

## Familiarity with the Health Unit

### Introduction

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#### **Background**

The Health Unit does a great deal of public education through media, printed materials and public presentations. Information on familiarity with health unit programs and services as well as the public's views on health information and media use patterns will all be very useful in developing effective media campaigns and the public education materials that we produce.

#### **Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System**

The data in this report was obtained and analyzed from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS). RRFSS is an on-going cross-sectional telephone survey occurring in various public health units across Ontario that provides timely and relevant local health unit data. A random sample of adults (aged 18+) in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark counties is interviewed monthly regarding risk behaviours, knowledge, attitudes and awareness about topics important to public health. The RRFSS survey is conducted by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at York University, on behalf of the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit. Data collected in the RRFSS survey is used to support community awareness programmes, health unit programme planning and evaluation, media campaigns, public policy development and evidence-based research as mandated by the Ontario Public Health Standards.

#### **Objectives and Methodology**

1. To determine community use, familiarity and satisfaction with health unit programmes and services.
2. To assist the communications officer and other health unit departments in making decisions in the design of a strategic communication plan for the health unit.

This module was enlisted into the RRFSS questionnaire module inventory in January 2001. The validity of the tool as a measure of true community familiarity with the Health Unit has not been established. However, the results are consistent with current theory and research and, therefore, possess a measure of construct validity.

Data from RRFSS were analyzed using standard data analysis protocols. All analysis was done using SPSS v.15.0 software (Chicago, IL) and MS Excel software (Redmond, WA). Results are weighted to adjust for household size and inequality in selection probability. Estimates are presented with 95% Confidence Intervals (C.I.) which indicate that there is a 95% probability that the true value of the variable measure (proportion) is contained within the interval. When the data is presented in a chart or table, an "E" indicates that the estimate may be released, but has a high coefficient of variation (C.V.) and must, therefore, be interpreted with caution due to a high sampling variability (C.V between 16.6 and 33.3). A "-" indicates the estimate is suppressed due to small cell size/high sampling variability (C.V greater than 33.3)<sup>†</sup>.

Questions pertaining to Familiarity with Health Unit were collected from January to December 2006. There were a total of 900 weighted respondents. However, response rates varied between questions in the module.

## Results

**Question 1: How familiar are you with Health Unit Programs and Services: would you say that you are very familiar, somewhat familiar, not very familiar, or not at all familiar with them?**

	Frequency (n=900)	Percent	95% C.I.
Very familiar	63	7.0	5.4, 8.7
Somewhat familiar	336	37.3	34.2, 40.5
Not very familiar	282	31.4	28.3, 34.4
Not at all familiar	211	23.5	20.7, 26.3
Don't know	7	0.7 <sup>E</sup>	0.2, 1.3

**Table 1:** A combined total of 44.3% of respondents ( $n = 399$ ) in Leeds, Grenville & Lanark (LGL) stated that they were either “Very” or “Somewhat” familiar with HU programmes or services. Those reporting being “Not very” or “Not at all” familiar ( $n = 493$ ) comprised 54.9% of the sample. Almost 1% stated that they did not know how to answer the question. A significantly higher proportion reported “Not at all” familiar when compared to those who stated they were “Very” familiar.

**Question 2: Some of the programs and services offered by the Health Unit include information about healthy eating and physical activity, restaurant inspections, immunisations, and prenatal classes. Have you heard of any of these programs?**

	Frequency (n=501)	Percent	95% C.I.
Yes	245	49.0	44.6, 53.4
No	251	50.1	45.6, 54.4
Don't know	5	0.9 <sup>E</sup>	0.1, 1.8

**Table 2:** Respondents who answered “Not very familiar”, “Not at all familiar” or “Don’t know” to question 1 were asked question 2. Equal numbers of respondents reported having heard and not having heard about the individual HU programmes.

**Question 3: Would you say that you are very familiar, somewhat familiar, or not very familiar with them?**

	Frequency (n=244)	Percent	95% C.I.
Very familiar	14	5.9	2.9, 8.8
Somewhat familiar	118	48.2	42.0, 54.6
Not very familiar	109	44.4	38.3, 50.7
Don't know <sup>†</sup>	--	--	--

**Table 3:** Those who answered “Yes” to question 2 were asked how familiar they were with the programmes and services presented to them in the text of that question. The majority 54.1% ( $n = 132$ ) stated that they were either “Very” or “Somewhat” familiar with the programmes or services.



