2015 Annual Report
Welcome to the 2015 Annual Report.

We are pleased to serve the Region of Waterloo residents and always strive to provide excellent service. This report highlights key accomplishments of the Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services department. This report describes our work in two broad themes: Impact on People and Service Excellence. It outlines the impact that the programs have on people, families and communities living in Waterloo Region.

Public Health Role

The main goal of Public Health and Emergency Services is to build healthy and supportive communities in partnership with others. The scope of public health services is determined by the provincial Ministry of Health and Long Term Care through the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Ontario Public Health Standards. These standards ensure that a basic set of services are provided consistently across the province, while still allowing for local flexibility in responding to local issues.

Public Health Objectives

- Enable children to attain optimal health and development potential
- Prevent and minimize risk by reducing environmental and other potential hazards (food, water)
- Reduce and manage infectious disease risks
- Reduce the burden of preventable chronic diseases and injuries
- Monitor and report population health information (health surveillance and health status reporting)

Paramedic Services

The main goal of Paramedic Services is to decrease premature morbidity and mortality by providing effective and efficient emergency medical services. Paramedic Services operates under a number of legislative and documented requirements, including the Ambulance Act. Paramedic Services is required by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to be re-certified every three years in order to be issued an operating certificate.

Paramedic Services Objectives

Ensure Excellence in Patient Care by:

- Delivering high quality patient care every time (Advanced Life Support and Basic Life Support standards)
- Accurate and complete documentation
- Providing paramedics with the resources they need (vehicles and equipment ready every time)
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Impact on People

Naloxone Program: Saving Lives One Kit at a Time

The focus of Public Health is to provide support towards building healthier communities in Waterloo Region. On a day to day basis the concept of “life or death” doesn’t often come into play as many of our programs are geared towards education and support. There is, however, a program that is giving clients the resources to save lives.

Naloxone is a prescription medication that can reverse the effects of an opioid (for example, heroin) overdose. The distribution of the medication is intended to reduce the number of preventable deaths due to overdose. Since June 2014, Public Health has offered naloxone to clients who have identified a history of past or current opiate use. Sanguen Health Centre, a community partner, has offered their program to residents of Waterloo Region since December 2013.

With a full year of naloxone distribution in the region, both programs were reviewed and it was found that 23 of 24 overdose incidents where participants reported administering naloxone resulted in survival. The outcome of one incident is unknown as the individual who administered naloxone did not stay at the scene.

Training and “meeting people where they are at” are the key ingredients in the success of this harm reduction program. One participant recalled the great nurse they had encountered who made them comfortable and not guilty for using. Another expressed gratitude for the program stating “you saved two of my friend’s lives.”

For the full report visit: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/naloxonedistribution

Did you know?
Naloxone is a prescription medication that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose.

Parenting for Optimal Health

Research points to the importance of positive parenting and how it contributes to optimal brain development which leads to improved self-regulation, executive skills and readiness to learn. A strong body of evidence demonstrates that these skills lead to success in life. Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) is a voluntary early intervention program which will result in outcomes that:

- Improve child health, growth and development
- Increase parenting confidence, knowledge and abilities
- Decrease parental stress and increase parental support
- Increase integration of supports and services at the community level
- Increase family integration into the community
Impact on People

On the ground, the program is changing lives like Jessica’s*. Jessica had a new baby and needed some extra support with feeding. With a referral from a community partner she was introduced to the HBHC program:

‘I was like, I don’t know how to cope with this baby, I can’t feed this baby, my life has changed. They were really positive. I got a lot of help just by talking and getting new ideas, you know. This stuff helped…’

Most parents at one time or another will experience self-doubt. Through the HBHC program Jessica was able to find the information and support she needed to develop confidence around the critical role she was playing in her young children’s lives. Jessica and her children, with new knowledge, skills, confidence and community connections, will have opportunities they might not have had.

*Names and details have been changed to protect the identity of our clients
For more information, visit: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/hbhc

Supporting our Newcomers

In 2015, Public Health set out to determine and make recommendations on how we could best increase and improve access to public health information, programs, and services for immigrants and refugees. We consulted clients, direct service staff, community leaders, and service providers. In total, we interviewed 72 participants in a mix of individual and group in-depth interviews. Interpretation was provided as needed as part of the interview process and participants were given the opportunity to review their feedback to ensure it was recorded accurately. In addition to these interviews, we consulted nearly all Public Health staff on multiple occasions throughout the process, as well as staff from 10 comparator health units.

