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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health
Report: #2024-INFO-30
Date: April 26, 2024

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 for the period January – March 2024.

2. Highlights

2.1 DRHD reports for January – March 2024 include the following key highlights:

- a. Health Analytics, Policy & Research – Health Analytics Information Products, and Health Policy & Equity updates;
- b. Health Protection – Emergency Management, Food Safety, Healthy Environments, Part 8 Ontario *Building Code* (Sewage Systems) and Safe Water updates;
- c. Healthy Families – Durham Health Connection Line, Healthy Babies Healthy Children, and Infant & Child Development updates;
- d. Healthy Living – Healthy Living, and *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* updates;
- e. Infectious Diseases – Infectious Diseases Prevention & Control updates; and
- f. Paramedic Services – Administration, Community Paramedicine, Logistics, Operations, 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 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.

b. 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 January – March 2024

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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

ABBREVIATIONS

- ACP – Advanced Care Paramedic
- AIV – Autonomous Intravenous
- AP – Automatic Prohibition
- BOH – Board of Health
- CCC – Child Care Centres
- CE – Continuing Education
- CEPCP – Central East Prehospital Care Program
- CP – Community Paramedicine
- DHCL – Durham Health Connection Line
- DPHS – Diseases of Public Health Significance
- DPZ – Detailed Planning Zone
- DRHD – Durham Region Health Department
- DROIS – Durham Region Opioid Information System
- ED – Emergency Department
- HBHC – Health Babies Healthy Children
- HCP – Health Care Providers
- HOC – Health Operations Centre
- HPD – Health Protection Division
- HPE – Health Policy & Equity
- ICD – Infant & Child Development Program
- IPAC – Infection Prevention & Control
- KI – Potassium Iodide
- LH – Lakeridge Health
- LTCH – Long-Term Care Homes
- MOH – Ontario Ministry of Health
- NM – Nutrition Month

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- NNSW – National Non-Smoking Week
- OAGO – Office of the Auditor General of Ontario
- OBC – Ontario *Building Code*
- OPHS – *Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability*
- PCIS – Parent Child Interaction Scale
- PCOP – Primary Care Outreach Program
- PCP – Primary Care Paramedic
- PHN – Public Health Nurses
- PM – Preventative Maintenance
- PSS – Personal Services Settings
- RDPS – Region of Durham Paramedic Services
- RH – Retirement Homes
- SFOA – *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017*
- TEO – Tobacco Enforcement Officers
- WNV – West Nile virus



Health Analytics, Research & Policy

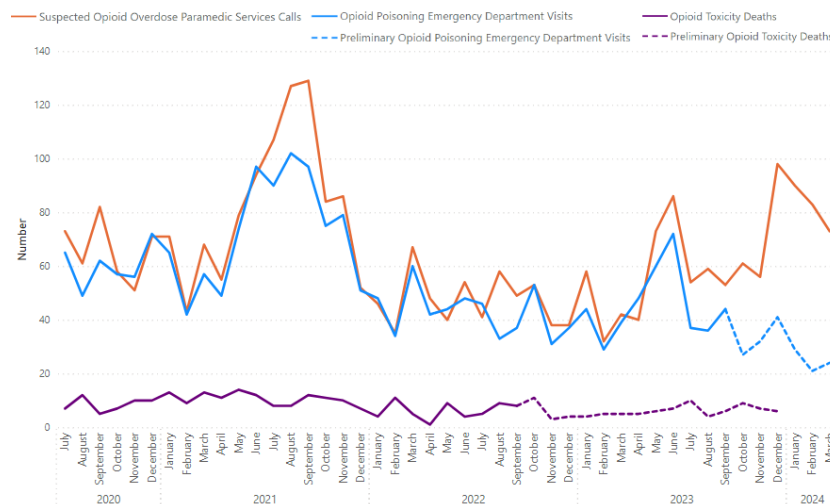
Report for January – March 2024

Health Analytics Information Products

The DROIS interactive dashboard was launched in March and is a key component for monitoring opioid related data in Durham Region. This dashboard is available at durham.ca/opioidstats and is updated weekly each Wednesday.

