

Accountability and Reporting

Canada's Drug Strategy is the federal response to the harmful use of substances. These include illegal drugs, alcohol, pharmaceuticals, inhalants and solvents. The Strategy takes a balanced approach to reducing both the demand for, and the supply of, drugs and substances. It contributes to a healthier, safer Canada through prevention, treatment, enforcement, and harm reduction initiatives.

Accountability

In renewing Canada's Drug Strategy in 2003, the Government of Canada responded to the findings and recommendations of a number of important reports, including the 2001 Report of the Auditor General of Canada (Chapter 11 – *Illicit Drugs: The Federal Government's Role*); the Report of the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs, 2002; and the Report of the House of Commons Special Committee on the Non-Medical Use of Drugs, 2002.

These reports highlighted the need for:

- a fully funded and long-term commitment of adequate resources for a drug strategy focused on prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction;
- federal leadership, coordination and up-to-date national data on drug use;
- a balanced approach focusing on both the supply and demand side of the illegal drug issue; and
- strengthened harmonization among departments and levels of government to facilitate the development of a common knowledge, research and evaluation framework.

Reporting to Canadians

As part of the renewal of Canada's Drug Strategy, the Government of Canada has committed to using measurable indicators of performance and to report every two years to

Parliament and Canadians *on the progress made by Canada's Drug Strategy*. The renewal includes an investment of \$17 million over five years to support the Government of Canada's leadership in working with others to address problematic substance use in Canada and in enhancing co-ordination, consultation, and accountability among federal partners.

An accountability and evaluation framework that includes all eight federal partners in Canada's Drug Strategy is already in place. This framework assesses the effectiveness of investments and other activities under Canada's Drug Strategy against four key results-based outcomes. These outcomes are improved health and safety of Canadians and reductions in the:

- demand for illegal drugs and harmful substances and the related harms in Canada;
- supply of illegal drugs in Canada; and
- health, social and economic costs associated with harmful substance use in Canada.

Informed Decisions

Regular surveys and other means of collecting data will be used in order to chart the progress of Canada's Drug Strategy. These results will also help to ensure that decisions on policy and program development are based on the most up-to-date and accurate information available. For example, in partnership with provinces, territories, communities, and stakeholders, public opinion research studies are being used to collect data to determine current and changing levels of substance use in Canada, as well as its associated costs.

Among the key mechanisms being used to track the progress and impacts of Canada's Drug Strategy are:

- **Epidemiology and prevalence surveys/data** which will be used on an on-going basis to identify and assess the prevalence, nature and the extent of the consequences of substance use among the Canadian population;



- **Royal Canadian Mounted Police enforcement-related data** which are used to monitor the seizures of illegal drugs and other harmful substances and the dismantling of clandestine laboratories and marihuana grow operations; and
- **Tailored evaluation strategies** and performance measures which are used to track and report on the relative impacts of community-based projects funded under Canada's Drug Strategy Community Initiatives Fund.

Performance information on Canada's Drug Strategy will be shared with stakeholders in a Biennial Report to Parliament and Canadians.

To learn more about Canada's Drug Strategy, please visit www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cds

Find out what governments, non-governmental organizations, and other partners are doing – National Framework for Action – Visit www.healthcanada.gc.ca/cds-nfa