



May 9, 2012

Derry Martens
CEO
Churchill Health Centre
Churchill MB R0B 0E0

Subject: 2012 Briefing Note: The Youth Health Survey

Dear Ms Martens:

As Chair of Partners in Planning for Healthy Living (PPHL), I'd like to thank you for your support of Partners' activities. RHAs' involvement has been an essential element in the collection and use of local risk factor data, which started with efforts to understand the health of school-aged youth and is now gradually moving into the area of measuring health in adults. All data are collected at a community level to better inform the implementation of locally-relevant programs and policies.

I am writing to advise that Partners is preparing for the implementation of the second round of the Youth Health Survey in the 2012-13 school year, which will provide updated data and an assessment of trends in the health of school-aged youth in Grades 7 to 12. As with our first Youth Health Survey, we are working closely with the school divisions, boards, and schools themselves, with the RHAs being key to successful survey implementation.

A few fast facts about the project:

What is the Youth Health Survey (YHS)?

- The first province-wide implementation of the YHS was conducted between November 2005 and October 2008.
- This is a collaborative effort of members of Partners in Planning for Healthy Living (PPHL) supported by government departments of Education, Healthy Living and Healthy Child Manitoba.
- Manitoba's experience with the YHS demonstrated that risk factor surveillance can have a positive impact at the regional, community and policy level and can provide an opportunity for program evaluation at all levels.

Who will be involved in the 2012 YHS?

- All Manitoba students in Grades 7-12 will be invited to participate during the 2012-2013 school year.
- Similar to the last YHS, RHAs will take the lead on implementing the YHS and disseminating results to schools.

What questions will be included in the 2012 YHS?

- 84 questions, 10 pages, (approx. 30 – 40 minutes).
- Topics from the original YHS include student demographics, physical activity, healthy eating, tobacco, alcohol & substance use.
- New or enhanced topics include safety/injury prevention, mental health, school connectedness, sleep patterns, sun/UV exposure, physical education curriculum and sexual health (optional).



How was the YHS developed?

- Expert Working Groups were brought together to provide input on content areas.
- An environmental scan of existing questionnaires was conducted.
- Each expert group reviewed, chose and amended questions to 'best' gather the information important to stakeholders.
- The Youth Health Survey Tools and Methods Working Group conducted the final review and revisions.

What will RHAs and school receive from the YHS?

- Feedback reports are prepared at the school, school division, community and RHA level to assist in local-level planning.
- The last YHS also developed a provincial level report - available at <http://partners.healthincommon.ca/reports/>.

What can the YHS data be used for?

- Community health planning, health promotion and programming at all levels.
- Policy evaluation at the school, community and regional levels.
- Policy evaluation at the provincial level for the 2008-2009 Grades 11 and 12 Active Healthy Lifestyles: Physical/Health Education curriculum.

We look forward to working with you again on the second cycle of the Youth Health Survey. If you have questions you can contact me at (204) 787-2573, or via email at donna.turner@cancercare.mb.ca, or contact Tannis Erickson the YHS Working Group Chair at (204) 235-3326 or tannis.erickson@cancercare.mb.ca. I have also copied the Partners representative for your RHA should you require additional information.

Regards,

Donna Turner, PhD

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donna Turner".

Chair, Partners in Planning for Healthy Living

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cc. Nancy Hughes , PPHL Member