in turn contribute to prosperity for the country as a whole.

This theme may be addressed through a variety of ways, including:

- Healthy pregnancy and child and adolescent development
- Prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Quality education opportunities for children, youth and young adults
- Life long development and learning
- Opportunities for all to be meaningfully engaged in society

### **Questions**

1) In your opinion, what would enable children, youth and adults of all ages to experience opportunities for healthy development and learning throughout life?

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2) What do you think prevents children, youth and adults of all ages from realizing opportunities for healthy development and learning throughout life?

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3) What in your view would enable communities to promote and/or contribute to healthy development and learning for children, youth and adults of all ages throughout life?

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4) What prevents communities from promoting and/or contributing to healthy development and learning for children, youth and adults of all ages throughout life?

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5) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 1?

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## Theme 2: Supportive communities and healthy working environments

We know that social and economic circumstances affect health throughout life. Friendships, good social relations and strong supportive networks at home, at work and within the community improve health. As well, factors such as inclusion, recognition of diversity, and a willingness and capacity of people to engage in civic activities contribute to a cohesive society that reduces many potential risks to good health. We also know that full employment, good jobs and good incomes contribute to health; job satisfaction and job security also increase health and well-being. The distribution of income is also very important – the more equal the distribution of wealth, the healthier the population and everyone in society benefits. By contrast, higher rates of unemployment lead to more illness and premature death. Poverty, relative deprivation and social exclusion adversely impact on health and also contribute to premature death.

This theme may be addressed through a variety of ways, including:

- Communities with strong social support networks
- Opportunities for public participation and to influence public decision-making
- Meaningful work and adequate working conditions
- Consider the workplace as a health promoting environment
- An adequate level of income
- An equitable distribution of income
- A strong, sustainable economy

### Questions

1) In your view, what would enable communities to offer positive and supportive living and working conditions for all people?

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2) What do you think prevents communities from achieving positive and supportive living and working conditions for all people?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 2?

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## Theme 3: Sustainable, diverse and safe environments

The natural and built environments are factors that contribute to health both directly in the short term and indirectly in the longer term. A healthy environment also protects consumers from product related hazards by promoting the safe use of products. These factors can influence personal health practices and shape the opportunities we have to live healthy and productive lives. Children are particularly vulnerable to serious health risks from environmental hazards and biological, physical and chemical threats. At certain levels of exposure, contaminants in our air, water, food and soil can contribute to a variety of adverse health effects, as can climate change. Factors related to indoor air quality, the design of transportation systems, urban planning that includes bicycle paths and parks, and the safety and security of residents significantly influence our health: creating healthy homes, schools, workplaces and communities is particularly important. For example, access to green space creates informal recreational opportunities, which play an important role in promoting healthy active living.

This theme may be addressed through a variety of ways, including:

- Safe and high quality physical indoor and outdoor environments air, water, food and soil
- Adequate and affordable housing
- Well-designed and sustainable communities
- Access to green spaces, recreational and sports opportunities
- Safe products and foods

### Questions

1) What contributes to creating and maintaining sustainable, diverse and safe environments?

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2) What prevents communities from creating and maintaining sustainable, diverse and safe environments?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 3?

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## Theme 4: Vulnerable populations

We know that in general the social, economic and environmental conditions in which some people live and work are not as favourable as others. Vulnerable groups such as Aboriginal people, people living with disabilities, new Canadians, single-parent and low-income families all face greater challenges. Factors such as education, employment, income, housing, safe areas to play and access to affordable and nutritious food have a direct impact on health. Other populations that are marginalized by various combinations of factors such as discrimination, culture, geographic isolation and social exclusion may also experience compromised health status and well-being. This theme is tied to the previous themes, however, given the magnitude of the burden of illness among vulnerable groups, special attention is necessary.

This theme may be addressed through a variety of ways, including:

- Public health and social supports and services tailored to the needs of vulnerable groups
- Equitable access to public health and social services

### Questions

1) What actions do you think would contribute to improving the overall health of Canada's most vulnerable groups?

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2) In your view, what are the major factors preventing the health, safety, and well-being of vulnerable groups?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a "public health goals" statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 4?

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## **Theme 5: Supports for personal choices, skills and capacities that enhance health**

In the first few years of life we begin to acquire personal skills and resources critical for healthy behaviours that we draw on throughout our lives. These skills help us become self-reliant, problem-solvers and enable us to make informed choices; deal with the challenges associated with life transitions; cope with injury, illness and other adversity; and generally exercise some control over our health and our environments. These skills can be applied when making choices about tobacco, alcohol and other drug use; about food, diet and nutrition: about physical activity and weight; and so on. At the same time, we know that health is determined by the complex interaction of a number of factors and that the choices we make as individuals are made easier or more difficult by the physical, social and economic conditions in which we live. Providing supports for healthy personal choices also means building strong and supportive social environments that enable and encourage healthy, independent living for all people. Thus, we need to make the healthy choices the easy choices through diverse approaches operating in different ways - from behaviour change programs to changes to legislation and public policy.