The main DROIS page provides a view of overall trends by layering all data sources together, including RDPS response calls, ED visits and opioid-related deaths, to show the overall trends in local opioid overdose-related statistics. Both preliminary and confirmed data are included to show the most current picture possible.

Opioid-Related Data in Durham Region



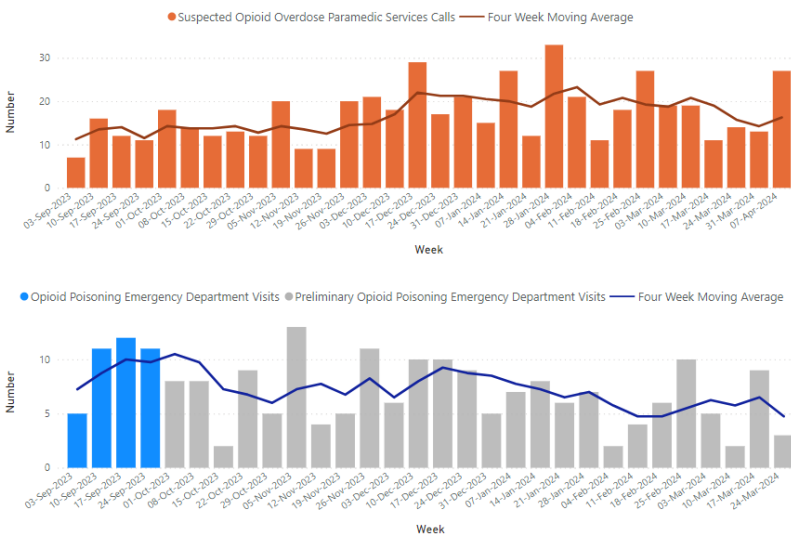
Key trends include:

- Opioid-related activity peaked in the summer of 2021, with significant increases in RDPS response calls, ED visits and opioid-related deaths.
- Recent data are showing an increase in RDPS response calls; however, it is a hopeful sign that preliminary data for ED visits have not increased. The

dashboard will continue to be updated as confirmed ED visit data become available.

- All opioid-related data show variation with increases and decreases observed. This variability is normal and expected for this type of health data and is best explored using the weekly dashboard view which presents the weekly data with a moving average to provide context on the overall trends.

Opioid-Related Data in Durham Region



The collection and monitoring of information related to local opioid concerns are crucial in working to address opioid-related drug toxicity overdoses and deaths. A key benefit of the dashboard is that it provides health and social service providers with local, up to date information they can use for service planning.

Health Policy & Equity

HPE staff participates on the Durham Welcome Centre Associate Partners’ Committee. The aim of this committee is to address and support the complex, changing needs of newcomers by providing integrated services through community alliance. Newcomers are often unfamiliar with Ontario’s immunization schedule, vaccines offered and the diseases they protect against. Recognizing this barrier, members from the Pickering Welcome Centre collaborated with HPE staff and the Immunization program to host a mobile immunization clinic on February 16 for school aged children. DRHD was able to immunize **10** clients with a total of **26** vaccines at the Pickering Welcome Centre.

HPE staff provided support to Social Services Department with the promotion of income tax filing as a financial empowerment strategy. Promotion included re-sharing social media messages, distributing posters and pamphlets for use at clinics, with community partners and clients, and sending a general email message to DRHD staff about the supports available.

2024 Q1 Program Reports – DRHD

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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



Health Protection

Report for January – March 2024

Emergency Management

DRHD, in collaboration with Durham Emergency Management and other Regional Departments and municipal partners, has been participating in planning activities for the upcoming Regional exercise that will take place on May 7 and 8. DRHD's objectives for the exercise include testing the capabilities of a new virtual HOC environment, enabling HOC members to practice their roles and responsibilities in the Incident Management System, and assessing interoperability and communications with other Regional Departments and organizations, as well as external communications with stakeholders.

