

# Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador

*Go Healthy*   
Newfoundland & Labrador



GOVERNMENT OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
AND LABRADOR

Department of Health  
and Community Services

Phase 1: 2006 - 2008  
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# ACHIEVING HEALTH AND WELLNESS:

Provincial Wellness Plan for  
Newfoundland and Labrador

(Phase 1: 2006 – 2008)

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council is recognized for the guidance it has provided on the development of this document to government, through the Minister of Health and Community Services.

The membership of the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council includes a broad representation from non-government agencies and government departments:

- Association of Allied Health Professionals
- Alliance for the Control of Tobacco
- Association of Registered Nurses of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Canadian Cancer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Canadian Diabetes Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Department of Education
- Department of Environment and Conservation
- Department of Government Services
- Department of Health and Community Services
- Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment
- Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation
- Heart and Stroke Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Lung Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty of Medicine
- Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Municipalities
- Newfoundland and Labrador Health Boards Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Medical Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Parks and Recreation Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Public Health Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association
- Newfoundland Dietetic Association
- Regional Integrated Health Authorities
- Rural Secretariat
- Seniors Resource Centre Association of Newfoundland and Labrador

The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council prepared and submitted the **Recommendations for a Provincial Wellness Strategy** to the Minister of Health and Community Services in September 2003.

Taking direction from the recommendations and building on existing initiatives and resources in the Province has led to the development of **Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador (Phase 1: 2006 – 2008)**.

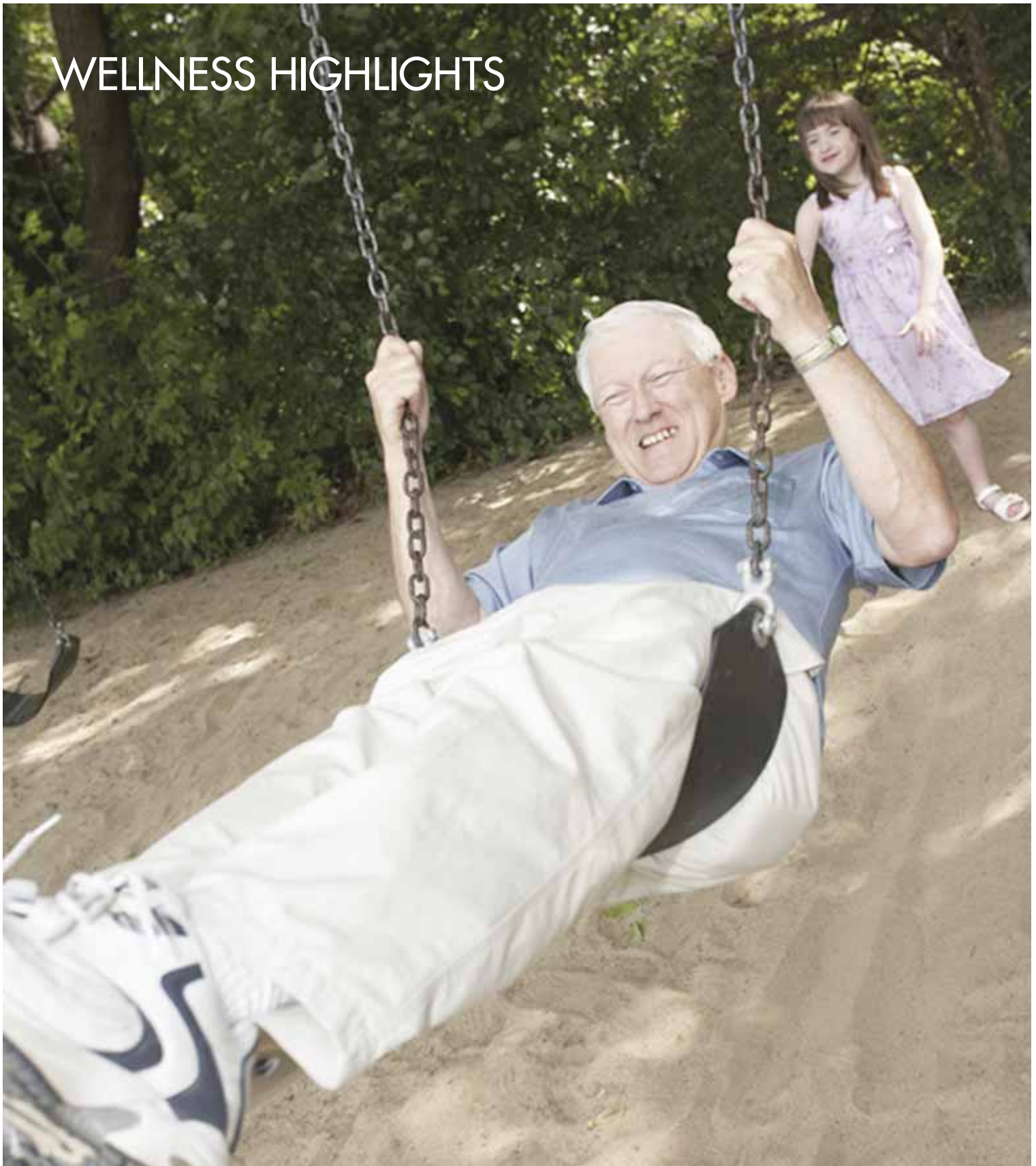
Government will continue to work with and look to the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council to share its expertise and provide advice and guidance to the Minister of Health and Community Services on the continued development and implementation of the Provincial Wellness Plan.



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# WELLNESS HIGHLIGHTS



## WELLNESS HIGHLIGHTS

The Department of Health and Community Services (DOHCS) is pleased to put forward the Provincial Wellness Plan aimed at improving the health of the provincial population and helping all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians achieve their optimal state of wellness. Budget 2005 dedicated \$2.4 million to support a wellness strategy – the largest single cash infusion in health promotion in the history of the province.

This initiative builds on the work of six Regional Wellness Coalitions and the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council (PWAC) which is comprised of a broad range of government departments, professional associations and community groups. The input, feedback and exceptional effort of the PWAC have led us to the development of the Provincial Wellness Plan. The Plan concentrates on encouraging healthy eating habits, a balanced lifestyle and active living as the first steps to improving overall health and wellness.

Phase I of the Plan will be implemented over the next three years and will focus on some key areas, including: healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control and injury prevention. This will be done through strengthened partnerships, public awareness, health promotion and evaluation of our methods. Phase II will consider other wellness priority areas under discussion such as mental health promotion, child and youth development, environmental health and health protection.

When people think of our health system, they often focus on acute and long-term care needs. This Wellness Plan focuses on the front end of the health spectrum: overall health and wellness. The goal is to keep people healthy rather than treating and caring for them when they are ill. We know that a healthy population is a happier, more prosperous one – this is something we strive toward for all the people of our province.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

**Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador** outlines our actions for wellness over the next three years (2006 – 2008). It builds on a great deal of work accomplished to date and provides the opportunity to continue the momentum and strengthen our current efforts. The Wellness Plan reflects an increased focus on a shared responsibility for health and provides direction for promoting health, preventing illness and injury and increasing the capacity of individuals, groups, communities and sectors to take action for wellness.

The Provincial Wellness Plan: Phase 1 is our initial response, as a government, to the **Recommendations for a Provincial Wellness Strategy** prepared and submitted to government by the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council. We will continue to work closely with the Council and seek guidance on the priority areas for wellness.

The Provincial Wellness Plan takes into consideration the recommendations from the Council, the feedback received from stakeholders and the current initiatives and resources available to set the direction for this first phase of the Wellness Plan. It builds on existing programs and complements other healthy living and wellness initiatives in our province and across Canada. There are many partners in health and we all have a role to play in implementing the actions required to improve wellness.



