



2019 Annual Report



HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD
Public Health

Message from the Board of Health Chair and the Medical Officer of Health

The year 2019 was one of challenge and change for public health in Ontario, and Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) was no exception. We implemented a new organizational structure, were notified of changes in our funding formula, and provided feedback in response to provincial proposals to amalgamate public health units.

Throughout the year, despite unexpected demands, HPEPH staff continued to deliver high-quality public health services to our communities, protected the health and well-being of our residents, and continued to make progress toward our strategic goals.

We identified and responded to numerous emerging local public health issues in 2019, while continuing to deliver our regular programs and services.

- The legalization of cannabis resulted in a need to provide comprehensive information and education sessions to our residents, in collaboration with local partners, to raise awareness about risks and laws related to cannabis use. We also equipped parents with strategies to prevent or postpone cannabis use among teens, and connect them with community resources.
- The presence of carfentanil was identified in our region, which significantly raised the risk of local overdose. In response, we worked with community partners to raise awareness of Naloxone kits and training, shared messaging to improve knowledge of the signs of overdose, and helped connect people who use drugs to support services.
- Recognizing the impact that overdose has had on residents in our community, we also participated in the first local event commemorating Local Overdose Awareness Day, when we



joined community partners in recognizing and remembering those who had lost their lives due to overdose.

- Our staff worked to improve accessibility to our prenatal and parenting programs by implementing an innovative new outreach program which allows parents to contact public health nurses by text, and offering prenatal classes online.
- We initiated a radon study, which provided free radon test kits to 619 local households, which will allow us to better understand local radon levels and help improve residents' understanding of the risk of radon.
- We undertook significant efforts to prepare for the launch of the new Ontario Seniors' Dental Care Program, which became available at the end of the year.
- We continued making difficult but necessary decisions to improve the efficiency of our organization and allocate our resources effectively.
- We implemented a new vision screening program in March of 2019.
- We continued our work with municipal staff and community organizations to build capacity for health in all policies, age-friendly communities and road safety.
- We launched a pilot project with licensed child care providers to enhance healthy eating and physical activity.

Throughout 2019, our staff have continued to work tirelessly to positively represent our organization during this time of uncertainty. Most importantly, we are committed to continuing the delivery of essential public health services to our communities, now – and into the future.



Jo-Anne Albert

Chair, Hastings Prince Edward Board of Health
Mayor, Municipality of Tweed, County of Hastings



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MD, CPHI(C), CCFP, MPH, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health & CEO
Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

Board of Health Members

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Municipality of Tweed,
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Dr. Craig Ervine

Deborah Goulden

Douglas Lafreniere

Joy Martin



Our Community and Priority Populations

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) is a public health agency that serves approximately 161,000 residents over a 7,000 square kilometre catchment area. We provide programs and services to all individuals in our communities to help improve and maintain their health. We also work to ensure priority populations in our region have equitable access to public health services. Priority populations within the HPEPH jurisdiction include those living on low incomes, Indigenous populations, rural populations, older adults, and children and youth (including families).

Understanding the needs of our community is essential to ensuring the effective delivery of public health programs.

Evidence shows that many local residents are living in poverty, lack safe and affordable housing, experience food insecurity, have minimal access to mental health supports, and have limited transportation.

Hastings and Prince Edward Counties (HPEC) are also home to a large proportion of daily smokers, and experience higher than average rates of hospitalization for diseases associated with smoking. As HPEC comprise an urban-rural mix, rural populations are at an increased risk of social isolation.

At HPEPH, we continue to work to address the needs of priority populations through our many programs and services, despite our limited resources and competing demands in our catchment area. We are continuously striving to work collaboratively with local partners, including Indigenous communities, health care providers, educators, and municipalities.

2019-2023 Strategic Plan

Our Values Show We CARE



Collaboration

We work together as a team with our communities, colleagues and clients to build effective partnerships.



Advocacy

We are the voice to influence public policy and take action to improve health.



Respect

We treat others with dignity, respect and integrity.



Excellence

We strive for excellence through effective public health practice and promote a culture of innovation and learning.