The revised [Emergency Management Guideline, 2024](#), requires BOHs to conduct an annual exercise if no lived experience in the last 12 months. Exercises provide training and learning opportunities for BOH staff and foster a culture of continuous organizational self-improvement as well as testing assumptions and identifying areas for improvement.

Potassium Iodide Tablet Program

DRHD launched its first KI campaign in January. The campaign promoted the availability of KI tablets to help keep residents safe in the highly unlikely event of a nuclear accident. Anyone living or working within 50 kilometres of Pickering or Darlington nuclear generating stations can order their free supply of KI tablets from preparetobesafe.ca.

DRHD continues to pre-distribute KI tablets to institutions (LTCH, hospitals, schools, CCC and youth detention centres) and first responders located within the DPZ (formerly known as the primary zone). The DPZ is a 10 kilometre radius around each of the Darlington and Pickering nuclear generating stations.

Food Safety

Staff has been working diligently on completing food safety inspections as per the [Food Safety Protocol, 2019](#). Between January 1 to March 31, staff completed **608** high-risk inspections, **800** moderate-risk inspections, and **444** low-risk inspections. A total of **342** re-inspections were completed, and **60** inspections/re-inspections were completed,

generated by complaints. Staff is on track to complete **100 per cent** of required inspections in the subsequent round for all high-risk and moderate-risk premises.

Staff processed **91** special events and farmers' market vendor applications. Using the risk assessment tool and updated special events procedure, staff inspected **two** special events and farmers' markets that were deemed higher risk.

Work is underway to create a vlog on home canning, a process that has gained popularity over the last few years, both at home and in food premises. The script and storyboard have been completed and staff members volunteering as actors are polishing their delivery ahead of an April film shoot. The finished product will be disseminated for viewing across multiple social media platforms and durham.ca ahead of the summer special events season.

Healthy Environments

Cold Warning and Information System

DRHD provides notification of cold events between November 15 to March 31. Cold alerts are issued daily when Environment and Climate Change Canada forecasts a temperature of -15°C or colder, and/or a wind chill of -20°C or colder. DRHD provides early notification to community partners to help service agencies better prepare for the cold event and implement their cold response plans. Issuing cold alerts is crucial to safeguarding the health of Durham Region's most at-risk populations such as the elderly, children and those experiencing homelessness through increased access to resources and support services that can prevent cold-related illnesses and injuries during cold events.

Solar Eclipse

On April 8, 2024, between 2:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., Ontario experienced a total solar eclipse. To help ensure the safety of residents for this celestial event, DRHD developed a communication plan to raise public awareness of the total solar eclipse and amplify public health and safety messaging. A social media campaign and webpage were launched to provide information and guidance about safely viewing the eclipse and recommended preparedness activities. Information was also shared with community partners such as CCC, LTCH, institutions, and other community service agencies, to provide education and guidance on how to protect those in their care during the solar eclipse.

DRHD also participated in provincial planning meetings with various ministry and municipal partners.

Part 8 OBC (Sewage Systems)

From January to March, HPD conducted the following activities related to Part 8 of the OBC: received **43** building permit applications for sewage systems, processed **18**

building addition applications, reviewed **16** planning applications, and investigated **nine** complaints related to private sewage systems.

A total of **81** inspections related to sewage system building permits and installations and **one** inspection related to planning applications and activities were conducted. Staff also attended pre-consultation meetings in each municipality regarding planning applications. From January to March, staff attended or provided comments for **20** pre-consultation meetings. Staff also responded to questions from the public and sewage system installers regarding sewage systems and planning applications.

