

World Cancer Day: Canadians Willing to Pitch in to Prevent Cancer

National survey examines attitudes to cancer research

TORONTO – February 3, 2011 – When it comes to cancer research, Canadians want to do more. A national survey released today in advance of World Cancer Day shows that more than half of Canadians 35 to 69 years of age feel cancer should be a top priority for health research. However, the survey also shows that a similar number do not know how to get involved in a way that could be helpful to other people.

We have the answer and it takes just 30 or so minutes to sign up. The *Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project* is looking for 300,000 Canadians between the ages of 35 and 69 to participate in a landmark Canadian study designed to help us better understand cancer and other chronic diseases, like heart and lung disease or diabetes. By following a large group of people over many years, researchers can explore how genetics, environment, lifestyle and behaviour interact and contribute to the development of cancer and other chronic diseases.

“This type of research is often difficult because it is complex, time consuming and extensive resources are required,” says Dr. Heather Bryant, Vice-President of Cancer Control, Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. “By joining this landmark study, Canadians will be contributing to the creation of a rich national bank of health information to help researchers answer fundamental questions about the causes of cancer and chronic disease for future generations.”

Study participants will be asked to provide information about their health, lifestyle and environment, biological samples such as urine and blood, and physical measurements such as weight and height. By following participants over the long term, researchers will be able to build layers of information that will create a rich understanding of how all of these factors interact to affect health. It is much more than a single study: it is the construction of a population laboratory that will yield results for decades to come.

“Like many Canadians, I have been personally affected by cancer and have often felt powerless in the face of this devastating disease,” says Jan Duff, a study participant. “By participating in the *Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project*, I know that I’m making a simple contribution that could make a significant difference in cancer research, and prevent my children and grandchildren from ever developing the disease.”

Most Canadians Want to Do More to Support Cancer Research

A new survey, conducted by Angus Reid Public Opinion for the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer to mark World Cancer Day on February 4th, found that virtually all Canadian respondents aged 35 to 69 (91 per cent) have been touched by cancer and three-quarters (74 per cent) feel that they are likely to develop cancer themselves. While more than half of Canadians (58 per cent), feel that they can do more to help improve the health of Canadians, a similar proportion (54 per cent) also feel that they do not know how they can help other people with their health problems, despite many (59 per cent) being interested in donating more time to health-related causes. While many Canadians in this age group (55 per cent) selected cancer over nine other possibilities as the top priority for health research, when introduced to the *Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project*, 80 per cent agree that it is critical for Canadians to participate in this type of study.

About Canada's Landmark Cancer and Chronic Disease Research Study

The *Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project* consists of five regional studies known as *Atlantic PATH*, *BC Generations Project*, Quebec's *CARTaGENE*, *Ontario Health Study* and Alberta's *The Tomorrow Project*. These cohorts are being driven by partner organizations in the five participating regions including the BC Cancer Agency, Alberta Health Services - Cancer Care, Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, Cancer Care Ontario, Quebec's *CARTaGENE* project, and Cancer Care Nova Scotia with Dalhousie University collaborating for work in the Atlantic Provinces.

Funding includes \$42 million from the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer – a national, independent organization funded by the federal government to accelerate action on cancer control for all Canadians – along with additional regional commitments of \$57.1 million.

How to Join

Make a commitment to cancer research by participating in the *Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project*, please visit www.partnershipfortomorrow.ca.

About The Canadian Partnership Against Cancer

The Canadian Partnership Against Cancer is an independent organization funded by the federal government to accelerate action on cancer control for all Canadians. Bringing together cancer experts, government representatives, the Canadian Cancer Society and cancer patients, survivors and their families through the Canadian Cancer Action Network to implement the first pan-Canadian cancer control strategy, the vision is to be a driving force to achieve a focused approach that will help prevent cancer, enhance the quality of life of those affected by cancer, lessen the likelihood of dying from cancer, and increase the efficiency of cancer control in Canada. For more information about the Partnership and Canada's cancer control strategy, visit partnershipagainstcancer.ca. The Canadian Partnership Against Cancer is also the driving force behind cancerview.ca, an online community linking Canadians to cancer information, services and resources.

About Angus Reid Public Opinion

Angus Reid Public Opinion is headed by Dr. Angus Reid: an industry visionary who has spent more than four decades asking questions to figure out what people feel, how they think and who they will vote for. A team of talented and experienced practitioners with a unique and profound understanding of global issues conduct high quality research throughout the world on a daily basis for corporations, governments, academic researchers, and non-profit organizations.

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The survey was conducted from January 19th to 23rd, 2011 by Angus Reid Public Opinion in collaboration with the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer. The survey was administered online among 1,002 Canadians aged 35 to 69 years who were recruited from the Angus Reid Forum online research panel. The margin of error, which measures sampling variability, is +/- 3.1% points, 19 times out of 20. Survey results have been statistically weighted according to the 2006 Census data on age, gender, region and education to ensure the sample is representative of the adult population Canadians between the ages of 35 and 69.

References:

¹ Canadian Cancer Society. Canadian Cancer Statistics 2010.