

Understanding causes of cancer and chronic disease: The Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project

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The urgent need to learn more about the causes of cancer and other chronic diseases is the impetus behind the foundation of a major research platform for the study of disease states an article on the Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project in *CMAJ* (*Canadian Medical Association Journal*).

The Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project, which will collect lifestyle information and biospecimens on 300,000 Canadians and follow them for up to 30 years, aims to understand the complex interplay between environment, lifestyle and genetics in the development of cancer and chronic diseases. Linkages to provincial [health data](#) across Canada will provide information on disease outcomes not recorded in cancer registries or on death certificates. Canada's ability to harmonize data and practices and cooperate across regions will ensure consistency in both data and biospecimen collection and allow widespread use of the information by researchers across Canada and beyond.

As the proportion of people over the age of 65 grows in Western countries, the number of people with cancer and other [chronic conditions](#) is also increasing. It is important to understand the causes of these diseases to aid in prevention.

"We think that a common constellation of risk factors may lead to the development of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and some cancers,

however, for many malignancies and other [chronic diseases](#) we know very little about the causes" says Dr. Marilyn Borugian, a senior scientist at the BC Cancer Agency and coauthors.

"This cohort will, in time, form the foundation for a major research platform for the study of disease causation, both nationally and internationally," state the authors.

The Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow Project represents the largest single investment of the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, which has provided lead funding of \$42 million. Additional funding commitments have been made regionally.

More information: www.cmaj.ca/cgi/doi/10.1503/cmaj.091540

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