Our Strategic Priorities

Throughout 2019, staff at HPEPH continued to work toward the achievement of our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

While funding changes, announcements related to modernization, and consultation activities were a key focus in 2019, we also continued to pursue activities to advance identified priorities in the areas of:

- Community Engagement
- Staff Engagement and Culture
- Population Health Assessment and Surveillance
- Health Promotion
- Program Standards
- Programs and Services



Strategic Priority:

Community Engagement

We have continued to work to be a collaborative partner within our communities, to protect and optimize the health of our citizens. In 2019, we:

- Finalized our Community Engagement Action Plan, which outlines key goals and deliverables to enhance the way we work with our community stakeholders.
- Prepared a new website for launch in 2020, with improved capacity for health care providers, educators, and clients.
- Continued to maintain and develop relationships with community partners including municipalities, health care providers, educators, Indigenous communities, and community agencies such as Housing Services, Children's Aid, Community Health Centres, Family Health Teams, EarlyON Centres, and Children and Youth Mental Health Service Providers.
- Participated in several collaborative working groups including Quinte Region Traffic Coalition, Harm Reduction Task Force, Low Water Response Team, City of Belleville Inclusion Committee, Source Water Protection Committee, PEC Environmental Advisory Committee, Healthy Schools Work Group, Smoking Cessation Providers Network, LHIN COPD Initiative, Municipal Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Committees, and Food for Learning Steering Committee.



Strategic Priority:



Staff Engagement and Culture

We have continued activities to build a culture of client focus, engagement and open communications. In 2019, we:

- Developed and issued an all-staff engagement survey to identify current engagement status, as well as opportunities for improvement.
- Formed an employee-led social committee to advance opportunities for improved workplace culture.
- Established training and development plans for management to improve skill equity.
- Created a new Corporate Communications Strategy and invested in centralized communications.
- Engaged staff to identify efficiencies in administrative and program processes.

Strategic Priority:

Population Health Assessment and Surveillance

We have continued our efforts to develop organizational capacity to monitor population health, and evaluate our programs and services. In 2019, we:

- Completed comprehensive reviews of seven programs, which allowed us to identify opportunities to improve efficiencies and address health inequities.
- Created a comprehensive planning process to ensure our programs are developed and implemented consistently and efficiently using the most up-to-date evidence.
- Developed a training and implementation plan to support the implementation and maintenance of our new planning process.



Strategic Priority:

Health Promotion

In 2019, we continued our work to develop a comprehensive health promotion approach that will address local health issues. In 2019, we:

- Developed comprehensive organizational strategies to collaboratively address topics that impact a variety of work areas.
- Continued work to prioritize our activities, to ensure our efforts are addressing the most pressing needs of our region.



Strategic Priority:



Program Standards

We have continued implementing the new Ontario Public Health Standards, in a coordinated and accountable manner. In 2019, we:

- Implemented a new organizational model, intended to break down silos, streamline programs, and improve operational efficiencies.
- Finalized our School Health situational assessment and continued our work with the Healthy Schools Working Group to implement a pilot project at priority schools.
- Scaled back our tuberculosis testing services, to allow the redeployment of nursing resources where they are most needed.
- Centralized our approach to phone reception services at all four of our offices, to improve over-all customer service and implement more efficient administrative practices.
- Continued to invest in our commitment to Indigenous health equity by beginning an Indigenous cultural safety plan and providing cultural awareness training to staff and the Board of Health.

Strategic Priority:

Programs and Services

As we made significant advances with our strategic priorities in 2019, we simultaneously continued to deliver the many programs and services that ensure our compliance with the Ontario Public Health Standards and help the residents of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties achieve optimal health. Below are some of the key statistics for the programs and services we provided our community in 2019.



1,333 Food services settings inspected

20 Food skills classes



40 Full day food handler training courses

223 Personal service settings inspected



3,266 Influenza vaccinations given

15,801 Other immunizations provided



2,288 Preventive fluoride treatments provided to children

401 One on one breastfeeding consultations



630 Visits to the Baby Feeding Drop In

146 Expectant families attended in person prenatal classes



2,157 Smoking cessation counselling sessions

675 Inspections conducted to ensure smoke free public places and workplaces



5,578 Sexual health clinic visits

394,000 Safe needle kits provided



890 Naloxone kits distributed

42 Institutional and community outbreak responses



619 Free radon test kits given to local residents

344 Small Drinking Water Systems inspected



18 Public beaches monitored for water quality

409 Rabies investigations conducted

Financial Statements

Financial statements for 2019 are reviewed annually by the Board of Health and are available at hpePublicHealth.ca.





HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD **Public Health**

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