

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 3111



The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health
Report: #2023-INFO-89
Date: October 27, 2023

Subject:

Program Reports

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 To provide an update on Durham Region Health Department (DRHD) programs and services.

2. Highlights

2.1 DRHD reports for July – September 2023 include the following key highlights:

- a. Health Analytics, Policy & Research – Health Policy & Equity update;
- b. Health Protection – Food Safety, Healthy Environments, Emergency Management, Part 8 *Ontario Building Code* (Sewage Systems) and Safe Water updates;
- c. Healthy Families – Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Healthy Families and Infant & Child Development updates;
- d. Healthy Living – Healthy Living, Oral Health and *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* updates;
- e. Infectious Diseases – Immunization and Infectious Diseases Prevention & Control updates; and

- f. Paramedic Services – Administration, Community Paramedicine, Logistics, Operations, Primary Care Outreach Program and Quality & Development updates.

2.2 Boards of health are required to “superintend, provide or ensure the provision of the health programs and services required by the [Health Protection and Promotion] Act and the regulations to the persons who reside in the health unit served by the board” (section 4, clause a, HPPA). In addition, medical officers of health are required to “[report] directly to the board of health on issues relating to public health concerns and to public health programs and services under this or any other Act” (sub-section 67.(1), HPPA). Accordingly, the Health Information Update is a component of DRHD’s ‘Accountability Framework’, which also may include program and other reports, Health Plans, Quality Enhancement Plans, Durham Health Check-Ups, business plans and budgets; provincial performance indicators and targets, monitoring, compliance audits and assessments; RDPS certification; and accreditation by Accreditation Canada.

3. Relationship to Strategic Plan

3.1 This report and the program updates included align with the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

a. Goal 1 – Environmental Sustainability:

- 1.4 Demonstrate leadership in sustainability and addressing climate change

b. Goal 2 – Community Vitality:

- 2.2 Enhance community safety and well-being.
- 2.3 Influence the social determinants of health to improve outcomes for vulnerable populations.
- 2.4 Support a high quality of life for all through human services delivery.

c. Goal 5 – Service Excellence:

- 5.1 Optimize resources and partnerships to deliver exceptional quality services and value.
- 5.2 Collaborate for seamless service experience.
- 5.3 Demonstrate commitment to continuous quality improvement and communicating results.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Program Reports are provided to update Regional Council (DRHD's board of health) on public health programs and activities as a component of DRHD's Accountability Framework.

5. Attachment

Program Reports for the period July – September 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

R.J. Kyle, BSc, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC, FACPM
Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health

ABBREVIATIONS

- A1C – Refers to a blood test that checks the average blood sugar levels over the past 3 months
- BGA – Blue-Green Algae
- BOH – Boards of Health
- CCC – Child Care Centres
- CCHVA – Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessment
- CE – Continuing Education
- CEPCP – Central East Pre-Hospital Care Program
- CLS – Congregate Living Settings
- COPD – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- CP – Community Paramedicine
- DES – Data for Equity Strategy
- DPHS – Diseases of Public Health Significance
- DRHD – Durham Region Health Department
- ECCC – Environment and Climate Change Canada
- HAV – Hepatitis A Virus
- HBHC – Healthy Babies Healthy Children
- HBV – Hepatitis B Virus
- HCP – Healthcare Providers
- HCV – Hepatitis C Virus
- HMCA – *Healthy Menu Choices Act, 2015*
- HPD – Health Protection Division
- HPE – Health Policy & Equity
- HPPA – *Health Protection and Promotion Act*
- HPV-9 – Human Papillomavirus-9
- HSO – Healthy Smiles Ontario
- ICD – Infant & Child Development