HPD has been preparing for the 2024 summer maintenance inspections of private sewage systems on properties within 100 metres of the Lake Simcoe watershed. HPD is contracted by the region's **three** northern municipalities to complete these inspections. These inspections ensure that malfunctioning sewage systems are identified and that the sewage systems are repaired/replaced. Malfunctioning sewage systems can negatively impact the health of the lake and put the public at risk who use the lake for recreation and/or a drinking water source. Contracts are now in place with all three municipalities, and staff is liaising with their Chief Building Officials to send notices to all property owners that are due for an inspection this year.

The Part 8 OBC program held an information session on March 20 with professional sewage system installers who conduct work in the region, which was attended by **58** of the **65** invited companies. This session was very well received, and HPD has received requests to conduct these annually to ensure an understanding of requirements and increase efficiency for the building permit application and inspection processes. The Part 8 program has also started planning for its social media campaign including a vlog regarding private sewage systems directed at property owners to provide general information and to educate owners on the importance of maintenance. The vlog will be filmed when the weather permits.

Safe Water

Bathing Beach Monitoring Program

As per the [Operational Approaches for Recreational Water Guideline](#), HPD collects bacteriological water samples from public beaches to determine if they are safe for swimming in accordance with the [Recreational Water Protocol, 2019](#). The Beach Monitoring Program will restart in June 2024 and the beach water results will be posted weekly throughout the season on durham.ca.

Drinking Water

On March 25, HPD received a request from the MOH that was distributed to all local public health agencies. The MOH advised that the OAGO will be conducting a performance audit related to non-municipal drinking water (including small drinking water systems and private well water). The audit request was for various reports to be provided to the OAGO including inventories of drinking water systems, notifications,

directives, adverse drinking water incident responses, credentials of staff, compliance and performance indicators, educational materials, and epidemiological data analysis. DRHD's response was submitted to the OAGO on April 8, 2024.

As part of ongoing program priorities identified for 2024, staff are continuing to enhance DRHD's safe water public website experience with additional social media content to remind residents of the importance of private well water and safe drinking water supplies.

HPD has been releasing content strategically, such as the recently posted [Private Well Water Manual](#), directed to homeowners to increase their awareness and knowledge of well water topics including interpretation of well water results, water sampling, well types, shock chlorination and water treatment content and operation.

Recreational Water

HPD is on track to meet all mandatory recreational water inspection targets in accordance with the [Recreational Water Protocol, 2019](#) for this quarter. To date, staff has conducted **110** routine recreational water inspections as required by the MOH, and issued **14** Section 13 Orders under the [Health Protection and Promotion Act](#) to close the facility due to the presence of health hazards.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Anthony Di Pietro

Director, Health Protection Division



Healthy Families

Report for January – March 2024

Durham Health Connection Line

DHCL provides access to public health information to the community. PHN provide assessment, health education, counselling, and referrals to community services for residents or those looking for services in Durham Region. Inquiries are addressed on the telephone or through email. From January to March, DHCL responded to **4,434** inquiries.

Healthy Babies Healthy Children

Within the field of infant development, attachment refers to the bond that forms in primary caregiver-infant relationships. The attachment bond has several key elements:

- An attachment bond is an enduring emotional relationship with a specific person.
- The relationship brings safety, comfort, soothing and pleasure.
- Loss or threat of loss of the person evokes intense distress.

An infant's potential for normal bonding and attachments requires predictable, responsive, nurturing, and sensory-enriched caregiving. Without this, the brain systems responsible for healthy emotional relationships will not develop in an optimal way and later learning, behavior and health may be impacted. Consistent and enriched experiences in early childhood are important in supporting motor, language, social and cognitive development.

PHN in the HBHC program provide assessment and interventions to support clients in understanding the importance of timely positive interactions with their infants. PHN assess the infant-caregiver relationship using an evidence-based PCIS which examines an interaction between caregiver and infant. Utilizing the results of the assessment, PHN plan interventions and provide education for families to increase their understanding of how their infant communicates and how they as caregivers can respond to support their development in positive ways.

Between January 1 and March 24, **130** PCIS assessments were conducted with clients in the HBHC program. Of these scales, **34** were repeat assessments with a **44 per cent** score improvement rate.

