NETWORKnews

SHARING IDEAS TO HELP IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF CANADIANS

Post-Secondary Access and Student Financial Aid in Canada

This country has reason to feel proud of its educational accomplishments. Among OECD nations, for example, Canada's educational attainment takes top spot. During the 1990s high school completion rates increased such that, by 1995, 65 percent of high school graduates went directly to post-secondary education.

Why then did university participation rates and enrollments show little change in the same decade?

In their background paper *Post-Secondary Access and Student Financial Aid in Canada: Current Knowledge and Research Gaps*, E. Dianne Looker of Acadia University and Graham S. Lowe, CPRN's Director of CPRN's Work Network, examine the issue. Demographics, they say, played a key role.

But there's more. They say that demographics combined with a complex set of social, economic and political factors to influence post-secondary enrollment patterns in the '90s. And the reality is that no one understands exactly how they interact or how much importance to place on them.

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Worse, no one understands what effect higher tuition fees and rising debt loads carried by university graduates will have on the situation. For example, tuition in Arts undergraduate programs has increased by 126 percent since 1990-91. And compared with university graduates a mere decade before, higher proportions of students in the '90s relied on student loans. They borrowed more and it took them longer to pay off the debt.

CPRN is a national not-for-profit research institute whose mission is to create knowledge and lead public debate on social and economic issues important to the well-being of Canadians, in order to help build a more just, prosperous and caring society.

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received 58 percent of university diplomas and degrees. But male teenagers have lower literacy levels and fewer of them actually complete high school. In addition, Aboriginal people achieve significantly lower educational levels than non-Aboriginals. And high school graduates from urban areas are much more likely to move on to higher education than their rural counterparts.

> **…many more women are getting a higher education: in 1997 they received 58 percent of university diplomas and degrees.**

It should come as no surprise that the children of higher income earners are much more likely to enrol in post-secondary education than those from lower income families. Nor, that the former are much likely to attend university and then pursue post-graduate degrees. But Looker and Lowe say the gap between richer and poorer students may be growing and this will reduce their already limited access.

Other factors affecting access include:

- **Language** – students whose mother tongue is English are more likely to attend university than are francophones

- **Immigration status** – people born outside of Canada are more likely to participate in university and in trade/vocational programs

In their paper, Looker and Lowe undertake to identify knowledge gaps that need to be addressed in future policy research on post-secondary education in Canada. (CPRN anticipates that their findings will help the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation develop a comprehensive research agenda.)

The trends aren't easy to read. As Looker and Lowe put it: "Relatively high overall post-secondary partici-pation stands in contrast with persistent and emerging inequalities based on socio-economic status and other socio-demographic characteristics. These trends must be viewed against a backdrop of unknown effects of the rising costs of post-secondary education for growing numbers of students."

What *is* known, they say, is that many more women are getting a higher education: in 1997 they

- **Race** – there is no Canadian research other than that relating to Aboriginal peoples

- **Disabilities** – students with disabilities are under-represented

- **Region of the country** – rates of university participation are highest in Ontario

- **Family structure** – single-parent families have lower rates of participation

- **Age** – older students have lower rates of attendance

- **Type of program or type of institution** – little is known

- **Access to information** – students with limited access to information are less likely to participate

So how do students pay for their education? Well, financial aid can come through a wide range of sources including student loans through the Canada Student Loan Program; bursaries and other forms of loans; family financing through gifts, investments (RESPs) or loans; self-financing through paid work; personal loans; and for a small minority, scholarships.

While governments have a wide array of policy options for dealing with student aid, little systematic information is available. Looker and Lowe say this raises two important policy questions: "What is the best mix of programs to meet the diverse financial needs of students at different stages of their education?" and, "What forms of flexibility need to be designed into programs to ensure these needs are being met?"

While the Council for Ministers of Education Canada links the post-secondary participation gaps between lower- and middle-income families to stagnant family incomes, rising economic inequality and declining grants-based student funding, Looker and Lowe argue that current data to document these trends are needed. To be useful, they say, "such data must enable researchers to examine how a student's family socio-economic status interacts with their gender, ethnicity, Aboriginal status or disability – personal characteristics traditionally associated with educational disadvantage."

They argue that much more than financial aid is required to redress inequalities in access to post-secondary education. Future research should help determine what combinations of monetary support and other kinds of support are needed to help those who lack the social, cultural and psychological resources to attain a higher education, they say.

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Post-Secondary Access and Student Financial Aid Workshop

In February CPRN held a *Workshop on Post-Secondary Access and Student Financing*. Representing a wide range of stakeholder groups, 35 participants discussed the issues raised in Looker and Lowe's background paper *Post-Secondary Access and Student Financial Aid in Canada: Current Knowledge and Research Gaps*.

