

Health Unit Media Release

September 26, 2011



Update on Board of Health Meeting September 22, 2011

Retirement of Dr. Bob Bowes

Dr. Bowes was thanked for his exemplary service to the Health Unit. For almost 20 years, Dr. Bowes has provided his support and leadership in his role as Dental Consultant to our organization. As the dental consultant, Dr. Bowes was responsible for providing much appreciated advice to staff and management on issues related to public health dentistry; monitored our monthly municipal fluoride reports; reviewed and authorized predeterminations for the **Children In Need of Treatment (CINOT)**, **Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO)** and **Ontario Works** dental benefits; and liaised with local dental providers on issues that impacted the implementation of our programs. When not in the office, Dr. Bowes actively participated in local dental coalitions and activities ensuring that there was always a technical expert providing sound advice and direction.

Adaptation to Climate Change

Patricia Larkin, a student in the Risk Management Program at the University of Ottawa presented the work from her practicum at the Health Unit on "The Health Effects of a Changing Climate". It is projected that there will be an increase in temperature of about 2.7%, an increase in annual precipitation of 5.9%, and a doubling in the number of hot days (over 30 degrees) in 50 or so years. This will increase the risk of fires, storms, floods, extreme heat, exposure to ultraviolet rays, vector-borne diseases, and result in decreased air quality. Preparation now can mitigate the impact of these risks both now and in the future.

Strategic Plan and Organizational Review

The Health Unit continues work on the Strategic Plan and the Organizational Review. The Steering Committee for the Strategic Plan will meet on September 30 to review the report from the consultants on the Organizational Review including the proposed service delivery, and to review the proposed mission, vision and values. The environmental scan work is progressing well and will be presented to the Steering Committee in October. We plan to hold community meetings in the fall with our partners to discuss priority areas to focus on to improve the health of the population.

Flu clinics

The Health Unit flu clinics will start at the end of October and go to early December. The vaccine will be distributed to physicians this month so we expect most people will get their flu shot at their own doctor's office. We are also giving ADACEL which includes tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis. For the first time this year the ministry is funding vaccine for adults so they can be protected against pertussis because adults can transmit it to susceptible babies.

Health Promotion Update

The Health Unit will be launching a new campaign in collaboration with its partners on November 4th called "**Spread a New Attitude About Poverty**". The aim of the campaign is to help decrease stigma associated with poverty and to raise awareness about food security and poverty related issues.

Through our youth engagement funding, a **tobacco summit** is being organised in October for 2 to 3 student leaders from each of our local High Schools to help our future leaders look at a tobacco-free tomorrow.

Youth in many communities feel they are not listened to or that they do not have a voice.

Photovoice is a photography project that allows youth to highlight and explore issues around health & wellbeing in their community. The issues can be positive or negative, and range from tobacco & substance use, to physical activity, to mental health and beyond. What's important is that the youth themselves are identifying the real issues affecting their day to day lives. In December, after the initiative has ended, a community gallery featuring the photos will be held, to which local media and decision-makers will be invited, along with a selection of youth participants.

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