Good Wishes to CPRN's Friends from Judith Maxwell

Friday, December 20, 2002 – Greetings to all our Friends on the web, and many, many thanks for the feedback you have given us over the year. You give us confidence and hope for the New Year.

2002 has been a year of accomplishments for CPRN.

Our Public Involvement Network (PIN) has produced Canada's first Report Card on the Quality of Life from a citizens' perspective. PIN went on to conduct a series of intensive dialogues with citizens on the tough choices facing Canada's health care system. The results of those discussions had a major impact on the report of the Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada. Today, PIN is busy analyzing the results of yet another series of citizens' dialogues on The Kind of Canada We Want – in effect, defining a social contract for today. Throughout these experiences we have been impressed by Canadians' strong desire to be involved in the key debates of our age and by the quality of ideas they have produced. It has been a privilege to take part in these exchanges.

Our Health Network also contributed to the work of the Romanow Commission with an assessment of the state of health human resource planning in Canada. The ideas from that work are visible in the Commissioner's final report. The Network's interest in knowledge transfer has clearly struck a chord with our subscribers, and future projects in the areas of governance and accountability in health care respond to citizens' priorities.

The Work Network's new Web site, ***jobquality.ca***, which presents indicators on the quality of Canadian workplaces and analyzes them in terms of a number of key variables, has drawn almost 60,000 visitors in its first year of operation. The Network has been expanding its work on access to education and skill development, and has pursued its interest in job quality with examination of health care workplaces and, most recently, workplaces in the increasingly important non-profit sector. That work will continue into the New Year.

The Family Network has also broadened its range of activities to include a series of studies on Canada's cities that will help define the components for a "best policy mix" to ensure their social and economic success. The Network is also developing a body of work around the redesign of Canada's "social architecture", drawing on the experience of other countries. If that weren't enough, work continues in the Network's traditional areas of interest – early childhood development, citizenship, diversity and social cohesion.

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This list leaves out many activities of the past year. Suffice it to say, our lives have been far from boring! The year to come promises more of the same.

What has been particularly rewarding has been the public response to our work. Our community of Friends continues to grow, as new people subscribe to ***e-network***. You and others downloaded more than 460,000 documents from the web site in 2002, up 44 percent from 2001. Most of you downloaded new releases, but many of you are obviously still using earlier releases – a sign they are still relevant to your needs. Together, you provide a direct market test of the value of our work. Thanks.

All this has been happening on a web site that has clearly outgrown its original design. So I am happy to report that early in the New Year (January/February) we will be offering you a fresh new Web site, updated in its look, its technology and its search engine. I hope you will all be happy to see this fresh face, especially those who provided suggestions in response to our survey of ***e-network*** subscribers.

A word of thanks, too, to those of you who have taken part in our dialogues, roundtables and other events during 2002. I cannot tell you how much I have enjoyed meeting you, exchanging ideas and learning from you. I look forward to more such encounters in future. You are our most important network of all.

This is not an easy time to build a country. There are constraints on every side. But Canada has room to make choices. All we need to do is dare to make them. Our job is to help inform the choices. And we have a great line up of ideas for the first half of 2003.

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