

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

RENFREW COUNTY AND DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT



A message from the Board Chair, Acting Medical Officer of Health and Acting CEO

On behalf of the Renfrew County and District Health Unit board members and staff, we are very pleased to present the 2016 Annual Report. This report highlights the key programs and services delivered to our community this past year. We hope you enjoy this report.

2016 was a year of growth, renewal and great progress on many fronts as the staff worked tirelessly to provide care to the community. In the fall we were awarded the “Baby Friendly” designation from the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada – an example of our ongoing efforts to create supportive environments through the dedication and commitment of the staff.

We initiated programs to address emerging health challenges including the issues of opioid overdose risk and distracted driving. Families were supported through our immunization, dental and family health programs. The range of protection services provided in 2016 included inspections of safe water systems, food premises and recreational camps, and monitoring for Lyme disease and West Nile virus - to name but a few. The highlights follow in the report.

The programs and services delivered by the Renfrew County and District Health Unit were accomplished with a high level of performance. This is due, in part, to the dedication of Health Unit staff and in accordance with the provincial performance indicators, 2016.

We are taking this opportunity to thank Renfrew County and District board members and staff, our community and provincial partners. Together we continue to focus on delivering quality services to the residents of Renfrew County and District.

Respectfully submitted,



Janice Visneskie-Moore
Board Chair



Dr. Robert Cushman
Acting Medical Officer of Health



Heather G. Daly
Acting CEO



Who We Are

Renfrew County and District Health Unit is one of 36 public health units in Ontario.

We provide public health programs and services to approximately 105,000 people in a 15,000 square km catchment area that includes 19 municipalities in eastern Ontario, Canada.

Community Health Profile Released

The Health Unit regularly provides information on the health status of the local population to identify public health priorities and assist with planning and implementation of public health programs and services. The [Community Health Profile](#) released in March 2016 is an overview of the socio-economic and health status of residents served by Renfrew County and District Health Unit.

The report revealed the following about our residents:

- life expectancy is high
- over half of the population perceive their health as very good or excellent
- over two-thirds perceive their mental health as very good or excellent
- almost one-third perceive their lives as stressful

The high prevalence of chronic disease risk factors such as high alcohol intake, smoking and obesity is concerning. Mortality rates from the four major causes of death (cancers, circulatory diseases, respiratory diseases and injuries) are similar to Ontario, except that mortality from circulatory diseases is elevated.



Meeting Public Health Challenges

Health Unit addresses the risk of opioid overdose

In 2016, the presence of illicit (non-prescribed) fentanyl in many recreational drugs emerged as a serious public health issue. Since there is no control over the quality or purity of illicit fentanyl, it has the potential to cause overdose and death.

As important first steps to addressing this risk, the Health Unit began local awareness raising activities and prepared to distribute Naloxone kits as part of its [Harm Reduction Program](#).

Naloxone is a drug that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose. This allows time for a person with a suspected overdose to be transported to a hospital to receive immediate life-saving medical treatment.

Partners Against Distracted Driving promote “Leave the Phone Alone”

Most people are aware that using hand-held devices while driving is dangerous – and illegal - in Ontario. But crashes caused by distracted drivers continue to be a serious problem.

Renfrew County Partners Against Distracted Driving redoubled its efforts to tackle this issue in 2016, with local support and a grant from the Ministry of Transportation’s Road Safety Community Partnership Program.

The [Leave the Phone Alone](#) campaign consisted of “DriveWise” computer simulator presentations for grade 11 and 12 students, presentations and a family activity booklet for grade 4 and 5 students, the installation of 40 road signs, focused police patrols in December that resulted in 60 charges, and media coverage in local newspapers, radio and television.

The campaign also received contributions from community partners, private businesses, some municipalities and the County of Renfrew. Renfrew County Partners Against Distracted Driving is a partnership between the Health Unit, local Police Services and Police Services Boards.

31 residents of Renfrew County and District visited an emergency department, and 20 people were hospitalized for opioid-related harms.

[Leave the Phone Alone](#) encourages people to take a pledge to leave the phone alone while driving.