Participants identified key themes and questions that need to be answered both in terms of access to post secondary education and student financial aid. They also dealt with the thornier questions of identifying gaps in the available data and the best ways to disseminate research findings.

The research recommended by participants will shape policy and practice, both directly and indirectly. Workshop deliberations and recommendations are available at the Web sites of the CPRN (www.cprn.org) and the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation (www.millenniumscholarships.ca).

Movement and Growth:
The Changing Boundaries of Citizenship

For centuries, struggles over the boundaries of citizenship have been at the centre of political debates. Citizenship, broadly defined, is an important political tool for the state, which, in defining citizenship, sets the conditions for full membership in the political community. In addition, it is a way for political actors who may use citizenship vocabulary to seek inclusion in the polity.

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Therefore, says Jane Jenson, CPRN Family Network Director and Martin Papillon, York University Political Science Professor, both state actions and social movements challenge the boundaries of the political community.

Jenson and Papillon co-authored "The Changing Boundaries of Citizenship. A Review and a Research Agenda," a paper that raises issues about the barriers to, and the boundaries of, citizenship. It is one of four papers in "Modernizing Governance: A Preliminary Exploration," published by the Canadian Centre for Management Development.

Jenson and Papillon consider citizenship to be "a dynamic relation between three complimentary dimensions: rights and responsibilities, access, and belonging". The "boundaries of citizenship" they refer to are those that define the relationship between the individual and the state, and the relationship among individuals that share a relationship with a state.

During the past four centuries, it's the idea – and the promise – of citizenship that has mobilized contestation, debate and efforts to redesign the boundaries of the relationship to political authority. In this paper, Jenson and Papillon, explore four challenges to the current understanding of citizenship: diversity, location citizenship, social citizenship and participation.

The Challenge of Diversity

This area is both well documented and highly discussed. But it has also led to some of the most difficult political disputes of the last decades. Why? Well, because when cultural attributes and related values are recognized, then they are often treated as either beyond the reach of citizenship or as something to be smoothed over by good citizenship practices.

However, since 1971 the Government of Canada has officially promoted a policy of multiculturalism which stresses the positive

value of cultural diversity in a liberal society. Its multiculturalism policies don't envisage a society divided along cultural lines. Instead, they are supposed to enhance people's freedom to choose to live according to their cultural heritage.

> **…since 1971 the Government of Canada has officially promoted a policy of multiculturalism which stresses the positive value of cultural diversity in a liberal society.**

Jenson and Papillon argue that citizenship cannot be treated as "above" cultural distinctions. That multiple communities of belonging are becoming the rule rather than the exception and that this has important consequences for defining the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

The Challenge of Locating Citizenship

In an era of globalization, the bond of citizenship is being challenged. How, people wonder, can national sovereignty survive in such an environment? When political struggles and debates get played out at transnational or subnational levels, national polities may become less

relevant, or less central to democratic practices. The same holds true for feelings of belonging and the way in which rights are distributed.

Indeed, Jenson and Papillon note that one consequence of globalization "has been the resurgence of local or subnational communities as a site of struggles for power as well as democratic expression and solidarity."

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The Challenge of Social Citizenship

The use of public funds to improve the quality of life of a state's citizens represented a major change in thinking about public finances. It also marked the creation of social rights of citizenship through public support of education, health, children and the poor.

Today supporting social citizenship has come under fire for creating "passive" citizens – citizens who become both economically and politically disengaged. On the other

hand, Jenson and Papillon argue that there is "increasing recognition that economic exclusion and poverty hinder access to the full rights of citizenship."

The Challenge of Participation

The right to vote and to stand for public office was historically, and continues to this day to be, the mark of a citizen. But the ability to translate that right into a genuine ability to participate remains an issue. In addition, say Jenson and Papillon, "there is the issue of civic duties, and the extent to which a good citizen must participate in civic, and particularly in political life, and therefore the need to educate them to do so."

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What Next?

The questions and issues revolving around citizenship are complex and

invite no easy answers. Nor do Canadians and their government have a consensus on where things are going, let alone where they should be going. However, Jenson and Papillon use the four challenges of citizenship as a springboard to identify specific areas where future research is needed.

> **"there is the issue of civic duties, and the extent to which a good citizen must participate in civic, and particularly in political life, and therefore the need to educate them to do so."**

Their hope is that such research might improve our understanding of all the changes taking place in the name of citizenship "and their impact on governance, state-citizen relations, well-being and democratic practices."

Making Job Quality Job #1

Beyond wages and benefits, job quality is emerging as one of the key factors in hiring and retaining skilled employees. Early next fall, CPRN's Work Network will launch a Quality of Employment Indicators Web site to generate discussion and further raise the profile of the quality of employment in Canada. Earlier this spring, *NetworkNews* met with Grant Schellenberg, a Senior Researcher with the Work Network and the Quality of Employment Indicators Project, to discuss the Web site.

