



Annual Report

Renfrew County and
District Health Unit

2010

7 International Drive, Pembroke ON Canada K8A 6W5 www.rcdhu.com

Public health is evolving

Public health aims to improve the health and well-being of the whole population and to reduce inequalities in health.

Our evolving understanding of what makes us healthy includes a variety of factors that interact with each other in complex ways. These factors are referred to as the determinants of health and include income and social status, social support networks and education/literacy.

Understanding and addressing determinants of health are fundamental to the work of public health in Ontario. Renfrew County and District Health Unit's health status report for 2010 takes a look at some determinants of health and how they influence the growth and development of local children. *Child Health and Renfrew County and District* is available on our web site.

The emphasis on determinants of health is part of how public health is evolving, and strengthens our efforts to work towards comprehensive and longer-term strategies that are effective in supporting the best health possible in our community.

Who we are...

Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) delivers public health programs and services within our borders, in collaboration with other organizations in the health system and in partnership with local, provincial and federal organizations.

We are a non-profit agency governed by the Renfrew County and District Board of Health. We are funded by the Government of Ontario, the County of Renfrew, the City of Pembroke and the Township of South Algonquin. Our 70 staff serves approximately 100,000 people living in an area of 15,000 square kilometers.

Dr. Michael Corriveau
Medical Officer of Health

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New dental program for children age 17 and under

Healthy Smiles Ontario is a free dental program for children from birth to age 17 who do not have access to any other dental coverage and meet the eligibility requirements. It was launched by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care on October 1, 2010.

Healthy Smiles Ontario covers regular visits to licensed dentists and dental hygienists. It pays for a range of services including check-ups, cleaning, x-rays, fillings and scaling. It does not cover orthodontics and cosmetic dentistry such as teeth whitening and braces.

Residents can apply for *Health Smiles Ontario* by calling their local public health unit. The health unit will provide application forms and help with the application process. When eligibility is confirmed, the health unit will issue a *Healthy Smiles Ontario* client card and provide information about dental providers participating in the program. RCDHU is leading this program locally and working with local partners to deliver the program.

Increase in requests for travel health advice

*1059 immunizations
provided to 793
individuals at Travel
Health Clinics in the
Pembroke, Renfrew and
Arnprior offices*

Knowing what precautions to take and getting the appropriate immunizations are crucial for staying healthy when travelling to another country. Health Units across Ontario have a mandate to provide or ensure the availability of travel health clinics.

In 2010, RCDHU received 1,038 travel health calls from residents. There has been a 76 percent increase in calls since 2005.

When individuals call RCDHU for travel health information, a Registered Nurse (RN) first completes a Pre-Travel Questionnaire to assess need. Depending on the destination, purpose of the trip, type of accommodation and medical history, the RN then advises on precautions to take, and any immunizations needed. A tailored information package is also prepared.

We advise people to call at least six to eight weeks before their departure date, especially during the busy travel season (December to March).

Updated immunization is one of the most important pieces of protection you can take with you on your vacation!

Helping Families

Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program can help

1062 postpartum telephone contacts and 686 visits to new mothers through the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program

77 referrals to the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Home Visiting Program

19 series of prenatal classes held at 5 locations

230 Well Baby Drop-Ins held at 7 locations

58 Child Health Clinics held at 8 locations

877 children received 1088 services at Child Health Clinics

Becoming a new parent can be both a rewarding and challenging experience. Public Health Nurses and Home Visitors at RCDHU assist many families with this transition through the *Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (HBHC)* Program.

“As new parents, my partner and I had lots of questions and concerns when we brought our daughter home from the hospital. When the Public Health Nurse phoned to offer a home visit we gladly accepted. We got help with breastfeeding, how to handle crying and some of our new feelings about the baby and each other. The PHN’s advice and reassurance was just what we needed.”

Proud parents in Renfrew

“I’m a single mom with a two-year old son and the HBHC program has been helping me since before he was born. My Home Visitor gives me practical help with lots of things like temper tantrums, toilet training, routines and playing with my child. She helps me deal with stress and tells me about other organizations in the community that can help. Because of HBHC, I think I’m a better mom!”

Single mom in Petawawa

Child health clinics provide consultation and screening

The Health Unit continues to offer Child Health Clinics throughout Renfrew County and District.

Parents of children age newborn to six years come to Child Health Clinics to talk with a health professional and get information on a variety of child health topics.

Hands-on services include immunizations, speech and language screening (selected clinics), consultation and screening regarding growth and development, and dental screening. The Parent’s Corner features information on a different parenting theme each month.

Helping the Community

Giant Colon comes to Pembroke

The Giant Colon is a 40 feet long by 8 feet high reproduction of the human colon. It was built by the Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada to inform the public of diseases of the colon, how to prevent them, and to promote colorectal cancer screening.

RCDHU collaborated with other local health organizations to bring the Giant Colon to the Pembroke Mall in March as part of a provincial tour sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Over 2,000 people visited the exhibit.