We reviewed this feedback, as well as research on this topic. From this we developed a department-wide approach on how to improve access to our services for immigrant and refugees that reflects both evidence and our community needs. We are now working towards steps to improve access to our services for immigrants and refugees such as providing interpretation and translation of key documents to anyone who needs it.

As described by one of the staff from the Immigration Partnership “Through this consultation Public Health has shown a commitment to those most affected. Listening to this feedback to improve service access for immigrants and refugees in Waterloo Region shows that commitment.”

The Executive Summary is available online: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/immigrantsandph

Did you know?
3,618 home visits were conducted in 2015 as part of the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program.

Did you know?
72 participants were interviewed by Public Health about improving access to information, programs and services for immigrants and refugees.

Did you know?
7,200 home visits were conducted in 2015 as part of the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program.
Early Intervention, Big Impact

Children experiencing developmental delays or who have medical conditions or health issues that may impact their lifelong learning are eligible to access a range of early intervention services through the Infant and Child Development program. The program offers two types of support: developmental monitoring services and early intervention services.

A medical diagnosis of an infant or young child can leave a family feeling lost or unsure of what to do next. When Clark was three months old he was diagnosed with Pontocerebellar Hypoplasia (PCH) a rare neurodegenerative disorder; his family felt alone. Shortly after his diagnosis Clark’s family contacted the Infant and Child Development program.

The Family Infant Consultant who has worked with the family for nearly three years, has made an invaluable impact on the lives of Clark and his family. “When we first met Joan she was able to bring us comfort. She reassured us that we were doing everything we could for Clark even though we felt clueless.”

The Infant and Child Development program strives to offer the right level of service at the right time for each family they meet, which can include developmental monitoring, short-term consultation, and service coordination.

“When Clark was first diagnosed we were warned not to expect much in the way of cognitive or physical development.” With in-home support and clinical therapeutic interventions he has learned to use a crawler, walker and communicative devices. “His communication skills are beyond what we ever expected. It is very exciting to watch him learn and grow into himself.”

For more information, visit: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/specialneedskids

Did you know?
898 families were provided service in 2015 by the Infant and Child Development Program.
Commit to Quit

The decision to quit smoking is a huge step and people wanting to quit often struggle with self-doubt and lack of resources. The Smoking Treatment for Ontario Patients (STOP) Program is a province-wide initiative run by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) that delivers smoking cessation treatment and counselling support to eligible Ontario smokers who wish to quit smoking.

Region of Waterloo Public Health partners with CAMH to offer ‘STOP on the Road’ workshops in Waterloo Region, which allows trained nurses from Region of Waterloo Public Health to dispense nicotine replacement therapy using a medical directive, provide an educational presentation on quitting smoking and collect study data, which is sent back to CAMH for study follow-up.

For program participants like Sarah, the support of this program was invaluable. When she was ready to quit, she called the Smokers Helpline and was referred to the program. “I saw that everyone who came in to the program had their head down in shame. The nurses moved right in and treated them with great respect. That really made a big difference for me. They didn’t make me feel bad about who I was. They gave me choices and it felt wonderful.”

The program offers approximately six workshops per year in Waterloo Region and on average, 23 per cent of participants are still not smoking at six month follow-up. “When I finally went off [the patch], it felt like stepping off a cliff. And I didn’t crash! I was a non-smoker!” says Sarah. “And to me, the biggest gift of all was that I inspired two of my friends to quit too!”

Quitting is not easy, but the benefits are worth the effort. It is normal to try more than once to quit; most smokers make three to five quit attempts before they are successful. Keep trying! There is help out there.

For more information visit: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/nrtherapy
When someone collapses and their heart stops beating, seconds count. Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services oversees the Public Access Defibrillator Program – otherwise known as the PAD Program. This program has been in place since 2007 to assist members of the public in the event that someone experiences cardiac arrest.

