



Health
Canada

Santé
Canada

Your health and
safety... our priority.

Votre santé et votre
sécurité... notre priorité.

Health Canada Quebec Region

Mission Description

Health Canada is the federal department responsible for helping Canadians maintain and improve their health. We assess the safety of drugs and many consumer products, help improve the safety of food, and provide information to Canadians to help them make healthy decisions. We provide health services to First Nations people and to Inuit communities. We work with the provinces to ensure our health care system serves the needs of Canadians.

Operational Principle for the Quebec Region

We, employees of Health Canada, are proud to be part of an organization where respect, creativity, innovation and knowledge are the foundation of a commitment to provide an accessible, reliable, professional and attentive service.



Message from the Regional Director General

Health care is without a doubt a major priority for Canadians. Every member of society, every health care worker and every level of government has roles and responsibilities in maintaining and improving the health of Canadians.

I am pleased to present this document that explains the role of Health Canada in this complex environment in which interdependence is a reality, and presents a profile of the programs and services offered by the Department in Quebec.

We welcome your comments and your questions. You'll find our contact information at the end of this document.

Enjoy your reading!

Marie-France Bérard



Canada's Health Care System

The organization of Canada's health care system is largely determined by the Canadian Constitution, in which roles and responsibilities are divided between the federal, provincial and territorial governments.

The federal government's role in health includes setting and administering national principles for the system under the *Canada Health Act*; financial support to the provinces and territories; several other functions, including:

- The direct delivery of primary and supplementary services to certain groups of people;
- Public health programs to prevent disease;
- Promoting health and educating the public on health implications of the choices they make;
- Health protection (food safety and nutrition, regulation of pharmaceuticals, medical devices, consumer products, and pest management products); and
- Funding for health research and health information activities.

The federal government's health portfolio is comprised of Health Canada, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Hazardous Materials Information Review Commission, the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board, and the Public Health Agency of Canada.



Roles of Health Canada

Health Canada plays 5 core roles in order to achieve its vision. In fulfilling these roles, our Department draws on its strengths as a science-based department. We generate knowledge through the research, analysis and evaluations that we conduct, partner in and support. We also draw on the knowledge that is being generated around the world to help us and others make informed, effective choices in each of these roles:

- **Leader and Partner:** Health Canada is the national leader in health care and is responsible for administering the *Canada Health Act* (CHA), which embodies the key values and principles of Medicare
- **Funder:** Health Canada funds health care through the auspices of the Canada Health Transfer. Each province and territory administers its own health care plan according to the five basic principles of the CHA: public administration, comprehensiveness, universality, portability, and accessibility.

- **Guardian and Regulator:** Health Canada ensures the management of products that could pose a potential risk to Canadians. The Department administers several regulations, including the *Hazardous Products Act*, the *Tobacco Act*, and the *Food and Drugs Act*.
- **Service Provider:** Through the provision of supplementary health benefits to approximately 750 000 eligible First Nations and Inuit people to cover a number of products and services.
- **Information Provider:** Through research and surveillance, we provide information that Canadians can use to maintain and improve their health.

Role of Provincial and Territorial Governments

The provinces and territories administer and deliver most of Canada's health care services, with all provincial and territorial health insurance plans expected to meet national principles set out under the *Canada Health Act*. The role of the provincial and territorial governments in health care includes administering their health insurance plans; planning, financing and evaluating hospital care, physician care, allied health care, prescription drug care in hospitals and public health; and negotiating fee schedules for health professionals.



Profile of the Quebec Region

Population Served

We serve a region that extends over 1.6 million square kilometres and has 7.4 million inhabitants, 82.5% of whom are francophones, 11% anglophones, and 6.5% allophones. Two thirds of the population lives in metropolitan areas.

Approximately 68 000 First Nations people and 10 000 Inuit live in Quebec in 55 Aboriginal communities, including 14 Inuit communities. About 21 000 First Nations and Inuit people live off-reserve.

