

Health Goals for Canada

A Federal, Provincial and Territorial
Commitment to Canadians

Objectifs de santé pour le Canada

Engagement fédéral-provincial-territorial
envers tous les Canadiens

Background

- In the context of accelerating work on a pan-Canadian Public Health Strategy and engaging across sectors, First Ministers committed to “improving the health status of Canadians through a collaborative process.” In September, 2004, First Ministers directed Ministers of Health to take the lead on developing health goals for Canada. Federal Minister Carolyn Bennett, Minister of State (Public Health), and Manitoba Minister Theresa Oswald, Minister Responsible for Healthy Living, were appointed to co-lead this process.
- Improving the health of Canadians will require the participation and collaboration of individuals, groups, organizations and employers. With that understanding, the consultation phase of the goals initiative included roundtables with public health stakeholders, experts and ordinary citizens in each province and territory so that Canadians could tell us about their concerns, priorities and visions for a healthy Canada. All of these inputs were used to draft an overarching goal and nine health goals.
- The goals statements are broad and meant to express the collective hopes and expectations of Canadians when it comes to their health. The goals are intended to be guideposts indicating a path to improve the health and quality of life of Canadians rather than a detailed map that lays out exactly how to get there.
- Work towards achieving these goals will take place on multiple fronts. While individuals, communities, regions and governments each have a role to play, they will approach this role from different perspectives and with different interests and priorities. While we hope that the goal statements will be embraced in all parts of Canadian society, it will be up to each government, community and individual to put them into effect in meaningful and relevant ways.
- According to the agreement entitled « Asymmetrical Federalism that respects Québec’s jurisdiction » which accompanies the « 10-Year Plan to Strengthen Health Care », Québec intends to determine its own objectives, standards and criteria. Thus, Québec did not participate in the process to develop health goals for Canada and did not contribute to the development of the documents relating to this process, although it may share the general objectives described in them.

Overarching Goal

As a nation, we aspire to a Canada in which every person is as healthy as they can be – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Health Goals for Canada

Canada is a country where:

Basic Needs (Social and Physical Environments)

Our children reach their full potential, growing up happy, healthy, confident and secure.

The air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, and the places we live, work and play are safe and healthy - now and for generations to come.

Belonging and Engagement

Each and every person has dignity, a sense of belonging, and contributes to supportive families, friendships and diverse communities.

We keep learning throughout our lives through formal and informal education, relationships with others, and the land.

We participate in and influence the decisions that affect our personal and collective health and well-being.

We work to make the world a healthy place for all people, through leadership, collaboration and knowledge.

Healthy Living

Every person receives the support and information they need to make healthy choices.

A System for Health

We work to prevent and are prepared to respond to threats to our health and safety through coordinated efforts across the country and around the world.

A strong system for health and social well-being responds to disparities in health status and offers timely, appropriate care.