Saskatoon, Canada

Canola

General overview

The province of Saskatchewan in Canada covers an area of 651 900 km^2 and has about 1.17 million inhabitants (2017). The largest city in the province is Saskatoon with a population of approximately 250 000 (2017) *(1)*.

Currently, life expectancy is 83.4 years for women and 78.7 years for men; there is a 9-year gap between the most and least well off *(1)*.

According to recent data, the top causes of death are circulatory diseases, cancer and respiratory diseases, and 57.6% of the population is overweight or obese. The self-rated health status is reported as very good or excellent for 65.2% of the population *(1)*.

Further information on health status in Saskatoon can be found in the reports under "Community views" on the CommunityView Collaboration website *(1)*.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority is responsible for the delivery of health services for the entire province of Saskachewan. It is the largest organization in the province, employing over 44 000 people.

Health services delivery in Saskatchewan is organized into six integrated service areas

(ISAs), providing a comprehensive range of services and programmes, including – but not limited to – hospital and long-term care, public health, home care, mental-health and addiction services, and prenatal and palliative care. Located in the western prairies of the south-central part of the province, the city of Saskatoon, along with its surrounding area, form one of the ISAs. Saskatoon is the main referral centre for the central and northern part of the province, providing specialized care to thousands of people from across Saskatchewan.

Together with the Health Sciences Colleges of the University of Saskatchewan, the hospitals and community health services in Saskatoon form an academic health sciences centre supporting more than 394 research studies within the health area. They provide training opportunities to more than 2000 health sciences students and take part in health education and research for the benefit of the province as a whole.

The Public and Population Health Department of the Saskatchewan Health Authority receives 2% of the health budget to deliver a wide range of programmes spanning the following areas: healthy families (immunizations, well

child clinics, oral health, older-adult wellness, parenting support); communicable disease control; international travellers' health; sexual-health; street health/harm reduction; HIV and TB prevention and treatment; population-health promotion; health inspection; and environmental health services. All of the programmes involved are supported by a public health observatory, the primary focus of which is to build health equity.

Strengths

Saskatoon's strengths include:

- ✓ health status monitoring and health equity reporting, monitoring and evaluation *(2,3)*;

- ✓ intersectoral collaboration through priority projects, such as: the Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership; the Plan to End Homelessness; the Aboriginal Employment Strategy; the Early Childhood Development Strategy; and the HUB/Centre of Responsibility (COR) model *(4,5)*;

- ✓ research on population health intervention, including topics, such as comprehensive school health, equitable immunization coverage for low-income neighbourhoods, and the HIV reduction strategy;

- ✓ adaption of quality improvement and management

- ✓ tools to public health and community services;

- ✓ auditing of health-care equity in the health system, and application of a health-equity gauge to health services;

- ✓ translation of knowledge on health equity and the social determinants of health for use in the health system and by intersectoral partners;

- ✓ public health leadership at the subnational level (Saskatoon's Medical Health Officer is co- founder and president of the Urban Public Health Network (UPHN) in Canada, which comprises the public health departments of the 23 largest cities/regions in Canada) *(6)*.

Aspirations

Saskatoon is aiming to:

- ✓ integrate population-health approaches in the health system;

- ✓ conduct collaborative and comparative health-equity and health-policy research and monitoring with other regions of Canada and the Regions for Health Network (RHN);

- ✓ develop comparative health-status and health-performance indicators;

- ✓ develop cultural competencies and safety approaches to reduce health inequities.

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Challenges

These are:

- ✓ lack of cultural diversity in the health workforce;
- ✓ low level of public health and prevention among government funding priorities;
- ✓ lack of surge capacity in times of public health crisis.

Potential areas of collaboration

Saskatoon is interested in collaborating with other regions (through RHN and UPHN) on:

- ✓ comparative research and monitoring projects *(6)*;
- ✓ poverty-reduction planning;
- ✓ and in acting as the liaison with and collaboration link to other UPHN members for any RHN-member initiatives.

Working groups

Saskatoon is interested in participating in working groups on:

- ✓ the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) *(7)*/ equity;
- ✓ health systems/primary health care;
- ✓ the all-of-government approach/intersectoral action.

People active in the Regions for Health Network (RHN)

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