Quebec's Health Network

6.7% of Quebec's active population works in the health and social services field. Specifically, Quebec has 18 000 physicians of whom a little over half are specialists and the remaining, general practitioners; it also has about 104 000 nurses.

In Quebec, health and social services are grouped under one department, the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* (MSSS) [department of health and social services]. In December 2005, the health and social services network consisted of 315 institutions (including 95 health and social services centres), of which 192 are public. The other 123 institutions are private and almost exclusively long-term care facilities.

The Quebec network also includes*:

- 85 rehabilitation centres
- 5 university hospital centres (UHC), 5 affiliated university hospital centres (AUHC), 95 health and social services centres (HSSC), 3 of which are designated as university institutions and 7 university institutes (UI)
- 107 family medicine groups (FMG)
- close to 4 000 community organizations.

*Source: *Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec*

Industry in Quebec – Health Field

- There are several businesses linked to health in Quebec. Over 13 000 people work in the 60 businesses in the pharmaceutical field, including research laboratories for some of the largest multinational firms.
- The biotechnology sector includes close to 80 companies in the field of health biotechnology, employs about 3 000 people, and boasts the largest biotechnology research lab in Canada.
- The bio-food industry is very important to Quebec's economy and provides 400 000 jobs, over 22 000 wholesale, retail, and food service establishments, with investments in research estimated at \$185 million.
- There are about 110 pesticide-licensed businesses and companies in Quebec.



The Regional Director General

The Regional Director General is Health Canada's main representative in Quebec. She is responsible for the delivery, coordination and coherence of all programs delivered in the region and is the liaison with central administration in terms of providing a regional point of view on the health care issues facing Quebec. The Regional Director General represents the interests of Health Canada in contributing to interdepartmental activities and promotes long-lasting relationships with representatives of the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec* and other local stakeholders in the health field.

● ● DID YOU KNOW THAT... ● ● The following laws are administered ● ● by Health Canada:

- Canada Health Act
- Department of Health Act
- Tobacco Act
- Pest Control Products Act
- Food and Drugs Act
- Controlled Drugs and Substances Act
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research Act
- Hazardous Products Act

THE PROGRAM

Health Products and Food

In the Quebec Region, Health Canada oversees the safety of food and health products such as drugs, medical devices, blood, tissues and organs.

- We establish standards and policies on food safety in collaboration with other federal departments like the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, other administrations and stakeholders.
- We ensure food safety through research and surveillance projects as well as chemical and microbiological laboratory analysis projects.
- We adopt public health policies with a focus on safe, nutritional foods and their consumption.
- We conduct inspections and assess compliance with good clinical practices, including instances involving research performed on humans during clinical trials on drugs, biological products and genetic therapy.
- We manage activities related to good manufacturing practices, inquiries, surveillance, and enforcement strategies in the context of regulations, namely for the manufacturing, packaging, and labelling of drugs.
- We also provide chemical, physical and microbiological analysis services to support inspection, inquiries and surveillance.
- We work on activities promoting public participation in decision-making processes with respect to priorities, policies, programs and regulations. We provide the public with an opportunity to influence the development and implementation of these initiatives and we ensure that their interests and concerns are taken into consideration.



● ● DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- The Health Products and Food program regulates more than 22 000 drugs for human use, 50 000 medical devices, more than 50 000 natural health products and 28 categories of food.
- We communicate and maintain relations with various individuals, groups and organizations to ensure they receive information on our activities and programs, and on the other hand, to obtain information on the public's concerns and help them make informed health decisions.
- We contribute to real-time monitoring of the safety of commercial chemical, biological, natural, and radiopharmaceutical health products.

Healthy Environments and Consumer Safety

Health Canada promotes healthy and safe living, working and recreational environments by reducing the harm caused by tobacco, alcohol, controlled substances, environmental contaminants, and unsafe consumer and industrial products. Following is an overview of the programs that allow us to perform our activities in the region.

● ● DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- The Product Safety Program has created a partnership with the Quebec Coroner's Office over the years that informs us of deaths related to consumer products, allowing us to do follow-ups on these products and modify regulations when warranted.

Drug Strategy and Controlled Substances Program

- We support community initiatives that promote, prevent and reduce harm associated with the abuse of controlled substances through the administration of a contribution program. Our Drugs' Analysis Service provides data from the analysis of drugs seized during police operations and proceeds to the shut down of clandestine laboratories.

Product Safety Program

- We are responsible for the inspection of consumer product safety and manage a compliance and enforcement program.

Through this program, we provide information while increasing awareness and educating the public and various stakeholders on current safety standards and health risks and safety standards associated with children's products, consumer products such as household products (including chemical products), cosmetics (including personal care products) and new chemical substances.

● ● DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- Inspectors for Health Canada, Quebec Region's Product Safety Program visit toy manufacturers and importers to ensure that safety standards are met and toys do not present a health risk for children.

Workplace Health and Public Safety Program

- We develop national health and workplace safety policies and provide services to protect the health of federal workers, visiting dignitaries and the travelling public in Canada. Through this program we help federal departments apply the Treasury Board Policy on Occupational Safety and Health and provide public health services, as well as employee assistance services.

Safe Environments Program

- We conduct assessments and provide advice and opinions on the health impacts of projects subject to the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* and on implementation of the *Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan*. Through this program, we contribute to regional preparedness for nuclear emergencies. Furthermore, we provide training on human health risk assessment methods and procedures, and inform the public and various stakeholders of environmental health issues such as air and water quality and climate change.

Tobacco Control Program

- We ensure compliance of the manufacturing, sale, labelling and promotion of tobacco products with the relevant regulations. This program allows us to develop and implement initiatives to deter the use of tobacco products and to oversee public education activities. Furthermore, we administer a contribution program that supports community-based anti-smoking activities.

First Nations and Inuit Health

Health Canada's vision is to support the efforts of First Nations and Inuit people in attaining a level of health comparable to that of other Canadians. To this end, we offer First Nations and Inuit communities long-term services and programs to battle inequalities in health and to prevent diseases.

We offer support to 34 health establishments that serve First Nations communities, of which 17 are health centres, 11 are health stations, 6 are drug abuse and solvent abuse treatment centres.

Here is an overview of programs and services that are offered to First Nations and Inuit people in Quebec:

Nursing

We are responsible for the recruitment, training, and retention of nursing staff in non-transferred communities, as well as ensuring nursing practice, standards and competency requirements.

● ● DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- Health Canada offers primary health care services to First Nations communities located in isolated regions where provincial services are not readily available.



Public Health Agency of Canada

The Public Health Agency of Canada is the major partner for our health portfolio in the Quebec region. The same minister is responsible for Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada. Our two organizations cooperate to implement strategies and projects to warn and inform the public as to the health repercussions of personal choices.

The Agency acts as the coordinator of federal government efforts to promote and protect the health of Canadians. Its spheres of activity also include the prevention and control of chronic and infectious disease and emergency response measures.

You can access the Agency's site by clicking on the following link: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca

For any information, contact:
(514) 283-2858.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

The most popular publications available at Health Canada – Quebec Region are:

- Eating well with Canada's Food Guide
- Healthy Living – Canada's Guide to Healthy Eating and Physical Activity
- It's Your Health

Non-Insured Health Benefits

We provide eligible members of First Nations and Inuit communities with access to a range of goods and services otherwise not covered by provinces and territories or other private health insurance plans.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Each year, Health Canada, Quebec Region answers over 2000 telephone calls and 1000 requests from First Nations people about vision care, medical transportation, medical supplies and equipment, drug benefit programs and crisis intervention situations.