NN: *Why a Web site?*

GS: We are hearing more and more about the importance of work environments and the quality of jobs for individuals, families and employers. Right now, however, there is no one place where people can find comprehensive, reliable, user-friendly information and tools on job quality and the quality of working environments. The Web site will help solve that problem.

NN: *How?*

GS: We are identifying the characteristics of a good quality job and clearly showing through words, graphics and tables, why they matter. In all cases, there will be a strong link to work outcomes. So, visitors interested in specific aspects of job quality, such as employee participation or involvement in the workplace, will find a newsy write-up telling them about the indicator and how to interpret it. We will also show them the link between employee participation and outcomes such as job satisfaction. In this case, the evidence is clear: employees who have a high level of influence have a higher level of job satisfaction, and it seems that they have a higher level of commitment to their employers.

NN: *You mentioned tools, how will they work?*

GS: The Web site will have diagnostic tools that employers – and others for that matter – can use to assess job quality in their workplaces. Employers, for example, will be able to download surveys and field them in their own organizations to gather information on how employees feel about their jobs, about the pace of their work, about the resources they have to do their work, and so on. With data from the Web site, employers will be able to benchmark their enterprises against the industry average and gauge how they stack up against their competitors.

Of course the resources and information will be refined and updated, so the site will always be current.

NN: *Are there other interactive features to the site?*

GS: Absolutely. We hope to make the Web site a hub for discussion on employment quality, by making annotated links to other high quality sites and by holding online discussions among human resource experts. For example, we might hold an in-depth discussion among 2 or 3 experts on a certain aspect of job quality and then post a synthesis of their discussion on the Web site. Visitors could read it and respond to it. Discussions might center on specific topics, like workplace harassment, programs to increase employee skill, or ways to create a healthy work environment. These informed discussions by experts in the field would help us bridge the varied interests of our audience.

NN: *How is the site being supported?*

GS: We have a broad range of funders supporting the site: several federal and provincial government departments, private sector corporations, like Bell Canada, a private charitable foundation and organized labour. The fact that we have virtually every segment of the economy signed on to the project shows, I think, how important the issues surrounding the quality of jobs and high quality work environments are to a wide range of people.

NN: *Thanks for your time.*

GS: You're welcome.

No Small Matter: Child Policy Research in Canada

Politicians of every stripe have identified children as a priority for social spending. To date, federal, provincial and territorial governments have pumped hundreds of millions of dollars into the National Children's Agenda (NCA). Why then should a leading Canadian researcher feel the need to make the case for child policy research?

"The answer," says CPRN researcher and Carleton University professor Rianne Mahon, is that "not enough of the right sort is being done to enable the full development of Canada's children." Her remarks were part of the 18th annual Davidson Dunton Research lecture which she delivered at Carleton University on March 21, 2001.

Mahon told her audience that "there are at least three good reasons why we need to pay attention to policies directed at children:"

- the "care crisis" resulting from the decline of the traditional male breadwinner family which formed the foundation of Canada's post-war social policies,

- the looming population crunch where fewer working Canadians will struggle to support growing numbers of retired baby boomers, and

- the demands of the emerging knowledge-based economy (KBE).

Mahon outlined some of the policy challenges posed by the confluence of these changes. For example, the decline of the male breadwinner family and the growth of dual earner and single earner families demand new ways of providing and financing care for the old and young alike. As Canada's population grays, policymakers need to make it easier, especially for women, to combine work and parenting. Immigration alone will not provide a sustainable age balance. And, if the emergent KBE is to include all Canadians, then we need programs that support the full development of all of Canada's children.

Mahon's assessment of Canada's response to these challenges thus far is a mixture of cautious optimism about the long-term, tempered by pessimism over what appears to be happening now.

"The optimist in me wants to say that the Children's Agenda, which is one of the key pieces of the "social renewal process" in which the federal, provincial and territorial governments are engaged, represents a new opening," she says. "Governments are aware of the challenges – at least, to some extent."

Much of Mahon's pessimism stems from her analysis of the National Child Benefit (NCB), the first major policy instrument in the renewal process to focus on children. She calls it regressive. Unlike the old Family Allowance, it is not a universal program and it falls far short of offsetting the costs of rearing children. And even though low income-earners are eligible for the NCB supplement, they must earn *less than* $21,214 to qualify for the supplement payment.

Mahon maintains that NCB largely ignores school-aged children. Its focus (and much of the NCA to date) is the very young. She also believes that the NCB reveals an employment strategy choice that is wrong for Canada's evolving knowledge-based economy.

"The narrowly targeted aspect of the NCB is part of a set of policies that, in effect, subsidize the "bad jobs" part of our increasingly polarized economy," she says.