- INR – International Normalized Ratio (Blood Clotting Factor)
- IPAC – Infection Prevention and Control
- ISPA – *Immunization of School Pupils Act*
- IV – Intravenous
- KI – Potassium Iodide
- LD – Lyme Disease
- LTCH – Long-Term Care Homes
- Men-C-ACYW-135 – Meningococcal-C-ACYW-135
- MOH – Ontario Ministry of Health
- NFB – Nutritious Food Basket
- OBC – Ontario *Building Code*
- OHD – Oral Health Division
- OPHS – *Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability*
- OSDCP – Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program
- OW – Ontario Works
- PCOP – Primary Care Outreach Program
- PCP – Primary Care Paramedic
- PHI – Public Health Inspector
- PHN – Public Health Nurse
- PSS – Personal Services Settings
- Q & D – Quality & Development
- RDPS – Region of Durham Paramedic Services
- RH – Retirement Homes
- RSV – Respiratory Syncytial Virus
- SFOA – *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017*
- SMILE – Supporting Mothers' and Infants' Learning Experience
- STI – Sexually Transmitted Infections

- SVS – Specialty Vape Stores
- TEO – Tobacco Enforcement Officers
- UTI – Urinary Tract Infection
- VPD – Vaccine Preventable Diseases
- WHO – World Health Organization
- WNV – West Nile Virus



Health Analytics, Research & Policy

Report for July – September 2023

Health Policy & Equity

The Health Policy & Equity team works with partners to address the social determinants of health. HPE staff collaborates with Social Services Department staff to implement initiatives that will help support individuals and families living with low income. In July, HPE launched a Health Equity Fax About Series to provide information to local HCP that have a unique opportunity to address the social determinants of health during client interactions. The [Improve Health Through Financial Empowerment Fax About...](#) informed HCP about income tax filing resources and supports to share with their clients.

Health inequities have been long-recognized and further exacerbated by the pandemic. Staff is continuing work on the Durham DES, a comprehensive data framework to identify, measure, and address local health inequities, in accordance with the [Health Equity Guideline](#) under the OPHS. The DES will help inform policies and program planning efforts, service delivery, and evaluations at DRHD that are intersectional and promote equity. In July, staff conducted a preliminary survey to DRHD managers as part of an overall needs assessment to understand and build capacity of staff around sociodemographic data collection. This survey was intended to identify current sociodemographic information being collected by client-facing staff and software(s) used by client-facing staff to collect such data.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

R.J. Kyle, BSc, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC, FACPM
Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health



Health Protection

Report for July – September 2023

Emergency Management

BOH must be ready to respond to emergencies anywhere and at anytime. To ensure staff readiness and ability to adequately respond, appropriate training and staff preparedness must be completed. DRHD will be launching a new online training module for staff members that will help them understand the emergency management cycle, the hazards staff may be called upon to respond to and expectations of how staff would support emergency efforts (e.g., assisting at evacuation or reception centres). To supplement this online training, an in-depth training session has been developed and will be launched later this year that will provide more information on specific roles and responsibilities for staff supporting emergency response.

In addition, a fall respiratory planning exercise was completed in August to help DHRD management to better plan for the respiratory surge expected this fall. The intent of the planning exercise was to build on key lessons learned from the pandemic to help ensure readiness for future outbreaks/pandemics.

Potassium Iodide Tablet Program

September marked the third and final KI communication campaign for this year. To help increase awareness of the availability of KI tablets, DRHD developed a new animated video, which encourages residents living within 10 kilometres of the two nuclear generating stations in Pickering and Darlington to get their supply of KI tablets. Entitled, “Got Yours?”, the video can be viewed on DRHD’s YouTube channel at youtube.com/DurhamHealth.

Food Safety

Staff is continuing to work on completing all inspections of local food premises, as per the [Food Safety Protocol](#), and has met all expected criteria, except for one

establishment in which the PHI was obstructed by the operator who refused the inspection. Charges have been laid in this instance and the operator has ceased production until an inspection can be conducted. Staff completed **735** high-risk inspections, **806** moderate-risk inspections, and **673** low-risk inspections between July 1 and September 30. HPD is on track for **100 per cent** completion of all low-risk food premises and required inspections in the subsequent round.

Due to the pandemic, [HMCA](#) inspections of new food premise chains of 20 and more locations in the province were put on hold. Training (and retraining for staff with tenure predating the pandemic) was conducted for inspection processes. Staff members also participated in MOH HMCA training and received their designation card from the MOH, allowing staff to conduct the noted inspections. These inspections are on-going, and it is anticipated that **100 per cent** of inspections will be completed.