Drivers who use hand-held devices are four times more likely to get into crashes serious enough to cause injury.



Creating Supportive Environments

Breastfeeding with no other liquids or solids (exclusive breastfeeding) is recommended for the first 6 months of life. The proportion of new mothers in Renfrew County and District exclusively breastfeeding at 2 months rose from 32% in 2015 to 49% in 2016.

In 2016 there were 61 e-cigarette vendors in Renfrew County and District. One charge was issued to a vendor for selling to a person under age 19.

118 tobacco vendors were each checked twice for sales to persons under age 19. 94% of vendors were in compliance with the Smoke Free Ontario Act.

Is the Health Unit Baby Friendly?

Assessors from the [Breastfeeding Committee](#) for Canada visited the Health Unit for three days in October to answer that question.

They interviewed staff in all program areas to assess how we support breastfeeding in our daily work. They looked at our policies, procedures, and teaching resources related to infant feeding. They visited with parents and expectant parents who were clients of the Health Unit to learn about their views and practices related to infant feeding.

As a conclusion to this research, the assessors determined that the Health Unit is indeed, Baby Friendly. This designation will last for five years, until a reassessment in 2021.

The [Baby Friendly Initiative](#) (BFI) is an international effort to improve the health of mothers and babies. BFI consists of [ten steps](#) for promoting and supporting breastfeeding, while assisting all families with feeding their children in a safe and nurturing way.

Smoke-Free Ontario Act amendment

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act became law in 2006 and in 2016 it had some important amendments. Among the more significant changes were:

- Flavoured tobacco products (except menthol) were banned
- Smoking became illegal on the grounds of hospitals, psychiatric facilities and certain provincial buildings
- Retailers can no longer offer promotional items with the purchase of tobacco products
- It became illegal to sell or supply e-cigarettes or their components to anyone under 19 years of age. E-cigarette vendors are also required to post signs that state they must ask for ID from anyone who looks under the age of 25.

The Health Unit enforces the Smoke-Free Ontario Act in accordance with the [Tobacco Compliance Protocol](#). For all enforcement measures in 2016, a total of 54 warnings and 8 charges were issued. In addition, 15 tobacco-related complaints were investigated.

Helping Families

Students are protected against infectious diseases

Ontario Health Units are responsible for enforcing the Immunization of School Pupils Act. This Act requires students attending primary and secondary schools to be immunized against [nine infectious diseases](#). If the Health Unit does not have required immunization records or a valid exemption, students may be suspended from school.

Health Unit staff reviewed the immunization status of all students in Renfrew County and District in early spring, and sent notices to parents of students with incomplete immunization records. Health Unit staff were available to support parents during the immunization review process, and extra immunization clinics made it easier for students to catch up on their immunizations.

Suspension orders were sent to school principals and parents in May for students who were still missing the required information. As a result of support from parents, principals, school boards and health care providers, the Health Unit received the required immunization records or valid exemptions for all students in Renfrew County and District.

Helping children access dental care

On January 1, 2016, six publicly funded dental programs were integrated into the Healthy Smiles Ontario Program. Children and youth age 17 and under are now automatically enrolled in Healthy Smiles Ontario if their family receives: Ontario Works, Temporary Care Assistance, Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities or the Ontario Disability Support Program.

Healthy Smiles Ontario is also available to children and youth who are identified with an urgent dental condition that meets the eligibility requirements OR living in a family that meets the income eligibility requirements.

The Health Unit's [Dental Screening Program](#) helps children who meet the eligibility requirements for Healthy Smiles Ontario to access dental care. Dental Hygienists from the Health Unit visit all elementary schools in Renfrew County and District each year to check students for dental care needs. The Hygienists follow up with parents and guardians of children with identified needs.

1,006 suspension orders were issued by the Acting Medical Officer of Health in May 2016. By working cooperatively with parents and principals, we achieved full compliance with the Immunization of School Pupils Act.

During the 2015/2016 School Year, 3088 children in kindergarten and grade two had an oral health assessment at school by a Dental Hygienist from the Health Unit.