The aim of the Provincial Wellness Plan is to address a set of wellness priorities which contribute to improving health and wellness. The wellness priorities include:

- healthy eating
- physical activity
- tobacco control
- injury prevention
- mental health promotion
- child and youth development
- environmental health
- health protection



The wellness priorities will be addressed through the following four key directions:

- Strengthen partnerships and collaboration
- Develop and expand wellness initiatives
- Increase public awareness
- Enhance capacity for health promotion

In this first phase of the Wellness Plan, the main areas of focus will be on healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control and injury prevention. In addition, as new information and resources become available, actions may be initiated in the other priority areas. In the second phase, the current actions will continue to be implemented and new actions will be developed in the areas of mental health promotion, environmental health, child and youth development and health protection. Other areas for action will include health protection and healthy aging. As the actions to address the wellness priorities are developed and initiated, they will be based on the evidence and best practices available at the time of implementation. In addition, the actions will be in keeping with government's commitment to address aging, aboriginal and gender issues.



## SUMMARY OF KEY DIRECTIONS WITH ACTIONS

### 1. Strengthen Partnerships and Collaboration

The value of collaborative action has been well documented. In our province, many of the partners involved in wellness are linked through the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council. We will continue to seek and create opportunities to build and strengthen our partnerships to support the actions for wellness.

- 1.1 Provincial Wellness Advisory Council:** The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council will continue to provide advice and guidance on the wellness priorities to government, through the Minister of Health and Community Services.
  
- 1.2 Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT):** ACT, in consultation with its partners, will continue to provide leadership on the implementation of the Provincial Tobacco Reduction Strategy (2005 – 2008).
  
- 1.3 Regional Wellness Coalitions:** The Regional Wellness Coalitions will continue to strengthen partnerships, build capacity and facilitate action for wellness at the regional and community levels.
  
- 1.4 Youth and Wellness:** Youth will be engaged to provide input and take action on the wellness priorities affecting them.
  
- 1.5 Provincial Injury Prevention Coalition:** A review of injury prevention data, initiatives and stakeholders in the province will be conducted with the aim to strengthen and support a provincial infrastructure for injury prevention.

## 2. Develop and Expand Wellness Initiatives

There are many successful initiatives in our province that support the wellness priorities. We will continue to strengthen and expand the existing efforts and develop new initiatives for wellness.

- 2.1 Healthy Students, Healthy Schools:** The Healthy Students, Healthy Schools initiative will be expanded to create school environments that support healthy living for children and youth and the larger school community.
- 2.2 Healthy Living Community-Based Programs:** Community-based programs and initiatives to support the wellness priorities will be expanded throughout the province.
- 2.3 Wellness Grants Program:** A Wellness Grants Program will be developed and implemented to support health promotion initiatives that address the wellness priorities.
- 2.4 Provincial Food and Nutrition Framework and Action Plan:** Eating Healthier in Newfoundland and Labrador: Provincial Food and Nutrition Framework and Action Plan will be released and implemented.
- 2.5 Tobacco Control Program:** The Provincial Tobacco Reduction Strategy will be implemented over the next three years.
- 2.6 Provincial Injury Prevention Strategy:** A Provincial Injury Prevention Strategy will be developed based on a review of current injury prevention practices.

## 3. Increase Public Awareness

To help us become better informed about health and wellness, we need current, accurate and consistent information delivered in a way that we understand. Sharing health information with the population is one element of a comprehensive approach that leads to a shift in attitudes and a change in behaviours which in turn contribute to improved health and wellness.

- 3.1 Social Marketing Strategy:** A Social Marketing Strategy will be developed to support and complement the programs, services and environments that promote and support wellness.



## 4. Enhance Capacity for Health Promotion

Health promotion involves a series of strategies that are required for promoting health. They include: building healthy policies, creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal skills and reorienting health services. A combination of health promotion strategies provides the most effective approach for the planning, delivery and implementation of programs to address the wellness priorities. We recognize that both human and program resources are essential to build the infrastructure and enhance the capacity to support an increased emphasis on health promotion.

- 4.1 **Regional Health Promotion Positions:** New health promotion/community development positions will be established in each of the Regional Integrated Health Authorities to strengthen the capacity for health promotion.
- 4.2 **Regional Program Resources:** Funding for the development and implementation of programs and initiatives will be allocated to Regional Health Authorities to support increased efforts for health promotion.
- 4.3 **Provincial Resources:** Additional programs and human resources at the provincial level will enhance health promotion capacity to address and support wellness initiatives across the province.

## EVALUATION

Finally, an evaluation plan will be developed to monitor the progress and measure the impact of our actions in the Wellness Plan. There are some current indicators available; however, other indicators will need to be developed to measure the current actions and the introduction of additional actions of the Wellness Plan. A data collection and reporting mechanism will be put in place to share the progress of our actions with all of our partners in wellness.



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Provincial Wellness Plan is guided by the following principles:

**Collective and Collaborative:** A collective and collaborative approach recognizes the contributions of many sectors and the importance of forming strong partnerships and working together towards a common goal. Collaborative action allows for the sharing of ideas and joint decision making on the major factors that have an impact on health and well-being.

**Integrated:** An integrated approach considers the many factors that link together and build on one another to improve health, including such things as the common risk factors for chronic diseases, the determinants of health, health promotion strategies and initiatives and the use of universal and targeted approaches to address the wellness priorities.

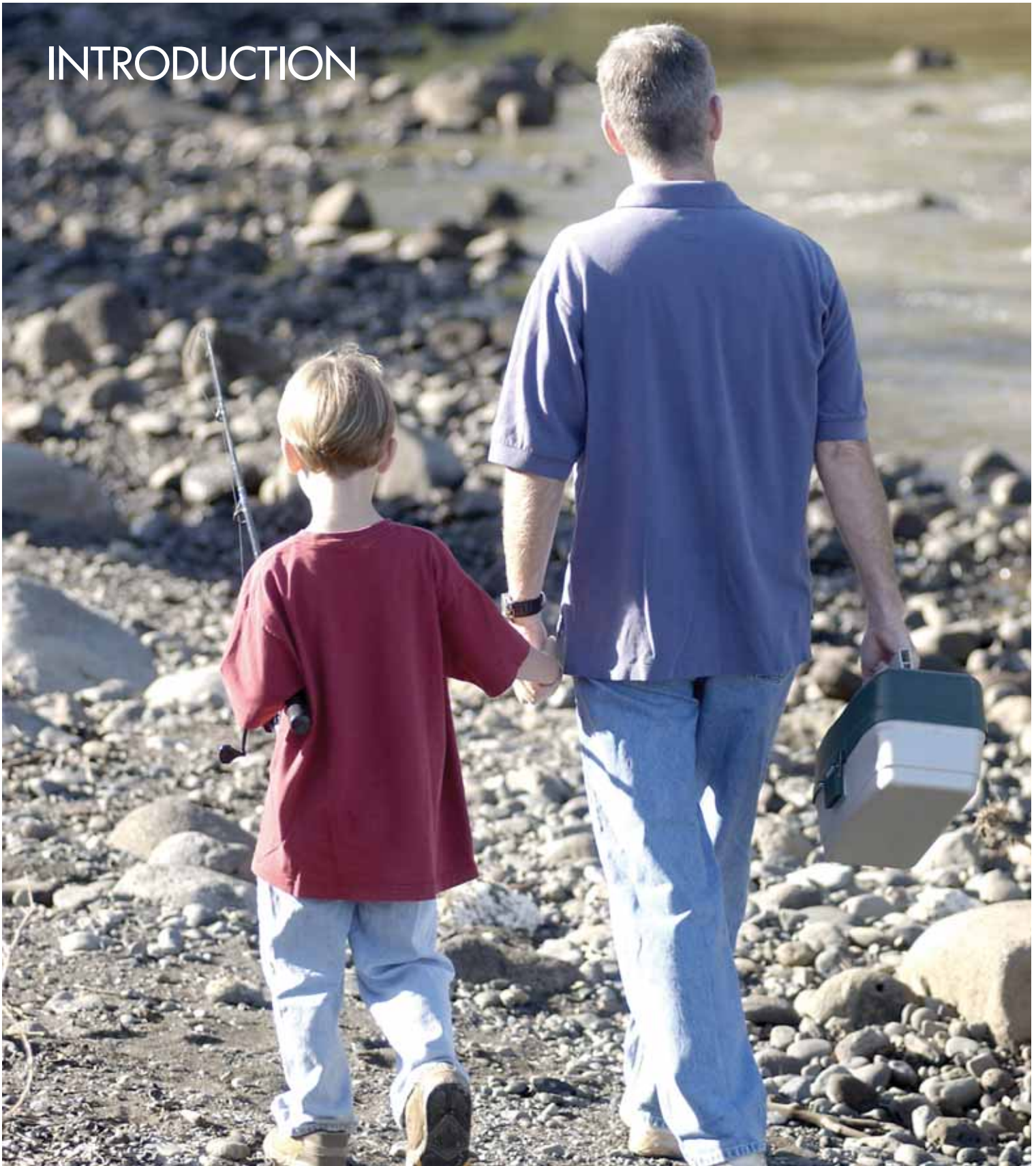
**Evidence Based:** A plan that is evidence based builds on existing strengths, successful initiatives and the best available knowledge, practices and evidence in wellness and health promotion work.