During this quarter, staff processed **117** special event and farmers' market applications (**372** this year). Using the risk assessment tool and updated special events procedure, staff inspected **23** special events and farmers' markets that were deemed higher-risk. The MOH special event risk assessment tool is currently under review; DRHD continues to use current processes, updating them recently with a streamlined data entry process for vendor applications that will make it easier for staff to find information related to specific vendors. Training on this new process will occur in the fall to prepare for 2024.

HPD is retiring its food handler training program in its current state but will continue to collaborate with community partners (e.g., secondary schools and community centres) to provide exams and issue certificates until the end of the year. Currently, HPD has agreements with **four** local secondary schools and **two** community partners to support food handler training. Staff has marked **78** food handler exams between July 1 and September 30.

Healthy Environments

Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessment

HPD in collaboration with HART is working on the CCHVA, as mandated under the OPHS. The purpose of the CCHVA is to determine current and future impacts of climate change on the health of Durham residents. This assessment will provide valuable information to assist decision makers, leaders, municipalities and community agencies in understanding climate related hazards, health impacts and assist with adaptation planning to reduce harmful health impacts.

Before completing the individual climate hazard vulnerability assessments, a primer will be released and shared on durham.ca. The purpose of the primer is to provide background information on the relationship between climate change and health, climate hazards of concern and related health impacts, key factors for defining and assessing climate vulnerability and why some people and communities face greater health risks

than others and a summary of local environmental and community features relevant to climate change and health analysis. The individual climate hazard vulnerability assessments will be released over the next several months.

Heat Warning & Information System

The past summer was slightly cooler than originally forecasted by ECCC. A total of **four** heat warnings and **three** extended heat warnings were issued in the summer with a total of **13** days of heat warning criteria being met.

Heat warnings are issued when the forecast conditions include a daytime high of at least 31°C and overnight temperatures of 20°C or greater, or with Humidex values of at least 40°C for two or more days. Advanced notice of heat warnings are shared with community partners to allow facilities such as recreation centres, LTCH, school boards and agencies serving at-risk populations to activate their heat response plans to minimize heat exposure for their clients during a heat warning. Notification of heat warnings are shared with the public through durham.ca and social media platforms. Staff also developed a new infographic [Heat Hacks for Keeping Cool](#) to help provide tips on how to cool down at home for residents at risk that may not be able to access cool spaces.

Part 8 OBC (Sewage Systems)

From July to September, HPD conducted the following activities related to Part 8 of the OBC: a total of **70** building permit applications for sewage systems were received; **19** building addition applications were processed; and a total of **15** planning applications were reviewed. PHIs investigated **13** complaints related to private sewage systems.

A total of **221** inspections related to sewage system building permits and installations and inspections related to planning applications and activities were conducted. HPD staff also attends pre-consultation meetings in each municipality regarding planning applications. From July to September, HPD staff attended or provided comments for **16** pre-consultation meetings. Staff also responds to questions from the public and sewage system installers regarding sewage systems and planning applications.

HPD continued the summer maintenance inspections of private sewage systems on properties within 100 metres of the Lake Simcoe watershed. DRHD is contracted by the three northern municipalities to complete these inspections. These inspections ensure that malfunctioning sewage systems are identified, and sewage systems are repaired/replaced. Malfunctioning sewage systems can negatively impact the health of the lake and put the public who use the lake for recreation and/or a drinking water source at risk. A total of **198** properties in Brock Township and **110** in Uxbridge Township were inspected.

During this time, the Part 8 program began the development of an outreach campaign to increase awareness of the building permit process and maintenance requirements for property owners on a private sewage system. The plan for this campaign includes the use of social media and vlogs to disseminate the information to members of the public.

Safe Water

Bathing Beach Monitoring Program

As per the [Operational Approaches for Recreational Water Guideline](#) and in accordance with the [Recreational Water Protocol](#), HPD collects bacteriological water samples from public beaches to determine if they are safe for swimming. The beach water results are posted on a weekly basis throughout the season on [durham.ca](#). The beach monitoring program ended for the 2023 season on September 8.