Understanding OxyContin

The misuse of OxyContin and other opioid pain killers is a public health concern in Renfrew County and District and across Ontario. The “Buzz” communication campaign was developed by the Renfrew County OxyContin Committee.

The campaign targeted youth and adults and raised awareness about the dangers of misusing OxyContin, including addiction and death. The campaign promoted taking medications according to doctor’s instructions; asking questions about your medications; storing prescription opioids where they can’t be stolen; and returning unused medications to the pharmacy.

Creative high school students were engaged

The *Youth Engagement Healthy Schools Initiative* was a local program based on a youth-led, adult supported approach.

In 2010, students at eight high schools in Renfrew County and District planned and carried out unique activities that promoted healthy eating, physical activity and/or the prevention of tobacco use and substance misuse. Youth leaders used their energy and creativity to encourage their peers to make healthy choices.

Many of the schools used their projects to gain the momentum needed to continue engaging their students in health promoting committees and events in 2011.

300 posters and 150 information pads distributed to doctors’ offices, dental offices, pharmacies, hospitals, high schools, police stations and municipal offices

272 youth were engaged in a leadership role

1,763 youth participated in school activities

Protecting Renfrew County and District

Safe Food Program

- 1,439 routine inspections of food premises
- 192 re-inspections to ensure corrective actions were taken
- 36 complaints investigated
- 56 food-related inspections at special events
- 21 food safety courses resulted in 403 people certified as Safe Food Handlers
- 15 food recall inspections completed

Safe Water Program

- 652 compliance inspections of water systems
- 66 adverse water results from regulated systems investigated
- 28 boil water orders/drinking water advisories issued
- 5,631 private water samples submitted to the provincial laboratory through the Health Unit
- 653 inquiries due to private water sample results
- 1,350 recreational beach samples collected from 25 beaches and 7 beaches posted as unsafe for swimming

Small Drinking Water Systems

- 95 compliance inspections
- 72 directives issued
- 51 adverse water incidents investigated and 7 boil water orders issued

Rabies Control

- 141 animal bites investigated
- 137 domestic animals confined for observation
- 16 people received post-exposure rabies prophylaxis

Immunization Program

- 97% of seven-year olds were up to date with their MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) and DPTP (diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus and polio) vaccines
- 5,623 doses of flu vaccine given at community clinics
- 26,690 doses of flu vaccine distributed to physician's offices, hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes, nursing agencies, workplaces, and community health centres
- 85 inspections conducted on vaccine storage and handling practices in health care provider premises

Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections

- 154 confirmed cases of chlamydia, 23 confirmed cases of hepatitis C and 8 confirmed cases of gonorrhea investigated

Sexual Health

- 1324 client visits at 11 clinic locations
- 16,900 condoms distributed

Harm Reduction Program

- 32,500 clean needles distributed, and an estimated 34,200 used needles collected

Protecting Renfrew County and District

Health Hazard Investigations

- 28 indoor air quality complaints investigated
- 11 sewage complaints investigated
- 10 insect complaints investigated
- 6 rodent complaints investigated
- 23 housing complaints investigated

Enforcement of the Smoke Free Ontario Act

- 10 complaints investigated regarding the sale of tobacco products to minors
- 279 worksites inspected for compliance with the Act
- 296 tobacco vendor inspections
- 225 enforcement checks using test shoppers

Health Unit works with organizations providing food at special events to ensure that food is handled safely

As part of its commitment to the protection of public health, RCDHU conducts regular inspections of all food service operations to ensure that food safety principles are being followed. This is important to minimize the public's risk of food poisoning.

Even short-term special events such as carnivals, fairs and community fundraising events require oversight by a public health inspector. Anyone who chooses to run a special event with food service is required by law to inform RCDHU in order to ensure the food preparation meets the provincial Food Premise Regulation.

Service clubs, fraternal organizations and religious groups who want to hold a special event with food service do not have to meet the Regulation. These exempt groups still need to inform RCDHU about their event, and the Health Unit still has a duty to ensure that the food will be handled in a safe manner.

Any person or group who plans to hold a temporary special event where food is to be served must fill in a special event application form and return it to the Health Unit at least ten business days before the event takes place. This form can be picked up at a Health Unit office or downloaded from our web site.

Once a completed form is received, a Public Health Inspector reviews it and approves it as is or with changes. An inspection of the event may also be warranted depending on the type of food being served. This process enables the Health Unit to ensure that special event operators use safe food handling practices and at the same time, provide essential food handler training.

2010 Board of Health members

Mayor Jack Wilson, Chair	County of Renfrew
Mr. Kenneth Bertrand	Provincial Appointee
Mayor Percy Bresnahan	Twp. of South Algonquin
Reeve Peter Emon	County of Renfrew
Warden Donald Rathwell	County of Renfrew
Councillor Gary Severin	City of Pembroke
Reeve Tammy-Lea Stewart, Vice-Chair	County of Renfrew
Ms. Marcia Timm	Provincial Appointee
Ms. Carolyn Watt	Provincial Appointee

2010 Approved Budget

Financial Information will be added when available.

Contact us...

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