

# Renfrew County and District Health Unit

## 2007 Annual Report

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### What Public Health does...

Public health professionals work to **prevent** human disease and injury; **protect** people from environmental hazards; and **promote** behaviours that lead to good physical and mental health. The goal of public health is to improve the health and well-being of the whole population.

*"Health care is vital to all of us some of the time, but public health is vital to all of us all of the time."*

### Who we are...

Renfrew County and District Health Unit is a non-profit agency governed by the Board of Health and funded by the Government of Ontario, the County of Renfrew, the City of Pembroke and the Township of South Algonquin. Our 67 staff serve approximately 100,000 people living in an area of 15,000 square kilometers.

*"Promoting healthy people in a healthy environment"*

### Message from the Medical Officer of Health

2007 has been another busy year for the Renfrew County and District Health Unit, as the contents of this annual report can attest to. Health promotion and protection activities would not be possible without a dedicated and hard working staff, committed and cooperative partner agencies and a willing and supportive public.

New public health standards are on the horizon that should result in some adjustments to health unit programs and services during the course of 2008-09.

Improved population health is the cumulative result of the efforts of many individuals and groups. Thanks to all that made positive contributions to that effort in 2007!

Dr. Michael Corriveau,  
Medical Officer of Health

## Preventing Diseases

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Many diseases are preventable. Public health offers services such as immunization and education to decrease the number of people who will become ill or die from infectious diseases.

### Influenza immunization available to all

All Ontarians have access to free immunization against influenza, or “the flu.” There is a new flu vaccine every year because influenza viruses are continually changing. For the 2006/07 influenza season, the vaccine was a good match for the types of influenza viruses that were circulating. Renfrew County and District Health Unit staff gave 7493 doses of influenza vaccine at 25 Public Health clinics.

### New vaccine introduced

In 2007, the Ontario Ministry of Health began to fund the Human Papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine for grade eight girls. This is a safe and effective vaccine that protects women against infection from HPV, which is associated with cervical cancer, genital warts and other abnormal cell changes in the female genital area that can lead to other forms of cancer. We vaccinated 316 grade eight girls in Renfrew County and District.

- 1026** vaccinations were given to children age 0 to 18 months at Public Health clinics
- 81%** of grade 7 students were vaccinated against hepatitis B and meningococcal C
- 1198** travel health vaccinations were given

### Food safety

- 1407** food safety inspections were completed
- 385** people were certified through our Food Handler Training courses

In addition to ongoing food safety inspections, the Health Unit worked with local farmers’ markets in 2007. We provided educational sessions and print information to vendors and market managers on food safety at farmers’ markets. Public Health Inspectors also carried out inspections at each farmers’ market throughout the summer. This work was as a result of changes in 2006 to the Food Premises Regulation that affect food vendors at farmers’ markets.

### Safe water

- 1325** water samples were collected from 24 public beaches
- 6339** private water samples were submitted through the Health Unit for laboratory analysis

## Promoting Health

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### Supporting student health

Renfrew County and District Health Unit works to support the health of children in schools. We immunize, screen for dental problems, and promote healthy living.

Public Health Nurses and Health Promoters work with teachers, students and parents in 53 elementary schools.

- The TV Turnoff is a one-week challenge that encourages children to turn off televisions and computers (except for homework). This year, 4,000 students at 22 schools participated in this challenge.
- The Ready, Set, Grow kit is an insulated lunch bag filled with practical resources for parents to help their children eat healthy, be physically active, and practice safe food handling and good oral hygiene. 1,100 kits were distributed to parents of children starting kindergarten.

Health Unit staff also offer information and support on drugs and alcohol, sexual health, body image and healthy relationships at 10 area high schools.

- At Student Health Centres, Public Health Nurses provide individual counseling, education and referrals.
- Drive for Life is an experiential event for grade 11 students about issues related to alcohol use and driving. 875 students at 6 high schools participated in 2007.

<b>1854</b>	people visited Sexual and Student Health Centres
<b>6232</b>	children were screened for dental problems and <b>480</b> children were identified with an acute dental condition and referred for immediate treatment
<b>2</b>	issues of the <u>Health for All Schools</u> newsletter were distributed to all elementary school teachers
<b>1</b>	issue of the <u>Health for All Schools</u> newsletter was distributed to all secondary school teachers

### Reducing chronic diseases and preventing injuries

Our health professionals work in the community to help prevent chronic diseases. We provide information to workplaces, groups and individuals on tobacco-free living, healthy eating, and regular physical activity.