Beginning June 5, HPD has monitored and sampled **14** beaches throughout the region on a weekly basis, and a total of **47** advisories were issued during the 2023 season. In addition, HPD issued **one** advisory for BGA at **one** public beach. HPD will continue to monitor and respond to any reports of suspected BGA.

Drinking Water

The Private Wells section on [durham.ca](#) was updated. A new addition to this section includes a [Private Well Water Manual](#) developed to help private well owners keep their well water supply safe and to serve as a reference guide on various well water topics including basic principles of ground water, types of wells, tips for finding and fixing well water problems, water sampling and treatment.

Recreational Water

HPD has completed all mandatory recreational water inspection targets in accordance with the [Recreational Water Protocol](#). To date, HPD has conducted **667** recreational water inspections as required by the MOH and issued **49** closure orders under the HPPA due to health hazards.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Lisa Fortuna
Director, Health Protection Division



DURHAM
REGION
HEALTH
DEPARTMENT



Healthy Families

Report for July – September 2023

Healthy Babies Healthy Children

The HBHC program is a voluntary home visiting program to support families from the prenatal period up until school entry. PHNs and family visitors work in partnership with at-risk families to provide supportive intervention, and to identify and address goals to promote optimal child development and positive parenting.

There are currently **293** families actively participating in the HBHC home visiting program. Between July to September, **1,054** home visits took place with families. During the same period, **1,210** new clients were screened and of those, **625 (52 per cent)** were identified with risk for compromised parenting and/or child development. PHNs were able to reach **416 (67 per cent)** of the clients screened with risk by telephone to offer an in-depth assessment. Those not reached by phone were sent a mailout inviting them to call back. Of clients reached by phone, **182 (44 per cent)** accepted this offer. In-depth assessments were completed with **141 (77 per cent)** clients and of those, **110 (78 per cent)** were confirmed with risk and offered referral to the blended home visiting program.

Healthy Families

Online Prenatal Classes

Pregnancy and childbirth are pivotal life events, and this transition period can be coupled with many worries and high levels of anxiety. Supporting and providing health education to expectant parents can have significant impact on both the short and long-term health of both infants and parents. WHO recognizes prenatal education as a key component to prenatal care.

Expectant parents have reported challenges attending in-person prenatal education classes for a variety of reasons including transportation barriers, scheduling conflicts, medical conditions, and preference for online learning.

To support expectant parents, DRHD offers free online prenatal classes to local residents. The Injoy online prenatal classes offered to expectant families in Durham provide evidence-based content from Health Canada, Best Start and the Society for Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada. The content covers information related to pregnancy, birth, breastfeeding, newborn care, substance use, mental health and local supports and services available to families. The course provides flexibility allowing individuals to browse and select from a variety of topics that are most relevant to them. Individuals can access information at their own pace when it is most relevant to their stage of pregnancy and/or parenthood.

A social media campaign was launched in July to promote the online prenatal classes. This resulted in an increase in new users from **59** in June to **95** in July, **102** in August and **105** in September. The social media campaign will continue to run through to December. The campaign was tailored to specific populations: anyone thinking about pregnancy, pregnant individuals, breastfeeding families, and those caring for a newborn. Promotional materials have been distributed to HCP for use with clients.

Since the online prenatal classes were launched in 2019, **4,510** users have registered for the classes. In 2018, only **19 per cent** of local residents who gave birth participated in either online or in-person prenatal classes, and in 2022, that number rose to **34 per cent**.

Supporting Mothers' and Infants' Learning Experience Prenatal Classes

SMILE prenatal classes are available to expectant parents and support persons under 26 years of age, those referred by a community agency, living with low income or other identified risks. These are free, two-hour interactive sessions facilitated by a PHN. Sessions run once a week for four weeks and topics covered include self-care during pregnancy, understanding labour and birth, comfort measures for labour, infant feeding, and newborn care.

