Health Reports: Transitions to long-term and residential care among older Canadians

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The proportion of Canadians aged 65 years and older was 17% in 2016 and is expected to rise to 20% by 2024, based on Statistics Canada's current demographic projections. This will likely lead to increased demand for long-term and residential care for older Canadians, but age is only one factor leading Canadians to move out of their homes. A new article released in today's Health Reports examines other demographic and health factors that affect transitions to long-term care.

The study found that women were more likely than men to move into a nursing home or seniors’ residence. Seniors who lived alone, had lost a spouse or were never married were also more likely to live in long-term or residential care. Other factors include not owning one's home, poor self-rated health, and being diagnosed with dementia. In contrast, individuals who were not born in Canada were less likely to live in a nursing home or seniors’ residence.

With the majority of the seniors still living in private residences, these results can help to identify possible vulnerable populations and to inform decision makers of factors associated with seniors being able to age in place.

Note to readers

Twelve years of Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) data were linked to two separate data sources: the Canadian Mortality Database (CMDB) and the 2011 Census of Population.

The central objective of the CCHS is to gather health-related data at the sub-provincial levels of geography (health region or combined health regions). In the present study, three cycles of CCHS data were used: cycle 3.1 (2005/2006), cycle 4.1 (2007/2008) and cycle 4.2 (HealthyAging, 2008/2009).

The CMDB is a census of all deaths registered in Canada. Provincial and territorial Vital Statistics Registries report deaths to Statistics Canada, providing information on cause, dates of birth and death, names, and postal code at the time of death.

The present study also uses 2011 Census short-form data, which provides information about people and housing units in Canada by their demographic, social and economic characteristics.

The CCHS-CMDB linked dataset is currently available at the Research Data Centres.

The population projections are from the publication Population Projections for Canada (2013 to 2063), Provinces and Territories (2013 to 2038) (91-520-X).
Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers 3226 and 3901.

"Transitions to long-term and residential care among older Canadians" is now available in the May 2018 online issue of Health Reports, Vol. 29, no. 5 (82-003-X).

This issue of Health Reports also contains the article "Accounting for misreporting when comparing energy intake across time in Canada."

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