**Sustainable:** A plan that is sustainable identifies actions and interventions that are consistent with the resources available (human, financial, information and infrastructure). Using a shared and an incremental approach for resources will provide the greatest opportunity for sustaining actions over time. It may also involve a leveraging of community, private sector and individual resources to achieve the goals.

**Accountable:** A plan that is accountable requires regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the actions identified in the Wellness Plan. This process will be key in helping government and its partners modify and improve policies and programs to support wellness and report to the public on its progress.



# INTRODUCTION





## INTRODUCTION

Wellness is a state of emotional, mental, physical, social and spiritual well-being that enables people to reach and maintain their optimal level of health.

**Achieving Health and Wellness: A Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador, Phase 1**, demonstrates our commitment as a government to improving the health and wellness of the people of the province. In keeping with our Blueprint directions, the Provincial Wellness Plan will increase our efforts towards health promotion and illness and injury prevention. It will also aim to strengthen community action for wellness. This is the first in a series of actions that highlight our long-term commitment to improving wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Provincial Wellness Plan builds on the work of the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council that prepared and submitted to government **Recommendations for a Provincial Wellness Strategy**. These recommendations include a Framework Document and three supporting Wellness Papers: Healthy Living, Mental Health Promotion and Healthy Environments. **Achieving Health and Wellness** is government's response to the recommendations and outlines initial actions for the next three years (2006 – 2008).

Currently, in Newfoundland and Labrador, provincial rates for chronic disease including heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes are among some of the highest in Canada. These chronic diseases are linked by the common risk factors of tobacco use, unhealthy eating, physical inactivity and obesity. Addressing these risk factors will contribute to improving our overall health. In addition, we can further enhance our efforts to ensure we stay well and live longer by focusing on areas such as healthy child development, injury prevention, mental health promotion, environmental health and healthy aging.



Health promotion and illness and injury prevention approaches are cost effective and the economic benefits are well documented. The contrast between the cost of preventing injuries and the cost of treating injuries is great. Prevention always costs less. The Provincial Wellness Plan will help balance the health agenda and shift the focus from the treatment of illness to the promotion of healthy living and wellness.

Wellness is everyone's responsibility. Individuals, families, schools, communities, groups, organizations, businesses and all levels of government have a role to play. Some partners will plan, deliver and monitor wellness initiatives. Others will focus on the development of strategies, guidelines and policies. To make a difference, we must combine our efforts and all work together.

We recognize that many of the factors that influence our health and well-being fall outside the health sector. Important health gains are achieved when actions and strategies focus on improving the health of the population, sub-populations and individuals and on reducing the inequities among groups. People are more likely to be healthy if they have a good education, a stable and adequate income, a supportive group of family and friends and live in a healthy community. The actions in the Wellness Plan will impact on and be influenced by the many factors that determine health.

#### Factors that determine health:

- Social support networks
- Income and social status
- Employment and working conditions
- Social environments
- Physical environments
- Education level
- Healthy child development
- Health services
- Personal health practices and coping skills
- Biology
- Gender
- Culture



The Provincial Wellness Plan is aligned with the strategic planning process ongoing in the Department of Health and Community Services. The vision for the strategic plan is for individuals, families and communities to have achieved optimal health and well-being. The strategic directions aim to improve population health, strengthen public health capacity, improve accessibility to priority services and improve accountability and sustainability in the delivery of health and community services within available resources. The actions in the Wellness Plan provide direction for policy and program development that will contribute to improved population health and enhanced public health capacity in the health and community services system.

The development and implementation of a wellness plan is linked with other government initiatives that focus on improving health and the delivery of health services. Maintaining links with primary health care, mental health and addiction services, public health, the new division of aging and seniors and other government sectors ensures there is an integrated and co-ordinated approach to health and wellness.

Primary health care aims to improve health in the community. It offers a team-based approach which involves individuals and the community in decision making around health issues. As a delivery model it provides preventive, promotive, curative, rehabilitative and supportive services. Health promotion and wellness are integral components to the model; as such the Provincial Wellness Plan must be congruent with government's approach for primary health care.

Mental health and addiction services address a broad range of services including mental health promotion for persons with mental illness. Mental health promotion is also one of the wellness priorities in the Wellness Plan; it focuses on enhancing the capacity of individuals and creating



the conditions to support positive mental health for everyone. Therefore, the Wellness Plan must be aligned with the **Mental Health and Addictions Services Plan**, recently released by government, to ensure a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach for mental health in the province.

As the new Division of Aging and Seniors develops its healthy aging strategy, the Wellness Plan will be able to support healthy living and wellness for seniors. An increased focus on health promotion and illness and injury prevention will promote and support people to be healthy and active and will contribute to healthy aging and independence.

Health promotion and wellness are primary functions of public health practice. Public health focuses on improving health in communities through the prevention of disease, promotion of health and the protection of the public from disease and environmental threats. The directions outlined in the Provincial Wellness Plan will be a key component as the Department of Health and Community Services builds public health capacity throughout the health and community services system.

Within the Province, in the Atlantic region, and across Canada, the development of strategies directly related to healthy living and wellness are currently taking place. **The importance of eating well, being physically active, being smoke-free and managing stress in a positive way are recognized as contributors to improved health, wellness and disease prevention.** Efforts by individual provinces combined with the collective efforts at the Atlantic and national levels are aiming to address these factors to improve the health of the population.

**Initiatives that focus on healthy living and wellness at the provincial level involve various departments and include the development of strategies to address food and nutrition, physical activity, recreation and tobacco control.** In addition, a Provincial Diabetes Strategy, Oral Health Strategy and an Integrated Stroke Strategy are currently being developed. In the Atlantic region, the four Atlantic Provinces are collaborating on wellness issues. As well, at the national level, provincial governments and national organizations are collaborating on the development of an **Integrated Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy.**



In addition to the strategies that focus directly on health, there are a number of other initiatives both within and outside the health sector that have an impact on wellness. Many of these initiatives relate to the factors that determine health status such as education, literacy, employment, economics, early childhood development, violence prevention, and labour market research and policy development activities. The efforts of other sectors and departments have been recognized in the development of this Provincial Wellness Plan.

## WELLNESS PRIORITIES

The Provincial Wellness Plan will address the following wellness priorities:

- **Healthy eating**
- **Physical activity**
- **Tobacco control**
- **Injury prevention**
- **Mental health promotion**
- **Child and youth development**
- **Environmental health**
- **Health protection**



The wellness priorities reflect the common risk factors for chronic disease and other key factors that impact on health. They correspond with ongoing initiatives at the provincial, Atlantic and national levels and are consistent with international trends.

The first phase of the Wellness Plan addresses the areas of healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control and injury prevention. During this phase, an evaluation will take place and as new information and resources become available, other wellness priority actions may be added to the Wellness Plan. In the second phase, the current actions will continue to be implemented and new actions will be developed in the areas of mental health promotion, environmental health, child and youth development, and health protection.