**Question 4: Have you or your family ever USED a Health Unit program or service?**

	Frequency (n=645)	Percent	95% C.I.
Yes	374	58.0	54.2, 61.8
No	249	38.7	34.9, 42.4
Don't know	21	3.3	1.9, 4.6

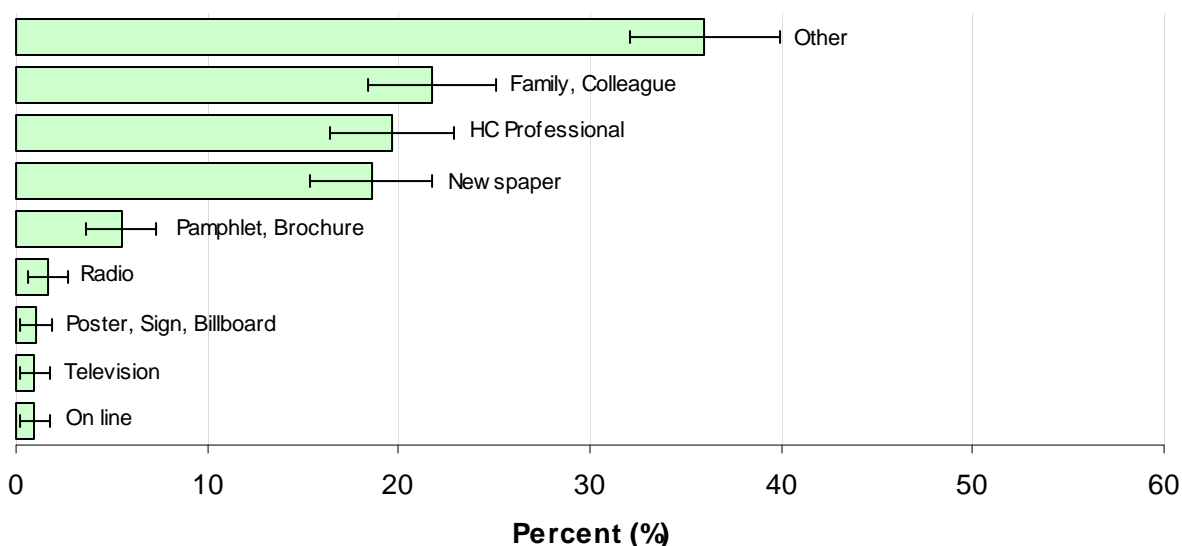
**Table 4:** When asked whether they had used an HU programme or service a significant majority of 58.0% (n = 374) of respondents stated that they had.

**Question 5: How satisfied were you with the service or information you received from the Health Unit?**

	Frequency (n=374)	Percent	95% C.I.
Very satisfied	269	71.8	73.0, 81.8
Somewhat satisfied	93	24.9	22.2, 31.5
Somewhat dissatisfied	6	1.5	0.3, 3.0
Very dissatisfied <sup>†</sup>	--	--	--
Don't know <sup>†</sup>	--	--	--

**Table 5:** As well, over 96.7% (n = 362) stated that they were satisfied with the programme or service they had received from the HU.

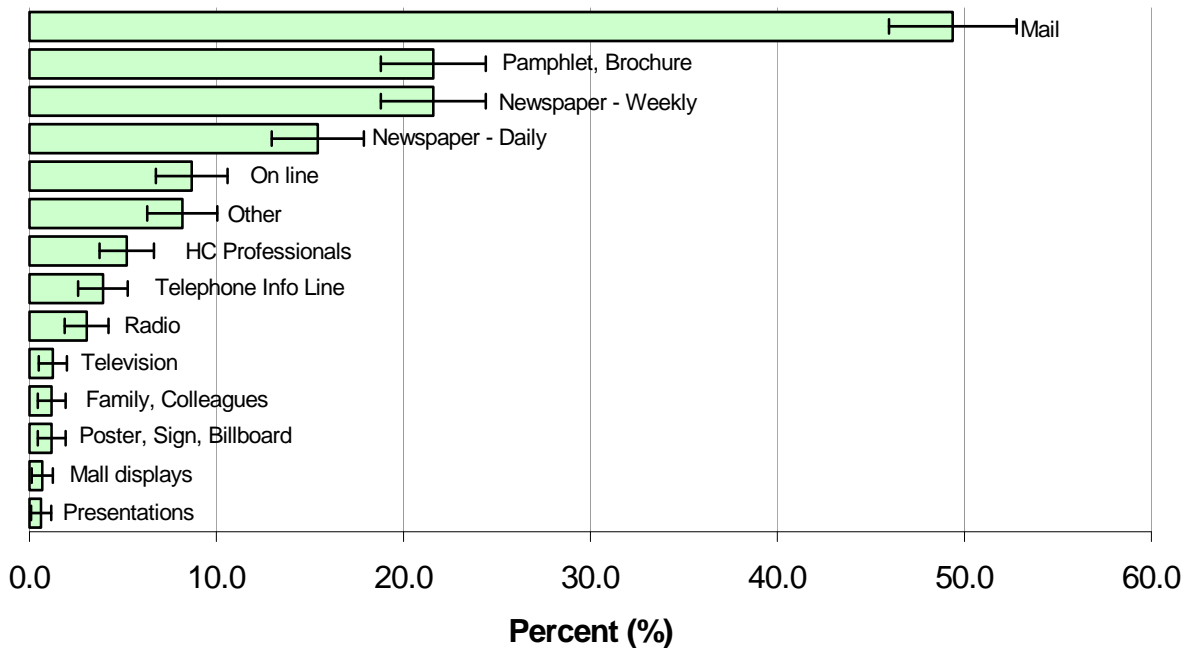
**How respondent found out about HU\* (n = 579)**