To foster child-centred development, Mahon calls for a system of universally accessible child services that supports dual-earner and single parent-earner families and plays a strong role in a "KBE" employment strategy.

Canadians, she says, must reignite their social imaginations to define a better, more equitable world that integrates our wage-earning lives with our care giving and active community lives – while also having some fun.

Rianne Mahon is the author of the CPRN Family Network Study, "School-Aged Children Across Canada: A Patchwork of Public Policies". Both her study and this presentation are available on the CPRN Web site at www.cprn.org.

Towards a New Perspective on Health Policy

It's called the butterfly effect and it's used to explain how small, seemingly insignificant changes in large, complex systems, like the weather, can have unpredictable and sometimes disastrous effects. Though it is of small comfort to the 5,000 residents of Walkerton, Ontario, it may help explain how their town's water became contaminated and they became sick with a deadly form of *E.coli* bacteria.

"Many of the features of [Walkerton] can be characterized in terms of complex adaptive systems," says Sholom Glouberman, CPRN's Director of the Health Network." In this case, the coincidence of a series of small events resulted in tipping the health status of half the population of Walkerton from relatively healthy to ill."

> **Advances in medical knowledge have led to an ever-deepening understanding of the physiology and psychology of the individual person.**

Walkerton is one of four case studies that Glouberman chronicles in *Towards a New Perspective on Health Policy*, the final report of a three-year research project at CPRN. The report ties together a number of separate studies and the results of discussions involving some

3,500 people at more than 90 events. Glouberman uses this collection of work and the growing body of knowledge that deals with complex adaptive systems to make his case for a broader understanding of health and health policy, one that recognizes the complexity of both.

The study takes a careful look at three fundamental questions:

What is health?

What is a health system? And,

What is health policy?

In his search for a new meaning to health, Glouberman turns to the past. He traces our concepts of health from the time of Hippocrates to the end of the 20th century. What he uncovers are three elements that are common to our understanding of health: the individual, the social context, and the way the two interact. Traditions for thinking about health have generally stressed one of these elements over the others.

The medical tradition, for example, focussed on health as it applies to an individual organism. Advances in medical knowledge have led to an ever-deepening understanding of the physiology and psychology of the individual person. Within this tradition, interventions have sought to maintain individual health and prevent or cure illness.

A second tradition looks beyond the body to the environment, which is seen as more important to individual health than medical intervention. This tradition has deep roots in public health initiatives like sanitation, mass vaccination, and health promotion programs to change unhealthy behaviours. Its most recent expression is the field of population health, which identifies

socioeconomic factors as the source of persistent inequalities in health.

The report offers a third approach. It maintains that the quality of the complex interaction between an individual and his or her social context is what largely determines health. Negative interactions are associated with lower health status, positive interactions with a higher health status.

There is mounting evidence to support this dynamic view of health. Research shows that a person's health status closely parallels their socio-economic status, regardless of the quality of the health care system available to them.

"What is challenging and hard to assimilate," Glouberman says, "is that this is not merely true of people who are disadvantaged: the very poor, the socially isolated. People with full time jobs and families, with relatively stable lives in the middle of the socioeconomic ladder, are less well than those above them."

This may explain why inequalities in health persist within universally accessible health care systems like Canada's. Yet the growing evidence that health and well-being follow wealth has had little policy impact.

Glouberman explains why: "This research begins to explain the nature and source of the inequalities but there is a current logjam about its policy consequences."

That logjam is mired in a left-right debate about the roles and responsibilities of the many actors with a role in health policy – federal and provincial governments, health professionals and managers, academics, and interested citizens.

Beyond any logjam, the link between health and wealth presents health policy makers with a quandary: if their mission is to improve the health of the population or even if they wish to reduce inequalities in health, the policy tools available to them are limited.

"They cannot themselves develop policies for "macroeconomic or cultural change," nor can they develop policies that will increase access to essential services outside the health portfolio, such as housing, or circumstances such as control over work," says Glouberman.

So what are the options for the future?

"A key step forward in breaking the logjam in health policy will be to recognize that the first obligation of health ministries is to maintain and improve the health "edifice" to assure the security of public health and contribute to the well-being of citizens," says Glouberman.

Research into inequalities in health also indicates that there is a much broader range of government policies that contribute to health. They include, among others: housing policy, education and employment conditions. In addressing this issue the report turns convention on its ear.

"Effective economic and social policies will have a major impact on the health status of the population,"

says Glouberman. "We have argued that health status measures could then be excellent indicators of the effectiveness of socioeconomic policies."

What policymakers must avoid, the report says, are dramatic changes to the health system like those introduced in the mid 1990s. The sudden withdrawal of funding intensified rivalries among professional groups, among the stages of health policy and between health and social policy budgets. This competition actually drove costs higher and increased anxiety about health care.