## KEY DIRECTIONS

The wellness priorities will be addressed through four key directions:

- Strengthen partnerships and collaboration
- Develop and expand wellness initiatives
- Increase public awareness
- Enhance capacity for health promotion

The Provincial Wellness Plan: Phase 1 provides the initial direction for increasing our health promotion efforts at the local, regional and provincial levels to address the wellness priorities and contribute to improved health and wellness. The many partners involved in wellness can use the plan to guide their health promotion work and community action for wellness.

## PARTNERS INVOLVED IN WELLNESS:

- Other government departments
- Regional Integrated Health Authorities
- Primary health care teams
- Non-government organizations
- Communities
- Community groups

This Provincial Wellness Plan is divided according to the following sections:

- Wellness Priorities
- Key Directions with Actions
- Accountability and Evaluation
- Conclusion



# WELLNESS PRIORITIES



## WELLNESS PRIORITIES

### **Healthy Eating: Improving healthy eating practices**

Healthy eating is essential for good health. However, eating a well-balanced and nutritious diet can be a challenge. To make it easier to eat healthy, we need to focus our efforts on increasing access to an adequate and nutritious food supply, making nutritious food affordable, and enhancing knowledge and skills so that we can choose and prepare nutritious food choices.

### **Physical Activity: Increasing the number of people who are physically active**

Being physically active is an important part of living healthy. While it is important for everyone to be active, there are factors which limit our ability to be physically active. Our efforts to improve physical activity levels and reduce physical inactivity must aim to increase opportunities to become active and reduce the barriers that keep us from being physically active.

### **Tobacco Control: Reducing smoking rates and exposure to second-hand smoke**

Our efforts in tobacco control have seen a decrease in the smoking rates in the province. While this is good news, we must continue our commitment and efforts to prevent children and youth from starting to smoke, encourage and support people to quit smoking and protect Newfoundlanders and Labradorians from second-hand smoke which will positively impact the health and well being of our people.

### **Injury Prevention: Reducing injury rates**

Many of us think that injuries are the result of 'accidents' that cannot be avoided. In actual fact, injuries are predictable and preventable. The majority of injuries in our province are a result of falls, motor vehicle crashes, suffocation, poisonings, fires, and pedestrian and water related incidents. It is time to learn more about the causes and to increase our efforts to reduce injuries. Intentional injuries (violence, homicide, suicide) and injuries as a result of a workplace or occupational event are outside the scope of the Provincial Wellness Plan.





### **Mental Health Promotion: Strengthening positive mental health**

In Newfoundland and Labrador, we are recognized for having positive mental health. To maintain good mental health, we must continue to create support systems in our communities, develop positive problem solving and coping skills, build strong self-esteem and develop the capacity to use the resources available to us in our communities.

### **Child and Youth Development: Enhancing the health of children and youth**

Our infant and early childhood experiences influence our health throughout life. We must enhance investments and initiatives that support health and well-being from infancy through the teenage years to include such things as healthy pregnancy and birth, parenting and family support, early childhood learning and care, and community support.

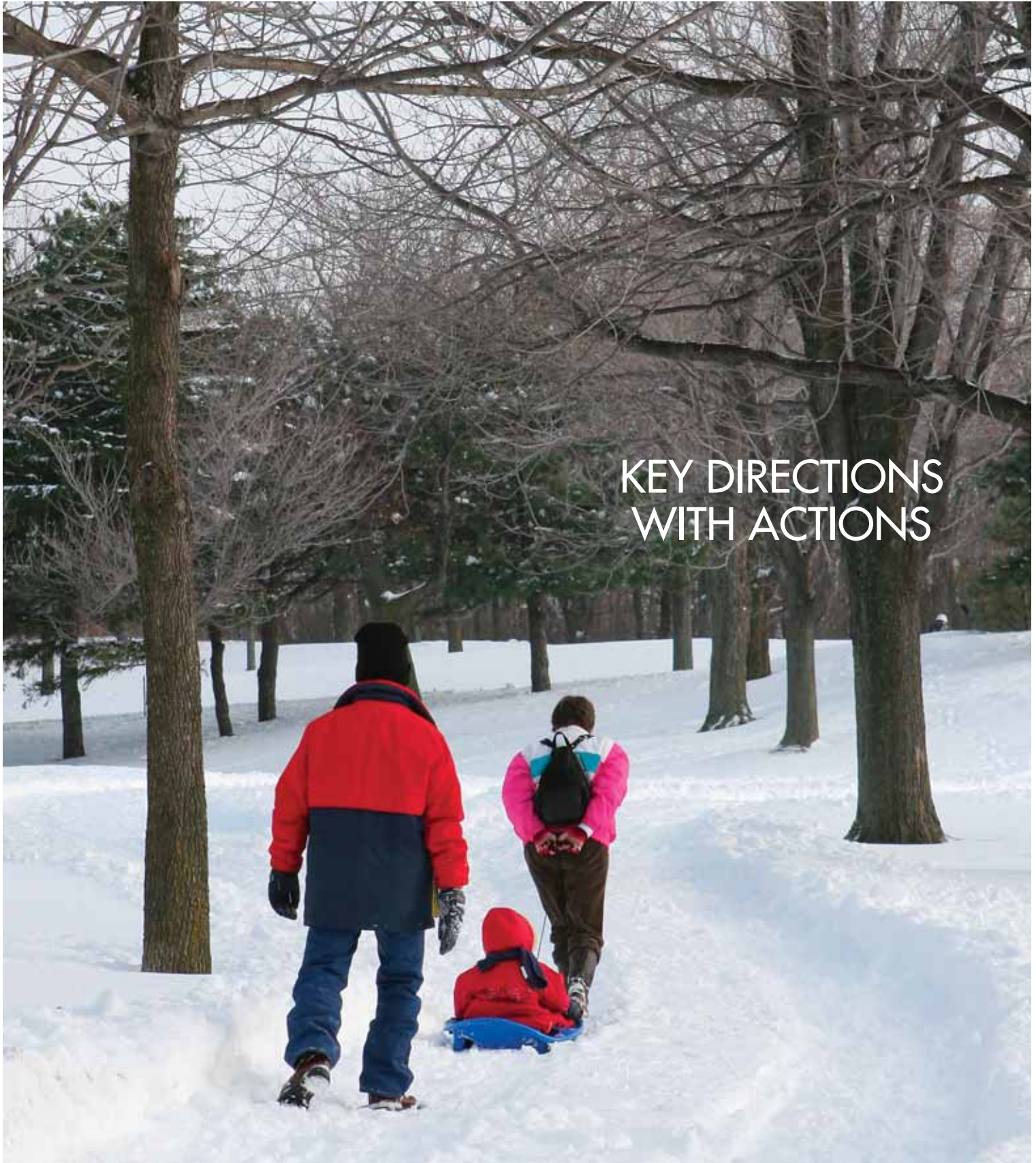
### **Environmental Health: Creating healthy environments**

Environmental health is about creating and maintaining environments which promote good public health. It involves those aspects of human health and disease that are determined by physical, chemical, and biological factors in the environment such as contaminants in food, air, soil and water.

### **Health Protection: Protecting the health of the public**

Health protection focuses on protecting communities and individuals from epidemics and communicable disease, and prepares them for natural or man-made disasters and public health emergencies. Actions will include raising awareness of the increased health risks of particular lifestyle choices, supporting at-risk groups in protecting themselves from particular disease agents, and engaging individuals and communities in emergency preparedness activities.

Many of the wellness priorities are linked to one another. For example, issues related to tobacco control link with healthy living (healthy eating and physical activity), with mental health promotion in terms of coping strategies and with environmental health as it relates to environmental tobacco smoke. A comprehensive approach involves numerous sectors and ensures that the wellness priorities are considered from various perspectives and are not looked at in isolation.



