

# Smoking Patterns in NL *fast facts*

*Tobacco smoke contains over 7,000 chemicals, at least 70 of which are known to cause cancer. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in Canada and it is estimated that smoking is related to more than 85% of lung cancer cases in Canada. Thus, smokers are approximately 20 times more likely to develop lung cancer than non-smokers (Canadian Cancer Society). This fast facts presents smoking trends across Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador for the population aged 12 years and older.*

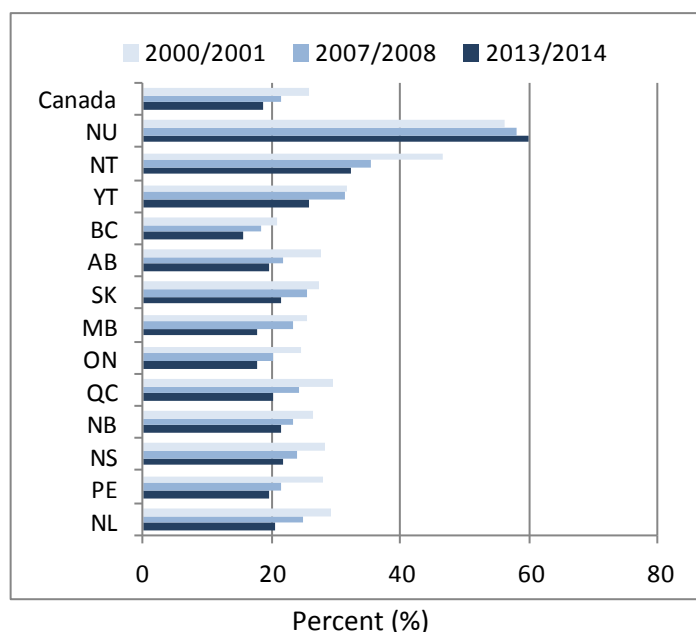
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The percentage of current smokers aged 12 years and older in Canada significantly declined from 25.9% in 2000/2001 to 18.6% in 2013/2014. This decrease was also observed across all provinces. Nunavut maintained the highest rate of smoking across the 14-year time period, while British Columbia maintained the lowest rate.

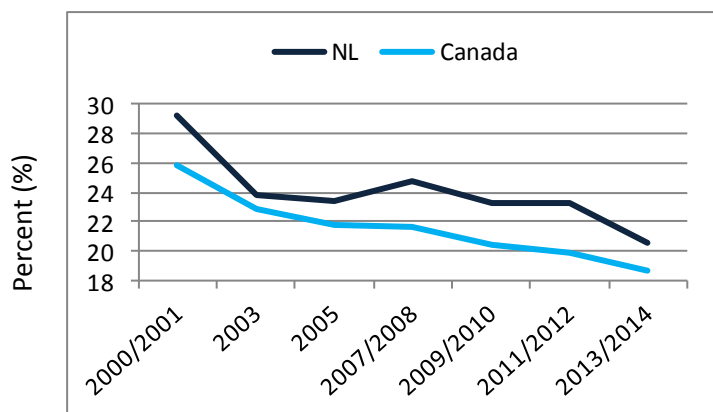
## Percentage of current<sup>1</sup> smokers, aged 12 years and older, Canada and Provinces, 2000/2001, 2007/2008 & 2013/2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, Share File, 2000/2001, 2007/2008 and 2013/2014

<sup>1</sup> Current smokers are defined as smokers who smoke either daily or occasionally

## Percentage of current smokers, aged 12 years and older, Newfoundland and Labrador and Canada, 2000/2001-2013/2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, Share File, 2000/2001, 2003, 2005, 2007/2008, 2009/2010, 2011/2012 & 2013/2014

Although the province consistently maintained higher smoking rates than the national average over the 14-year time period, the provincial rate significantly decreased from 29.3% in 2000/2001 to 20.6% in 2013/2014. This decline may be due to:

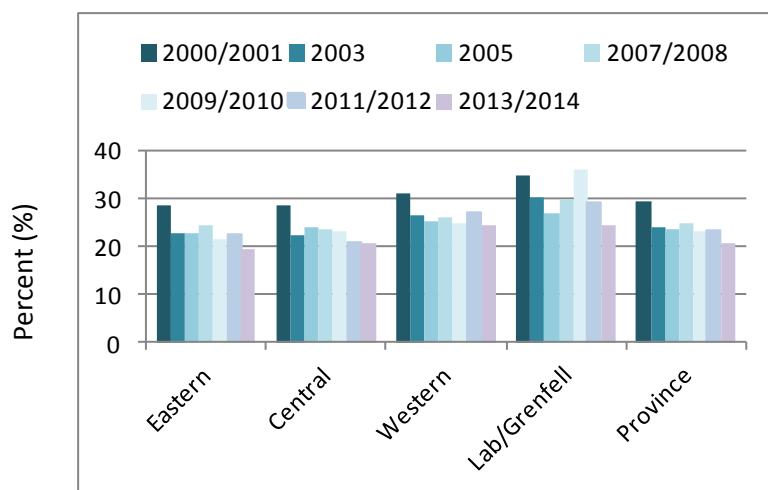
- a heightened public awareness of the negative health effects of tobacco smoke;
- health promotion efforts including tobacco prevention initiatives, public education campaigns, smoke-free policies, taxation and access to cessation programs (e.g., Provincial Smokers' Helpline);
- the *Smoke-Free Environment Act* which came into force in 1994 (replaced with the *Smoke-Free Environment Act, 2005*) and aims to reduce the exposure that people have to environmental tobacco smoke. The Act prohibits smoking in indoor public places (e.g., daycares, schools, hospitals, restaurants, bars and bingo halls) and workplaces. On July 1, 2011, the Act was

