

**SASKATOON HEALTH REGION  
OUR HEALTH STORY AND CALL TO ACTION**



*This health status summary is based on information presented in the Chief Medical Health Officer's 2008 Health Status Report. For a copy of the full report, please visit: <http://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca>*







# HIGHLIGHTS

## *Our Region's Population*

- > We reached nearly 300,000 residents in 2008, an increase of 8.3% from 1995 and all signs point to growth in the next 20 years.
- > Our population will continue to age with 20,000 more 65 to 74 year olds by 2028.
- > At more than 25,000, our Aboriginal population is young and projected to grow.

## *The Good News Story*

- > Our overall life expectancy increased from 78.8 years in 1997 to 79.8 in 2004.
- > Our infant mortality rates declined from 7.6 per 1000 live births in 1992 to 5.9 in 2006.
- > At 4.0% in June 2008, our provincial unemployment rates were at near record lows.
- > The percentage of Saskatoon's low income residents has decreased from 19.7% in 2001 to 17.7% in 2006.
- > Air quality in Saskatoon is rated 'good to excellent' most of the time.
- > Drinking water quality for Saskatoon consistently meets or exceeds national regulatory standards.
- > Our exposure to second hand smoke in public places decreased dramatically from 24% in 2003 to 7% in 2007.

## *The Not-So-Good News Story*

- > HIV rates have risen dramatically from 5.6 per 100,000 in 2004 to 25.8 in 2008.
- > At 401.6 per 100,000 population, our chlamydia rates were twice the national average of 217.3 in 2007.
- > We ranked 6th out of 13 Saskatchewan health regions in infant influenza immunization rates (41.3%) in 2008.



# HIGHLIGHTS

- > Our 2007 smoking rates were significantly higher than the national average (26.2% and 21.9% respectively) and have increased since 2003.
- > Less than half of our adults were at least moderately physically active in 2007 (46.1%), and nearly half were overweight or obese (49%).
- > Between 2001 and 2005, a much lower percentage of rural residents (about one in five) ate the recommended number of daily servings of vegetables and fruit compared to their urban counterparts (about one in three).
- > Six month exclusive breastfeeding rates for Saskatchewan in 2005 were much lower compared to breastfeeding at initiation (22% and 89% respectively).
- > Diabetes is the only chronic disease examined in this report where both mortality and hospitalization rates increased between 2001/02 and 2006/2007.
- > 46% of Saskatoon and area households reported pesticide use on lawns and gardens. This is among the highest of all urban areas in Canada.

## *Health Equity Gaps Still Large in Saskatoon's Core Neighbourhoods*

- > Core neighbourhood residents' life expectancy decreased from 74.7 years in 1997 to 74.4 years in 2004.
- > Hepatitis C rates were seven times greater in 2007 than for residents of non-core neighbourhoods; 505.4 per 100,000 and 69.5 per 100,000 respectively.
- > The percent of people living in low income (47%) more than doubled the city average (17.7%) in 2006.
- > Suicide rates were more than double compared to those living in non-core neighbourhoods (27.7 and 9.9 per 100,000 respectively) between 2004 and 2006.
- > In 2007, significantly higher percentages of elementary school students said they tried smoking compared to other areas of Saskatoon (28.6% and 3.6% respectively).



# A CALL TO ACTION

## *Strengthening the Foundations for Healthy Communities*

By working together, we can improve health in our communities. As an independent report of the Chief Medical Health Officer, the 2008 Health Status Report contains a number of recommendations to encourage the Health Region and its partners to take action in several key areas. They are aimed at local communities, the province and the Health Region itself. The detailed recommendations are provided in Chapter 8 of the full Health Status Report and they focus on:

- > Planning pro-actively for a larger, changing and aging population;
- > Improving the social determinants of health and reducing the gaps in health inequities through priority actions;
- > Creating the social and physical environments to optimize health and healthy lifestyles;
- > Enhancing efforts in health protection and illness and injury prevention in key risk areas;
- > Taking action to ensure a healthy, sustainable environment.

We encourage you to take the time to examine the recommendations in more detail and consider how you can take action to improve the health of our communities. Visit our website at [www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca](http://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca) for details. Copies of the report are also available through:



Public Health Observatory  
Public Health Services

Saskatoon Health Region

Phone: (306) 655-4600



*[www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca](http://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca)*