Governance, Infrastructures and Operations

This sector provides the following services:

- E-Health Solutions
- Health facilities and Capital
- Contracts and Contributions
- Health Services Transfer

Community Programs

We put health promotion and disease prevention programs into practice among First Nations and Inuit people by focusing on the following elements:

- Giving children a healthy start in life;
- Promoting community mental health;
- Planning substance abuse prevention and treatment programs;
- Planning healthy eating and activity programs;
- Planning disease and injury prevention programs;
- Contributing to the development of home and community care.

Professional services

We manage the following programs:

- **Environmental health:** Drinking/waste water, environmental health and environmental contaminants, transportation of hazardous materials.
- **Community health:** On site medical advice and orientation of health programs, infectious disease control (immunization), Tuberculosis Elimination Strategy.
- **Pharmacy:** Managing the drug distribution program for Health Canada's health institutions, proper use of drugs, provision of pharmaceutical advice.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Health Canada provides eligible First Nations community members with goods and services including pharmacy services, dental care and vision care when medically required.

The Pest Management Regulation

The Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) protects human health and the environment by minimizing the risks associated with pest control products while enabling access to pest management tools.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

Each year, pesticide program consultants working for the Pest Management Regulatory Agency answer about 500 requests for information on pest control products.

We promote the implementation of the *Pest Control Products Act (PCPA)*, encourage and ensure compliance with the PCPA through inspections, inquiries and consultations and manage the coordination of activities with provincial and other federal departments.

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

A pest control product is a product, substance or organism that destroys, attracts or repels pests, or that reduces or prevents their toxic, harmful or annoying effects. Herbicides, insecticides, animal repellents and bactericides for pools and spas are all pest control products.



Health Canada Quebec Region

Our offices are situated in Montreal, Longueuil and Quebec City.

The offices include nursing stations and community health stations in First Nations communities. We also have three laboratories in Longueuil where we carry out research and analysis activities.

Our Employees

Four hundred and fifty (450) employees from the Quebec Region (approximately 400 employees at Health Canada and 50 at the Public Health Agency of Canada) allow the Minister to accomplish the department's mission. Our personnel includes chemists, biologists, inspectors (for such things as product safety, health products such as drugs and medical devices, tobacco and pesticides), program advisors, physicians, nurses, microbiologists, policy analysts, communications advisors, human resources advisors and others.

Our Activities

The Quebec Region is one of eight regions that carry out Health Canada's programs and services. The others are British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, the Atlantic region and the Northern Secretariat which is comprised of the Northwest Territories, Yukon and Nunavut. We strive to ensure that our programs and services are adapted to regional and local characteristics.

In collaboration with our partners, we implement programs and services for the Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal population of the First Nations and Inuit communities of Quebec; we fund community projects, perform laboratory analysis and research functions, and evaluate the compliance of many products with the regulatory standards for which Health Canada is responsible; we contribute to policy analysis and development and co-ordinate intergovernmental affairs in the region. Finally, we disseminate information on a multitude of health-related subjects.

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HC Pub.: 1165
Cat.: H21-276/2006E
ISBN: 0-662-44309-8



Printed on recycled paper



Our Partners

Health Canada works in collaboration with its partners from other federal departments, agencies, provincial and territorial governments, and health care organizations in Quebec. These partnerships assist Health Canada in meeting the needs of Canadians, including groups at risk like children and First Nations people.

Our Organizational Structure

The internal structure of Health Canada – Quebec Region, with its corporate services and its programs, enables it to carry out the Department's mandate successfully and to better deliver the various programs, services, products and advice to the population.

Corporate Services

The following corporate services ensure the continuity and quality of programs and services offered to the public: human resources management; material, facilities and building management; administration and finance; information management; analysis and strategic advice regarding intergovernmental matters and on the evolution of Quebec's health care system and its implications for Health Canada; strategic planning and evaluation; participation in the development and analysis of programs and policies; monitoring the administration of the *Official Languages Act*; communication services ensuring strategic management of the Department's communications within the region.

Useful Information

To reach us, or for more information:

Hours
Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

By telephone
450-646-1353
1-800-561-3350

Through our Web site
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