

Research Summary

Community-level estimation of smoking behaviour prevalence in Nova Scotia

Although the proportion of Nova Scotians engaged in smoking behaviour has declined somewhat over the past two decades, the province still has the third highest rate of smoking in Canada. There are signals that more Nova Scotians are smoking again, particularly younger males. Smoking is still the top risk factor for causing death with more than 1,600 Nova Scotians dying prematurely due to cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. We can do much more to prevent and reduce smoking behaviours and organizations like the Lung Association and the Nova Scotia Health Authority have plans to prevent lung disease and deliver health services and tobacco control programs at a more local level. Unfortunately, we do not have the data at the local level necessary to support communities that need these services and programs the most.

The aim of this project is to calculate estimates of smoking behaviours at the community level so that efforts to improve lung health are more targeted and effective. We will use data on smoking behaviours from multiple health surveys to estimate rates of smoking behaviour for more than 300 communities in Nova Scotia. We will then map these data to support the Lung Association and the Nova Scotia Health Authority and their efforts to promote health and delivery of health services particularly for communities with higher rates of smoking prevalence in Nova Scotia. Ultimately this research supports the mission of the Lung Association and their efforts to reduce smoking behaviour and reduce the burden of respiratory and related chronic diseases in Nova Scotia.