

Patterns of health and disease are largely a consequence of how we learn, live and work.



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**H** *Health of the Nation* was launched in February 2004 in conjunction with the Canadian Population Health Initiative (CPHI) flagship report, *Improving the Health of Canadians*. Release of this report set the stage for the focus of *Health of the Nation*—taking action to improve population health knowledge generation, synthesis and exchange. This newsletter aims to promote CPHI activities, including funded research, synthesis papers and workshop reports.

## INSIGHT AND HIGHLIGHTS

## Errata

Please note that there was an error in *Improving the Health of Canadians*, Chapter 4, Table 1, on page 81: in the Inuit (Nunavut) column, the female and male life expectancy numbers should be reversed. In Nunavut, life expectancy for females at birth is 70 years; for males, it is 68 years. This error also affects paragraph two on page 80 and, in the Summary Report, the second-last bullet on page 18. The corrected statement is: "In Nunavut, the average lifespan for women is 12 years less than the average for non-Aboriginal Canadian women, while for males the comparable gap is 8 years."

Pan-Canadian Briefings—*Improving the Health of Canadians*

Promoting dialogue and debate on policy choices is one of the aims of the CPHI report, *Improving the Health of Canadians* ([www.cihi.ca/ihc2004](http://www.cihi.ca/ihc2004)), released on February 25, 2004. CPHI is bringing together policy- and decision-makers, researchers and advocates in a wide range of settings to review key findings of the report and to engage in dialogue on their implications.

A presentation at Health Canada in Ottawa attracted nearly a hundred people from the federal government and non-governmental organizations, as well as a number of Health Canada's regional staff, who were linked by teleconference. Other Ottawa briefings have included a Newsmakers' Breakfast at the National Press Club, a presentation at the recent Policy Forum on Health Disparities and meetings with a federal government inter-departmental working group on early childhood development and the Policy Research Initiative.

Briefings were held in Victoria and Vancouver in late April, followed by Edmonton and Charlottetown in May. Presentations were made at the inaugural Canadian Association of Health Services and Policy Research conference, held in Montréal in late May, and the Department of Community Health and Epidemiology, Queen's University, Kingston in early June. Over the month of June, briefings continued in Halifax, St. John's, Regina and Saskatoon. The Saskatoon meeting was held through satellite conferencing to allow other centres across Saskatchewan to participate, with approximately 300 participants in attendance.

These pan-Canadian briefings were well attended and drew an exciting range of participants, including senior government officials, advocates and regional program administrators. The response to these meetings suggests strong support for increasing attention to determinants of health and promoting dialogue on policy choices. For further details on these meetings, or meetings in other provinces, please e-mail [healthofthenation@cihi.ca](mailto:healthofthenation@cihi.ca). If you are unable to attend a face-to-face session, you can view the complete presentation on the report at [www.cihi.ca/ihc2004](http://www.cihi.ca/ihc2004).

We'd like to hear from you. What did you think about *Improving the Health of Canadians*? To provide feedback on this report, go to [ecomm.cihi.ca/forms/CPHI\\_IHCfeedback\\_e.html](http://ecomm.cihi.ca/forms/CPHI_IHCfeedback_e.html) and complete the evaluation form. We will be using the evaluation results to inform the content and structure of future reports.

## WHAT'S NEW?

## CIHI Press Release: Obese Teens More Likely to Be Victims or Perpetrators of Bullying

According to a new CPHI-funded study conducted by Queen's University researchers Ian Janssen, Wendy Craig, William Boyce and William Pickett, overweight and obese children are more vulnerable to bullying behaviour, both as victims and as perpetrators, than healthy-weight children. Findings of this study indicate that overweight and obese girls and boys are more likely to be the perpetrators and victims of verbal, physical and relational bullying than their normal-weight peers. In all ages studied (11- to 16-year olds) a relationship was observed between victimization and adiposity level; however, the relationship between bully-perpetrating and adiposity level was observed only in 15- to 16-year-old youths. The results of the study were published on May 3, 2004 in the American journal, *Pediatrics*. The press release is available at our Web site ([secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw\\_page=cphi\\_e](http://secure.cihi.ca/cihiweb/dispPage.jsp?cw_page=cphi_e)).

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## WHAT'S NEW?

### Socioeconomic Determinants of Mortality in Two Canadian Provinces

Research from the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy at the University of Manitoba by Dr. Leslie Roos, Jennifer Magoon, Sumit Gupta, Dr. Dan Chateau and Dalhousie University's Dr. Paul Veugelers compared neighbourhood level socioeconomic data with mortality data in Manitoba and Nova Scotia. This CPHI-funded research study found that neighbourhood level variables, such as education and income, did not have a significant direct effect on mortality rates. The authors note that studies of neighbourhood-level variables and their effect on personal health status have produced diverse findings.