From January to September, **four** SMILE prenatal series were completed reaching **17** prenatal clients and **nine** support persons. **One hundred per cent** of clients who completed a SMILE series indicated through evaluations that they felt more prepared for labour, birth and caring for their infants.

In August 2023, an online registration portal was launched on durham.ca. The online registration portal proved to be an effective strategy with **nine** participants registering through the portal for the September SMILE series. Of those who registered online, **eight** participants attended, and **six** support persons attended at least once during the four-week series. This is an increase in both registered participant attendance and support person involvement compared to previous registration methods.

In addition to the online registration process, the first virtual SMILE prenatal series is scheduled to be held in November. This virtual series is intended to further increase

access to prenatal education for vulnerable expectant families in the region by reducing barriers such as transportation, childcare, and mental health concerns.

Infant & Child Development

The ICD program is a voluntary home visiting program that partners with families to promote the healthy growth and development of children between the ages of birth to school entry and who have a developmental diagnosis or who are at risk of a developmental delay. ICD Consultants partner with families to identify and plan developmental goals and establish ways to achieve these goals within their daily routines using a family-centered, strengths-based approach. Service can include:

Developmental Intervention

- Informal assessments and developmental screening
- Early intervention strategies and family coaching
- Connecting families to community programs and services
- Family education

Occupational Therapy

- Assessment for feeding, motor ability, self-help skills, and sensory function
- Recommendations and resources to support participation in daily activities

Between July to September, the ICD program offered service to approximately **588** children with a developmental disability and/or who are at risk of a developmental delay and provided approximately **1,070** consultation visits. Additionally, the ICD program supports children and families with the transition to kindergarten. This support often includes sharing information with families, navigating special education options, coordinating meetings with the school regarding resources and strategies to support the child's transition. By September 30, **57** children were supported with transition to school.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Kavine Thangaraj
Director, Population Health Division
Chief Nursing Officer



Healthy Living

Report for July – September 2023

Healthy Living

Food Insecurity

Many households in Durham Region experience challenges being able to afford nutritious food. Families living with low-income struggle to pay for rent, bills, and food, and are often forced to give up healthy food choices to pay for other expenses. In 2022, **15.5 per cent** of local households were food insecure, meaning they either worried about running out of food, settled for lower quality food options or missed meals altogether. Food insecurity poses serious health risks including higher rates of diabetes, depression, high blood pressure and disproportionately higher healthcare use.

Nutritious Food Basket

Monitoring food affordability is one of the most meaningful tools to raise awareness about the cost of healthy eating and to assess the adequacy of social assistance and minimum wage rate. Food affordability is monitored by surveying the cost of nutritious foods from local grocery stores using the [Monitoring Food Affordability Reference Document](#). The NFB contains a variety of foods that are consistent with Canada's food guide and are commonly consumed by Canadians including, fruit, vegetables, protein, and whole grains.

In Durham, food data were collected and calculated for approximately **60** foods that represent a nutritious diet for individuals in various age and gender groups from nine local grocery retailers. Results identified that the cost of the 2023 Durham Region NFB for a household family of four (two adults aged 31 to 50, a boy aged 14 and a girl aged eight) was **\$270.84** per week or **\$1,172.73** per month. This represents a **9.9 per cent** increase in cost from 2022.

To increase awareness about the issue of food insecurity, PHD implemented a NFB awareness campaign. This included the completion and distribution of [The Price of Eating Well in Durham Region 2022 Report](#) and the [Food Poverty in Durham 2022](#) infographic. The information in the report is used by community partners to support their

local advocacy work regarding food insecurity. In addition, a food insecurity promotion campaign was implemented, with messages on DRHDs Facebook page, X (formerly known as Twitter) and Instagram. This resulted in **three** media articles and **one** radio interview.

Oral Health

To date, in 2023, OHD notes the following achievements, which demonstrate its commitment to improving oral health outcomes and delivering exceptional services to our community. The following highlights provide an overview of our key activities:

Comprehensive Dental Services: The DRHD Dental Clinic provided dental services to **629** HSO clients, **1,755** OSDCP clients through **5,816** appointments, and **81** clients from the OW program. Additionally, services were provided to **168** residents from the Region's LTCH through **181** appointments. These services demonstrate OHD's commitment to supporting diverse client groups and delivering high-quality care.

