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# *Data Sources, Methods and Limitations*

Data sources used in this report and limitations of the data are described below.

## **NATIONAL SURVEYS**

### **1996/97 National Population Health Survey, 1998/99 National Population Health Survey and 1996/97 Ontario Health Survey**

This survey is conducted nationally by Statistics Canada, with an enhanced sample that provides additional data on Ontario residents. When referring to the Ontario sample, the reference of *1996/97 Ontario Health Survey* is used. Responses to this survey were limited to respondents aged 12 years and older.

### **2000/01 Canadian Community Health Survey**

The *2000/01 Canadian Community Health Survey* is conducted nationally by Statistics Canada. Data are available provincially and for specified regions within each province. Responses to this survey were limited to respondents aged 12 years and older.

### **2001 Peel Community Health Survey**

Data for the *2001 Peel Community Health Survey* are collected by the Institute of Social Research at York University through the Ontario Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System project. Responses to this survey were limited to respondents aged 18 years and older.

Data from the national, provincial and local surveys used in this report are all based on self-reports from survey respondents. Self-reported data may be subject to errors in recall, over or under-reporting because of social desirability, or errors from proxy reporting.

## **HOSPITALIZATION**

Hospitalization data in this report are from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). Data for Peel from 1986 to 1992 were obtained from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, while data for 1995 through 1998 were distributed to Peel Health from the Central East Health Information Partnership (CEHIP). For 1999 and 2000, data were obtained through the Provincial Health Planning Database (PHPDB) initiative at the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

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Data for Peel and Ontario for the years 1992–2000 were also obtained from an on-line database program available through the Northern Health Information Partnership (NHIP). Historical data for Ontario (1971–1999) were obtained from the Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control at Health Canada.

CIHI data were coded based on the International Classification of Diseases, 9th Revision (ICD-9) system of classifying causes of death and hospital stay, with asthma having the code ICD-9: 493.

Limitations of the hospital separation data include:

- only cases serious enough to require hospital admission are captured,
- these data reflect the cause of stay upon discharge, not at admission,
- people admitted to hospital more than once in a year for the same cause are counted for each hospital stay, not as an individual case
- other reasons, such as factors related to physician referral, screening and admission practices, may explain changes in the data over time.

## **MORTALITY**

Mortality data for this report were from the Mortality Data File, collected by the Ontario Registrar General and distributed to Peel Health through the Health Planning System (HELPS) initiative of the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. At the time this report was prepared, final data were available up to 1997. The death data were coded based on the International Classification of Diseases 9th Revision (ICD-9) system of classifying causes of death and hospital stay, with asthma having the code ICD-9: 493.

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