

SENIORS' HEALTH 2006 *Report*

Introduction

The Seniors' Health Report 2006 is one of an ongoing series of health status reports published by Region of Peel, Public Health to describe the health of the region's population.

The profile of seniors in Canadian society has changed compared to previous decades. Today's seniors are living longer, are in better physical and mental shape, are better educated, have an improved economic situation, and are more diverse.

This report provides an overview of seniors aged 65 years and older using the most recent data for the following:

- Peel's seniors
- General health
- Mental health
- Barriers to health
- Health-care services and utilization
- Lifestyle and health behaviours
- Sexual health
- Communicable disease
- Cardiovascular disease
- Cancer
- Chronic obstructive lung disease
- Diabetes
- Arthritis and rheumatism
- Injury
- External causes (e.g., falls) of morbidity and mortality



The *Seniors' Health Report 2006* also contains data on many interventions to promote and protect health.

The *Seniors' Health Report 2006* is intended to be a resource for Peel Public Health and Long Term Care, community groups, health and social services agencies, elected officials, planners and residents to assist in the planning of programs and services for seniors.

For the purposes of this report, the term seniors refers to the population aged 65 years and older. However, as this is not a homogenous population, some of the data refer to more specific age groups within the senior population. Differences in age groups will be discussed throughout the report.

The data in this report on chronic conditions such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and arthritis are presented as individual illnesses or conditions. It is common for seniors to have more than one condition at a time (also known as co-morbidity). According to the 2003 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) for example, one-third (33%) of all Canadian seniors reported that they had three or more chronic conditions (as diagnosed by a health-care professional), compared with 12% of younger adults. In addition, the average number of conditions increased by age group, from almost two chronic conditions for 65- to 74-year-olds to almost three chronic conditions for those aged 85 years or older.²