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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health
Report: #2023-INFO-97
Date: November 24, 2023

Subject:

Prevention System Quality Index 2023

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 To provide an update on the report entitled [Prevention System Quality Index](#) (PSQI) 2023, released by the Population Health and Prevention Unit at Ontario Health on November 8, 2023.

2. Background

2.1 The PSQI report provides information on indicators that demonstrate risks for chronic disease and policies and programs that can reduce the incidence of chronic disease risk factors and exposures in Ontario. This year's PSQI report is the sixth report in the series and the first to expand beyond cancer to include other chronic diseases.

2.2 The PSQI report focuses on four major chronic diseases categories: cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and chronic lower respiratory diseases.

2.3 The report also provides an overview of the health disparities that exist for equity-deserving groups and provides best evidence on prevention efforts to address these inequities.

3. PSQI Report Key Findings

3.1 The PSQI report describes key findings on the relationship between chronic diseases and various factors, including the social determinants of health, First

Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous (FNIMUI) Peoples, commercial tobacco, alcohol, healthy eating, physical activity (PA), environmental exposures, occupational exposures, and infectious agents. Examples of key findings are summarized below. Data show:

- a. A greater prevalence of multimorbidity in the lowest income quintile compared to the highest income quintile. Adults who lived in households experiencing food insecurity had more than twice the risk of developing type 2 diabetes compared to food secure households. In addition, race-based data showed that racialized populations had up to seven times higher rates of COVID-19 infection than White Ontarians.
- b. Generally, FNIMUI Peoples experience a greater impact on health and well-being from chronic diseases compared to other populations living in Canada. In Ontario, the prevalence of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and CVD mortality, and incidence of common cancers is disproportionately higher among First Nations. Métis people have a higher prevalence of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and hospitalizations compared to the general Ontario population. In addition, urban healthcare services are not consistently appropriate for First Nations, Inuit, Métis Peoples, and urban Indigenous populations have reservations about accessing healthcare services due to the risk of stigmatization and discrimination.
- c. That 15.4 per cent of adults reported they currently smoke commercial tobacco every day or occasionally. Smoking is more common in adults with lower household income and differs by racial group and immigration status.
- d. In 2022, Ontario had the third lowest taxation rate in the country. The taxation rate in Ontario is 57.5 per cent of the average retail price of tobacco products, whereas the World Health Organization recommends a relative tax of 75 per cent on tobacco products.
- e. In 2020, people in Canada reported the highest level of second-hand smoke exposure within multi-unit housing compared to United Kingdom and the United States. In Ontario, 68 per cent of local housing corporations had smoke-free policies for all properties.
- f. Men, people in rural areas and people in the highest income quintile were more likely to exceed drinking guidelines. In addition, regulations in Ontario were amended to increase the availability of alcohol during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- g. More adults in the lowest income household income quintile reported inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption than adults in the highest household income quintile.
- h. That 42.3 per cent of adults did not achieve the recommended moderate-to-vigorous PA per week and 73 per cent of adolescents were not meeting the

recommended moderate-to-vigorous PA per day. Women and people in lower income households were more likely than men to report inadequate aerobic physical activity, in addition to differing by immigration and racial group.

- i. All municipalities had a shade policy to prevent harmful ultraviolet exposure.
- j. There was an increase in exposure to asbestos for Ontario workers. In addition, 327,000 Ontario workers were exposed to diesel engine exhaust in 2016, which is an eight per cent increase from 2006.
- k. Both human papillomavirus and hepatitis B school-based vaccination coverage remained lower than prior to the pandemic.

4. Relationship to Strategic Plan

4.1 This report aligns with the following strategic goal and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Goal 2: Community Vitality
 - 2.3: Enhance community safety and well-being
 - 2.4: Influence the social determinants of health to improve outcomes for vulnerable populations

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The findings of the PSQI report suggest that Ontario had limited improvements in the system-level policy and programs aimed at reducing chronic disease risk factors and exposures. Tackling chronic disease prevention will require a multi-faceted and multi-sectoral approach.
- 5.2 The PSQI report outlines many opportunities to improve chronic disease prevention in Ontario. One of the greatest impacts will come from addressing the social determinants of health that factor in economic root causes. In addition, tailoring programs specific to the needs of FNIMUI, Black, and racialized people will benefit the populations who lack adequate access to healthcare.
- 5.3 Local trends and statistics are available on the [Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System \(RRFSS\) Data Explorer](#). The RRFSS Data Explorer provides data on health behaviours, knowledge and attitudes among Durham Region residents using various indicators and stratifiers.
- 5.4 Local cancer rates and screening data are available on the new [Durham Region Cancer Data Tracker](#). The Cancer Data Tracker provides information about cancer incidence (new diagnosed cases of cancer) and mortality (deaths from cancer) for Durham Region and Ontario.

5.5 Health and wellness information on various topics (e.g., alcohol use, tobacco use, immunization, child and school-age child health, healthy eating, physical activity, and environmental health) is available at [Health and Wellness - Region of Durham](#).

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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