Infant & Child Development Program

The ICD program is a voluntary service 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 concern.

Between January and March, the ICD program offered service to **524** children and provided **964** appointments to support modeling, parent coaching, and family education.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Kavine Thangaraj
Director, Population Health Division
Chief Nursing Officer



Healthy Living

Report from January – March 2024

Healthy Living

National Non-Smoking Week

NNSW was held from January 21 to 27, promoting the theme "Every attempt brings you one step closer to quitting for good."

NNSW has been observed across Canada for over 40 years. This annual event aims to raise awareness about the hazards of smoking and encourage smoking cessation. During NNSW, DRHD promoted messages highlighting that it is never too late to quit smoking.

To address youth vaping, NNSW expanded its campaign to reach young individuals to inform them about the dangers of e-cigarettes. Additionally, a cannabis-related post was shared on social media for Weedless Wednesday on January 23. This digital promotion reached a total of **24,578** individuals through social media platforms, resulting in **450** interactions.

Nutrition Month

The month of March marks NM, which is a pivotal time for DRHD to raise awareness about importance of healthy eating within the context of rising food costs. Local data indicate the average cost to feed a family of four in Durham Region has increased to **\$1,173** per month.

DRHD launched its NM campaign promoting resources available to support healthy eating while being mindful of the rising cost of food. Campaign metrics indicate that NM social media messaging through DRHDs social media platforms reached **38,035** social media accounts.

In addition, DRHD created a new [Food and Eating](#) homepage. This webpage functions as a central hub for residents to access resources and receive support for all aspects of healthy eating. The webpages include strategies, lower-cost meal ideas and food storage tips. Additionally, there is information on accessing food programs and services

across the region. Since the launch, the web traffic for the new landing page is **795** views.

DRHD also provides ongoing support to residents through initiatives aimed at promoting healthy eating. These initiatives include partnering with community agencies to offer food literacy train the trainer programs and implementing food programming within schools.

Opioids

Over the past decade, the rate of substance-related toxicity deaths has increased significantly, representing a major contributor to the rise in working age mortality; particularly among individuals aged 25 to 44 years. Preliminary data show there were approximately **57** opioid-related deaths in Durham Region residents from January to October 2023 and **75** opioid-related deaths from January to December 2022. A progressively toxic drug supply is having an impact on the increased number of opioid-related deaths in Durham Region and across the province.

In accordance with the OPHS, DRHD must fulfill requirements under the [Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction Guideline, 2018](#). To accomplish this work, DRHD staff partners with numerous community agencies and service providers to address opioid related overdoses in Durham Region. One important aspect of this work is to increase awareness of the local impact this crisis is having, identify emerging threats as well as potential solutions.

On March 6, staff presented information at a symposium hosted by Ontario Tech University, entitled Finding Real Solutions to Address the Opioid Crisis. During this event, panel discussions and presentations included:

- Supported Solutions and Services for Those Affected by Opioids
- Fighting the Opioid Crisis with Legislation: Opportunities and Challenges
- The Next Chapter: How to Deal with Emerging Threats as the Opioid Crisis Continues.

During the symposium, staff provided an overview of local statistics and information about the Opioid Task Force including work that is currently underway. As well, information was shared about the toxic drug supply, which is an emerging threat to addressing this crisis.

As part of DRHD's mandate, staff routinely monitors paramedic service calls and issues drug alerts when a statistically significant increase in paramedic calls or opioid related deaths has occurred. DRHD may also issue drug alerts when new information on risks related to the local toxic drug supply become available. Accordingly, between January and March, DRHD issued **three** drug alerts to community partners and local service providers:

- January 7 to 12: statistically significant increase in suspected drug related deaths.
- January 29 to February 4: statistically significant increase in the number of paramedic calls related to suspected opioid overdose.
- March 11: Durham Regional Police Service drug sample return indicated that Protonitazepyne was detected in samples seized in 2023. This new substance has the potential to be present in the local drug supply.