<b>4</b>	issues of the <u>Health for All Workplaces</u> newsletter were distributed to 100 workplaces
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## Promoting Health (continued)

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### Caring for families

The Family Health Program supports optimal physical, cognitive, communicative and psychosocial development of children and youth from before birth to age six. Below are examples of activities of the Family Health Program.

- The Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program provides support to high-risk families from before birth to age six through home visiting, service coordination and referral to community supports.
- Prenatal classes provide education on how to have a healthy baby, and prepare expectant parents for birth and beyond.
- Early contact with new parents after the birth of their child identifies family needs and health issues and provides support and referrals.
- The Renfrew County and District Breastfeeding Network works to increase the number of mothers who initiate breastfeeding, continue breastfeeding and have a positive experience with breastfeeding.

<b>358</b>	women attended prenatal classes
<b>846</b>	families were contacted by a Public Health Nurse within 48 hours of discharge from a hospital or their midwife's care
<b>922</b>	home visits were made to families by Public Health Nurses and Home Visitors
<b>120</b>	"Breastfeeding Friendly" locations were identified and promoted
<b>731</b>	children received services at child health clinics

## Protecting You

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### Monitoring for West Nile virus

Public health inspectors monitor Renfrew County and District for the presence of West Nile virus. In 2007 we set 80 mosquito traps and picked up 15 dead birds and had them tested. All mosquitoes and birds tested *negative* for West Nile virus.

Public health inspectors also provided information about the importance of protection against mosquito bites such as cleaning up areas around the house where mosquitoes like to rest and breed, and wearing light-coloured, long-sleeved shirts and long pants when spending time outdoors in places where mosquitoes are present.

### Preparing for an influenza pandemic

In 2007, Renfrew County and District Health Unit consulted with community partners, municipalities and health facilities to prepare for a pandemic. Our Pandemic Influenza Plan was completed and may be found on our website at <http://www.rcdhu.com/Pandemic%20Flu%20Plan/Index.htm>

The plan includes Public Health Measures, which are non-medical actions that will reduce the spread of the influenza virus during an influenza pandemic. Public health measures include public education, management of people who are ill with influenza and their contacts, community-based disease control strategies (i.e. social distancing, school closures and restriction/cancellation of large public gatherings), and travel restrictions.

### Ensuring cleaner air in public places

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act protects the health of all Ontarians by prohibiting smoking in all enclosed workplaces and enclosed public places. Public health inspectors ensure that local businesses comply with the legislation.

**760** inspections of tobacco vendors were completed

**350** inspections of workplaces were completed

**24** investigations were made in response to complaints and 12 charges were laid by the Health Unit under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act

Compliance with the legislation is more than 90% and we are pleased with the acceptance of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act in Renfrew County and District.

Renfrew County and District Health Unit received the Heather Crowe Award from the Ontario government for making a significant contribution to tobacco control efforts at the local level.

## 2007 Board of Health Members

Mayor Jack Wilson, Chair	County of Renfrew
Ms. Sheila Clarke, Vice-Chair	Provincial Appointee
Mayor Ann Aikens	County of Renfrew
Mr. Kenneth Bertrand	Provincial Appointee
Mayor Percy Bresnahan	Township of South Algonquin
Councillor Gary Severin	City of Pembroke
Reeve Tammy-Lea Sonnenburg	County of Renfrew
Ms. Marcia Timm	Provincial Appointee
Warden Janice Visneskie	County of Renfrew

## 2007 Approved Budget

Total budget: \$7,776,917

Funding sources:

- Province of Ontario - 74%
- County of Renfrew, City of Pembroke and Township of South Algonquin – 18%
- Other sources - 8%

How the funds are allocated:

- Salaries, benefits and program costs – 83%
- Occupancy and communications – 5%
- Rebate to obligated municipalities – 7%
- Other operating costs – 5%

## Contact us...

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Reception .....	613-732-3629
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Web: [www.rcdhu.com](http://www.rcdhu.com)

## Branch Offices

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