Dental Benefits Claims: OHD processed **2,813** dental benefits claims, amounting to **\$721,649.44** in fees paid. These efforts facilitate the smooth provision of dental care and ensure financial support for those in need.

Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017

TEO have resumed youth test shopper surveillance in the region. All tobacco and vapour product vendors are test shopped during the year by a student under the age of 19 who attempts to purchase products. If the vendor sells tobacco or vapour products to the minor, the operator and owner of the store are subsequently charged with selling or supplying tobacco or vapour products to a person who is less than 19 years old.

From July to September, **347** test shopper inspections for tobacco have been conducted with results indicating a **94 per cent** compliance rate. TEO have issued **20** charges and **20** warnings for supplying tobacco to minors under the SFOA. A total of **16** compliance inspections for display and promotion were conducted for tobacco retailers and **18** display and promotion compliance inspections were conducted for vapour product retailers. TEO have conducted **194** test shopper inspections for vapour products and have issued **16** charges and **15** warning letters.

TEO have been responding to a significant number of complaints and concerns regarding vaping by students within schools and on school property. In September, TEO investigated **21** complaints, issued **13** warnings and **3** charges to students vaping on school property.

The [Regional Smoking and Vaping By-law](#) has been in effect since June 24, 2019. The by-law expands the number of public places and workplaces in the region where smoking or vaping of any substance, including cannabis, is prohibited. Prohibited places

include hookah and vape lounges, any public park and 20 metres beyond the park, post-secondary campuses, and any municipal building and the property around it. TEO continue to enforce the by-law within prohibited facilities and have issued **13** charges this year.

SVS and tobacconist stores have increased from **70** stores in June to **76** stores (i.e., **72** SVS and **four** tobacconist stores). There continues to be an influx of convenience stores opening SVS within or beside their current store location allowing them to sell flavoured vapour products.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Kavine Thangaraj
Director, Population Health Division
Chief Nursing Officer

Original signed by

Lisa Fortuna
Director, Health Protection Division



Infectious Diseases

Reports for July – September 2023

Immunization

Immunization of School Pupils Act

The purpose of ISPA is to protect students attending public and private schools in Ontario against VPD including diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, meningococcal and varicella. Parents/guardians of students are required to follow the Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule to ensure their children are up-to-date on their immunizations for these diseases. If students are unable to be immunized, they must file a statement of conscience or religious belief or submit a medical exemption with DRHD. DRHD is required to enforce ISPA and assess the immunization status of all children attending schools in Durham.

For the 2022-2023 school year, ISPA enforcement did not include suspensions. Instead, reminder letters were sent out to **31,517** elementary and **17,347** secondary school students who were overdue for the immunizations required for school. Strategies implemented during the 2022-2023 school year to increase vaccine uptake included resuming Grade 7/8 immunizations in schools, introducing school-based catch-up clinics for high school students and initiating phone calls to parents/guardians of elementary students who remained overdue for vaccines to support them in planning for their child(ren) to be immunized. HCP were notified that reminder letters had been sent to students to support them in being prepared for an increase in appointment requests.

As of August 14, **25,322** elementary students and **10,096** secondary students remain overdue for vaccines required under ISPA.

School-Based Immunization Clinics

The OPHS require BOH to provide provincially funded immunization programs to eligible students through school-based clinics, with the aim to reduce or eliminate the burden of VPD. As a result of the pandemic, many Grade 7 and 8 students missed opportunities to receive school-based vaccines including HBV, Men-C-ACYW-135 and HPV-9. School-

based immunization clinics were offered during the 2022-2023 school year to eligible Grade 7 and 8 students. PHNs provided clinics at **206** schools, **twice** during the school year to provide immunizations.