amended to prohibit smoking in motor vehicles when occupied by a person under the age of 16; and,

- the *Tobacco Control Act* which came into force in 1994, and prohibits the sale of tobacco to persons under the age of 19, restricts how tobacco products can be displayed, stored and promoted in establishments that sell tobacco, and prohibits the sale of tobacco at a number of establishments (e.g., pharmacies, recreational facilities) in the province.

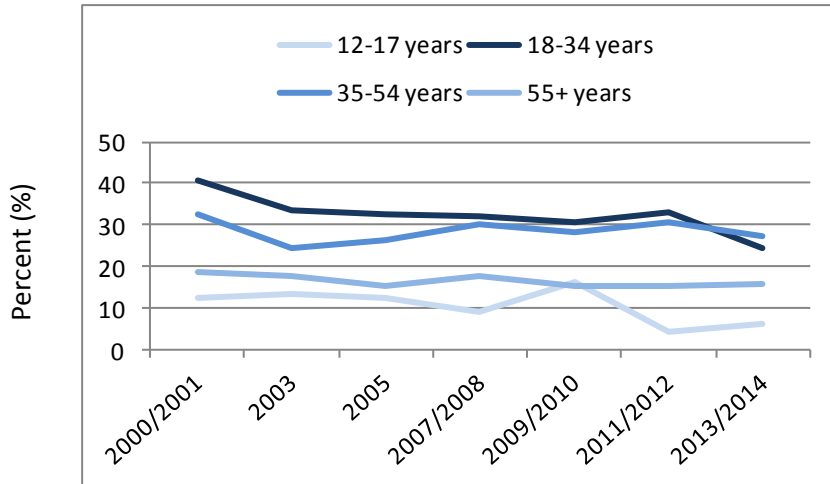
Between 2000/2001 and 2013/2014, the Labrador-Grenfell Regional Health Authority maintained the highest smoking rates while the Eastern Regional Health Authority maintained the lowest smoking rates compared to the other health authorities. The percentage of current smokers, aged 12 years and older, in Labrador-Grenfell peaked at 35.7% in 2009/2010. This rate decreased considerably by 2013/2014 to 24.1%.

## Percentage of current smokers, aged 12 years and older, by Regional Health Authority, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2000/2001-2013/2014



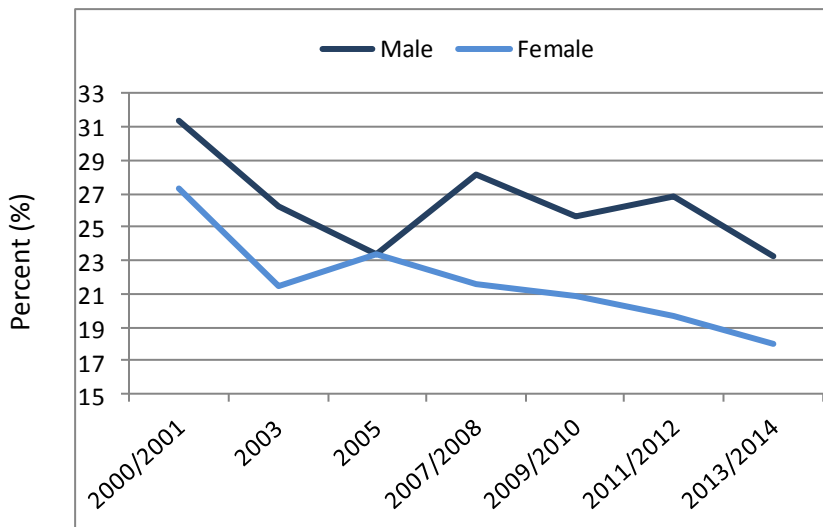
Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, Share File, 2000/2001, 2003, 2005, 2007/2008, 2009/2010, 2011/2012 & 2013/2014