Policymakers could not have predicted this result. Nor could they have predicted that streamlining water testing in Ontario would inadvertently put at risk the health of the people of Walkerton. And there is the rub. Uncertainty and unpredictability are a fundamental characteristic of large complex systems like health.

"No decision maker is in a position to anticipate how the system as a whole will react to new interventions," says Glouberman. "The most effective policy decisions will have to rely on a combination of the best available medical evidence along with evidence based on experience and anecdotes of local conditions."

Glouberman and his new organization, Health and Everything (www.healthandeverything.org), will continue to examine more carefully the consequences of using these new perspectives on health and health policy for policy development.

Setting Priorities for Health Services Research

Human resource issues, such as the shortage of nurses in Canada, must be a priority for health services research says an environmental scan of 56 organizations working in the health care sector in Canada and abroad. The scan, carried out by CPRN researcher Terry Albert, was part of a broader consultation process initiated by a consortium that included:

- the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation,

- the Institute for Health Services and Policy Research,

- the Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment,

- the Canadian Institute for Health Information, and

- the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Advisory Committee on Health Services.

Other health services and policy priorities identified by the scan were:

- continuity of care and integration of service delivery,

- utilization, access and waiting lists,

- health technology assessment and evaluation,

- system performance indicators,

- building research capacity.

"Interestingly," says Albert, "two areas identified as high priority – health human resources and

technology assessment – weren't even on the radar screen in 1997, when we conducted a similar scan for the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation."

> **Human resource issues, such as the shortage of nurses in Canada, must be a priority for health services research…**

The reason, he explains, is a function of the lag that naturally exists between the daily reality in the health care system and the establishment of research agendas and programs within the health services research community.

"Decision makers in the field have to deal with the nursing shortage, but the research agenda hasn't been developed to give them an understanding of the full dimension of the problem," says Albert. "It makes sense that big research programs cannot turn on a dime to meet the emerging needs of the on-the-ground health managers and decision makers. So, this whole process is a way to try and crystal ball a bit so that we can stay closer to the leading edge of change in the sector and can be more relevant to the decision makers who are out there."

Results from the scan were fed into five regional and one national workshop to begin the process of matching the needs of decision and policymakers to research priorities.

Deputy Ministers of Health and Chairs of the five federal/provincial/territorial advisory committees on health were also surveyed for their views. A group of research experts was formed to translate this data into medium (2-5 years) and long-term (beyond 5 years) research themes.

> **"It makes sense that big research programs cannot turn on a dime to meet the emerging needs of the on-the-ground health managers and decision makers.**

"This is the first time the five partner institutions have tried to put together a "national priority list" for health services research" says Diane Gagnon, whose own organization, the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation, is coordinating the priority setting exercise. "Now we have to coordinate how those priorities are addressed, so that we avoid duplication and try and make sure that all the issues are addressed."

Tracking What Matters to Canadians

After decades of Canada relying on largely economic indicators to measure quality of life, CPRN and others are searching for measures that will capture, in a more holistic way, the reality of life in Canada. And the route to that goal is a collaborative process with those most intimately affected – citizens themselves.

It's been three years since CPRN assembled a task group (which later became the Steering Committee) to examine how to track Canada's quality of life in a more accurate and comprehensive way. Gauging the well being of Canadians has traditionally depended on measuring the economy. How many jobs were created? Did the GDP grow? And, if so, by how much?

But these measurements, while important, don't tell the whole story. They reveal nothing about how people experience life at home, at work, and in their communities. Nor do they provide any insight into their hopes and expectations.

This information gap spurred CPRN to undertake the Quality of Life Indicators Project*. Key to this project was entering into a consultative process with Canadians. The objective was to hear from citizens themselves and then develop a prototype set of national indicators, based on their priorities, that could be used through time to track Canada's progress.

Well, the consultations are done and the material has been analyzed. Now CPRN is ready to move ahead with the prototype. Before describing it, how-

ever, here's a snapshot of how the indicator project arrived at this point.

History

In October 2000, CPRN met with 40 groups of citizens across the country to get their views on quality of life. Committed to getting a representative sample of all sectors of the population, these people were carefully selected (see sidebar on p.12).

Working with trained moderators and recorders, they were asked to draw a collective portrait of what makes up, or contributes to, quality of life and then to identify their top five priorities. Ironically, the economy was nowhere near the top of their concerns. Instead, Canadians named health, education, the environment, social programs, political rights, personal well being, and safe communities as priorities.

"And they placed the availability of jobs that pay a living wage, job security, job satisfaction, and opportunities for on-the-job skill development ahead of economic growth as measures of economic well being," says project director Sandra Zagon.

Within six weeks of these dialogue sessions, CPRN sponsored two back-to-back workshops. The first workshop brought together Steering Committee members, a select group of citizens, and indicator practitioners/experts. The second one was with indicator practitioners/experts only. Their job: review the findings. Their goal: develop criteria to select a manageable number of national indicators based on the citizens' input.

