



Preface

Toward a Healthy Future: Second Report on the Health of Canadians is the result of a collaborative effort by the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health (ACPH), Health Canada, Statistics Canada, the Canadian Institute for Health Information and a project team from the Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto.

The role of the Advisory Committee is to advise the Conference of Deputy Ministers of Health on national and interprovincial strategies to improve the health status of the Canadian population and to provide a more integrated approach to health.

As the title suggests, this is the second report to summarize and comment on the state of the nation's health. The first report was released in September 1996. The current report differs from the first one in several ways. It puts more emphasis on the influence of gender and socioeconomic status on health. Chapters on healthy child development and biology and genetics have been added in order to paint a picture that includes all of the major determinants of health. The section on the physical environment has been expanded to provide a better understanding of how it impacts on the health of all Canadians.

This report summarizes the most current information we have on the health of Canadians, and invites the reader to consider the implications of these findings for current and future policies, practices and research. It is a tool to alert policy makers, practitioners and the public to current and future challenges in health, and to help identify actions that can be taken to improve the health of Canadians.

More detailed statistics and information are provided in the *Statistical Report on the Health of Canadians (1999)*, published under separate cover by the ACPH.

Print copies of this report and the *Statistical Report on the Health of Canadians* are available from Provincial and Territorial Ministries of Health or from:

Publications
Health Canada
Tunney's Pasture (AL0900C2)
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9
Telephone: (613) 954-5995
Fax: (613) 941-5366
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The full text of both reports can be found on the Internet at the following Web site: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca>. The Statistical Report is also available at <http://www.statcan.ca> and at <http://www.cihi.ca>.

Members of the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Advisory Committee on Population Health welcome your comments on this report. A questionnaire is included at the end of the report for this purpose.