



# Renfrew County and District Health Unit

*"Optimal health for all in Renfrew County and District"*

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## CEO Report: January 2025

To: Board of Health  
Date: January 28, 2025  
From: Heather G Daly

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### Staffing Update

With 2025 upon us, we are excited to welcome Erin Vereyken as RCDHU's new Director, Health Protection. Erin brings over 17 years of experience at RCDHU, along with a wealth of knowledge and expertise. She has previously served as our Manager of Clinical Services and played a pivotal role in our COVID-19 response, leading the local rollout of our vaccine campaign. Welcome, Erin!

### Ministry of Health: Strengthening Public Health Updates

#### Funding:

The Ministry issued an executive lead memo on December 23 sharing updates on strengthening public health. The 1% growth to mandatory base funding for 2025 and 2026 for all Ontario public health units is confirmed. Their intent is to address the '...urgent need for stabilization while change processes are underway'. The review of the provincial funding methodology for public health continues and they will share next steps and timelines as it is available.

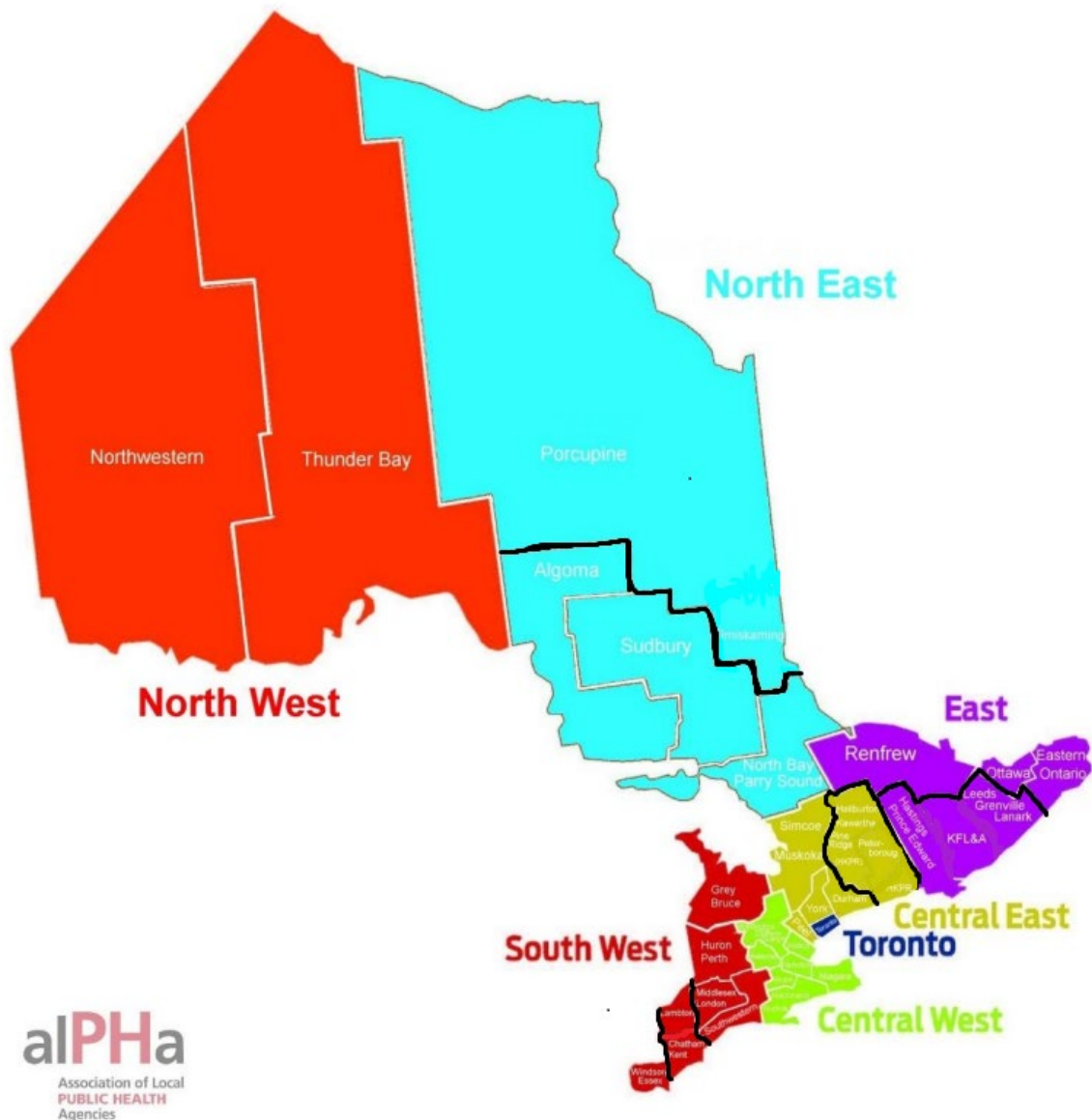
#### Voluntary Mergers:

As of January 1, the number of health units in Ontario has been reduced from 34 to 29 following the formal government announcement of support in December ([Ontario Continuing to Build a More Connected and Convenient Health Care System | Ontario Newsroom](#)) for their voluntary mergers.

The nine health units that have merged into four are:

- Porcupine and Timiskaming Health Units = Northeastern Public Health
- Brant County and Haldimand-Norfolk Health Units = Grand Erie Public Health
- Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge (HKPR) and Peterborough = Haliburton Kawartha Northumberland Peterborough Health Unit (legal name only, branding in progress.)
- Hastings and Prince Edward Counties (HPE), Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox and Addington (KFLA) and Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Units = South East Health Unit

Below is a modified map with the boundaries added in black showing the 29 public health units in Ontario:



#### Standards Review:

The Ministry is continuing their review of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS). They are working to address and incorporate feedback while looking at any other opportunities to reduce burdens at the local level.

The revised documents are expected to be released in August 2025, with an effective date of January 2, 2026. For 2025, the current OPHS standards and incorporated protocols and guidelines remain in effect ([link here](#)).

#### Conferences and Training:

The alpha winter symposium is scheduled for February 12 – 14. Section meetings and workshops are now open for registration. They will discuss a wide variety of issues of importance to public health leaders. The cost is \$399 plus HST and more information is available [here](#) and through the January 2025 Infobreak referenced in the meeting correspondence.

#### New Year Updates

##### Board Calendar:

The [2025 board calendar](#) has been prepared and is posted on the board portal. This calendar provides information about anticipated dates and timing of key board topics and activities throughout the coming year. Note these are the planned dates but are subject to change.

##### Closing out 2024:

We are currently preparing the 2024 Q4 report for the Ministry. The due date to the Ministry is not yet known because the Ministry templates have been delayed. Additionally, our team is gearing up for the 2024 financial audit. Today, the board will consider the bylaw to appoint auditors. The board will also review and approve the signing officers, following the change in the board executive structure after the Inaugural meeting in January. These bylaws are approved annually at the first regular meeting of the year.

##### Budget and Program Planning:

The templates for the 2025 Annual Service Plan (ASP) have not yet been released by the Ministry. The plan was originally due to the Ministry on March 1, 2025, however, they are extending this deadline. The timelines for presenting to Resources Committee and board of health will be confirmed after the date has been confirmed by the Ministry.

##### Risk Management and Operations Planning:

2025 risk assessment and operations planning sessions continued through December and January. Risks are being evaluated and updated as necessary, with mitigation strategies developed and incorporated into the operating plan. The final plan should be ready for presentation to the board at the March board of health meeting. This year, additional attention is being given to progress reporting for 2025 with the goal of ensuring the board receives sufficient information and feels confident in this information being provided.

##### Qualified Donee Status:

The application was filed by our lawyer with the Charities Directorate of Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) on December 19, 2024. It has been placed into their inventory and will be assigned for review as soon as possible. The expected response date is mid-2025.

Other Items:

Our address officially changed on January 1 to include 'Suite 100'. This is necessary to help direct deliveries and mail as there are many new tenants in the building.

The signage at the front of the building, along Lake Street, has now been refurbished and RCDHU has 'top billing'. A recent photo is below showing our new look.



Respectfully submitted,

*Heather Shady*

January 28, 2025