## KEY DIRECTIONS WITH ACTIONS

## KEY DIRECTIONS WITH ACTIONS

### KEY DIRECTION 1: STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

In recent years, a number of initiatives have demonstrated the value of collaborative action. The establishment of the Provincial Wellness Advisory Council links many of the partners involved in the areas of wellness and together they form a strong voice for health promotion and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador. We recognize the contributions of the many sectors and the importance of forming strong partnerships and working together towards a common goal. These partnerships allow for the sharing of ideas and joint decision making on the major factors that have an impact on health. This collaborative effort leads to a shared commitment, ownership and responsibility for improving overall health and wellness. There are many opportunities to strengthen partnerships and increase collaborative action to improve wellness. We will work with existing partners and develop new partnerships as we address the wellness priorities.

#### ACTIONS:

##### 1.1 Provincial Wellness Advisory Council:

**The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council will continue to provide advice and guidance to government, through the Minister of Health and Community Services, on the wellness priorities.**

The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council was established in November 2002 to provide advice and guidance to government on the development of a wellness strategy. This 26 member council includes a broad representation of non-government agencies, professional associations and government departments. The Council, through its working groups, will continue to identify evidence-based and effective strategies for addressing each of the wellness priorities. The Council will provide advice to the Minister on the future directions of the wellness plan and will also monitor achievements in the plan. The work of the Council will continue to be supported by the Wellness Division of the Department of Health and Community Services.

## 1.2 Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT):

**ACT, in consultation with its partners, will continue to provide leadership on the implementation of the Provincial Tobacco Reduction Strategy (2005-2008).**

The Alliance for the Control of Tobacco (ACT) involves many stakeholders interested in tobacco control issues throughout the province. The role of ACT is to work closely with its many partners in tobacco control and with government as it provides leadership on the implementation of the Provincial Tobacco Reduction Strategy. ACT will continue to receive provincial funding and support.

## 1.3 Regional Wellness Coalitions:

**The Regional Wellness Coalitions will continue to strengthen partnerships, build capacity and facilitate action for wellness at the regional and community levels.**

Six Regional Wellness Coalitions have been formed and will operate within regions covering the four health authorities across the province. The Coalitions provide opportunities for people to become involved in community action around the issues that affect their health and well-being. Coalitions provide leadership, co-ordination and support for local wellness initiatives. They build partnerships by bringing together individuals, groups and organizations interested in working together on common wellness issues based on the needs of their region. The strength of the Coalitions comes from the many partners involved, their ability to reach and build capacity in their communities and their experience in sustaining these efforts.

The Regional Wellness Coalitions advocate for healthy public policy, administer community grants to enhance local health promotion initiatives and develop and deliver community based programs which support the wellness priorities in each of the regions.

Provincial support, co-ordination and funding will continue to be provided to each of the Regional Wellness Coalitions. Staff and infrastructure support will be provided through the Regional Integrated Health Authorities in each region.



#### 1.4 Youth and Wellness:

Youth will be engaged to provide input and take action on the wellness priorities affecting youth.

A group of young people who reflect the diversity of our province's youth population will be identified to provide input and take action on the wellness priorities. Their role will be to advise government on how best to address wellness issues as they relate to youth in their homes, schools and communities.

#### 1.5 Provincial Injury Prevention Coalition:

A review of the current status of injury prevention initiatives and stakeholders in the province will be conducted with the aim to strengthen and support an infrastructure for injury prevention.

With a commitment to keeping people healthier in our province, one area of focus is on reducing the rate of injuries. An integrated and coordinated approach is required to address injury prevention and control. We will build on the work of the Provincial Injury Prevention Coalition, the ongoing initiatives by injury prevention partners and on the current injury prevention initiatives at the Atlantic and National levels to help set the direction in our province.



## KEY DIRECTION 2: DEVELOP AND EXPAND WELLNESS INITIATIVES

In our province, we have many examples of successful community-based health promotion initiatives that support health and wellness. Through a combination of health promotion strategies (page 34) and initiatives we will contribute to improving our overall health. As we address the wellness priorities, we will review and adopt new information, evidence and resource material as it becomes available. Initiatives will be developed and implemented to best suit the needs of the population including specific age, gender and aboriginal needs.

To enhance current initiatives, we must strengthen our efforts in a comprehensive manner to collectively address health issues at home, in our schools, in our communities and at the broader systems and sector levels. Our investment in wellness will see the further development, implementation and evaluation of wellness initiatives throughout the province. In additional phases of the Provincial Wellness Plan, we will build on these initiatives and develop new initiatives as we focus on the other wellness priorities.

### ACTIONS:

#### 2.1 Healthy Students, Healthy Schools

**The Healthy Students, Healthy Schools initiative will continue to be developed and implemented to create school environments that support healthy living for children and youth and the larger school community.**

The Departments of Health and Community Services and Education will continue to partner to develop and implement the Healthy Students, Healthy Schools initiative. This initiative aims to create a school environment that supports healthy living for children and youth and to foster a healthy lifestyle that will continue throughout life. The initial focus is on the development of policies, programs and services that support healthy eating and physical activity as well as support parents, educators and the school community to address these healthy living issues. As the initiative is further developed, other areas will be addressed including mental health, injury prevention, immunizations, social behaviours, school structures and environments and support to vulnerable populations.



Using a comprehensive school health approach, this initiative will see policies and guidelines developed, curriculum enhanced and programs expanded to support the creation of a healthy school environment including such initiatives as:

### Healthy Eating:

- **Healthy Eating in School Program:** This initiative involves the implementation of provincial guidelines for foods served and sold in school cafeterias, canteens, vending machines and events organized by or held in schools.
- **School Food Programs:** This initiative will provide ongoing support for healthy eating opportunities through school food programs such as those provided by the Kids Eat Smart Foundation and the Newfoundland and Labrador School Milk Foundation.
- **Training Program for Caterers:** Training on healthy eating and the preparation of nutritious food in schools will be developed and implemented for school food caterers.

### Curriculum:

- **Health and Physical Education Curricula:** Curricula will be developed, revised and implemented to enhance and support healthy living in the K – 12 school system. To help address the issues of physical inactivity and obesity among youth, physical education equipment will be purchased to support the new mandated high school physical education curriculum.
- **Physical Education and Physical Activity Best Practices:** Guidelines for physical education and physical activity for children and youth will be developed for schools supported by research and the identification of best practices.



## Supporting Health Promoting Schools:

- **Healthy Schools Student Summit:** a provincial student summit was held in September 2005 to engage and support youth to share ideas and take action on healthy living initiatives in school. As a follow-up to the summit, youth will contribute their Living Healthy initiatives to the development of the Living Healthy website, schools will engage other schools in their districts to develop a district plan to move forward the Living Healthy agenda and Living Healthy activities for students in grades kindergarten through six will be planned for the 2006 school year.
- **Communicating Healthy Living Messages:** mechanisms will be developed to support healthy living initiatives and to communicate the healthy living messages to students, school administrators, districts, councils, teachers and parents.

## 2.2 Healthy Living Community-Based Programs

**Community-based programs and initiatives to support the wellness priorities will continue to be developed and implemented throughout the province.**

We have extensive evidence of the benefit of community-based health promotion initiatives in our province. Through the implementation of Phase 1 of the Provincial Wellness Plan, these community-based initiatives will continue to be supported and enhanced to reach a greater number of people and communities. These community actions help promote health messages, increase awareness, create supportive environments, build healthy public policies and provide opportunities for members to get involved in their communities in actions which support health and wellness. The implementation of these programs is flexible and can be adapted to suit an individual community or region.

We will continue to support and evaluate the current healthy living programs and as other programs are developed and initiated they will be shared province-wide.





Some current initiatives include:

- **Heart Smart Restaurant Program:** This program offers healthy food choices upon request to the customer. Many restaurants, cafeterias and cafés are currently involved in the program. The program will be expanded to reach additional food service establishments in communities throughout our province.
- **Lifestyle Clinics Program:** These clinics provide a community setting for screening and health checks for adults and involve a partnership of community volunteers and health care professionals to administer the program. This program will be evaluated, revised and further expanded throughout the province.
- **On the Move with Ticker Tom:** This program focuses on increasing healthy eating, physical activity and being smoke-free for children in after-school programs. The recent evaluation of this program has determined that this program is an effective method for communicating healthy living messages to children and youth and the program will be expanded throughout the province.
- **Moving for Health Program:** This community-based fitness program is for older adults. Community volunteers are trained and supported to deliver the program in their communities. Additional training will be offered so that the program can be further expanded across the province.
- **Born a Non-smoker Program:** This program promotes the importance of a smoke-free environment for newborns and their families. The evaluation of this program has determined it is an effective approach for sharing smoke-free messages with families of newborns and as a result the program will be expanded throughout the province.

