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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health
Report: #2025-INFO-58
Date: July 11, 2025

Subject:

Durham Region Health Department 2024 Health Check-Up!

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on Durham Region Health Department's (DRHD's) [2024 Health Check-Up!](#) (HCU), which has been posted on durham.ca.

2. Background

- 2.1 The aim of the HCU is to report on DRHD's past-year accomplishments, according to its families of programs and services. Accomplishments are based on DRHD's priorities as identified in the [2024 Health Plan](#) and its vision, mission, and mandate.
- 2.2 The HCU is a key component of DRHD's 'Accountability Framework' that also includes: the Health Plan; Program Reports; Health Information updates; Quality Enhancement Plans; business plans and budgets; provincial performance indicators and targets, monitoring, compliance audits and assessments; RDPS certification; and accreditation by Accreditation Canada.

3. 2024 HCU Highlights

- 3.1 The 2024 HCU includes successes and accomplishments achieved in the following DRHD program areas:
- a. Health Analytics & Business Affairs (Administrative Services, Community & Resource Development, Privacy & Information Security, Health Analytics & Research, and Health Policy & Equity).

- b. Health Information Systems and Quality Assurance & Improvement.
 - c. Health Protection (Durham Health Connection Line, Emergency Management, Food Safety, Healthy Environments, Ontario *Building Code* – Part 8, and Safe Water).
 - d. Healthy Families (Durham Health Connection Line, Pregnancy & Parenting, and Healthy Babies Healthy Children, and Infant & Child Development).
 - e. Healthy Living (Chronic Disease Prevention, Oral Health, Prevention of Injury & Substance Misuse, School Health, and *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017*).
 - f. Infectious Diseases (Immunization, and Infectious Diseases Prevention & Control).
 - g. Paramedic Services.
- 3.2 The 2024 HCU includes stories from various program areas highlighting key accomplishments, including:
- a. The Health Policy & Equity Team collaborated with Social Services Department staff to host Mobile ID and Benefits Access Hub events across the region.
 - b. DRHD collaborated with regional and municipal partners to conduct exercises for extreme heat and respiratory emergencies to enhance preparedness, test response strategies, and strengthen coordination to safeguard public health.
 - c. Health Protection staff performed nearly 8,000 food safety inspections, in addition to monitoring special events and offering public education activities to ensure food is safe for everyone in Durham Region.
 - d. Health Protection staff launched a comprehensive public health education campaign to raise awareness about Lyme disease and promote preventive measures for management and prevention.
 - e. Healthy Families staff implemented cognitive behavioural therapy groups to help prenatal and postpartum parents experiencing symptoms of depression and/or anxiety improve their mental health.
 - f. Tobacco Enforcement Officers achieved a significant victory in their work to enforce the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* by providing evidence to support court decisions to fine and issue other measures to a retailer that supplied tobacco and vape products to underage people.
 - g. In Durham Region, there were 191 syphilis cases in 2023, which is twice as many as in 2019. Nurses at DRHD worked to manage syphilis cases and their contacts in a confidential and sensitive way and participated in knowledge exchange activities in response to this emerging issue.

4. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 4.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Strategic Direction(s) and Pathway(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- a. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action
 - E3. Prepare for and respond to severe weather impacts.

b. Healthy People, Caring Communities

- H1. Implement preventive strategies to support community health, including food security.
- H2. Collaborate with partners to respond to complex social issues that improve community safety and well-being, including mental health and addictions.
- H3. Integrate and co-ordinate service delivery for positive life outcomes, including investments in poverty prevention, housing solutions, and homelessness supports.
- H4. Support the development of healthy children and youth, including access to affordable and quality child care.
- H5. Provide services for seniors and work with community partners to support aging in place.
- H7. Prepare for and respond to local health emergencies in partnership with the community.

c. Strong Relationships

- S1. Enhance inclusive opportunities for community engagement and meaningful collaboration.
- S2. Build and strengthen respectful relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities.
- S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.
- S4. Advocate to the federal and provincial government and agencies to advance regional priorities.
- S5. Ensure accountable and transparent decision-making to serve community needs, while responsibly managing available resources.

4.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- a. Processes: Continuously improving processes to ensure we are responsive to community needs.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The release of the 2024 HCU has been highlighted in this month's [video message](#) from the Medical Officer of Health available at durham.ca. The HCU highlights the work of DRHD staff and features key achievements across all programs.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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