

2015

**ANNUAL REPORT**



Renfrew County and  
District Health Unit



# Renfrew County and District Health Unit

7 International Drive, Pembroke, ON Canada K8A 6W5 [www.rcdhu.com](http://www.rcdhu.com)

## What's Inside?

- 2 Who We Are
- 3 Meeting Public Health Challenges
- 4 Creating Supportive Environments
- 5 Helping Families
- 6 Helping the Community
- 7 Protecting Renfrew County and District
- 9 Preventing Communicable Diseases
- 10 Performance Indicators
- 12 2015 Board of Health Members  
2015 Approved Budget

## Message from Dr. Kathryn Reducka, Acting Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

As the Acting Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer of the Renfrew County and District Health Unit I am pleased to present the 2015 Annual Report.

Under the leadership of Dr. Maureen Carew a strategic plan for the Health Unit was developed that began implementation in 2015 and will continue until 2019. To realize the vision of 'Optimal Health for all in Renfrew County and District' four primary values were identified. Transparency, equity, excellence and collaboration will guide the organization as we move forward.

In 2015 the expertise of Health Unit staff was evident when faced with managing travelers returning from Ebola affected areas and preparing to welcome Syrian refugees. One of the new initiatives in 2015 was the launch of on-line prenatal education, making our free program more accessible to busy parents. Another was the pilot of *Nutri-STEP*<sup>®</sup> Nutrition Screening Tool for Every Preschooler, which helps parents identify children's eating problems early and access resources to make needed changes.

I hope the report increases the community's awareness of the many programs offered by the Renfrew County and District Health Unit.

## Message from Mr. J. Michael du Manoir Board of Health Chair, 2015

It is my pleasure to share the 2015 Renfrew County and District Health Unit Annual Report with you. This report outlines the ongoing contributions of Renfrew County and District Health Unit in promoting and protecting the health of all of our population. I trust you will find this report of interest.

The Strategic Plan initiated during 2014 is complete and is now adopted. This Strategic Plan sets a direction for the Health Unit for a five year period and will guide operational planning.

The vision of the Renfrew County and District Health Unit is "Optimal health for all in Renfrew County and District". I wish to thank the Board of Health, the Renfrew County and District Health Unit staff and all of our community partners for their support and commitment to the continuous drive towards optimal health outcomes for all of our residents.

## Who We Are

The Renfrew County and District Health Unit is one of 36 health units in Ontario that provides public health programs and services to a population of approximately 105,000 over a 15,000 square km catchment area that includes 19 municipalities in eastern Ontario, Canada.

Renfrew County and District Health Unit has a new vision, mission, values and strategic directions. The [2015-2019 Strategic Plan](#) was released in March 2015. The plan's implementation will guide priority-setting and enhance delivery of public health services in Renfrew County and District.



### Renfrew County and District Health Unit Strategic Plan 2015 - 2019

#### MISSION

*Renfrew County and District Health Unit protects and promotes the health and well-being of all residents through leadership, partnership, accountability and service excellence.*

#### VISION

*Optimal health for all in Renfrew County and District*

## Strategic Values

Transparency	Equity	Excellence	Collaboration
We operate ethically and transparently in the service of our communities.	We recognize and appreciate the diversity in Renfrew County and District and endeavour to address the unique needs of our population.	We are committed to providing the best possible services for individuals and communities. We embrace a culture of continuous improvement, evidence-based decision-making and life-long learning.	We work with community partners to achieve shared goals.

# Meeting Public Health Challenges

---

*Through the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, organizations are required to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities will have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.*

---

## Working towards barrier-free public health services

More than one in ten people in Ontario have some kind of disability, and this number will increase as our population ages. A goal of the Health Unit is to provide programs and services that are accessible to everyone, and employment practices that accommodate job applicants and employees with disabilities.

The Renfrew County and District Health Unit [Accessibility Policy](#) and [Accessibility Plan](#) outline how we are working on removing and preventing barriers, so that people with disabilities can participate fully. This initiative is in compliance with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#).

## Preparing to welcome Syrian refugees

When the new federal government announced plans to resettle 25,000 Syrian refugees, the Health Unit began taking steps to ensure that public health services would be accessible to refugees settling in Renfrew County and District.

