

Population Health Surveys “Statistical Program”

In the fall of 1991, the National Health Information Council recommended that an ongoing national survey of population health be conducted. This recommendation was based on the economic and fiscal pressures on the health care system and the commensurate requirement for information with which to improve the health of the Canadian population.

The **National Population Health Survey (NPHS)** was designed to collect information on the health of the Canadian population and related socio-demographic information. The first cycle of data collection began in 1994 and continues every second year thereafter. The NPHS fulfilled both cross-sectional and longitudinal needs during its first three cycles. In 2000-2001, it became strictly a longitudinal survey. The cross-sectional and the North components have been taken over by the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). The NPHS is now composed of two components: the survey of households (survey id 3225) and the survey of health care institutions (survey id 5003).

The Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) is a cross-sectional survey that provides timely cross-sectional estimates of health determinants, health status and health system utilization for community health regions and special populations across Canada. Many surveys are conducted under CCHS. The first cycle of the **Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS 1.1)** was conducted in 2000-2001. The next large survey (CCHS 2.1) is scheduled for 2003. The **Health Services Access Survey** gathered information at the national level on the patterns of use of health care services and self-reported difficulties faced by Canadians. The survey was conducted in the Fall of 2001 as a supplement to the CCHS 1.1. The **Canadian Community Health Survey - Mental Health and Well-being (CCHS 1.2)**, conducted in 2002, will produce provincial cross-sectional estimates of certain mental health disorders, utilisation of mental health services, and will examine links between mental health and socio-demographic, geographic and economic characteristics. **The Canadian Forces 2002 Canadian Community Health Survey** is also a supplement to CCHS 1.2.

In Canada, the primary use of the data from these surveys is statistical, such as in prevalence of disease and projections, demographic trend analyses and research. The data are used extensively by the research community and other health professionals.