Then and Now: Selected Snapshots of Health Factors in Canada

September 29, 2000 – The Lalonde Report, *A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians*, came out just over 25 years ago. It is seen as one of the most influential health policy documents in Canadian history. Why? Because it stressed the importance to health of factors beyond the health care system.

Lalonde divided the determinants of health into four "health fields:" lifestyle, human biology, the environment, and health care organization.

As part of CPRN's **Towards a New Perspective on Health Policy** project, researchers Philip Groff and Susan Goldberg compiled health data on factors in each of these four health fields to make a comparison between the time of Lalonde and the present. In the process, they found that interpretation of the data is highly controversial and that it is not possible to determine the impact of changing approaches to health policy conclusively from the data.

Nevertheless, the data Groff and Goldberg compiled makes for interesting reading. In the interests of fostering and feeding debate over alternative approaches to health and health care, CPRN is releasing their work as a Background Paper, "The Health Field Concept Then and Now: Snapshots of Canada."

Both the paper and a substantial statistical appendix are available on our Web site.

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