The Health Unit provided cultural sensitivity training for staff, planned how to communicate with Arabic speaking clients, and linked with provincial and regional organizations involved in resettlement.

Along with many other organizations, the Health Unit is ready to assist families from Syria with making successful transitions to their new life in Canada.

# Creating Supportive Environments

---

*The percent of new mothers in Renfrew County and District who met the recommendation for feeding their babies “breast-milk only” in 2015 was: 67% in hospital, 52% at 2 months and 39% at six months.*

---

---

*The Township of Bonnechere Valley is a local leader in supporting the growing Canadian trend to make healthy food choices available wherever children and their families live, learn, work and play.*

---

## The Baby-Friendly way

The Health Unit is participating in the [Baby Friendly Initiative](#) (BFI), an international effort to improve the health of mothers and babies. BFI consists of ten steps for carrying out practices that promote and support breastfeeding, while assisting all families with feeding their children in a safe and nurturing way.

In 2015, the Health Unit hosted a “pre-assessment visit” from a Breastfeeding Committee for Canada representative. The purpose of the visit was to determine if the Health Unit is ready to be assessed for designation as a “Baby Friendly” community health service. The visit was successful due to the hard work and support of staff throughout the organization.

## Supporting healthy food policy

The Health Unit has been supporting the Community Resource Centre (Killaloe)’s project “Healthy Food IN and OUT of Schools” since 2013. The project has focused on increasing healthy food choices at the Eganville Community Arena’s canteen, in the Township of Bonnechere Valley.

In 2015, project work involved developing a healthy food policy for the arena. The Health Unit dietitian supported the process by making changes to the draft policy based on feedback, writing an implementation guide, training canteen staff and participating in presentations to Council.

Congratulations to Township of Bonnechere Valley Council for passing a comprehensive Healthy Food and Beverage Policy at its October meeting.

# Helping Families

---

*Prenatal education enables parents to build knowledge and confidence, so they can make the best decisions for themselves and their baby.*

---

---

*Healthy habits at a young age build life-long habits for healthy growth and development.*

---

---

*During the Chalk Challenge kick-off event, 21 organizations chalked their paved play areas and held events that fostered creativity, community involvement and spirit.*

---

## New online prenatal education

Renfrew County and District Health Unit launched its free on-line [prenatal education](#) program in October 2015, offering another way for expectant parents to learn about healthy pregnancies and prepare for parenthood. [The Gift of Motherhood](#) includes videos, animated illustrations, quizzes and games.

The on-line program makes prenatal education more accessible to families with transportation barriers and busy schedules, and enables learning at a pace that suits the parents. The Gift of Motherhood is available in both English and French. The Health Unit continues to provide in-person prenatal education in locations throughout Renfrew County and District.

## NutriSTEP® – Nutrition screening tool for every preschooler

NutriSTEP® is a checklist for parents about the eating and activity habits of their children ages three to five. This identifies what is going well, where there is room for improvement, and where to find trusted healthy eating information and supports.

The Health Unit offers the NutriSTEP® checklist through our programs and services for young families along with follow-up information and referrals to community resources. We also promote [Nutri-eSTEP](#), which parents and caregivers can do online and get immediate feedback.

## Healthy Kids Community Challenge gets underway

The County of Renfrew is receiving funding, training and social marketing tools over three years as part of the [Healthy Kids Community Challenge](#). The Challenge encourages community organizations to work together on creating sustainable programs and policies that improve the eating habits and activity levels of children ages 0 - 12. The Health Unit is supporting the County with this work by helping to engage partners, review literature and plan events.

A kick-off event called the Chalk Challenge was held in October 2015. Work is underway to create physical activity equipment lending hubs, an idea that was identified as a priority at community engagement sessions.

# Helping the Community

---

*The 2015 Amplify! youth summit involved 90 youth and 28 adult allies. The summit is a stepping stone for youth to get motivated to make things happen in their community.*

---

## Working towards a Renfrew County Youth Strategy

The Health Unit chairs and brings youth engagement expertise to the Renfrew County Youth Network, a dynamic group consisting of youth, community members, and youth social service agencies. The Network's mission is to develop, implement, and sustain a Renfrew County Youth Strategy to support all young people to become healthy and resilient.