### 2.3 Wellness Grants Program

A Wellness Grants Program will be developed and implemented to support health promotion initiatives that address the wellness priorities.

Grants and incentives can provide the necessary funds often required by communities, groups, not-for-profit agencies and organizations to start-up or enhance initiatives to support wellness. A new Wellness Grants Program will provide an opportunity for the creative development and testing of new and innovative approaches to address the wellness priorities. Results attained from this activity will be shared with stakeholders across the province.

### 2.4 Provincial Food and Nutrition Framework and Action Plan

**Our Eating Healthier in Newfoundland and Labrador: Provincial Food and Nutrition Framework and Action Plan will be released and implemented.**

The Provincial Food and Nutrition Framework and Action Plan will serve as a framework to guide and support government, community organizations, industry and citizens in decisions relating to food and nutrition and physical activity. The strategy was developed with extensive stakeholder input and under the guidance of an interdepartmental committee of government officials called the Provincial Food and Nutrition Advisory Committee.



The following strategic directions for this strategy have been developed:

- Reinforce healthy eating and physical activity practices.
- Support vulnerable populations.
- Enhance the availability of affordable, high quality food which supports healthy eating.
- Support food and nutrition research.

Initial priorities for action have been identified:

- Develop and implement provincial school guidelines which support healthy eating and physical activity.
- Enhance initiatives which enable young children (1 – 5 years) to have access to programs and services that promote and support healthy eating and physical activity.
- Continue to provide and enhance lifestyle programs which address healthy eating and physical activity as part of healthy aging.

The Provincial Food and Nutrition Advisory Committee will identify ongoing priorities and provide guidance on the implementation of the food and nutrition strategy.



## 2.5 Tobacco Control Program

The Provincial Tobacco Reduction Strategy will be supported and implemented over the next three years (2005 - 2008).

Building on the existing comprehensive, integrated and collaborative approach to tobacco control, we will continue to work towards reducing the negative impact of tobacco use and improving overall health and well-being. The actions of the strategy will focus on public education, community and school-based prevention programs, cessation supports, taxation, legislation and enforcement. We will continue to build on and support the current tobacco control initiatives:

- **Provincial Tobacco Reduction Strategy (TRS):** The revised strategy outlines the direction for tobacco control in the province and will be implemented over the next three years.
- **Smoking Cessation Programs:** A coordinated approach to cessation, including a range of support services, will be developed.
- **Smoke-Free Environment Act:** The amendments to the Act implemented, effective July 1, 2005, will be monitored.
- **Youth Smoking Prevention:** A review of current school smoking prevention programs will be initiated to determine the additional supports and resources required for curriculum components K – 12, school smoke-free policies and youth cessation programs.
- **Youth Access:** Enforcement related to the sale of tobacco products and third party sales will continue in an effort to decrease youth access to tobacco products. Public education messages will be developed to support these initiatives.



## 2.6 Provincial Injury Prevention Strategy

A Provincial Injury Prevention Strategy will be developed based on a review of injury prevention initiatives in the province and elsewhere.

The development of a Provincial Injury Prevention Strategy will provide direction and co-ordinate efforts for injury prevention in the province. It will be based on evidence and best practices and complement the current direction for injury prevention at the Atlantic and national levels.

### KEY DIRECTION 3: INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS

Achieving health and wellness in our province will require raising awareness and supporting healthy behaviours among the population. To help us become better informed about health and wellness issues, we need current, consistent and reliable health information. Health information that is delivered in a way that we understand will help us learn more about health issues and the factors that contribute to our health, how to make informed choices and take more responsibility for our health, and how to become more involved in addressing health issues in our communities. Over time, health information can lead to a shift in attitudes and a change in behaviour; however, it must be supported by the development of policies and environments that support a comprehensive approach and a long-term commitment to health and wellness.



## ACTIONS:

### 3.1 Social Marketing Strategy

**A Social Marketing Strategy will be developed to support and complement the programs, services and environments that promote and support wellness.**

A social marketing campaign can deliver health information and messages using a variety of methods to increase knowledge and move people to take action on issues that affect their health and well-being. Clear consistent messages are important if people are to use those messages to make informed health choices. The initial focus of this strategy will be on communicating messages on healthy eating, physical activity and tobacco reduction issues. Future areas of focus will include mental health promotion, environmental health, healthy child development, injury prevention and healthy aging. We will build on the success of existing social marketing projects such as Senior's Month and the Ticker Tom character who promotes healthy eating, active living and staying smoke-free messages to children and youth. As the wellness priorities are further developed and actions implemented, the social marketing efforts will be expanded to support these initiatives.

The national Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy and our Atlantic partners are also developing social marketing campaigns. We will co-ordinate our efforts and build on these campaigns.



## KEY DIRECTION 4: ENHANCE CAPACITY FOR HEALTH PROMOTION

The health promotion approach involves applying a set of strategies to enable us to increase control over the factors that determine our health and thereby improve our health. Health promotion strategies include:

- Building healthy public policy
- Developing personal skills
- Creating supportive environments
- Reorienting health services
- Strengthening community action

To be most effective, this approach requires a combination of the health promotion strategies and involves individuals, groups, communities and systems working together to create the conditions for improved health.

This Plan integrates and builds on **The Circle of Health: Health Promotion Framework\***. The design of this health promotion framework brings together the main elements required for addressing wellness to ensure a comprehensive approach. It incorporates population health, determinants of health and the five health promotion strategies identified in the **Ottawa Charter of Health Promotion**. The health promotion framework has been selected as a tool to guide the planning, delivery and evaluation of programs, actions and initiatives to address the wellness priorities.

To enhance health promotion capacity, we must build the infrastructure that supports an increased emphasis for health promotion. This will involve increasing expertise, human resources and program resources to effectively address the wellness priorities at both the regional and provincial levels. In addition, it will involve developing the health promotion knowledge and skills of our staff and other partners involved in health promotion. These actions for wellness will complement the directions being developed to enhance the public health capacity in the health and community services system. These resources represent a commitment and foundation on which to build and expand further work in the province related to health promotion and wellness.

\* See Appendix A: Health Promotion Framework.

## ACTIONS:

### 4.1 Regional Health Promotion Positions

**New health promotion/community development positions will be established in each of the Regional Integrated Health Authorities to strengthen the capacity for health promotion.**

These new positions will complement and enhance the existing health promotion staff in each of the four Regional Integrated Health Authorities. They will work closely with the Regional Wellness Coalitions, primary health care teams, rural councils and other community partners to advance health promotion and community capacity building in relation to the wellness priorities in each of the regions.

Professional development opportunities will be identified and supported to increase knowledge and skills of providers/partners involved in health promotion (e.g., capacity building, coalition building, health promotion, program planning, implementation and evaluation).

### 4.2 Regional Program Resources

**Funding for the development and implementation of programs and initiatives will be allocated to Regional Integrated Health Authorities to support increased efforts for health promotion.**

Based on the needs and strengths of their respective regions, the Regional Integrated Health Authorities will review current resource allocations and direct resources to enhance existing and new community-based health promotion initiatives that support the wellness priorities.

