
FOR THE RECORD

Sept. 25, 2006

Ministry of Health

BC HEALTH INDICATOR IMPROVEMENTS

- The latest information from Vital Statistics show that the death rates from cancer, cardiovascular disease and cerebro-vascular disease are continuing in a long-term downward trend. (*BC Vital Statistics Agency, 2005 data*)
- The life expectancy for an average British Columbian has risen from 80.57 years in 2001 to 81.12 years in 2005, one of the highest rates in the world. (*BC Vital Statistics Agency*)
- Mortality rates are falling. The mortality rate for all causes of death is down by 7.18% between 2001 and 2005. Heart disease mortality rates are down by 18.47%, cancer mortality rates are down by 4.39% and stroke mortality rates are down by 15.25% (*BC Vital Statistics Agency*)
- B.C. is doing more surgeries than ever before. Between 2000/01 and 2005/06: knee replacements increased by more than 84%, hip replacements by more than 47%; cataract surgeries by 33%; and angioplasties by more than 62%. (*Ministry of Health, Discharge Abstract Database, September 2006*)
- The number of surgeries for young patients who come from around the province to British Columbia's Children's Hospital in Vancouver increased 16% from 8,211 in 2001/02 to 9,558 in 2005/06. (*Ministry of Health, Discharge Abstract Database, September 2006*)
- The target median wait time for non-emergency open heart surgeries is 90 days. The median wait time has improved from 111 days as of March 31, 2004 to 62 days as of April 30, 2006. (*BC Cardiac Registry*)
- The number of patients waiting for open heart surgery has also declined, from 903 as of Feb. 28, 2003 to 498 as of April 30, 2006. (*BC Cardiac Registry*)
- The total number of open heart surgeries has increased to 3,384 cases for 2006/07. (*BC Cardiac Registry*)
- In 2001, 17 percent of British Columbians over the age of 15 smoked, in 2005 that rate had fallen to 15 percent. (*Health Canada, Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey, 2001 & 2005 Annual Results*)
- In 2002 the percentage of youth in grades 5 to 9 in British Columbia who had ever tried smoking a cigarette was 15 percent and in 1994 was 39 percent; as of 2004/05 the rate had dropped to 12.1 percent. (*Statistics Canada, Youth Smoking Survey, 1994, 2002 & 2004/05*)

-30-

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