Plans for developing the strategy took shape in 2015. Complementary activities were the recruitment of two youth co-chairs for the Network, a county-wide youth summit and a workshop for mental health workers on mental health of youth ages 12 - 15.

Watch the video about the Renfrew County Youth Network's [2015 Amplify! youth summit](#).

## Training helps prevent falls in older adults

Too many older adults in Renfrew County and District arrive at a hospital emergency department because they have been injured in a fall. The Health Unit's falls prevention work in 2015 focused on training Personal Support Workers and others who work with older adults in their homes.

The training emphasized that falls are *not* an inevitable part of the aging process. Participants developed an understanding of the multiple factors that interact to cause falls, and the steps that can be taken to prevent falls. The training is part of the [Champlain Falls Prevention Strategy](#).

---

*Residents of Renfrew County and District age 65 and over visited hospital emergency departments because of injuries caused by falls 1,818 times in 2015 (91 visits per 1,000 people age 65+).*

---

# Protecting Renfrew County and District

---

*The Health Unit sampled and tested water from 28 municipally owned and operated beaches in Renfrew County and District.*

---

---

*In 2015, Renfrew County and District Health Unit offered 30 courses and certified 662 individuals in safe food-handling.*

---

## Beach water testing in Renfrew County and District

The Renfrew County and District Health Unit has a mandate to prevent or reduce waterborne illness and injury related to recreational water use. This mandate is supported through weekly water testing at public beaches during the swimming season.

In 2015, 2 beaches were temporarily posted by the health unit as being unsafe for swimming due to high levels of bacteria. The health unit also monitors water conditions for signs of blue-green algae. In 2015, 2 beaches were closed due to the presence of blue-green algae.

## Food handler certification

As part of our commitment to public health, The Renfrew County and District Health Unit provides food handler certification training at no cost. This provincially-recognized training program for food service workers and interested residents is intended to promote safe food handling strategies to control or eliminate unsafe conditions that cause food poisoning. The certificate remains in effect for five years from the date of the exam.

## Canadian Nuclear Laboratories KI tablet distribution

The health unit collaborated with Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL) in Chalk River on the pre-distribution of potassium-iodide (KI) tablets to residents living in the primary zone around the CNL site. KI tablets are used to help protect the thyroid gland from radioactive iodine that may be released into the air during a radiological emergency. Pre-distribution of the tablets would allow residents to take the tablets in a timely manner should an emergency situation occur.

Information sessions were held in Chalk River in late October by representatives from CNL and the health unit for residents seeking additional information about the program.

## Revisions to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act affect playgrounds and sport fields

As of January 1 2015, it became illegal to smoke tobacco on and within 20 metres of children's playgrounds and publicly owned sport fields and surfaces. This includes areas for basketball, baseball, soccer, outdoor ice rinks, tennis courts, splash pads, and swimming pools that are owned by a municipality or the province or a postsecondary education institution.

The Health Unit has partnered with community groups and municipalities to deliver this message along with government-issued no smoking signs to protect users of playgrounds and sports fields from exposure to second-hand smoke.

## Decreasing the impact of tobacco use

The Health Unit is involved in decreasing the negative impact of tobacco use by preventing youth from starting to smoke, helping people to quit, promoting smoke-free public spaces, supporting legislation that protects us from harmful tobacco marketing practices, and enforcing tobacco control legislation.

In 2015 we found creative ways to continue this work:

- Mobilized leadership training for youth and young adults to work with [Freeze the Industry](#) and [Love My Life...Tobacco Free!](#) in their local communities.
- Consulted with Renfrew County Housing Corporation staff on developing a smoke-free policy for 35 social housing properties and providing cessation support to tenants.
- Coordinated a survey of students at Algonquin College for their opinions about the need for smoke-free housing units.
- Promoted the [wouldrather](#) and [Driven to Quit](#) challenges.
- Promoted the [MyQuit](#) smoking cessation service and established a fax referral system for Health Unit clients interested in quitting.
- Surveyed selected health care providers about their use of the 5 A's (ask, advise, assess, assist, arrange) to help pre- and postnatal patients move towards quitting smoking.

The Health Unit works closely with staff at other Health Units in eastern Ontario through the Tobacco Control Area Network.