A defibrillator is an electronic device that gives an electric shock to the heart and helps to re-establish normal contraction rhythms in the heart – and it can help bridge that gap in time between collapse and paramedics arriving on the scene.

The PAD Program has placed 457 defibrillators to date across the region – each unit able to coach someone through using the machine on someone experiencing cardiac arrest. Every public school and catholic school has one as well as every arena and public recreation centre. Paramedic Services has also partnered with the Waterloo Regional Police Service to place defibrillators in the police cars patrolling rural areas. In 2015, 20 new defibrillators were placed across the Region, increasing the number of units at some existing locations, and also placing new units at the Provincial Courts.

The PAD program is saving lives. Last year alone, four lives were saved because of the PAD program. The Wilmot Township Arena is especially grateful for the program. In 2015, within two weeks, two different individuals collapsed during a hockey game without vital signs, and because of the PAD program and the quick action of people at the arena, those two people’s lives were saved.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL 911.

For more information visit: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/calling911
Have you ever wondered how clean the kitchen is at your favorite restaurant or if that piercing needle is sterile? You may even wonder if your favourite spa is properly disinfecting the footbaths. We can help! **Check it! We inspect it.** is your access to public health inspection results in Waterloo Region.

The website includes health inspection results from restaurants as well as all businesses that offer beauty and body art services such as tattoos, body piercing, electrolysis, manicures/pedicures, waxing, hair cuts and styling.

Public Health launched the **Check it! We inspect it.** website in January 2014. In 2015 the site expanded to include easier searches, including searching for beauty and body art premises by services offered. For example, you can search for all premises that offer facials or tattooing.

**Check it! We inspect it.** will help you make an informed choice about the various businesses you visit.

For more information visit: [www.regionofwaterloo.ca/checkit](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/checkit)

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**Did you know?**

Each year, Public Health Inspectors complete over 6,000 inspections of businesses that serve food or offer beauty and body art services. The purpose of inspections is to make sure these businesses meet minimum public health requirements to prevent illness and infection.

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Public Health Inspectors are not only visiting our local restaurants and businesses that offer beauty and body art services to ensure the public’s safety. A big part of a Public Health Inspector’s role is education in the community.

Region of Waterloo Public Health Inspectors educate our community stakeholders including those at child care, institutional, and residential facilities about infection prevention and control best practices during routine inspections. Public Health also participates in infection prevention and control committees at institutional facilities to provide important knowledge about infection prevention and control best practices, providing consultation, documentation, and resources to facility staff.

In addition, Public Health organizes long-term care and child-care forums annually for institutional facilities and child-care providers by providing information on infection prevention and control practices.

For more information visit: [www.regionofwaterloo.ca/infectioncontrol](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/infectioncontrol)
Through provincial programs and our local dental clinic, the Dental Health program provides access to members of the community who would not otherwise be able to obtain dental care. The Dental Health program provides dental screening and treatment referrals, protects and promotes oral health and ensures access to dental treatment through shared financial support programs.

Public Health Dental Hygienists screen children and youth every year in publicly funded elementary schools, at Public Health dental clinics and targeted community locations. Screenings identify children with dental needs and support is provided so that children can access needed dental treatment.

In April 2015, Public Health released its Dental Health Program Report, covering outcomes from 2011 – 2014. Some of the highlights include:

- The proportion of children with unmet urgent dental needs remained consistent between 7.3 and 7.6 per cent.
- The number of clients receiving dental services through the Ontario Works program in the past four years, 2011 to 2014, ranged from 6,023 to 7,073 per year
- The number of appointments at the Public Health dental clinics has remained fairly consistent between 2,444 and 2,753 per year

Beginning in 2016 the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care will integrate six dental programs for children and youth into one new Health Smiles Ontario program. The key goals of the integrated Healthy Smiles Ontario program include improved access, consistent eligibility criteria and streamlined administration.

To read the full report visit: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/dentalhealth2015

Did you know?
Public Health Dental Hygienists screen more than 20,000 elementary school students each year.
A healthy working environment is not only a place where hazards are non-existent, but a place where there are health-promoting initiatives. Public Health staff recognized the need for health promotion and education in the workplace and launched the Project Health initiative in 2007. This project provides services and resources to over 200 local workplaces (with more than 50 employees), and consultation on prevention topics, encouraging local employers to adopt a comprehensive workplace health promotion approach.