For more details, look for the article by Roos L., Magoon J., Gupta S., Chateau D. and Veugelers P. entitled "Socioeconomic Determinants of Mortality in Two Canadian Provinces: Multilevel Modeling and Neighbourhood Context" in an upcoming issue of *Social Science and Medicine* (publication date not yet available). The abstract (free) and article (subscription required) are now available on-line at [www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/02779536](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/02779536) in Articles for Press.

### Charting the Course Progress Report

In the fall of 2001, the Institute of Population and Public Health (IPPH) (part of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, or CIHR) and CPHI consulted with researchers, policy-makers, and public and community health practitioners from different sectors in 10 cities across the country. The key population and public health priorities identified by participants were reported in *Charting the Course: A Pan-Canadian Consultation on Population and Public Health Priorities*, 2002.

Two years later, IPPH and CPHI are reporting back to stakeholders on the progress made to date in addressing the priorities. *Charting the Course Progress Report, Two Years Later: How Are We Doing?* lists the activities and plans of the two organizations in addressing:

- priority research themes
- research methods, standards of evidence, and data infrastructure issues
- knowledge transfer and priorities (moving from transfer to exchange)

The progress report and the first consultation report are available on-line at [www.cihi.ca/cphi](http://www.cihi.ca/cphi).

## POPULATION HEALTH AROUND CANADA

### Research Results—Getting the Word Out

CPHI is moving from research funding to dissemination of results. Of the 44 programs and projects funded, 20 final reports have been received, and 12 more are expected by the end of September 2004. To facilitate knowledge transfer, CPHI will be posting summaries of research results on the Web site beginning in July 2004, including a brief synopsis of related research and information on how you can obtain detailed results. A summary description of each research project is available on our Web site at [www.cihi.ca/cphi](http://www.cihi.ca/cphi) (under Current CPHI Research).

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## POPULATION HEALTH AROUND CANADA

### Education Workshops

CPHI offers a full-day education workshop entitled “Applying a Population Health Perspective to Health Planning and Decision-Making.” This workshop is intended to provide participants with a basic understanding of population health and the tools to apply population health concepts to planning. It includes an overview of population health, planning principles and processes, and resource allocation, as well as case studies in which participants have the opportunity to work hands-on with regional data from the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). Workshops begin again in September 2004. Please see the 2004–2005 schedule of workshops posted at [www.cihi.ca/education](http://www.cihi.ca/education) for a location near you.

### Second Consensus Conference on Population Health Indicators

On March 25 and 26, 2004, over 80 researchers and representatives of health regions, provinces, territories and other groups gathered in Ottawa for the second Consensus Conference on Population Health Indicators. This conference, co-sponsored by CIHI and Statistics Canada, was convened to gather input for the next stage of indicator development and dissemination at the health region level.

Building on results from the 1999 Consensus Conference on Population Health Indicators and subsequent regional consultations, this process helped to inform the selection of a core set of health indicators that provides the public, health care providers and health authorities with reliable and comparable data on the health of Canadians, the health care system and the determinants of health. Throughout the two-day conference, participants were able to validate the current set of indicators, as well as to inform priorities for future indicator development. There was also an opportunity to begin a dialogue on the recent addition of the “equity” dimension of the health indicator framework and potential approaches to measuring equity in terms of health status, non-medical determinants of health or health system performance. A final conference report will be released this summer.

### CPHI at CPHA Conference in June 2004

The Canadian Public Health Association’s 95th annual conference was held in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, from June 13 to 16, 2004. CPHI worked with the conference organizing committee to present current work through workshops, panel discussions and roundtable forums, including:

- *Improving the Health of Canadians*: the flagship report from CPHI
- CPHI Education Workshop: “Applying a Population Health Perspective to Health Planning and Resource Allocation”

The Institute for Population and Public Health (IPPH) of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) co-sponsored the following panels with CPHI:

- The Impact of Housing on Population Health
- Income and Income Disparities: Implications for Population Health
- Understanding the Relationship Between Place and Health
- The Role of Income Support in Population Health

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## POPULATION HEALTH AROUND CANADA

CPHI at CPHA Conference in June 2004 (cont'd)

Together, the IPPH, CPHA and CPHI are pleased to announce the inaugural Population and Public Health Student Awards. Designed to acknowledge excellence in the next generation of population and public health researchers, policy-makers and practitioners, these awards are available to Masters and PhD students enrolled in Canadian academic institutions. This year's awards were presented at the CPHA Conference in St. John's. The inaugural recipients were Sarah Viehbeck (MA candidate, University of Waterloo), Jena Webb (MA candidate, Université de Québec à Montréal), Sharon Yanicki (MA candidate, University of Lethbridge) and Alice Chen (PhD candidate, University of British Columbia).