## Vector-borne disease control program

In 2015, the health unit submitted a total of 16 ticks to the Ontario Public Health Lab for identification. These ticks were brought into the health unit after being found attached to individuals. Of these 16 ticks, 11 were identified as *Ixodes scapularis* (black-legged tick), which is the primary vector responsible for the transmission of Lyme disease. All of these black-legged ticks were further tested for the bacterial agent which causes Lyme disease and none were found to be positive for this agent.

The health unit also carries out an annual West Nile Virus (WNV) monitoring program. For a ten-week period in the summer, a total of five traps are set up across our service area on a weekly basis to trap mosquitoes. The mosquitoes are then shipped to a lab for testing and in 2015, as in previous years, none of the mosquitoes were found to be positive for WNV. The health unit did not receive any reports of human cases of WNV in 2015.

# Protecting Renfrew County and District

---

*The Health Unit has ongoing collaboration with organizations involved in infection prevention and control through IPAC Renfrew County and IPAC Canada.*

---

## Health Unit hosts Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) fall conference

The IPAC conference in October 2015 gathered over 50 health care workers, including infection prevention and control practitioners, working within acute care, community and long-term care and retirement homes from across Renfrew County and District.

The full-day event included updates on infection prevention and control practices, influenza prevention, and management of respiratory and enteric outbreaks in institutions. As well, the new [Recommendations for Tuberculosis \(TB\) Screening in Long-Term Care and Retirement Homes](#) was presented and discussed.

## Management of travellers returning from countries affected by Ebola Virus Disease

Public health organizations around the world have become involved in responding to the devastating epidemic of Ebola Virus Disease. In 2015, Renfrew County and District Health Unit played a part in Canada's efforts to prevent the spread of Ebola to Canada.

Between February and December 2015, the Health Unit monitored travellers who returned from Ebola affected countries. Staff followed procedures described in [Public Health Management of Travellers from Countries Affected by Ebola Virus Disease: Guidance for Public Health Units](#).

Each returned traveler was managed by public health for a 21-day monitoring period. This included telephone contacts to check for any symptoms and to ensure prompt testing if they became ill. There have not been any cases of Ebola in Canada to date.

## Wireless access to information about vaccinations

The Health Unit has been making good use of Panorama, a provincial electronic information system that includes vaccination records of Ontario residents that have attended primary and/or secondary schools.

New in 2015, staff providing vaccinations in schools and other community locations are able to access the information in Panorama through a secure internet connection.

This enables staff to ensure that each vaccination is needed, and to check for any allergies, previous adverse reactions and exemptions. After each vaccination is given, the individual's record is updated immediately.

# Performance indicators

Outlined below are the 2015 results for the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement performance indicators. These indicators are a requirement for health unit funding and are reported by all 36 health units in Ontario.

Performance Indicator	2015 Target	2015 Performance
% of high-risk food premises inspected once every 4 months while in operation	monitoring	100%
% of moderate-risk food premises inspected once every 6 months while in operation	monitoring	100%
% of Class A pools inspected while in operation	100%	100%
% of high-risk Small Drinking Water Systems inspections completed for those that are due for re-inspection	100%	100%
% of public spas inspected while in operation	monitoring	100%
% of personal service settings inspected annually	monitoring	100%
% of suspected rabies exposures reported with investigation initiated within one day of public health unit notification	97.5%	91.7% <sup>a</sup>
% of confirmed gonorrhea cases where initiation of follow-up occurred within 2 business days	monitoring	100%
% of confirmed gonorrhea cases treated according to recommended Ontario treatment guidelines	baseline	60%
% of confirmed iGAS (invasive group A streptococcal disease) cases where initiation of follow-up occurred on the same day as receipt of lab confirmation of a positive case	monitoring	100%
% of salmonellosis cases where one or more risk factor(s) other than "unknown" was entered into iPHIS (Integrated Public Health Information System)	82%	100%
% of HPV vaccine wasted that is stored/administered by the public health unit	0.1%	0.6% <sup>b</sup>
% of influenza vaccine wasted that is stored/administered by the public health unit	2.2%	2.3% <sup>b</sup>
% of refrigerators storing publicly funded vaccines that have received a completed routine annual cold chain inspection	100%	100%
% of school-aged children who have completed immunizations for hepatitis B	monitoring	70.3%
% of school-aged children who have completed immunization for HPV	monitoring	53.6%

