Wellness Information Survey & Evaluation Research
Summary of Results – Phase Two

Prepared by the Wellness Information Survey and Evaluation Research (W.I.S.E.R.) Program

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♦ Between January and April 2003, 500 people from Winnipeg (and surrounding areas), who had been interviewed in 1999, were interviewed for a second time.  

♦ These people were re-interviewed in order to explore changes in their health practices and behaviours since the first time they were interviewed.  

♦ 93% of the eligible people contacted agreed to be re-interviewed for this phase of the study.  

Background

◆ 77% of respondents in this phase were married, while 6% were single or never married, 7% were divorced, and 6% were widowed.  

◆ Males were more likely to be married (82%) than females (73%). Women were more likely to be widowed (10%) than men (1%).  

◆ The highest level of education completed was: diploma or certificate from a community, technical or trade college (21%), grade twelve (21%), and bachelors or undergraduate degree from a university (17%).  

◆ 71% of respondents reported doing “paid work” (75% of employed members work full-time only; 19% work part-time only; and 6% reported working both full and part-time).  

◆ Respondents who did not do paid work were asked to describe their current main activity. The following were the top three responses:  

1. Retired (61%)  
2. Caring for family (23%)  
3. Recovering from illness (7%)
Leisure Participation

♦ In both Phase One and Two of the study, respondents mentioned the same top three leisure activities they engaged in for more than 10 hours a week. These were:

1. Watching television
2. Reading
3. Visiting with friends or relatives

♦ The number of respondents currently belonging to a fitness facility has increased from 9% in Phase One to 13% in Phase Two.

Specific Health Behaviours

♦ In Phase One, 22% of those interviewed smoked daily. By Phase Two 14% of respondents reported smoking daily.

♦ 34% of participants who smoke reported that they tried to stop smoking altogether, while 77% of smokers reported they tried to decrease their smoking habit.

♦ For those who currently smoke daily, 77% intend to cut down in the next 12 months.

♦ In terms of alcohol consumption, about one-quarter (24%) of respondents drink regularly (once a week or more) and 59% drink occasionally. The average number of drinks consumed in the 7 day period prior to the interview was 2.9 drinks.

♦ In terms of risk-taking behaviour, only 26% wear a helmet while bicycling, 51% use sunscreen regularly, and 42% do not have a carbon monoxide detector at home.

Stress & Stress Management

♦ When respondents were asked to reflect on the past 4 weeks prior to their interview, most people ranked their level of stress as either a 3 (31%) or a 4 (22%) on a 5 point scale (with 5 being extremely stressful).

♦ The most commonly reported sources of stress were:

1. Work (47%)
2. Family relationships/demands (29%)
3. Family illness (13%)

♦ The most common stress management techniques were:

1. Exercise (29%)
2. Music/reading/writing (20%)
3. Socializing/talking (15%)
Similar to Phase One (1999), Phase Two (2003) respondents once again rated their health as good or very good.

**Self-Rated Health Phase One and Phase Two**

- 53% of participants reported that their health was **about the same** as three years ago, 8% reported their health as **much better**; 14% reported being **somewhat better**; 21% as **somewhat worse**; and 3% as **much worse** than three years ago.

- The average number of Chronic conditions mentioned in Phase One was 2.0, while in Phase Two the average reported was 2.9 chronic conditions.

- The three most prevalent chronic conditions reported in both phases were: Arthritis or rheumatism; Back problems; and allergies.

- The 3 most commonly reported things done to maintain **physical health** were:

- While exercise decreased, Phase Two respondents mentioned diet more frequently as something done to maintain physical health.

- The 3 most commonly reported things done to maintain **emotional health** were:

- Respondents performed the same activities to maintain emotional health in both 1999 and 2003, although the frequency of these activities increased.
30% of people reported doing both vigorous and moderate activities. Out of this group, 5% participated in vigorous activity exclusively, while 65% participated in moderate activity only.

Below is a comparison of the most common vigorous activities reported in Phase One and Two. While speed-walking decreased in Phase Two, participation in jogging and treadmill use increased.

66% of participants felt they should get more exercise to maintain or improve their health.

While 60% of respondents in Phase One said they intended to increase their level of physical activity in the next year, approximately half actually increased their level of activity by Phase Two of the study.

25% of people who increased their level of activity attributed the increase to self-motivation or commitment. 18% attributed the increase to having social or familial support and 17% attributed the increase to enjoying exercise.

In summary, the number of Phase Two respondents smoking daily decreased, while membership in fitness facilities increased slightly.

There was limited change in the types of physical activities reported over time and the majority of Phase Two respondents continued to describe their health in positive terms.

Similarly, below is a comparison of the most common moderate activities. Here, respondents reported walking slightly more in Phase Two than they did in Phase One.

If you have any questions about the W.I.S.E.R. Program or this summary of results, please contact Dr. Alexander Segall, Principal Investigator, at 474-7493 at the Health Leisure and Human Performance Research Institute, University of Manitoba.