The workshops succeeded in providing a large inventory of possible indicators and data sources to be considered for the development of the prototype.

The Prototype

While citizens had no problem selecting national quality of life priorities, identifying specific indicators to measure these priorities was more complex, depending on, amongst other things, the availability of data.

The indicator experts came up with the inventory with assistance from the Statistics Canada representatives of the project's Steering Committee. They then finalized selection criteria for choosing a manageable set of indicators. A draft prototype was developed based on these criteria. It was distributed to a cross-section of citizens who participated in the October dialogues for reaction and validation.

The resulting prototype set of 40 national quality of life indicators consists of nine elements: (see sidebar on p.12).

- Democracy
- Health
- Education/learning
- Environment
- Social conditions
- Personal well-being
- Community
- Employment/economy
- Government

These elements cannot be viewed in isolation, however, because they are not only interconnected, they overlap. Zagon says, "Together they form a comprehensive picture of what Canadians consider important to their quality of life."

Each of the elements has been broken down and defined more precisely by a set of specific indicators. So, for example, four indicators further define the broad category 'health' – quality of the health care system, status of physical health, status of mental health, and lifestyle. The environment has five indicators – water (drinking) quality, air quality, waste management, resources devoted to developing renewable energy sources and access to clean, healthy public outdoor spaces.

> **…four indicators further define the broad category 'health' – quality of the health care system, status of physical health, status of mental health, and lifestyle.**

What's Next?

CPRN is now preparing to field test this prototype of quality of life indicators. Says Zagon, "The next steps will be to gather the data, and to produce a first report to Canadians on quality of life in Canada. In this way, these indicators can become a regular part of the public discourse."

The Dialogue Process

Forty dialogue sessions took place in 21 towns and cities in nine provinces. More than half were held in urban settings (28 groups), while 12 were in rural areas. There were 34 English-language groups and six French-language groups.

Who talked?

- Males (51 per cent) and females (49 per cent);

- Age range – 16 to 86;

- Average age – 43;

- Slightly more than half were married or in common-law relationships; 31 per cent had never married; 16 per cent were divorced or separated, and the rest were widowed;

- Average household size: 2.7;

- 21 per cent lived alone, almost one-fourth lived as couples without children (including four same-sex couples), and 38 per cent lived in nuclear families with two parents plus one or more children. Another 8 per cent were lone-parent families;

- 87 per cent were born in Canada;

- Foreign-born participants hailed from nearly two dozen countries from many parts of the world;

- Just over 78 per cent spoke English as their first language, while 13 per cent reported French as their native tongue;

More than one in four had done some post-graduate work or earned a post-graduate degree. Seven in 10 participants had some college or university experience.

The past three months have seen considerable media attention for CPRN's work. Judith Maxwell's *REFLEXION* made the front page of **Opinion Canada**. Mrs. Maxwell's views on citizen participation in government were the subject of two columns in the **Toronto Star**, and a column in the **Globe and Mail** drew on an address she made to the United Way of Greater Toronto on the need for restoring investment in basic public goods. Her address to a conference on Ontario in the 21st Century was covered in the **Toronto Star**. A series of stories on the National Roundtable on Learning, organized by CPRN in Edmonton, featured Mrs. Maxwell and the Director of the Work Network, Graham Lowe. Stories ran in **The Gazette, Toronto Star, Victoria Times-Colonist, Edmonton Journal, St. Catherines Standard,** and the **Lindsay Daily Post.**

The Family Network's publication, *Housing Affordability: A Children's Issue*, was the subject of news reports on CBC Radio's **World Report** and Jane Jenson gave radio interviews to **CBC Ottawa, Halifax, Regina, St. John's, Quebec City, Yellowknife, Winnipeg, Sydney, Prince George, Vancouver and Iqaluit**. The issue was raised in Question Period in the House of Commons the same day, and the **Hamilton Spectator** ran a feature on the subject. The **Toronto Star** later ran an op-ed piece by Jane Jenson. On other fronts, Jane prepared a feature column on social cohesion and inclusion for the February issue of **Horizons**, the newsletter of the federal govern-

ment's Policy Research Initiative, and she was interviewed by the Windsor radio station, **CKLW**, about compensation for stay-at-home spouses.

The release of Graham Lowe and Grant Schellenberg's *What's a Good Job? The Importance of Employment Relationships* was very well received. Graham and Grant shared a series of **CBC Radio** interviews in **Toronto, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Vancouver, St. John's, Moncton, Saint John, Iqaluit, Ontario Morning, Sudbury, Fredericton, Thunder Bay, Yellowknife, Whitehorse, Kelowna** and **Prince George**. Graham also gave interviews to the **CBC Radio** national current affairs program, *This Morning* as well as **CBC TV's Newsworld** and **The Training Report**. The print media also took note, with articles in the **Edmonton Journal** (2), **Globe and Mail**, **Toronto Star**, the **Vancouver Sun**, and an American newsletter, **Office Hours**. An article by Graham appeared on the University of Alberta Web site.

