

Foreword

The British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency (the Agency) is pleased to present the 2008 Annual Report, the one hundred and thirty-seventh published since the establishment of the Division of Vital Statistics in 1872. The tables, figures, and maps in this publication are based on information collected from registrations of live births, stillbirths, deaths, and marriages, as registered by the Agency for events occurring in the 2008 calendar year.

This publication contains approximately 100 tables, figures, and maps that summarize selected information about the vital events taking place in British Columbia (BC). Although some tables and information relate to vital events occurring within the province that may include visitors to BC, such as marriages, the majority are specific to residents of BC.

The information relating only to residents is important for evaluating and monitoring the health status of the province's population.

Throughout the report, key indicators are presented for the province's Health Authorities (HA), Health Service Delivery Areas (HSDA) and Local Health Areas (LHA). The report includes a detailed *Glossary*, defining the terms used in the body of the publication; as well as a *Methodology* section, explaining the statistical computations in the main body. A set of *Information Boxes* supplement the standard tables with information on a wide range of subjects, from a profile of a *Typical Day in British Columbia* to *Place of Birth for Midwife Assisted Births* and *Usual Residence of People Married in 2008*.

Beginning with the 2000 Annual Report, the Agency has presented data using the tenth revision of the World Health Organization's *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems* (ICD-10) coding scheme. Where possible, this report follows a format consistent with previous annual reports that presented statistics from the current year along with comparative statistics from the preceding five years. However, some tables and figures present statistics prior to 2000 when an earlier version of the coding scheme (ICD-9) was in effect. Many changes in the codes and in the rules for selection of the underlying cause of death preclude direct comparison of ICD-9 and ICD-10 data. Extensive manual reviews using translation tables in conjunction with recoding of data from ICD-9 to ICD-10 enabled the production of trend data. This approach is unique to publications of the Agency.

The Agency would like to acknowledge the many groups and individuals who ensure complete and accurate recording of vital events. Their contributions have resulted in continual improvement in the quality of vital event data and the quality of this report.

Original signed by,

Jack Shewchuk
Chief Executive Officer
British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency

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