## Percentage of current smokers, aged 12 years and older, by age group, Newfoundland and Labrador, 2000/2001-2013/2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, Share File, 2000/2001, 2003, 2005, 2007/2008, 2009/2010, 2011/2012 & 2013/2014

## Percentage of current smokers, aged 12 years and older, by sex, Newfoundland and Labrador 2000/2001-2013/2014



Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, Share File, 2000/2001, 2003, 2005, 2007/2008, 2009/2010, 2011/2012 & 2013/2014

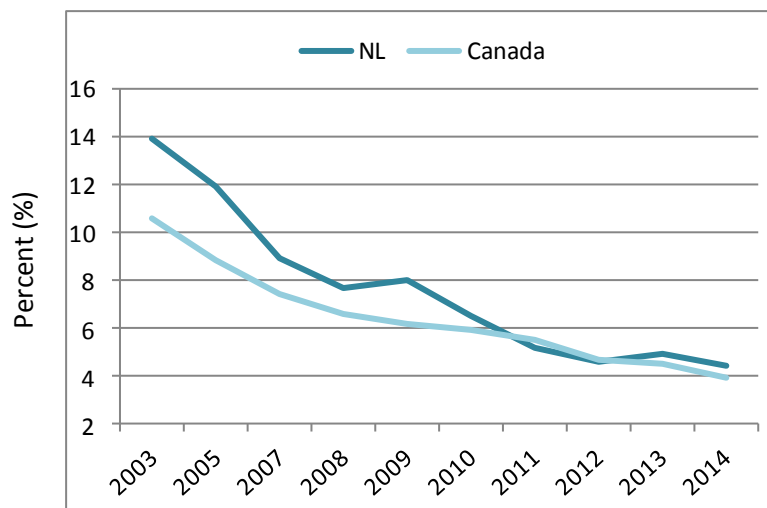


Between 2000/2001 and 2013/2014, smoking rates were highest among individuals aged 18-34 years in the province. For the most part, smoking declined across all age groups over the 14-year timeframe. Youth (12-17 years) smoking has significantly decreased from 12.3% in 2000/2001 to 5.9% in 2013/2014. According to the Youth Smoking Survey<sup>1</sup>, in 2012/2013, 1.9% of students in Grades 6-9 and 7.8% of students in Grades 10-12 were smokers. This is the lowest rate of current youth smokers since 1994.

Overall, there was a steady decline in smoking rates for females. Males had a more variable decline from year to year. With the exception of 2005 (when male and female smoking rates were equivalent at 23.4%), males consistently maintained higher smoking rates than females between 2000/2001 and 2013/2014. The difference was most stark in 2011/2012, when the smoking rate for males was 27% compared to 20% for females.

<sup>1</sup> A national survey that monitors tobacco use in school-aged (Grades 6-12) children.

## Percentage of the non-smoking population, aged 12 years and older, who reported at least one person smoked inside their home<sup>1</sup> every day or almost every day, Newfoundland and Labrador



Source: CANSIM Table 105-0501: Health indicator profile, annual estimates, by age group and sex, Canada, provinces, territories, health regions (2013 boundaries) and peer groups.

- Data not available for 2000/2001

<sup>1</sup> Smoking inside the home excludes smoking inside the garage, whether attached or detached

<sup>E</sup> Use 2012 estimate for Newfoundland and Labrador with caution.

The percentage of in-home second-hand smoking rates decreased significantly between 2003 and 2014 both provincially and nationally. In 2003, 13.9% of the non-smoking population aged 12 years and older in NL reported being exposed to second-hand smoke inside the home. This percentage decreased to 4.4% by 2014.

The risk of developing lung cancer, as well as cancers of the larynx and pharynx increases when exposed to second-hand smoke. Every year, over 800 Canadians who don't smoke die from second-hand smoke (Canadian Cancer Society).

### Resources:

#### **Provincial Smokers' Helpline (SHL)**

The NL Lung Association's Smokers' Helpline offers free, confidential and convenient telephone and web-based counseling to support an individual's attempt to quit smoking. Health professionals, and family and friends can also contact the SHL if they need information to support someone in their effort to quit smoking. Located in St. John's, the SHL can be reached at **1-800-363-5864** or **[www.smokershelp.net](http://www.smokershelp.net)**

#### **Smokers' Helpline Online:**

**[www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca)**, an initiative of the Canadian Cancer Society, is an interactive, web-based service that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It offers tips, tools and support to help with smoking cessation.

## About the Centre for Health Information

The Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information (the Centre) provides quality information to health professionals, the public, researchers and health system decision-makers. Through collaboration with the health system, the Centre supports the development of data and technical standards, maintains key health databases, prepares and distributes health reports and supports and carries out applied health research and evaluations. The Centre's mandate also includes the development of a confidential and secure provincial electronic health record (EHR), including the change management required to support adoption by end user clinicians. In addition to the EHR, the Centre also manages the planning, design and implementation of provincial health information systems.