Graham Lowe's final synthesis report for the Human Resources in Government project, *Employer of Choice? Workplace Innovation in Government*, is another hit. Stories ran in the **Vancouver Sun**, **Calgary Herald**, **Ottawa Citizen**, **Edmonton Journal**, **Victoria Times-Colonist**, **The National Post**, **Fredericton Daily Gleaner**, **Calgary Business Edge** and in the **Workplace Diversity Update**. Graham prepared articles on the report for the **Lac Carling**

Governments' Review, Canadian Government Executive, and the **Canadian HR Reporter**. Reviews of Graham's book, *The Quality of Work* (Oxford), appeared in **Isuma** and the **Canadian Journal of Sociology**. Graham also did an interview on the quality of work with the **Learning Channel** program, **Career TV** and for **Workplace Today** on regulation of the workplace.

CBC Radio's *This Morning* interviewed Sholom Glouberman, the former Director of the Health Network, on his synthesis report, *Towards a New Perspective on Health Policy*. The Society We Want project was the subject of a column in the **Toronto Star**, and articles by Sandra Zagon and Barbara Legowski on the Quality of Life Indicators project ran in **Reality Check** and in the Federation of Canadian Municipalities newsletter.

Our Web presence continues to grow. In the first five months of 2001, more than 138,000 copies of CPRN publications have been downloaded from our Web site! The most popular document is Judith Maxwell's, *REFLEXION*, *Toward a Common Citizenship: Canada's Social and Economic Choices*, with more than 6900 electronic copies in circulation. Not far behind are publications from the Work and Family Networks, with more than 4 thousand copies downloaded. We will be doing our best in the coming months to increase awareness of our Web site in the hope of boosting the distribution of CPRN's research even further.

PUBLICATIONS

Towards a New Perspective on Health Policy. Sholom Glouberman. CPRN Study No. H|03. 2001. 92 pp. $12.95. ISBN 1-896703-52-6.

Canada spends $75 billion on health services, yet Canadians are worried that care will not be available to them and their families should they need it. Meanwhile, those who have a role in determining the future of health care and health policy are deadlocked in jurisdictional debates and disagreements over the best ways to improve health care in Canada. In this final report of a three-year research project, the author explores new ways of thinking about health and health policy as a way to jumpstart the debate over the future of health care. This document is essential reading for anyone involved or interested in health and health policy in Canada.

What's a Good Job? The Importance of Employment Relationships. Graham S. Lowe and Grant Schellenberg. CPRN Study No. W|05. Changing Employment Relationships Series. 2001. 42 pp. $12.95. ISBN 1-896703-53-4.

In this study, authors Graham Lowe and Grant Schellenberg, maintain that relationships in the workplace mean more to job satisfaction than pay or benefits. For Canadians seeking satisfying and meaningful work and and for employers looking to attract and retain highly skilled employees, it boils down to four key components: trust, commitment, influence in one's workplace and communication. In focussing on employment relationships, the two CPRN researchers define a new employment model that is better suited to realities of the global economy. Labour analysts, researchers, policymakers, academics and Canadians interested in labour issues will find this study a refreshing new look at employment and labour issues.

Asking Citizens What Matters for Quality of Life in Canada – Results of CPRN's Dialogue Process. Joseph H. Michalski. April 2001. 66 pp.

In October of 2000, forty citizen dialogue groups were held in nine provinces across Canada. The groups included random samples of rural and urban dwellers and purposive samples of urban and rural participants, "influencers," hard-to-reach groups and youth. This paper is an analysis of the findings. It is intended for researchers, academics and policymakers.

Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A Citizens' Prototype – Summary of Results of Public Dialogue Sessions and Prototype of National Indicators. April 2001. 23 pp.

Experts working with the results of 40 citizen dialogue sessions developed a prototype set of national indicators of quality of life in Canada and provided the background information about how they arrived at the prototype. The intended audience for this publication includes researchers, policymakers, the media and members of the public.

Quality of Life: What Matters to Canadians – Lessons Learned. Miriam Wyman, April 2001. 31 pp.

The Quality of Life Indicators Project broke new ground as a project of national scope that involved input from citizens across Canada. This paper focusses on the context in which the project was launched and carried out, the methodology behind the citizen dialogues, the lessons learned from the process and the next steps in bringing the indicators into common usage.

PEOPLE

Trish Adams will be joining the Work and Family Networks in Ottawa to provide much needed administrative support.

