

Making Quit Happen: Canada's Challenges to Smoking Cessation Backgrounder

Making Quit Happen: Canada's Challenges to Smoking Cessation was developed to assess the current state of smoking cessation in Canada. Spearheaded by The Lung Association, the initiative was directed by a task force with medical expertise from the Canadian Thoracic Society (CTS) and the Canadian Respiratory Health Professionals (CRHP). Expertise in the areas of tobacco use intervention and addiction, family medicine, and addiction counseling was also provided within the task force.

The report, through an analysis of smoking cessation supports in the country, aims to understand what obstacles need to be overcome in order to help the remaining 5 million smokers quit smoking. Surveys were conducted with a total of 4,793 people to explore attitudes and behaviours regarding smoking cessation, an important aspect of tobacco control.

Report Key Findings:

- **The vast majority of smokers want to quit, but many realize that there are barriers to staying quit.**
 - 91 per cent of smokers surveyed have at least some desire to quit.
 - 79 per cent of smokers have tried to quit with an average of six attempts; three attempts being in the last year.
 - Only one-third of ex-smokers were successful on their first quit attempt.
- **Access to smoking cessation programs and support systems is not universal for people living in Canada.**
 - Tobacco dependence is a chronic, relapsing medical condition that requires a planned, individualized treatment approach.
 - People living in remote and rural areas do not have full access to cessation supports - online, telephone helpline, group and individual counseling.
- **Health care professionals need better access to training and supports.**
 - Only 18 per cent of doctors and 16 per cent of healthcare workers indicated that they had been trained in smoking cessation counseling.
- **Access to different medication options is disparate and depends on the smoker's province of residence.**
 - Nearly seven-in-ten smokers agree that the increasing availability of affordable prescription smoking cessation medications would motivate them to quit.

Report Contents:

The report is a comprehensive review of the smoking environment in Canada and the barriers and supports to cessation. Specifically, the report includes:

- Smoking...at what cost?
- Tobacco-related healthcare costs rising
- Rates of smoking
- Moving toward a new national cessation target
- Setting benchmarks
- Good news on smokers wanting to quit
- Reasons why Canadians are still smoking
- Barriers to cessation
- The role of family physicians and other allied health professionals
- Access to programs and medications
- Achieving equal access for all people living in Canada

The survey analysis is available on both a national and provincial level.

Report Methodology:

The Lung Association completed an environmental scan and analysis between December 11th, 2007 and May 9th, 2008. In addition, a hybrid telephone and online survey was conducted by Leger Marketing between February 11th, 2008 and March 8th, 2008 among the following stakeholder groups:

- Family Physicians
- Allied Health Professionals including nurses, nurse practitioners, pharmacists, and dental hygienists
- Smokers
- Ex-Smokers
- Non-Smokers exposed to second-hand smoke (i.e. those who live with smokers)

The following table outlines the reliability for each stakeholder group surveyed:

	Total sample size	Margin of error at the 95% confidence level
Smokers	2002	±2.2%
Ex-Smokers	1296	±2.7%
Non-Smoker Exposed to Second-Hand Smoke	898	±3.3%
Doctors	200	±6.9%
Healthcare Workers	397	±4.9%

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