One of the major successes from 2015 is the Healthy Workplace Awards Program. In October twenty local workplaces received the Region of Waterloo Healthy Workplace Award demonstrating their strong commitment to improving the health of their employees. Here are some of the many achievements and initiatives from individual workplaces in our community:

- Workplace wellness health fairs with 100-400 employees in attendance
- Walking challenges with one workplace collectively walking over 100,000 km (an average of 73 km per employee)
- Rewards to employees who participate in healthy challenges
- Mental health awareness campaigns to engage employees and provide a better understanding of mental health issues faced by others
- A Work-Life Balance Policy that outlines the company’s commitment to providing time away from work by requiring employees to use their entitled vacation time, and restricting after-hours use of mobile devices and work-related emails.

For a complete listing of all the local success stories from the 2015 award recipients visit: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/awards2015
Public Health and Emergency Services in Numbers

Budget Overview

2015 Operating Budgets

- Cost shared mandatory programs: $27,910,202
- Emergency Medical Services: $24,648,000
- Healthy Babies Healthy Children: $2,864,743
- Infant Development program: $1,054,856
- Healthy Smiles Ontario: $885,500
- Infectious Disease Prevention and Control: $745,700
- Tobacco programs: $550,575
- Vector Borne Diseases: $305,328
- Other: $1,012,882

Total Budget: $59,977,786

2015 Sources of Funding

- Provincial funding: $39,198,961
- Regional tax levy: $20,079,356
- Fees and charges: $126,000
- Other sources of funding: $573,469

Total Funding: $59,977,786
Public Health and Emergency Services in Numbers

Paramedic Services Response Time Performance Plan

Under regulations, Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services is responsible for the development of a patient focused Response Time Performance Plan (RTPP). This plan measures emergency and non-emergency response times to all 911 calls, including for sudden cardiac arrest. The RTPP is reviewed on a yearly basis and Regional Council approves the RTPP to be submitted to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) prior to October 31st annually. The RTPP targets for 2015 approved by council were adjusted across most levels of urgency (i.e. CTAS* levels) from 2014 to 2015. The CTAS-specific benchmarks set reasonable and achievable targets according to the urgency of the call: setting faster times for more urgent calls and progressively slower times for less urgent calls.

The results of the Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services RTPP for the past year were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of call</th>
<th>Response Time Target</th>
<th>Approved 2015 ROW target</th>
<th>No. of calls in compliance</th>
<th>No. of calls</th>
<th>Per cent compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sudden Cardiac Arrest</td>
<td>Defibrillator Response in 6 minutes or less (Set by MOHLTC)</td>
<td>50% or better (EMS Only)</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTAS* 1</td>
<td>Paramedic Services Response in 8 minutes or less (Set by MOHLTC)</td>
<td>70% or better</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTAS* 2</td>
<td>Paramedic Services Response in 10 minutes, or less</td>
<td>80% or better</td>
<td>4,424</td>
<td>5,686</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTAS* 3</td>
<td>Paramedic Services Response in 11 minutes, or less</td>
<td>80% or better</td>
<td>13,664</td>
<td>17,495</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTAS* 4</td>
<td>Paramedic Services Response in 12 minutes, or less</td>
<td>80% or better</td>
<td>6,101</td>
<td>7,673</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTAS* 5</td>
<td>Paramedic Services Response in 12 minutes, or less</td>
<td>80% or better</td>
<td>1,840</td>
<td>2,334</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services is performing well with regard to response times, with trends moving in a positive direction.

Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services strives to provide Excellence in Patient Care, while remaining responsive and cost efficient for the residents of and visitors to Waterloo Region.