STOP on the Net 2024 Campaign

In 2022, **10.9 per cent** of Canadians aged 15 and older smoked cigarettes, amounting to over three million people nationally. A study conducted in the same year revealed that among daily smokers in this age group, **34.9 per cent** had attempted to quit for at least 24 hours.

DRHD partners with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health to support the delivery of a free web-based program for nicotine cessation titled STOP on the Net targeting adults aged 19 and older. Adults interested in quitting can register and receive free nicotine replacement therapy patches and gum/lozenges mailed to their address.

DRHD received a \$1,000 grant to help implement a social media campaign that ran December 2023 to the end of January 2024. The social media campaign reached **9,593** people. In January, **368** eligible enrollees from Durham Region participated in the program.

Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017

TEO re-initiated youth test shopping surveillance for the 2024 season. 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. Two or more convictions may lead to an AP, issued by the MOH, where the vendor is prohibited from selling tobacco products for a minimum of six months.

TEO respond to all complaints received with respect to smoking/vaping in all enclosed workplaces and other prohibited areas that are covered under the SFOA and the [Smoking and Vaping By-law #28-2019](#) such as multi-unit dwellings, schools, hospitals, outdoor recreation playground areas and hookah lounges.

From January to March, **344** youth test shopper inspections for tobacco were conducted, resulting in a **96 per cent** compliance rate as TEO issued **13** charges and **nine** warnings for supplying tobacco to minors under the SFOA. Durham Region applied for and received **four** APs from the MOH for tobacco vendors in Durham Region.

TEO also conducted **130** youth test shopper inspections for vapour products, resulting in a **100 per cent** compliance rate.

TEO conducted **220** compliance inspections for display and promotion for tobacco retailers and **220** display and promotion compliance inspections for vapour product retailers. TEO conducted **57** inspections in enclosed workplaces and other prohibited areas.

TEO continue to respond to complaints regarding students vaping on school property. This year, TEO have investigated **26** complaints, issued **21** warning letters and served **five** charges to students vaping on school property. In addition, TEO have issued **one** charge to a student smoking cannabis on school property, issued **two** warnings for smoking tobacco and **two** warnings for smoking cannabis on school property.

Specialty vape stores and tobacconist stores continue to operate in Durham Region. As of March 31, there are **67** registered specialty vape stores and **four** tobacconist stores.

The Durham Region Smoking and Vaping By-law #28-2019 has been in effect since June 24, 2019, and in February 2023 an application made by an operator of a hookah lounge to quash the by-law was dismissed by the Ontario Superior Court. In February 2024, the Court of Appeal for Ontario also dismissed the application to quash the by-law, which is articulated in the [Court of Appeal for Ontario outcome](#). TEO continue to enforce the Smoking and Vaping By-law within prohibited facilities.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Director, Population Health Division
Chief Nursing Officer

Original signed by

Anthony Di Pietro
Director, Health Protection Division



Infectious Diseases

Report for January – March 2024

Infectious Diseases Prevention & Control

Child Care Centres

Between January and March, **200** inspections were completed in CCC. The Child Care Inter-Program Coordination Committee started and had its first meeting on February 1. The wee care newsletter will be sent out in mid-April.

Diseases of Public Health Significance

HPD is responsible for the management of cases and contacts of DPHS, as per the [OPHS](#) and [O. Reg. 135/18](#). Between January and March, **859** DPHS were reported to HPD. These include: influenza (**765**), salmonella (**44**), campylobacter (**11**), giardiasis (**nine**), Lyme disease (**four**), cryptosporidiosis (**four**), legionellosis (**three**), yersiniosis (**three**), shigellosis (**three**), cyclosporiasis (**two**), food poisoning, all causes (**two**), Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (**two**), Verotoxin-producing *E. coli* (**two**), and **one** each of carbapenemase-producing enterobacteriaceae, typhoid fever, amebiasis, hepatitis A, and paratyphoid fever. HPD had **two** hepatitis A contacts that required investigation and vaccine distribution.