This theme may be addressed through a variety of ways, including:

- Opportunities to develop and maintain personal life skills and a sense of life control and effectiveness
- Resources and supports in society to enable and maintain healthy lifestyles
- Opportunities for all people to live with dignity
- Reduction of preventable illness, injuries, disabilities and premature deaths

### **Questions**

1) What kinds of supports would help you to make informed personal choices and build skills and capacities that enhance health?

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2) What do you think prevents people from having or strengthening personal choices, skills and capacities that enhance health?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 5?

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## Theme 6: An integrated, supportive health system

The recent emergence of new infectious disease threats such as SARS , the re-emergence of other diseases such as tuberculosis coupled with the increasing burden of chronic disease have underscored the need for greater collaboration and linkages among players in the broader health system as well as other sectors to safeguard the health of Canadians.

We know that successful public health activities have the potential to positively influence overall health. Furthermore, we know that policies, programs and services that lie outside of the health system also have important influences on health. Measures that foster healthy Canadians also contribute to health care system sustainability. For example, it is generally acknowledged that access to education plays an important role in buffering the impact of other factors such as income inequality, which in their own right are key influences on our health.

This theme may be addressed through a variety of ways, including:

- Sustainable, effective and efficient health care services
- Quality public health services
- Coordination and linkages within the public health system
- Coordination and linkages that interface with the broader health system and other sectors

### Questions

1) What opportunities do you see within your community to create links among players to ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach to public health?

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2) What is needed in your community to prevent emerging public health threats?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 6?

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**Additional Questions**

**General questions on the themes**

1. Are there any broad themes missing? Did you feel that any public health issue that is important to you was not identified or discussed?

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2. Is making progress on any of these themes more important than on others? Why?

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**General questions on a broad understanding of health**

1. What do you think contributes most to making a person healthy?

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2. If you could do one thing to improve the health of Canadians, what would that be?

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**General questions on understanding the factors that contribute to health**

1. What decisions and choices do you make that most influence your health and/or the health of your family?

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2. What decisions and choices made by others do you feel most influence your health and/or the health of your family?

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3. Do you feel that you can influence these decisions and decision-makers? How?

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4. Do you think your community contributes to your health and/or the health of your family? If yes, how?

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5. What are the most important things that could be done in your community to strengthen the way that it contributes to your health, the health of your family and your community?

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Thank you for choosing to be part of the process that will help define public health goals for Canadians. These goals and the actions required to realize them, will put us all on the path towards a healthier life. For more information and to view the results of this survey, as well as consultations across the country, please visit our website [www.healthycanadians.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.ca). You may also submit your response to this survey electronically.



# APPENDIX A

## Provincial and Territorial Goals

The collaborative goals development process we are now undertaking will build on considerable work already done in this area by provinces and territories. The following summary list is made up of integrated statements that illustrate common goal areas, as well as the wide range of public health goals that exist at the Provincial/Territorial level, information that may be useful in setting public health goals for Canada. Further details on provincial/territorial goals can be found on the Public Health Goals web site at <http://www.healthycanadians.ca>.

- Support the development of individual skills and capacity
- Encourage and support healthy living
- Access to nutritious foods
- Improve health reporting by individuals
- Reduce tobacco use and the harm it causes to the population
- Increase the number of people who engage in regular physical activity to promote optimal health
  
- Preparation for lifelong learning and work
- Diverse, sustainable, and high quality physical environments that support health
- Prevent or reduce negative health outcomes resulting from exposure to health hazards
- Improve Aboriginal health, and social and economic circumstances in Aboriginal communities
- Supportive living and working conditions
  
- Effective, efficient, and high quality health service system
- Health system sustainability
- Provide client-focussed, affordable, high quality health services in appropriate settings
- Increase the length and quality of life by the reduction of preventable communicable and non-communicable diseases, injuries, disabilities, substance abuse, and premature death
- Protect health
- Promote health across the lifespan and in key settings
- Engage in intersectoral actions that favour health and well-being
- Encourage return to effective preventive clinical practices
- Develop public policy that promotes a healthy population
- Explore the underlying obstacles to universal wellness
  
- Communities that support healthy choices
- Improve conditions that support positive mental well-being by promoting resilience, connectedness, and citizenship
- Improve community capacity to take action on community issues using cost-effective, efficient, evidence-based approaches
- Support vulnerable populations

# APPENDIX B

## Goals in Other Countries

### Sweden

The overall aim of Swedish public health policy is to create social conditions that ensure good health for the entire population. Swedish public health policy is based on 11 objectives containing the most important determinants of Swedish public health. The 11 objectives are:

- Participation and influence in society
- Economic and social security
- Secure and favourable conditions during childhood and adolescence
- Healthier working life
- Healthy and safe environments and products
- Health and medical care that more actively promotes good health
- Effective protection against communicable diseases
- Safe sexuality and good reproductive health
- Increased physical activity
- Good eating habits and safe food
- Reduced use of tobacco and alcohol, a society free from illicit drugs and doping and a reduction in the harmful effects of excessive gambling.