Helping The Community

Renfrew County Youth Network

The [Renfrew County Youth Network](#) held the 4th Amplify! youth summit in October 2016. It attracted 110 youth in grades 10 and 11, and 35 adult allies from across Renfrew County.

After the summit, the Network supported participants with getting connected in their communities and addressing topics they had identified as important at the summit.

The youth developed 6 excellent [Amplify Action Projects](#), which the Network committed to supporting. The projects address mental health, relationship building, self-confidence, leadership development, and safety and belonging, and will take place in 2017.

The Health Unit co-chair brings youth engagement expertise and leadership to the Renfrew County Youth Network. The Network's mission is to develop a Renfrew County Youth Strategy to support all young people to become healthy and resilient.

Healthy Kids Community Challenge promotes physical activity and water

The Healthy Kids Community Challenge completed its first theme: Run, Jump, Play and launched a second theme: Water Does Wonders in 2016. The highlights of Run, Jump, Play were the creation of Physical Activity Equipment Lending Hubs and Outdoor Natural Play Spaces in all Renfrew County municipalities.

The Water Does Wonders theme kicked off with an opportunity for schools, municipalities and community organizations to apply for a water bottle filling station. 27 new filling stations were installed as a result. All elementary school students received a stainless steel water bottle to use at the stations, and to remind them to drink water.

Elementary schools were encouraged to send a teacher to Sip Smart!™ Ontario Training, which was led by the Health Unit. Sip Smart!™ Ontario is a licensed classroom educational program that helps teach children in grades 3 to 7 about sugary drinks and about making healthy drink choices.

The Health Unit co-chairs the Healthy Kids Community Challenge in partnership with the County of Renfrew.

The goal of Amplify! is to empower youth to create positive changes in their home communities. In turn, community members will listen to youth and consider their concerns when making decisions.



Protecting Renfrew County and District

Public Health Inspectors work with operators of small drinking water systems to ensure water is safe

Renfrew County and District Health Unit is required to assess and monitor all small drinking water systems within our jurisdiction for compliance with provincial regulations. Small drinking water systems are those located at motels, trailer parks, campgrounds, resorts, places of worship, community halls, and restaurants etc. that provide water to the public and that do not have access to a municipal drinking water system.

Each system is assessed with regard to the type of water supply (ground or surface water), safety of the supply, distribution, bacteriological test results, and treatment requirements in order to establish a risk rating.

System operators are then provided with a directive that outlines how the system must be maintained in order to ensure a continuous supply of safe water.

An important feature of compliance is regular bacteriological testing by the system operators. Health inspectors monitor these test results and are notified immediately of any adverse conditions. All systems are reassessed on a regular schedule and when there are any upgrades or changes to the system.

Public Health Inspectors ensure recreational camps meet standards

There are about 35 recreational children's camps operating in Renfrew County and District. These camps are inspected every year by the Health Unit.

Public Health Inspectors enforce provincial regulations to ensure the camps meet minimum standards for accommodation, first aid treatment, protection from fires, safe water supply, safe food preparation, general cleaning and garbage disposal, waterfront safety and other requirements. Beach water is also sampled for bacterial contamination if the camp makes a beach available for campers.

In 2016 the Health Unit worked with operators of about 400 small drinking water systems.



Recreational camps requiring inspection are those camps used mainly for recreational activities that have overnight accommodations for ten or more people for periods of at least five days.

Protecting Renfrew County and District

Health Unit investigates animal bites in an effort to prevent rabies

The Health Unit implements a rabies control program to help prevent rabies in humans. This is done by managing animal bite cases that are reported to the Health Unit.

Public Health Inspectors assist with the quarantine of animals that have bitten a person, the testing of animals for rabies and the provision of anti-rabies vaccine for patients that have been exposed to higher risk animals.

Health Unit monitors for the presence of West Nile Virus and Lyme disease

In 2016 the Health Unit set up mosquito traps on a rotational basis at sites across Renfrew County and District to monitor for the presence of West Nile Virus. Trapped mosquitos were packaged and sent to a lab for analysis.