Infection Prevention and Control Lapses

Between January to March, there were **10** IPAC lapse investigations. Regulated health facilities were part of **five** investigations. A medical clinic was noted to have an IPAC lapse due to reprocessing issues. An IPAC lapse report was posted and a referral was made to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.

Measles Preparedness

A post-pandemic surge of measles cases is occurring in every region of the world due to global travel and low vaccination rates. Increased measles activity has been reported across the United States, and the World Health Organization European Region reported a 30-fold rise of measles cases in 2023. The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruptions to the delivery of routine immunizations. The global increase in measles

activity is an important reminder of the risk of measles and the importance of vaccination in preventing infection.

Between January to March, no cases of measles were reported in Durham Region. During this time, DRHD staff focused on preparing for potential measles activity within the region. On March 8, DRHD launched the [Measles Case and Contact Information Hub](#) webpage. The hub provides information to residents and HCP and includes fact sheets, self-isolation instructions, exposures, risks and vaccination information. A new 'Fax About' on measles exposure was also developed to provide public health recommendations for clients who have been identified as contacts of measles.

To ensure community HCP are prepared, **two** Fax Abouts were distributed with a focus on measles testing and vaccination. Additionally, DRHD engaged with partners at Lakeridge Health, Oak Valley Health, Durham Community Health Centre and other community clinics to ensure they are prepared for measles testing and the administration of post exposure prophylaxis. These partnerships strengthen the overall public health response and ensure timely detection and management of measles in the community.

To prepare internally, a virtual measles information session was held on March 21, with **125** DRHD staff in attendance. This session provided a forum to share information on provincial measles activity and DRHD preparedness for measles cases.

Outbreak Summary

Outbreaks are investigated in accordance with the OPHS.

Between January to March, **122** outbreak investigations were conducted; **52** of these were COVID-19 related (**18** LTCH, **21** RH, **seven** congregate living settings, and **six** hospitals). The other **72** outbreaks were respiratory (**41**) and enteric (**31**). The number of outbreaks by type of facility is **28** in LTCH, **25** enteric in CCC, **10** in hospitals, **six** in RH as well as **3** suspect foodborne illness outbreaks. Some confirmed causative agents identified included: coronavirus (non-COVID-19), enterovirus, influenza A, metapneumovirus, norovirus, parainfluenza, rhinovirus, rotavirus, and respiratory syncytial virus.

Personal Services Settings

Between January and March, **234** inspections were completed in PSS. For PSS, common infractions included improper cleaning and disinfection, single-use items not discarded after use, and items not in good repair. New devices and services being offered continue to involve more staff resources. DRHD issued **zero** charges for repeat violations of [O. Reg. 136/18](#), and issued **six** Section 13 orders.

Rabies Prevention and Control

From January to March, DRHD investigated **329** animal bite reports, which is a slight increase from **286** reports investigated for the same period in 2023. During this time,

DRHD provided **26** local residents with anti-rabies treatment, many of whom were exposed while travelling overseas.

DRHD submitted **21** animals involved in a human exposure for testing and none were positive for rabies.

From January to March, DRHD issued **three** charges to animal owners for failing to immunize their pets against rabies, pursuant to [Reg. 567: Rabies Immunization](#).

DRHD updated the [Rabies in Durham Region](#) infographic which captures rabies program related data from 2019 to 2023. The updated infographic is now posted on [durham.ca/rabies](#).

Vector-Borne Diseases

The WNV prevention and control program completed seasonal activities in late September 2023. 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. An extra round was completed in 2023 compared to 2022 due to the warmer temperatures forecasted for the early fall. In addition, **88** private backyard catch basins and **412** catch basins on Regionally-owned properties were also 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.

There was **one** confirmed and **one** probable human case of WNV reported in the Region.