Terry Albert will be leaving his position as Network Leader of the Health Network to pursue new challenges with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research where he will work as liaison. While with CPRN, Terry conducted and coordinated large and small-scale projects covering several areas including economic burden studies, costing studies, health economics and health policy. Among his published works are the reports *Sustainable Health Care for Canada* and *The Economic Burden of HIV/AIDS in Canada*, which he co-authored.

Lindsey McKay has left her position as a researcher with the Health Network to work as a Policy Analyst at the Canadian Population Health Initiative. While with CPRN, Lindsey wrote two background papers for the Health Network project Towards a New Perspective on Health Policy and, with Barbara Legowski, a discussion paper, *A History of Health Policy Development in Health Canada from 1974 to 1999*. She also organized an international symposium for this project, and wrote a discussion paper synthesizing the results of this gathering.

Rebecca Marland will be working as a volunteer for CPRN. Rebecca has a BA (Honours) in Politics and Parliamentary Studies from the

Congratulations to **Iouliia Evitchenko** on becoming a Canadian. She is pictured here at the citizenship ceremony held in Ottawa earlier this spring.

University of Leeds (UK) and is interested in quality of life, social indicators and citizen engagement issues.

Megan Matthews will be working with CPRN's Communications and IT Unit this summer. A University of Ottawa student, she will be updating CPRN's media database, searching for new constituencies for our products and identifying kindred organizations interested in cross promotion endeavours and the like.

SPONSOR CORNER

The five institutions that sponsored CPRN's environmental scan sought, for the first time, to develop a common national priority list for health services research. The sponsors included:

- the Canadian Health Services Research Foundation which sponsors and promotes applied health systems research to support evidence-based decision making by policy makers and health systems managers;

- the Institute for Health Services and Policy Research which supports research to address the need for health systems, technologies and tools to promote health, prevent disease and deliver healthcare effectively for all Canadians;

- the Canadian Coordinating Office for Health Technology Assessment which provides evidence-based information on emerging and existing health technologies, primarily to Canadian health care policy makers and managers;

- the Canadian Institute for Health Information which delivers the knowledge and develops the tools to advance Canada's health policies, improve the health of the population, strengthen the health system and assist leaders in the health sector make informed decisions; and,

- the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Advisory Committee on Health Services which helps senior bureaucrats and elected officials in the federal and provincial Ministries of Health develop and coordinate health services in Canada.

ERRATUM

In our last issue, number 13, in the write up of *What's a Good Job*. The article says that STRONG employment relationships are linked with a HIGHER tendency to join unions. In fact, the study says the opposite. We apologize for the error.

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Key to Prosperity – The Urban "Social Commons"

Our cities show the best and the worst of the Canadian quality of life, as well as the extremes of wealth and poverty.

In the new economy, the key drivers of economic growth are highly qualified people, capital and ideas. And there is growing evidence from economic geography, first, that these factors come together in cities and second, that the most dynamic new industries cluster together in cities where they find the best mix of people, capital and ideas.

What is it that brings high tech professionals to jobs in Kanata, now part of Ottawa, or in Kitchener-Waterloo? It is the opportunity presented by the cluster of high tech firms that are already operating there. Once established in a community, however, it is the diversity of the community and quality of life that encourages people to stay and build their life there. ("The economic geography of talent;" florida@andrew.cmu.edu)

In contrast, when CEOs of major companies talk about the factors that determine location decisions, they talk mainly about costs, taxes, and regulatory frameworks. Indeed, Calgary has attracted large numbers of head offices for these very reasons. One suspects, however, that it is Calgary's quality of life that encourages talented employees to make their homes there.

What is it that shapes quality of life? When CPRN asked citizens what mattered for quality of life in this country, there was remarkable consensus across regions and regardless of economic status. They value their political rights – their ability to vote and to participate actively in community life. They also value what I call the "social commons." They want a clean environment, an accessible health care system, quality public education, and social supports for vulnerable people (especially children and the elderly).

Yet, citizens cannot construct the "social commons" by themselves. They delegate that to their municipal, provincial and federal governments, and then pay their taxes so that these services can be provided. Citizens do work as volunteers to clean the environment, to make health services more effective, to advise the school staff, and to support children's causes. But citizens cannot train the doctors, hire the teachers, or regulate the quality of air and water.

In the meantime, citizens notice the growing rates of poverty, the widening gap between rich and poor, and the disrepair of the social infrastructure. They connect these trends to the cutbacks in public expenditure over the past decade.

Governments, too, are focussed on costs and tax rates, and they have not made the link between economic success and the investments in the key components of quality of life in our cities and towns. The simple fact is that if quality of life in a city deteriorates, talented professionals will not move there.

To ignore the social commons is to undermine our capacity to generate wealth. In a sense, all the big social and economic policy questions of the day are also urban questions.

Judith Maxwell

President
Canadian Policy Research Networks