



# The My Health, My Community Survey

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**It has long been said** that we are what we eat, but is that it? Our health and well-being are also closely linked to where we live and what we do. Understanding these intricate relationships is one goal of community health, also called public health. By knowing more about the many interconnected factors that affect the health of a community we can respond with better services that target those who most need them. But how do we know?

The short answer is “by asking questions.” Launched June 27, the *My Health My Community* online survey aims to gather the information we need to tailor health and social services to the communities that need them. One region may need more services for children at risk; another may need to focus on seniors with mobility issues. We need to know this to make the most effective use of our resources.

The *My Health My Community* was created in partnership by Vancouver Coastal Health, Fraser Health, the UBC Faculty of Medicine’s eHealth Strategy Office. The survey asks people to provide information about their health, lifestyle choices, community involvement and neighbourhood characteristics. The information gathered will help improve future community programs and services that are more relevant to your health and wellness needs.

Health surveys are a recognised part of community health assessment because they provide information that may not be available in any other way. They help to quantify population health status, can examine prevalence of specific risk factors and seek user or patient perspectives. The results inform program planning and

evaluation and allows for examination of issues around inequalities in health access and outcomes.

No matter how genuine our goals, without information from sources such as the *My Health My Community* survey, results will be haphazard at best. The survey is web-based and can be accessed via any platform: web, phone, tablet. There will also be field outreach teams equipped with mobile devices to survey in the field, particularly the segments of the population that do not go online. The survey asks questions needed to generate a detailed picture of our communities including socio-demographic characteristics, health status, lifestyles, availability of health care, the built environment and the sense of community belonging.

The data generated will emphasize wellness and empowering the participant. It will help guide services to communities that need them.

The *My Health My Community* survey follows strict privacy practices to govern how information is collected, to control who will be able to see the information and how that information will be used. Protecting your personal information

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is extremely important to *My Health My Community* and safeguards are in place to ensure privacy.

Though not obvious, contributing to *My Health My Community* makes the most sense if we realize doing so means we are helping ourselves, certainly at the community level, but even as individuals. Find out more, and take the survey via the organization’s [website](#). Participants of the survey will be entered into a draw for an iPad.

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