Communication was sent out to community partners throughout the 2023 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](#).

For the 2023 season, there were **110** confirmed and **15** probable human cases of Lyme disease in Durham Region residents.

Durham Region residents can have ticks identified by submitting a photo to [www.eTick.ca](#). This website is a free online service where professionals identify ticks using photographs sent in by members of the public.

For 2024, a new Tick-Borne Disease sign will be distributed to the local area municipalities and owners/operators of greenspaces, parks, and conservation areas. The sign advises members of the public to keep safe when outdoors and includes a QR code linking to [durham.ca/ticks](#), for more information.

Updated [Lyme Disease in Durham Region](#) and [West Nile Virus in Durham Region](#) infographics are posted on [durham.ca](#) and include data from 2019 to 2023. Additionally,

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a Vector-Borne Diseases program summary infographic will be posted soon on durham.ca which highlights 2023 program activities.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Chief Nursing Officer

Original signed by

Anthony Di Pietro
Director, Health Protection Division



Paramedic Services

Report for January – March 2024

Administration

During this quarter, RDPS released an external job posting for one Program Assistant, which has received interest from 27 applicants.

RDPS is coordinating process improvements between management and the Abilities Team for Workplace Safety and Insurance the day of injury.

Community Paramedicine

During this quarter, RDPS onboarded **179** new clients into the CP program and onboarded **four** new paramedics to backfill the CP program and PCOP.

The PCOP began administering suboxone to unsheltered residents in Durham Region, RDPS continued to administer COVID-19 and influenza vaccines to the infirmed, and **48** CP clients were put on remote patient monitoring software.

During this quarter, RDPS also collaborated with the Ontario Health Team and community partners to improve availability and collaboration of homecare for vulnerable individuals. The program began with LH where Community Paramedics support post-surgical patients at home. The goal is for early release with community paramedic support. The Province performed an informal audit of RDPS programs and was extremely impressed with RDPS CP initiatives and results to date.

Logistics

Public Safety Radio Network upgrades to RDPS bases have been completed through the last quarter of 2023 and commissioning checks are ongoing through this quarter with switchover to the new system to follow once all checks are completed.

With the implementation of the new non-assigned vehicle model in December 2023, RDPS Logistics has been able to implement a new, more robust PM program which will result in increased reliability across RDPS equipment. This quarter, **one** full PM cycle has been completed with the new PM system.

RDPS continues with forecasting and planning of inventory with a target of ensuring 90 days of inventory on-hand. This provides some protection against shortages and manufacturer delays.

Between January and March, RDPS successfully commissioned and deployed **seven** new (replacement) ambulances. Delays in the vehicle supply chain continue to be a challenge with an approximate 15-month lead time for a new ambulance.

Operations

RDPS continues to work closely with LH to implement procedures aimed at reducing offload delay times and to accommodate paramedics waiting in the ED.

During this quarter, RDPS reviewed and named **seven** paramedics for Exemplary Service Medal consideration.

Three individuals were successful in the full-time Superintendent competition, and **one** individual joined the management team in an Acting Superintendent role.

Quality & Development

During this quarter, RDPS completed ambulance call report reviews.

RDPS facilitated return-to-practice education for **four** paramedics returning from extended leaves of absence and delivered spring CE content in March on **12** days continuing into April. RDPS coordinated and assisted CEPCP education for PCP AIV certification for **eight** paramedics, developed educational content for the Fall 2024 CE session, and attended **nine** community outreach events.

During this quarter, RDPS conducted recruitment screening and assessment of over **200** applicants to the external paramedic posting. RDPS successfully recruited **one** full-time ACP, **two** part-time ACPs and **45** part-time PCPs, and planned and developed onboarding/orientation education for new hires.

RDPS monitored field placement for **43** PCP students from **six** neighbouring Community Colleges and rostered over **90** clients with Home and Community Support Services for the Palliative Treat and Refer program.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Troy Cheseboro
Chief/Director