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Strong Foundation, Renewed Focus

An Overview of Canada's Federal Tobacco Control Strategy

2012–17

A Strong Foundation

Few other countries have been as successful as Canada in lowering smoking rates and shifting public attitudes about tobacco. Since 2001, actions taken under the Government of Canada's Federal Tobacco Control Strategy (Strategy) have helped to lay the foundation for continued success in tobacco control. The Strategy's renewal from 2012 to 2017 has refocused activities in tobacco control to achieve the goal of preserving the gains made since the Strategy's launch and continuing the downward trend in smoking prevalence.

More than 10 years of progress

Did you know that Canadian smoking rates are among the lowest in the world? According to the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS), smoking prevalence is lower than ever before among both Canadian adults and youth, and fewer young people are starting to smoke.¹

Impressive numbers speak for themselves

Fewer Canadians are smoking

- ▶ Lowest-ever rates overall—16% of Canadians were current smokers in 2012—down from 22% in 2001.
- ▶ More Canadians have quit smoking—about 63% of Canadians who have ever smoked have quit, up from 52% in 2001.

Canadians are smoking less

- ▶ Even lower rates of daily smoking—12% of Canadians smoke everyday—and they are smoking fewer cigarettes daily.

Youth smoking is at an all-time low

- ▶ 7% of teens aged 15–17 are current smokers—down from 18% in 2001.

Thanks to federal, provincial, territorial and municipal actions, Canadians are now more protected than ever from exposure to second-hand smoke. Nearly 100% of indoor public places across the country—like restaurants, hockey arenas and shopping malls—are smoke-free.

¹ Statistics are from the Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey (CTUMS), 2012

Two significant 'firsts' for Canada

Our country was the first in the world to:

- ▶ Require that tobacco packages have picture-based health warnings.
- ▶ Ban the use of flavours like chocolate and bubblegum in little cigars, cigarettes and blunt wraps.

TOBACCO – MORE THAN CIGARETTES

Cigarettes top the list of tobacco products used in Canada, but tobacco use also involves a wide range of other products like cigars, little cigars (cigarillos), blunt wraps, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, waterpipe tobacco and snuff.

The Challenge Persists

Despite important achievements, millions of Canadians continue to smoke

Even though smoking trends have decreased overall, about 4.6 million Canadians still smoke.

Problematic trends persist

The Government of Canada is particularly concerned about the high rates of smoking within Aboriginal communities and among young adult Canadians aged 20–24:

- ▶ Smoking rates for on-reserve First Nations and for Inuit are more than triple the Canadian average: 57% of First Nations adults living on-reserve and in northern First Nations communities smoke daily or occasionally (First Nations Regional Health Survey, 2008/10) and 58% of Inuit are daily smokers (Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2006).
- ▶ The current smoking rate of 20% among Canadian young adults is also cause for concern. Not only is it higher than the smoking rate for the rest of Canada which is 16%, but it's significantly higher than the smoking rate among teenagers aged 15–17 (7%).

Adding up the high costs of smoking

Tobacco use kills an estimated 37,000 Canadians every year. Many of these deaths are premature and could be prevented. People who smoke have a much higher chance of getting a serious disease like cancer, heart or lung disease or suffering a stroke.

Smoking also adds a huge burden to our health care system. The health and economic costs associated with tobacco use are estimated to total \$17 billion annually, including \$4.4 billion in direct health care costs.

Clearly there is
still work to be done.



A Renewed Focus

Sustaining the Momentum

Canada's Federal Tobacco Control Strategy has helped reduce smoking rates to an all-time low. The continued comprehensive and collaborative approach of the Strategy will help to preserve the gains of the past decade and continue the downward trend in smoking to reduce tobacco-related death and disease among Canadians. To support this, the Government of Canada is investing over \$230 million over the 2012–17 time period.

To protect Canadians, especially young people, from the health consequences of tobacco use, the Strategy continues to focus on:

- ▶ preventing children and youth from starting to smoke;
- ▶ helping people to quit smoking;
- ▶ helping Canadians protect themselves from second-hand smoke; and
- ▶ regulating the manufacture, sale, labeling and promotion of tobacco products by administering the *Tobacco Act*.

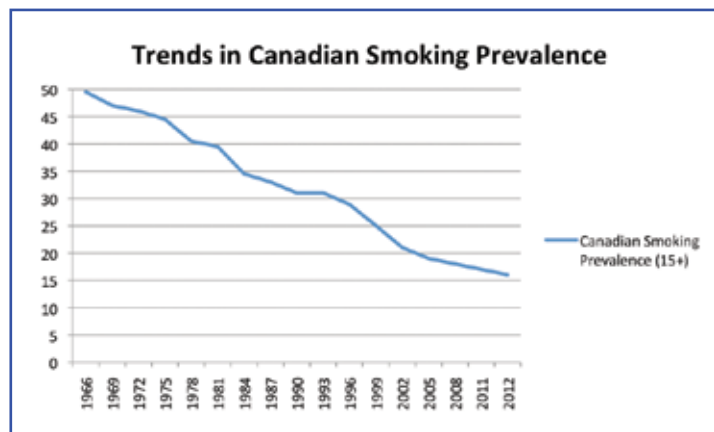
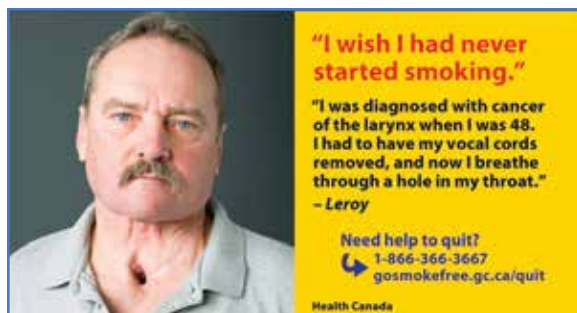
Core components of the Federal Tobacco Control Strategy are continuing:

Cracking down on marketing to youth

Minimum packaging requirements for little cigars and blunt wraps ends the practice of selling these products in single units and “kiddy-packs”. Under the renewed Strategy, the Government of Canada will continue to implement and enforce a strict regulatory environment that limits the tobacco industry's ability to use marketing to attract new smokers.

Health warning messages

Have you looked at a cigarette or little cigar package lately? There are now 16 new health warnings that are larger and more impactful than before. Under the renewed Strategy, the Government of Canada will continue to inform Canadians about the health hazards of smoking.



Pan-Canadian Quitline

Do you want to quit smoking—or know someone who does? With the right tools, people can stop smoking for good. The Quitline is a one-stop toll-free phone and web resource to help Canadians quit smoking. The toll-free number and web address are now found on packages of cigarettes and little cigars. Click on an interactive map at gosmokefree.gc.ca/quit to link to the web pages for your province or territory or **call toll-free at 1-866-366-3667**.

Continued international cooperation

Canada remains a strong and committed global partner to reduce tobacco use. Canada follows and promotes best practices set in the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. It cooperates on cross-border efforts to stop trafficking of illegal tobacco products. Our country participates in multilateral negotiations to develop international guidelines and responds to requests from around the world to share our expertise in tobacco control.

Action based on evidence

Through the Strategy, the Government of Canada takes action, based on evidence, to reduce tobacco use. This evidence comes from surveying Canadians on smoking behavior, conducting research and evaluation, and keeping track of trends and emerging issues.

Contraband

Continued funding will be provided to support Public Safety Canada's efforts to monitor contraband tobacco activity and related crime; the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to continue monitoring contraband tobacco trafficking activities and the trans-border/trans-national movement of illicit tobacco products; and the Canada Border Services Agency to liaise with tobacco authorities at all levels and to monitor both national and global contraband tobacco.

Informing the Public

Explaining to Canadians how tobacco use can harm their health, including second-hand smoke, is an important role that will continue under the renewed Strategy. Health Canada makes available a variety of information and tools to support Canadians to quit smoking and to remain smoke-free. This includes tobacco information online as well as a number of print publications. For more information, please contact TCP-PLT-Questions@hc-sc.gc.ca or 1-866-318-1116.

Pushing Forward

The 2012–17 Strategy will place a specific emphasis on two groups with higher rates of smoking than most Canadians and on tobacco as a risk factor for serious disease:

Working with on-reserve First Nations and Inuit communities

Health Canada is committed to working with First Nations and Inuit partners to take steps to reduce and prevent smoking. Under the renewed Strategy, funding will assist First Nations and Inuit communities to implement and strengthen tobacco control measures.

Helping young adults stop smoking

The smoking rate for Canadians aged 20-24 is higher than the national average. To help address this, Health Canada is launching a marketing awareness and outreach campaign in partnership with the Canadian Cancer Society, using popular channels like Facebook and Twitter, to get young people talking together about smoking, about quitting, and remaining smoke-free.



Targeting tobacco as a risk for serious disease

Most people know that smoking causes cancer, but not as many know that it also increases the chances of heart disease, stroke, and respiratory diseases like asthma. The 2012–17 Strategy highlights the link between tobacco and serious diseases. The Public Health Agency of Canada is working together with partners from the public and private sectors to promote healthy living and prevent chronic diseases caused by risk factors such as tobacco. For more information see: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fo-fc/mspphl-pppmvs-eng.php

Collaboration is key to success

The Federal Tobacco Control Strategy is a remarkable example of *partnership-in-action*. Its success depends on strong collaboration within the Government of Canada, and the coordinated efforts of several government departments and agencies. Partners include Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Public Safety Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Canada Border Services Agency and the Canada Revenue Agency. Each one of these federal partners plays a pivotal role in delivering key components of the Strategy. In addition, the Department of Justice also leads the defence of the Government of Canada in high profile tobacco litigation cases.

There is also ongoing cooperation between the federal government, the provinces and territories, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, community agencies and the private sector. The combined effort of many groups working together helps to ensure the continued progress of the Strategy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the Controlled Substances
and Tobacco Directorate

Email: TCP-PLT-Questions@hc-sc.gc.ca

Telephone: 1-866-318-1116