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### New Zealand

New Zealand's Health Strategy set out goals with the following aims:

- Unite the health sector (public health and health care)
- Improve coordination across the health sector
- Improve coordination across sectors
- Emphasize users' involvement
- Focus and direct actions according to priorities

There is also a complementary strategic plan for Maori public health that focuses on reducing disparities in Maori versus non-Maori populations (identified as a priority).

The goals are structured to address societal, community and individual factors determining health (from education and employment to improving oral health). There are 10 goals and they are broad and non-specific.

#### Goals

- A healthy social environment
- Reducing inequalities in health status
- Maori development in health
- A healthy physical environment
- Healthy communities, families and individuals

- Healthy Lifestyles
  - Better mental health
  - Better physical health
  - Injury prevention
  - Accessible and appropriate health care services
- 

## **United States**

Two national goals were outlined in the US Healthy People 2010 Initiative:

- Increase life expectancy and improve quality of life
- Eliminate health disparities

The goals are directional, non-specific. Some of the leading health indicators are:

Leading Health Indicators

- Physical activity
  - Overweight and obesity
  - Tobacco use
  - Substance use
  - Responsible sexual behaviour
  - Mental health
  - Injury and violence
  - Environmental quality
  - Immunization
  - Access to health care
- 

## **United Kingdom**

Between 2001 and 2002, the UK developed and put in place two national targets meant to stem recent increases in health inequalities. These targets include the reduction of differences in life expectancy and infant mortality across social classes by 10% by the year 2010. In order to attain these targets, a program for action has been implemented including a strategy and recommended priority interventions along four theme areas:

- Supporting families, mothers, and children
  - Engaging communities and individuals
  - Preventing illness and providing effective treatment and care
  - Addressing underlying determinants of health.
- 

## **Australia**

In Australia, goals have recently been developed in four categories that are consistent with national health priority areas and which focus on chronic disease burden reduction. The four priority categories are:

- Preventable mortality and morbidity
- Healthy lifestyles and risk factors
- Health literacy and health skills
- Healthy environments

# QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE SHEET

(Tear off and mail or fax to coordinates listed in chapter 3 of this workbook)

## Theme I: Opportunities for healthy development and learning throughout life

### Questions

1) In your opinion, what would enable children, youth and adults of all ages to experience opportunities for healthy development and learning throughout life?

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2) What do you think prevents children, youth and adults of all ages from realizing opportunities for healthy development and learning throughout life?

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3) What in your view would enable communities to promote and/or contribute to healthy development and learning for children, youth and adults of all ages throughout life?

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4) What prevents communities from promoting and/or contributing to healthy development and learning for children, youth and adults of all ages throughout life?

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5) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 1?

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## **Theme 2: Supportive communities and healthy working environments**

### **Questions**

1) In your view, what would enable communities to offer positive and supportive living and working conditions for all people?

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2) What do you think prevents communities from achieving positive and supportive living and working conditions for all people?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 2?

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## **Theme 3: Sustainable, diverse and safe environments**

### **Questions**

1) What contributes to creating and maintaining sustainable, diverse and safe environments?

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2) What prevents communities from creating and maintaining sustainable, diverse and safe environments?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 3?

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## Theme 4: Vulnerable populations

### Questions

1) What actions do you think would contribute to improving the overall health of Canada's most vulnerable groups?

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2) In your view, what are the major factors preventing the health, safety, and well-being of vulnerable groups?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a "public health goals" statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 4?

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## Theme 5: Supports for personal choices, skills and capacities that enhance health

### Questions

1) What kinds of supports would help you to make informed personal choices and build skills and capacities that enhance health?

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2) What do you think prevents people from having or strengthening personal choices, skills and capacities that enhance health?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a "public health goals" statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 5?

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## Theme 6: An integrated, supportive health system

### Questions

1) What opportunities do you see within your community to create links among players to ensure a coordinated and collaborative approach to public health?

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2) What is needed in your community to prevent emerging public health threats?

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3) Given your views on the preceding questions, can you compose a “public health goals” statement or statements that speak to the overarching public policy objectives you see flowing from Theme 6?

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### General questions on the themes

1. Are there any broad themes missing? Did you feel that any public health issue that is important to you was not identified or discussed?

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2. Is making progress on any of these themes more important than on others? Why?

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### General questions on a broad understanding of health

1. What do you think contributes most to making a person healthy?

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2. If you could do one thing to improve the health of Canadians, what would that be?

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## General questions on understanding the factors that contribute to health

1. What decisions and choices do you make that most influence your health and/or the health of your family?

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2. What decisions and choices made by others do you feel most influence your health and/or the health of your family?

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3. Do you feel that you can influence these decisions and decision-makers? How?

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4. Do you think your community contributes to your health and/or the health of your family? If yes, how?

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5. What are the most important things that could be done in your community to strengthen the way that it contributes to your health, the health of your family and your community?

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Thank you for choosing to be part of the process that will help define public health goals for Canadians.

These tear-out pages can be faxed or mailed by September 15, 2005 to the following coordinates:

**Fax: (613) 952-5738**

**I 866 558-2948**

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