## Performance indicators (continued)

Performance Indicator	2015 Target	2015 Performance
% of school-aged children who have completed immunization for meningococcus	monitoring	78%
% of tobacco vendors in compliance with youth access legislation at the time of last inspection	≥90%	90.9%
% of secondary schools inspected once per year for compliance with section 10 of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act	100%	100%
% of <b>non-seasonal</b> tobacco retailers inspected for compliance with section 3 of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act	100%	97.3% <sup>c</sup>
% of <b>seasonal</b> tobacco retailers inspected for compliance with section 3 of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act	100%	100%
% tobacco retailers inspected for compliance with display, handling and promotion sections of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act	100%	100%
Oral health assessment and surveillance: % of schools screened	100%	100% <sup>d</sup>
Oral health assessment and surveillance: % of all JK, SK and grade 2 students screened in all publicly funded schools	100%	100% <sup>d</sup>
Implementation status of NutriSTEP® Preschool Screen	Intermediate	Intermediate
Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) status	Advanced	Advanced

“Monitoring” indicates that performance is reviewed internally by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to ensure that high levels of achievement are sustained.

“Baseline” indicates that the performance level will be used to establish targets for future performance and for measuring changes in such performance.

- a The target was not met due to intermittent late reporting of animal bite exposures by the treating facilities.
- b Vaccine wastage was due mainly to unused vaccine.
- c All tobacco vendors were inspected at the frequency required by provincial guidelines.
- d The time period was July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015.

## 2015 Board of Health Members

The Renfrew County and District Board of Health provides governance, oversight and strategic direction to the Health Unit. Members of the Board of Health in 2015 were:

Mr. J. Michael du Manoir, Chair  
 Ms. Carolyn Watt, Vice-Chair  
 Reeve Glenn Doncaster  
 Mayor Michael Donohue  
 Mayor Jane Dumas  
 Warden Peter Emon  
 Mr. Wilmer Matthews  
 Councillor Christine Reavie  
 Ms. Marcia Timm  
 Mayor Janice Visneskie Moore

## Contact Us

### Renfrew County and District Health Unit

7 International Drive, Pembroke, Ontario, Canada  
 K8A 6W5

<b>Health Info Line</b>	<b>613-735-8666</b>
Immunization	613-735-8653
Environmental Health - Inspection	613-735-8654
Dental	613-735-8661
Health Promotion and Clinical Services	613-735-8651
Reception	613-732-3629
Facsimile	613-735-3067

Web site [www.rcdhu.com](http://www.rcdhu.com)

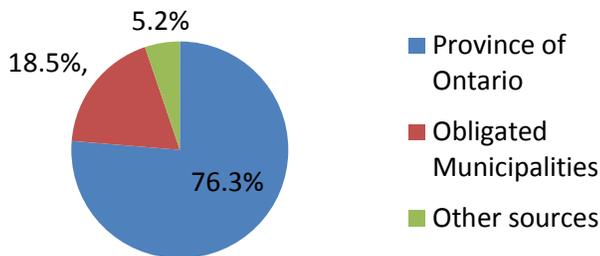
### Branch Office

450 O'Brien Road, Suite 106, Renfrew 613-432-5853

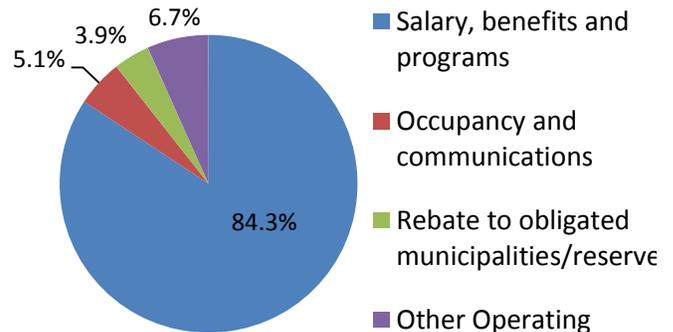
## 2015 Approved Budget

Total budget: \$9,165,839

### Sources of Funds



### Spending



613-735-8666 or 1-800-267-1097, Ext. 666

[www.rcdhu.com](http://www.rcdhu.com)



Renfrew County and District Health Unit