Since this program began in 2003, no mosquitos trapped in Renfrew County and District have tested positive for West Nile Virus. However, we still recommend that residents [protect themselves from mosquito bites](#).

As part of our Lyme disease monitoring program, the Health Unit accepts ticks that have been attached to humans so the species can be identified and tested for the presence of Lyme disease.

In 2016 the Health Unit began looking for black legged ticks, the species that carries Lyme disease, at sites across Renfrew County and District. Black legged ticks were found at the Arnprior site in both spring and fall. As a result, Arnprior is now classified as a [risk area](#) for Lyme disease.

The Health Unit investigated 274 animal bite reports from local health care providers. 23 people were provided with anti-rabies vaccine after being exposed to high-risk animals. 19 animals were tested for rabies. There were no positive reports of rabies in Renfrew County and District.

In 2016, 41 ticks were either submitted to or collected by the Health Unit and sent for testing. 29 were identified as black-legged ticks, with only 2 testing positive for Lyme disease.



Protecting Renfrew County and District

Communicable Disease Guidelines for Schools and Child Care Facilities

The Health Unit receives ongoing requests for information about identifying and dealing with communicable diseases in schools and childcare facilities. In response, we released [Communicable Disease Guidelines for Schools and Child Care Facilities](#) in June 2016.

The Guidelines are a concise information source about 37 communicable diseases commonly experienced by children. Information for each disease includes what it is, how it spreads, the incubation period, the period of communicability, and how to prevent transmission to others.

Also available as [Prévention et contrôle des infections en milieu scolaire et services de garde Guide d'Interventions](#).

Reported chlamydia infections continue to rise

In Ontario, over 70 communicable diseases must be reported to the local Medical Officer of Health. The most common reportable disease is chlamydia. Chlamydia is a sexually transmitted infection caused by a bacterium. In 2016, there were 323 confirmed cases of chlamydia in Renfrew County and District – the highest number ever reported here.

Chlamydia rates in Renfrew County and District were comparable to Ontario, with 304 cases per 100,000 people here and 298 cases per 100,000 in Ontario. Chlamydia rates have risen in recent years, both in Ontario and Renfrew County and District.

Based on the Health Unit's follow-up with people infected with chlamydia in 2016, common behaviours that increase the chance of getting chlamydia are: not using a condom, more than one sexual contact in the past 6 months, and new sexual contact in the past 2 months.

The Health unit offers free condoms through [Sexual Health Clinics](#) and high school [Student Health Centres](#).

In 2016, 63% of confirmed chlamydia cases in Renfrew County and District were females. In females, chlamydia was more common in the 20 – 24 and 15 – 19 age groups. Males infected with chlamydia were most likely to be in the 20 – 24 and 25 – 29 age groups.



Performance indicators

Performance indicators are a requirement for health unit funding through the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement. Performance indicators are reported by all 36 health units in Ontario. 2016 results for Renfrew County and District Health Unit are [available here](#).

2016 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 2016 were:

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

Contact Us

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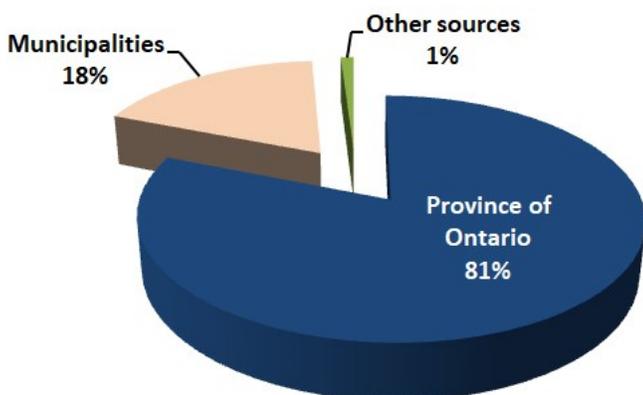
Web site <https://rcdhu.com>

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2016 Approved Budget

Total budget: \$8,940,631

2016 Funding Sources



2016 Actual Spending