### 4.3 Provincial Resources

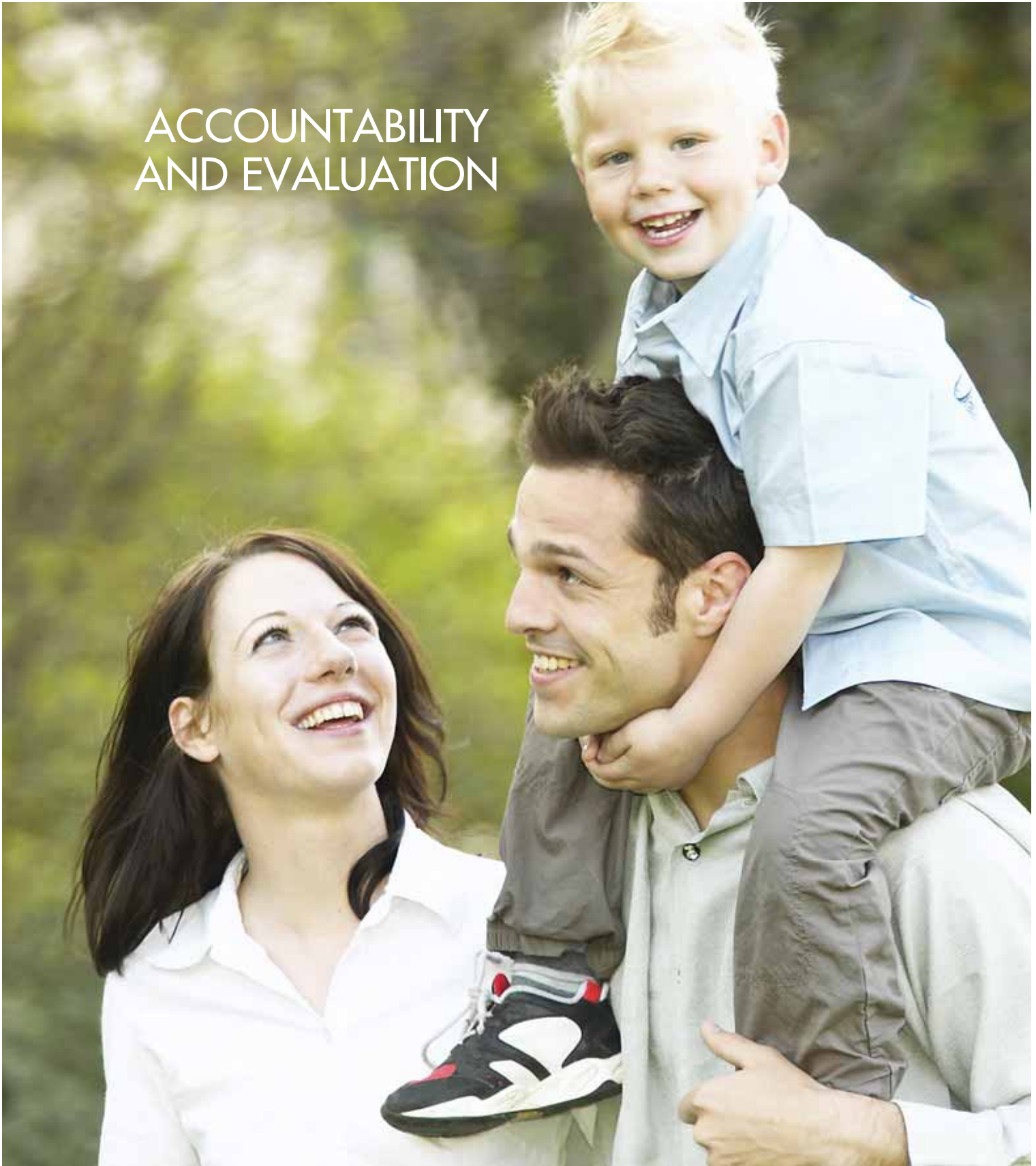
**Additional program and human resources will enhance health promotion capacity to address and support the actions for wellness at the provincial level.**

In order to strengthen the health promotion/wellness capacity of the Regional Integrated Health Authorities to support wellness initiatives, the need for additional provincial program and human resources has been identified. These resources will support an increase in expertise in the areas of nutrition, health promotion and evaluation. These resources will be used to support the development and sharing of new initiatives that can be implemented on a province-wide basis.





# ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION



## ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVALUATION

The Department of Health and Community Services and the Regional Integrated Health Authorities will take the lead role in measuring, tracking and reporting on the progress of the actions identified in the Provincial Wellness Plan. The development of an evaluation plan will help us assess the impact and effectiveness of the interventions outlined in the Wellness Plan. Over time, we should also see the impact we have made on health status and on the capacity of communities to support health and wellness. Other government departments and agencies will be accountable for monitoring and reporting on relevant actions and achievements in their strategies that support wellness.

The evaluation of Phase 1 of the Provincial Wellness Plan will provide evidence to sustain or modify our policies, programs and/or resources. It will also provide information on effective practices to consider in the development of new initiatives as the Wellness Plan evolves. The Wellness Plan will be assessed and reported on annually.

A set of process and outcome indicators will be used to measure the progress and impact of the actions outlined in the Wellness Plan. To date, we have a number of potential indicators identified for each key direction. The indicators will be revised and additional indicators added as the evaluation plan is developed.



## EVALUATION PLAN

An evaluation plan will be developed to monitor the progress and measure the impact of the Provincial Wellness Plan.

The development of an evaluation plan will incorporate evaluation as a key component of the Plan. Indicators will be identified, information and data collection mechanisms will be established and a reporting system will be put in place to report annually on the progress of the Wellness Plan.

### Potential Indicators for Each of the Key Directions

#### 1. Strengthen Partnerships and Collaboration

##### Process:

- The Provincial Wellness Advisory Council maintained and recognized as a shared voice for health promotion and wellness.
- The Alliance for the Control of Tobacco maintained and recognized as a leader in tobacco control and for forming strong partnerships with stakeholders in tobacco control.
- The Regional Wellness Coalitions sustained with expanded scope and number of partnerships in the regions to support wellness initiatives.
- A group of youth identified and engaged to provide input and take action on wellness issues related to youth.
- Our partners in injury prevention consulted on the current status of injury prevention initiatives in the province and a process to support injury prevention identified.

##### Outcome:

- Increase in number of partners working together on wellness initiatives.
- Increase in number of wellness initiatives implemented across all regions by various partners.

## 2. Develop and Expand Wellness Initiatives

### Process:

- The Healthy Students, Healthy Schools initiative implemented with a specific focus on the school food guidelines, student summit, school food programs and physical activity guidelines.
- The healthy living community-based programs expanded across all regions.
- The Provincial Wellness Grants Program implemented.
- The Provincial Food and Nutrition Framework and Action Plan released and select actions implemented.
- The Provincial Tobacco Reduction Strategy implemented.
- A Provincial Injury Prevention Strategy developed.

### Outcome:

- Decrease in adult smoking rates.
- Decrease in youth smoking rates.
- Increase in physical activity rates.
- Decrease in sedentary activity.
- Increase in opportunities for physical activity.
- Increase in consumption of fruits and vegetables.
- Increase in percentage of the population with a healthy weight.
- Increase in community-based wellness activities.



### 3. Increase Public Awareness

#### Process:

- A provincial social marketing campaign for wellness (linked to the Atlantic and national initiatives) developed and implemented.

#### Outcome:

- Increase in promotion of factors that support healthy living (healthy eating and physical activity).