*CTAS = Canadian Triage Acuity Scale
### Public Health and Emergency Services in Numbers

#### Child And Family Health
- **4,093** Number of Healthy Babies Healthy Children screens conducted at prenatal, postpartum and early childhood stages
- **492** Number of families who are confirmed with risk through an In-Depth Assessment for Healthy Babies Healthy Children
- **3,618** Number of home visits conducted by Public Health staff in Healthy Babies Healthy Children program
- **967** Calls received from the Service First Call Centre
- **1,199** Secondary school students charged with smoking on school property

#### Health Protection and Investigation
- **35** Charges laid on food premises
- **99** Occurrences where food products were seized and destroyed
- **18,794** Number of Inspection Disclosure Website Sessions
- **681** Routine inspections and re-inspections of recreational water premises (pools, wading pools, splash pads, water slide receiving basins, spas and whirlpools)
- **752** Routine inspections and re-inspections of personal service settings
- **1,037** Routine inspections and re-inspections of personal service settings
- **413** Rabies investigations
- **441** Confirmed enteric communicable disease cases (food-borne, water-borne and parasitic diseases)
- **71** Institutional, child care centre and community outbreaks

#### Paramedic Services
- **39,020** Patient contacts
- **7,739** Increase in patient contacts since 2010
- **90%** of emergency calls (code 4) reached within 11 minutes 50 seconds or less from time of ambulance dispatch
- **457** Public Access Defibrillators provided (with Heart and Stroke Foundation assistance) at public facilities
- **31** Ambulances and Response Vehicles operated from 10 stations
- **9** Secondary school students charged with smoking on school property
- **1,199** Tobacco inspections including routine inspections of workplaces, public places and tobacco vendors
- **98.4%** Tobacco retailers compliant with the Smoke Free Ontario Act
- **441** Calls to citizens about their private well water results

#### Epidemiology and Health Analytics
- **33** Weekly Local Influenza Surveillance Bulletins
- **5** Community Data Requests
- **4** Health Status Reports

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Healthy Living

Sun Safety
- 10 Consultations including conducting shade audits with municipalities and school boards
- 16 Key stakeholders at community shade forum

2 Cities adopted policies to add/strengthen shade within their planning processes

Peer Program
- 2,807 People reached by Community Nutrition Workers and Peer Health Workers (45 per cent people on low income, 44 per cent parents with young children)
- 1,430 Sessions run by peer workers

Tobacco Cessation
- 70 Health Care Professionals trained in tobacco cessation
- 48 Consultations with Health Care Professionals on the integration of tobacco cessation into their practice and organizational systems
- 43 “Cessation-related” calls on the Tobacco Related Inquiries/Tobacco Information Line (TIL)
- 439 Participants attended Project Health Lunch and Learns on various health topics

Injury and Substance Misuse Prevention
- 3 Community presentations completed on Motivational Interviewing and Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment

Community Gardens
- 1,642 Community Garden Plots at 63 gardens across Waterloo Region

Healthy Food Systems
- 41,396 Visits to the Food System Roundtable website
- 90 Blog posts by healthy food system advocates on current food issues
- 656 Number of people receiving bi-weekly Waterloo Region Food News email newsletter

Healthy Living

Workplace Health
- 427 Workplace Health Intermediaries are active members of Project Health
- 11,379 Visits to www.projecthealth.ca

Breastfeeding and Positive Parenting
- 639 Number of registration codes provided for the Gift of Motherhood online prenatal program
- 1,452 Early breastfeeding contacts

Reproductive Health and Healthy Family Dynamics
- 433 Number of registration codes provided for the Gift of Motherhood online prenatal program

Infectious Disease, Dental & Sexual Health
- 24,891 Number of visits to Public Health’s dental, immunization, sexual health, and tuberculosis clinics
- 546,464 Needles distributed through Waterloo Region’s syringe exchange program
- 100% of Invasive Group A Streptococcal cases where investigation was initiated the same business day the case was reported

1,373 Visits to the tuberculosis skin test clinic (for testing)
- 99.5% of confirmed gonorrhea cases where case investigation was initiated within two business days

6,862 Number of visits to Public Health’s Cambridge and Waterloo sexual health clinics

15,624 Number of JK, SK and grade 2 students screened for oral health (2014-2015 school year)
- 7% of grade 2 students with two or more decayed teeth (2014-2015 school year)
- 2,813 Number of visits to Public Health dental clinics

20,415 Number of immunization notices sent to elementary and secondary students
- 100% of refrigerators that store publicly funded vaccine inspected by Region of Waterloo Public Health
For more information about this report or any of our programs and services please contact:

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Accessible formats of this document are available upon request.