Visit the CPHA Web site for details at [www.cpha.ca](http://www.cpha.ca).

## Upcoming Reports

## LOOKING FORWARD

## Developing Policy Implications: Youth Health Case Study

As reported in the February 2004 issue of *Health of the Nation*, CPHI co-hosted a workshop with the Canadian Adolescents at Risk Research Network (CAARRN) in February 2004. The workshop report uses the topic of youth health as a case study to address the issue of policy development from research findings. This report is intended to help researchers improve their understanding of the policy development process and develop their capacity to shape policy implications from their research. It contains links to useful knowledge exchange documents and policy Web sites. The workshop report will be available on-line in summer 2004 at [www.cihi.ca/cphi](http://www.cihi.ca/cphi).

### *Housing and Population Health: The State of Current Research Knowledge*

In collaboration with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the National Housing Research Committee—Working Group on Housing and Population Health, CPHI is producing a research synthesis: *Housing and Population Health: The State of Current Research Knowledge*. Linked to our Place and Health theme, this synthesis, written by Dr. Brent Moloughney of the University of Toronto, updates previous research syntheses done on this topic. The report will be available electronically at [www.cihi.ca/cphi](http://www.cihi.ca/cphi) in July 2004.

### *Overweight and Obesity in Canada: A Population Health Perspective*

CPHI is releasing the report *Overweight and Obesity in Canada: A Population Health Perspective*, by Dr. Kim Raine, Director and Professor at the Centre for Health Promotion Studies of the University of Alberta.

The paper synthesizes the current state of knowledge related to 1) the nature and extent of the problem of obesity, 2) the impact of obesity as a case for prevention and control, 3) a population health perspective on the determinants of obesity and 4) effectiveness of strategies for addressing obesity and its determinants. The author also identifies priorities for future policy-relevant research and presents options for promising interventions for reducing population obesity levels. The report is scheduled for release in July and will be available on the CPHI Web site at [www.cihi.ca/cphi](http://www.cihi.ca/cphi).



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## LOOKING FORWARD

### *What Have We Learned Studying Income Inequality and Population Health?*

In *What Have We Learned Studying Income Inequality and Population Health?*, Dr. Nancy A. Ross reviews the research on income inequality and health. The paper discusses research studies in this area, including international comparisons of five countries, with specific comparisons of Canada and the United States on urban income segregation and the earnings gap; identifies research gaps; and discusses policy implications.

*What Have We Learned Studying Income Inequality and Population Health?* was prepared as a background research paper for CPHI's flagship report, *Improving the Health of Canadians*, released on February 25, 2004. This paper is scheduled for release in summer 2004 and will be available on the CPHI Web site at [www.cihi.ca/cphi](http://www.cihi.ca/cphi).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### New Director for CPHI

CPHI is pleased to announce the promotion of Elizabeth Gyorfi-Dyke to the position of Director, CPHI. Elizabeth has a breadth of experience in developing, planning and conducting research and analysis on policy options and positions. Through her work in P.E.I. on the Heart Health Project, at Alberta Health and Wellness on healthy aging, and many other initiatives, she has a diverse background in population health and the determinants of health. Prior to joining CIHI, Elizabeth was Director of the Health Charities Council of Canada (HCCC), where she worked closely with key stakeholders on a variety of issues.

At the same time, it is with mixed feelings that CPHI bids farewell to David Hay, Manager of Reports and Analysis. During his time at CPHI, David had a key role in the development of the flagship report, *Improving the Health of Canadians*. David has an exciting opportunity to be Director of the Family Network at the Canadian Policy Research Networks beginning in early July. In that role, we're sure that he will continue to be involved with the mandate of CPHI, and we look forward to working with him.

## CONNECTIONS

Connections profiles best practices in expanding our collective understanding of research and how it can be used in policy development and evaluation, as well as knowledge exchange. To submit to Connections, please e-mail [healthofthenation@cihi.ca](mailto:healthofthenation@cihi.ca).

### New Guidelines for Standardized Reporting of Evaluations With Non-Randomized Designs

Evidence-based public health policy relies on the results of evaluation studies with both randomized and non-randomized designs. The TREND (Transparent Reporting of Evaluations With Non-Randomised Designs) statement provides guidelines for the transparent reporting of intervention evaluation studies using non-randomized designs. It follows the same format as the CONSORT (Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials) statement that has been in use for several years for reporting results of randomized controlled trials. These guidelines were published in the March 2004 issue of the *American Journal of Public Health* (vol. 94, no. 3, pp. 361–66). The full article is available on-line at [www.ajph.org](http://www.ajph.org).