### 4. Enhance Capacity for Health Promotion

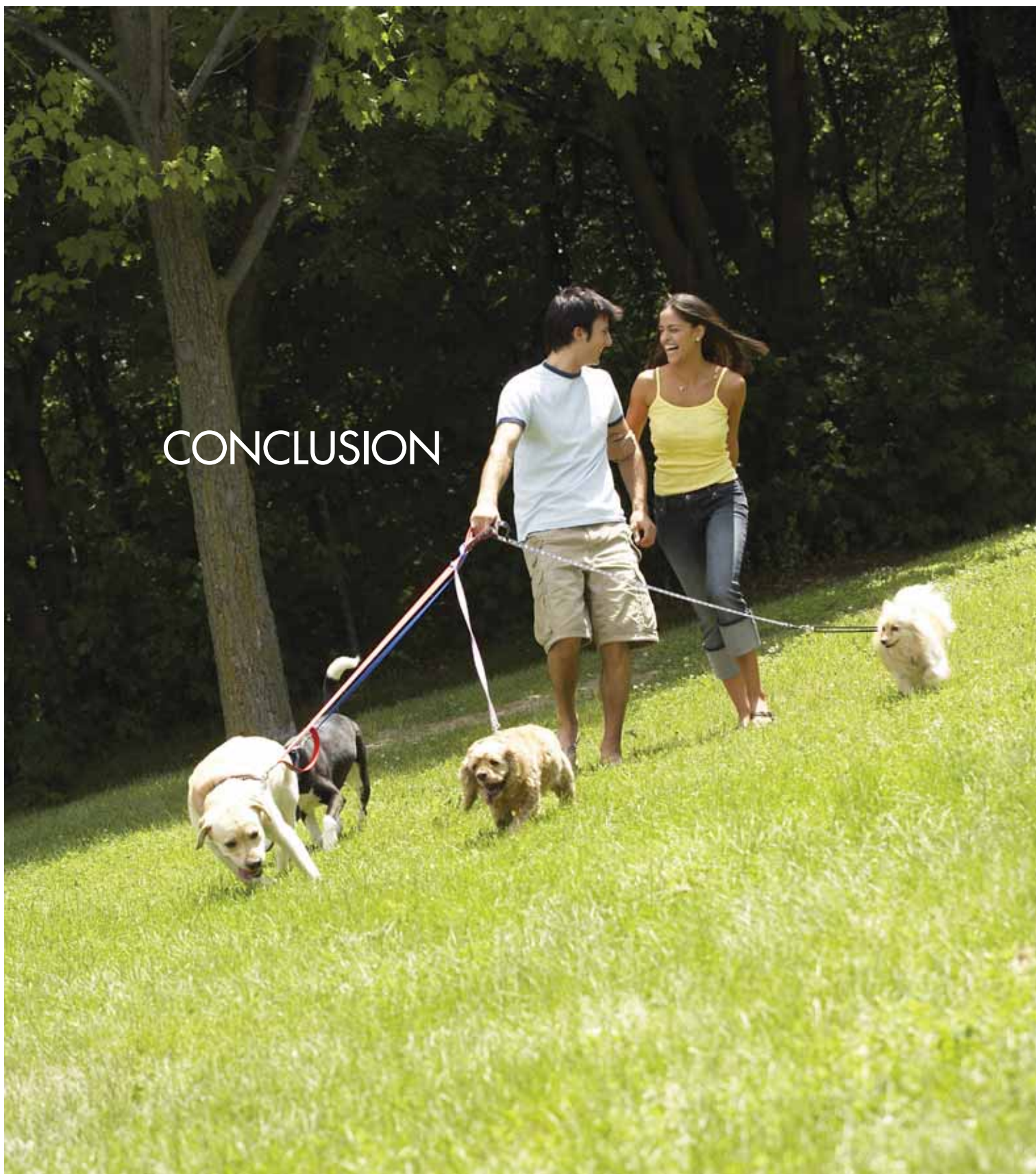
#### Process:

- The Regional Integrated Health Authorities establish new health promotion/community development positions.
- The Regional Integrated Health Authorities support and implement health promotion initiatives.
- The Provincial Health Promotion and Wellness Division establishes new provincial positions to support increased focus on health promotion and wellness throughout the province.

#### Outcome:

- Increase in capacity for health promotion at the regional and provincial levels.
- Increase in knowledge and skills for health promotion in target audiences.
- Increase in integration of health promotion strategies at the regional and provincial levels.

# CONCLUSION



## CONCLUSION

**Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador** outlines a framework that will contribute to improving the health and well-being of the people of the province. Phase 1 identifies leadership, resources and sets the direction for an increased focus on health promotion and wellness over the next three years (2006 - 2008).

To improve overall health, the Provincial Wellness Plan identifies the following wellness priorities:

- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Tobacco control
- Injury prevention
- Mental health promotion
- Child and youth development
- Environmental health
- Health promotion

To address the wellness priorities, four key directions outline the areas for action:

- Strengthen partnerships and collaboration
- Develop and expand wellness initiatives
- Increase public awareness
- Enhance capacity for health promotion

An increased focus on health promotion and wellness requires that the necessary infrastructure, resources and supports to enhance and sustain wellness efforts are in place. The initial commitment and investments for wellness see a strengthening of these elements at the provincial, regional and community levels. Further commitments will build on the successes and learnings from Phase 1.

The first phase of the Wellness Plan addresses the areas of healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control and injury prevention. In the second phase, the current actions will continue to be implemented and new actions will be developed in the areas of mental health promotion, environmental health, child and youth development, and health protection.

Building capacity for health promotion and wellness at multiple levels will increase the opportunities for collaborative action to address the wellness priorities. As supports and healthy environments are put in place and knowledge and skills are developed, individuals, groups and communities can take more responsibility for their health and become partners in addressing health issues.

Addressing the wellness priorities also requires an integrated approach both within and outside the health and community services system. Integrating health promotion and wellness in various systems and sectors increases the development of programs and policies to improve health and wellness. The partnerships formed through the development of the Wellness Plan will be maintained and new partners will become involved as the direction and initiatives continue to expand.

The increased focus on health promotion and wellness and the increased efforts by our many partners will contribute to achieving health and wellness in Newfoundland and Labrador.





## APPENDIX A

### Health Promotion Framework

Health promotion is the process of applying a set of strategies to enable people to increase control over and improve their health. The Circle of Health has been developed as a guide for health promotion work.



**The Circle of Health** provides a common understanding of health promotion. The framework helps to locate links, relationships and contributions in health promotion work. It can be applied to policy and program planning and it helps people, groups and systems understand where their work fits within the larger context of health.

The design of the **Circle** identifies all the main elements required for a comprehensive approach to health promotion. It incorporates the population health approach, the determinants of health and the five health promotion strategies identified in the **Ottawa Charter of Health Promotion**. The rings identify what determines health, who should be involved in the interventions and how to improve health.

**The rings of the framework include (working from the outside in):**

- **Values:** The outside ring (purple) provides the base for the framework. It presents the values which reflect a sense of respect and fairness for all: respect, social justice, sharing, choice, caring and balance. These components help identify the mission and guiding principles for a health promotion initiative.
- **Determinants of Health:** The blue ring identifies what determines health – those aspects that make and keep people healthy: income and social status, social support, education, employment and working conditions, physical environments, personal health practices, healthy child development, health services, gender, genetics and culture.
- **Populations and Settings:** The green ring lists the populations of people who should be involved in the interventions: individuals, families, communities, systems and society. These groupings will also help identify who will be impacted by the changes and how to reach them (e.g., home, school, workplace and community).



Reaching people where they are provides practical opportunities for implementing health promotion strategies to address wellness. Some settings for interaction include:

- where people live (home, apartment, institution, neighbourhood and community)
  - where people learn (day care, school, university, college and training centre)
  - where people work (indoor and outdoor work site and locations)
  - where people play (outdoor spaces, community and recreation facilities)
  - where people interact with the health care system (home visit, clinic, doctor's office and hospital)
- 
- **Health Promotion Strategies:** The yellow ring identifies the health promotion strategies used to improve health: build healthy public policy, create supportive environments, strengthen community action, develop personal skills and reorient health services. These strategies consider a broad range of actions that can be put in place to make changes and improve overall health.
  - **Needs:** The center ring (orange) reflects people's needs. People's health depends on meeting all their needs: physical, emotional, spiritual and mental. Considering these aspects helps to identify which domains of health are being reached by the health promotion initiative.

The **Circle of Health** represents a picture of the components of health at a glance. The model of the framework has each of the rings mounted on a central pivot point. The model allows the rings to be manipulated and provides the opportunity to move each of the rings independently. By moving the rings you can line up many possible interactions within and between components. The overall framework helps to understand health promotion as a dynamic process that involves many people and strategies.

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*Go Healthy* 

**Newfoundland & Labrador**

**Achieving Health and Wellness:**

Provincial Wellness Plan for  
Newfoundland and Labrador  
Phase 1: 2006 - 2008



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and Community Services

