



## Information Sheet

The Health System Analysis and Emerging Issues branch is nested within the Research and Analysis division of CIHI. The branch is responsible for producing policy-relevant health reports, analytic briefs and quick-turnaround projects that answer questions on emerging health care issues. By working with key partners, including the research community, the branch turns data into information that is relevant for sound management of the Canadian health care system.

### Our Vision

Better data. Better decisions.  
Healthier Canadians.

### Our Mandate

To lead the development and maintenance of comprehensive and integrated health information that enables sound policy and effective health system management that improve health and health care.

### Our Values

Respect, Integrity, Collaboration,  
Excellence, Innovation

# Compromised Wounds in Canada: Summary

Wounds are a serious health care issue with profound personal, clinical and economic implications. *Compromised Wounds in Canada* explores the prevalence of “compromised” wounds in 2011–2012 in Canadian health care settings. Compromised wounds include chronic wounds (such as pressure ulcers or “bedsores,” gangrene and leg ulcers), skin barrier breaches, and surgical wounds that are not healing as expected.

The study found that

- **Compromised wounds are a common concern.** Compromised wounds were reported in almost 4% of acute care inpatients, more than 7% of home care clients, almost 10% of long-term care residents and almost 30% of hospital-based continuing care patients. Although the percentage of patients with compromised wounds in acute care was relatively low (4%), it represented 117,000 patients across Canada in 2011–2012.
- **Compromised wounds are likely under-reported, particularly in acute inpatient care.** Wounds in early stages are not always properly identified and captured.
- **Diabetes is a major risk factor for compromised wounds.** Patients with diabetes were much more likely to have a compromised wound than patients without the disease. Complications from diabetic foot wounds alone led to more than 2,000 amputations across Canada in 2011–2012.

Despite data limitations and gaps, this study provides useful insight into the prevalence of preventable wounds across various health care settings and demonstrates that wounds are a substantial burden across all health care settings examined. It points to the importance of wound prevention and management across all health care settings, and especially among health care sectors providing service to individuals with chronic illness.