

Health Unit Media Release

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Medical Officer of Health leaving Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit

Today the Chair of the Board of Health for the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, Mr. Adrian Van Schie announced the upcoming departure of Dr. Charles Gardner as the Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer. Dr. Gardner has been with the Health Unit since 1998, and will be leaving his position as of October 28th. He will be starting as the Medical Officer of Health and Executive Officer of the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit on October 31st.

Dr. Gardner stated that it has been a privilege for him to serve the Board, and to work with the staff and partner agencies of the Health Unit since 1998:

“I wish to take this occasion to commend the members of the Board and the staff for their dedication to the improvement of the health of the population that we serve. I would also like to commend the Board Chairs that I have worked with, Mr. Adrian Van Schie, and Mr. Bill Widenmaier for the leadership that they have shown over the years. We have had many successes in the fulfillment of our mandate, and I will reflect back on my time in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark with pride in the years to come.”

During Dr. Gardner’s time the Health Unit provided leadership in response to a number of health issues: maternal health and early child development and wellbeing; raccoon rabies; West Nile virus; drinking water safety; tobacco bylaw development, and substance abuse prevention; injury prevention and safe communities; healthy nutrition, physical activity, sexual health teaching and dental health in schools; institutional influenza outbreaks, and pandemic influenza planning; SARS and health care infection control; three new vaccines for children; and food safety. The Health Unit maintained its accreditation status, receiving the maximum four-year accreditation award in 2002. In addition to supporting these initiatives Dr. Gardner was active on a number of provincial and federal fronts: member of the executive for the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health, and the chair of the Council’s Maintenance of Certification Committee; member of the Surveillance Subcommittee of the Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee; president and member of the Ontario Council for Community Health Accreditation; member of the Examination Board for the Specialty of Community Medicine with the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

“Dr. Gardner will be missed at the Health Unit for his dedication in providing leadership in the improvement of Health Protection & Promotion”, said Adrian Van Schie, Board of Health Chair. “Charles always accepted the challenges placed before him and generated a high level of energy around new and innovative thinking processes. He always had the ability to engage the staff by providing them the opportunity to develop the strategy as a team and then overseeing and supporting the implementation of the process. His involvement on provincial committees was always an asset to the corporation in that he was able to network with others so that we would learn from their experiences. I would personally like to wish Charles and his family the best for the future and thank them for the time they spent in our community.”

The Health Unit will be actively pursuing a replacement for Dr. Gardner in the very near future.

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