In total, **28,387** vaccines were administered to eligible Grade 7 students, and **21,307** vaccines were administered to eligible Grade 8 students. As a result of DRHDs follow-up and vaccination, **63 per cent** of both eligible Grade 7 and 8 students are now fully immunized for HBV, **55 per cent** of eligible Grade 7 students and **60 per cent** of eligible Grade 8 students are fully immunized for HPV-9, and **80 per cent** of eligible Grade 7 students and **81 per cent** of eligible Grade 8 students are fully immunized for Men-C-ACYW-135.

World Hepatitis Day

DRHD recognized World Hepatitis Day on July 28. Hepatitis infection is preventable, treatable, and in the case of HCV, curable, yet the global burden and associated health consequences of infection remain high. Over 80 per cent of people living with hepatitis globally are lacking prevention, testing and treatment services.

World Hepatitis Day is an opportunity to highlight DRHDs resources and services offered in supporting screening for early hepatitis diagnosis, as well as promoting access to care and treatment of hepatitis cases in the community. A “FAX About...” was sent to local HCP on World Hepatitis Day promoting the day’s theme “We’re Not Waiting” as well as the 2023 WHO theme “One Life One Liver”. The “FAX About...” provided information on the current rates of hepatitis, how HCP can order free vaccines for HAV and HBV, and updated recommendations for risk-based screening and birth-cohort screening.

In addition, a coordinated series of World Hepatitis Day messages were posted across DRHDs social media platforms to promote the availability of screening, testing, and treatment. The reach across social media platforms included **1,078** people through Facebook, **1,464** people through X (formerly known as Twitter), and **3,418** people through Instagram.

Infectious Diseases Prevention & Control

Child Care Centres

Between July to September, **315** inspections were completed in CCC. The Child Care IPAC module has been finalized, launched, and shared with CCC in the region.

Diseases of Public Health Significance

Between July to September, **265** DPHS were reported to HPD. These include, in descending order: LD (**82**), salmonella (**50**), campylobacter (**42**), cyclosporiasis (**21**), giardiasis (**16**), legionellosis (**13**), influenza (**11**), WNV (**eight**), cryptosporidiosis

(**seven**), shigellosis (**four**), verotoxin producing *E. coli* including Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome (**three**), carbapenemase-producing enterobacteriaceae (**two**), amebiasis (**two**), and **one** each of paratyphoid fever, yersinosis, blastomycosis, and typhoid fever.

Infection Prevention and Control Lapses

There were **14** IPAC lapse investigations. **Ten** IPAC lapse investigations involved improper cleaning/disinfecting, reuse of single-use items or potential product contamination in PSS that resulted in **seven** IPAC lapse reports posted; all items were corrected. Regulated health facilities were part of **four** investigations. Upon investigation, no issues were found, no lapses were posted, and no referrals were made to regulatory colleges.

Outbreak Summary

Between July to September, **87** outbreak investigations were conducted; **58** of these were COVID-19 (**25** LTCH, **17** RH, **13** hospitals, **three** CLS). The other **29** outbreaks were respiratory (**23**) and enteric (**six**). The number of outbreaks by type of facility is: **19** in LTCH, **five** in RH, **zero** in hospitals and **five** enteric in CCC. Some confirmed causative agents identified included: coronavirus (non-COVID-19), enterovirus, influenza A, metapneumovirus, norovirus, parainfluenza, rhinovirus, rotavirus, and RSV.

Personal Services Settings

Between July to September, **218** inspections were completed in PSS. Common infractions included improper cleaning and disinfection, single-use items not discarded after use, and items not in good repair. DRHD issued **11** charges for repeat violations of the PSS regulation.

Rabies Prevention and Control

From July to September, HPD investigated **492** animal bite reports which is a slight increase from **439** reports investigated for the same time period in 2022. During this time period, DRHD provided **65** local residents with anti-rabies treatment.

A total of **27** animals involved in a human exposure were submitted for testing during this time and none were positive for rabies.

From July to September, DRHD issued **three** charges to an animal owner for failing to immunize their pets against rabies, pursuant to [O. Reg 567: Rabies Immunization](#).

HPD provided information to physicians related to reporting animal bites, conducting risk assessments and the administration of anti-rabies treatment.