**Figure 1:** When asked how they found-out or heard about HU programmes or services a significant proportion of 36.0% (95% C.I.: 32.1, 39.9) reported hearing about the HU in the “Other” category. About similar proportions of respondents (~ 20%) stated that they had found-out about the HU through: 1) Family, friends or colleagues; 2) Healthcare professionals; 3) Newspapers. These 4 categories were significantly higher than all other categories in this question. See appendix 1 for full-text listing of question categories. See appendix 2 for full listing of “Other” responses.



## Respondent's desired source of HU information\* (n = 824)



**Figure 2:** When asked how the HU could better get information about programmes or services to survey respondents, 49% (95% C.I.: 46.0, 52.8) reported that the mail would be the best method. This proportion was significantly higher than all other categories. Providing pamphlets and weekly newspapers were tied for second and third at 21.6% (95% C.I.: 18.8, 24.4). Surprisingly, getting HU information from the internet was a distant 5<sup>th</sup> at 8.7% (95% C.I.: 6.8, 10.6). See appendix 3 for full-text listing of question categories. See appendix 4 for a listing of “Other” responses.

## Summary of Key Findings

Some key findings in the study were:

1. Majority of survey respondents said that they were not familiar with HU programs and services. However, when specific programs and services were identified about half of respondents who stated that they were not familiar with HU programmes and services answered that they had heard of them.
2. Those that stated that they had heard of specific HU programmes and services reported that they were “Somewhat” (48.2%) or “Very” (5.2%) familiar with them.
3. Once familiarized with HU programmes or services, the majority of respondents stated that they had used a HU program or service and that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with it.
4. Most respondents learned about the HU from someone they know, a healthcare professional or the print media. They also identified the print media (mail, pamphlets/brochures, newspapers) as their selection of choice as a means for obtaining HU related information.



## Strengths & Weaknesses: \_\_\_\_\_

The data provided in this analysis demonstrates a timely and local perspective of how familiar and satisfied residents of LGL who use HU programmes and services were in 2006.

Both figures 1 and 2 have a subcategory entitled "Other". Miscoding survey respondents appears to be an issue as several of the "Other" responses are contained within the subcategories of the original questions (See appendices).

## Notes \_\_\_\_\_

1. †Coefficient of variation calculations were not produced for this report. Extreme care must be taken when reporting cell sizes of or around 5 respondents.
2. ‡Responses from "Other" categories not provided in survey data.
3. \*Sum of total proportions may be greater than 100% as respondents may have answered more than 1 category.

## Appendix 1: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Bus advertisement
2. Doctor/nurse/other health professional
3. Friend/family/acquaintance/colleague at work, etc.
4. Internet/on line/web site, etc.
5. Mall display
6. Newspaper
7. Pamphlet/brochure/flyer, etc.
8. Poster/sign/billboard, etc.
9. Radio
10. TV
11. Other, please specify

## Appendix 2: "Other" responses for how found out about HU \_\_\_\_\_

1. Hospital
2. School
3. Public advertisement
4. Prenatal course
5. Phone book
6. Counsellor
7. Work
8. Real estate agent (water test)/mortgage agreement
9. Called health unit
10. Word of mouth
11. Mail
12. Drove past building
13. Occupational health nurse
14. After dog bite
15. Child had inoculation
16. Senior centre



### Appendix 3:

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1. Presentations (public), School meetings (classroom), Seminars, Workshops
2. Mall display.
3. Posters, Signs, Billboards (including those on buses)
4. Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Colleagues at work
5. Television
6. Radio
7. Telephone information line
8. Doctors, Nurses, Other health care professionals
9. Internet, Web site, On line
10. Newspaper -- Daily (includes those published six days a week)
11. Newspaper -- Community, Weekly
12. Pamphlet, Brochures, Flyers
13. Mail, Direct mail, sent to home directly
14. Other, please specify

### Appendix 4: "Other" responses for sources of HU information

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1. E-mail
2. Telephone
3. Newsletter or newsletter sent to home
4. At school
5. Senior support group
6. Yellow pages
7. Work place safety committee

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