Vector-Borne Diseases

The WNV prevention and control program completed seasonal activities in late September. The program included weekly surveillance of potential breeding sites for WNV vector mosquitoes which resulted in **5,758** site visits. Regional roadside catch

basins were larvicided **four** times over the summer which resulted in a total of **255,619** catch basins being treated. In addition, **88** private back yard catch basins and **412** catch basins on Regionally owned properties were treated. Over the season, **7,700** adult mosquitoes were trapped and tested for WNV. Of the **595** pools collected, **16** positive pools were identified. The positive pools were located in Ajax, Clarington, Oshawa, Pickering and Uxbridge. At this time, there has been **one** probable human case of WNV reported in the region.

Local residents can have ticks identified by submitting a photo to eTick.ca which is a free online service where professionals identify ticks using photographs sent in by members of the public. This year, **69** human cases of LD have been confirmed involving local residents.

Communication has been sent out to community partners throughout the season, including regular media releases, a variety of social media messaging on various platforms, as well as posting a weekly summary report of WNV mosquito testing results on durham.ca.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Lisa Fortuna
Director, Health Protection Division



Paramedic Services

Report for July – September 2023

Administration

In August, RDPS welcomed Allison Wilkins as the new full-time Program Assistant. Allison previously held a part-time Program Assistant position within RDPS. This position was approved in the 2023 budget.

Community Paramedicine

In July, RDPS commenced a northern CP resource in Sunderland to advocate for the population requiring resources and medical support. RDPS also onboarded **four** new relief pool Community Paramedics to help staff and the continued expansion of the team. The following metrics were observed: **71** new enrollments, **10** INR tests, **21** blood work tests, **12** A1C tests, **117** wellness checks, **15** urinalyses, **three** antibiotics for UTI, **five** COPD medical directives (antibiotics and prednisone), and **two** IV Lasix.

Logistics

Mathew Vickers was the successful candidate for the Logistics Coordinator position which was vacant when Linda Carter retired in early 2023. As part of RDPS' restructuring plans to better serve capacity needs, Bryan Thuot will continue to support Mathew. Bryan is focused primarily on vehicles and equipment while Mathew is focused on inventory and bases.

Public safety radio network upgrades were completed on all RDPS vehicles between May to July. All vehicles are now equipped with the new radio system and all portable radios have been upgraded.

RDPS continues to experience price pressure as it relates to all inventory items. RDPS has seen price increases between 10 to 50 per cent on various items. RDPS continues

to work with vendors to try to mitigate the impact through negotiation and/or alternatives.

The balance of new ambulances from the 2022 order has started arriving and it is anticipated that all ambulances will be delivered prior to the end of the year. The 2023 order is not expected to arrive until mid-2024. RDPS continues to face delays of approximately 15 months for new vehicle deliveries and this has been managed by extending the life of some of the existing fleet.

Operations

To enhance safety and service continuity, all ambulances were equipped with a mobile phone issued to each paramedic.

Sixteen paramedics started Advanced Care Paramedic training at Durham College.

RDPS underwent a MOH service review, in which no serious deficiencies were identified, and a written report is pending.

Primary Care Outreach Program

From July to September, there was continued wound care expansion and support within the team from Mission United Medical. In August, RDPS hired **three** new relief pool PCOP paramedics to support vacation, time off, and CE sessions to continue the expansion of the medical role in PCOP. The following metrics were observed: **22** new enrollments, **29** wellness checks, **45** wound care, **11** urine drug screens, **seven** anti-psychotic injections, and **37** medical assist/prompts.

Quality & Development

RDPS completed ambulance call report review of all **37** new hires' documentation and conducted their three-month probationary review meetings.

RDPS facilitated return to practice education for **14** paramedics returning from extended leaves of absence and provided remedial education for **one** paramedic.

In collaboration with the CEPCP, Q & D facilitators helped train an additional **90** PCPs in autonomous IV certification.

RDPS developed educational content for the fall CE session, attended **36** community outreach events, successfully filled one Q & D facilitator position vacancy with Michael McMahon, and assisted with preparations for the MOH service review.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Troy Cheseboro
Chief/ Director