

Health Report – Distribution

Introduction

Background

Making information available to the community is an important role for public health. One part of this process is raising awareness of our programs and services through our *Annual Community Report*. We are mandated to develop a report outlining our yearly activities and expenses. Distributing this report to the public and evaluating the methods of that distribution are important so that we can increase awareness of the wide range of services the Health Unit has to offer and reach the greatest number of community residents. This is an important marketing objective, as the community does not usually seek out prevention messages so they are often received through mass media. Finding the best channels for distribution of the Annual Community Report in mass media can help the Health Unit serve the community better.

Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System

The data presented 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 & 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 Mandatory Programs and Services Guidelines.

Objectives and Methodology

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of the distribution of the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit's *Annual Community Report* to residents of the tri-county area using local newspaper inserts.
2. To inform the health unit in focusing its marketing resources towards ensuring that the most residents in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark as possible receive information about the health services provided by the health unit.

This module was enlisted into the RRFSS questionnaire module inventory in January 2001

Data from RRFSS were analyzed using standard data analysis protocols. All analysis was produced 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).

Questions pertaining to the Health Report Distribution were collected from February to May of 2007. There were a total of 326 weighted respondents. However, response rates varied between questions in the module.

Results

The mean age of respondents to this module was 51.1 years (S.D. = 16.7), with a range of 77.8 years (min = 18.4, max = 96.2). In terms of gender, a similar proportion of respondents were male (45.4% (95% C.I.: 36.6, 54.2)) and female (54.6% (95% C.I.: 46.6, 62.6)).

Identification of Newspaper Readership

Table 1: Do you get a local newspaper?

	Frequency (n=325)	Percent	95% C.I.
Yes	270	83.1	78.6, 87.6
No/Don't know	55	16.9	7.0, 26.8 ^E

Table 1: At the time of the survey 83.1% (95% C.I.: 78.6, 87.6) of respondents (n = 270) in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark stated that they received a local newspaper. Of those who responded that they received a local newspaper, 62.1% (95% C.I.: 54.8, 69.4) stated that they read the paper “Most of the time” with 27.7% (95% C.I.: 17.6, 37.8)^E stating that they read the paper “Some of the time”.

When asked to identify which paper they received, 50.8% (95% C.I.: 42.2, 59.2) of the original 270 respondents stated that they received the *Brockville Recorder and Times*, and 49.2% (95% C.I.: 40.6, 57.8) of respondents stated that they read an “Other” newspaper. The “Other” category of this variable consists of all responses except the *Brockville Recorder and Times* as these response categories were too small to report. This frequencies reporting in this response category can be seen in table 2.

Table 2: Breakdown of respondents in “Other” sub-categories.

	Frequency (n=131)	Percent	95% C.I.
Gananoque Reporter	22	3.9	--
St Lawrence	11	8.3	--
Other:	98	36.8	26.6, 45.6
▪ EMC			
▪ Mississippi Weekender			
▪ Perth Courier			
▪ Almonte Gazette			



However, there was evidence of miscoding errors with this data as the *Brockville Recorder and Times* also appeared in the “Other” response category on 11 occasions. Had this error not occurred the response rate of 50.8% for the *Brockville Recorder and Times* would have been greater than that reported.

Community Report Readership

As already stated, those respondents who reported that they received a local newspaper ($n = 270$) were then asked if they actually read that newspaper. A total of 89.8% ($n = 244$) of these respondents stated that they read their newspapers “most of the time” or “some of the time”. These respondents were then asked the question presented in Table 2.

Table 2: In the past few weeks have you seen an insert in the paper called the *The Annual Community Report*, a report produced (published) by the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit?

	Frequency ($n=244$)	Percent	95% C.I.
Yes, saw the report/perhaps saw the report	80	32.8	22.5, 43.1
No/Don't know	164	67.2	60.0, 74.4

Table 2: When respondents ($n = 244$) were asked if they had seen *The Annual Community Report* produced by the health unit as an insert in the newspapers a total of 80 respondents or 32.8% (95% C.I.: 22.5, 43.1) stated that they had seen or thought they may have seen the health unit report. When asked if they had read the report 34 or 43.0% (95% C.I.: 26.4, 59.6)^E of these 80 respondents stated that they had read “all or some of the health unit report”.

A total of 29 of the 34 readers of the health unit report (85.3% (95% C.I.: 72.4, 98.2)) felt that it was “very” to “somewhat” useful. However, when asked if they kept the entire report or cut out parts that were of interest to them, 87.5% (95% C.I.: 75.3, 99.8) of those who felt that the health unit report was “very” to “somewhat” useful had thrown it out.

A final qualitative question in this RRFSS module was asked to determine what parts of the report that those who had read ($n = 34$) it found to be useful. The responses are listed below in no order of importance:

- “Information on programs”
- “Part about local people in the community”
- “All of the updates”
- “Rabies clinic”
- “Statistics”
- “Information about upcoming health clinics”
- “Information about vaccinations and smoking”

Finally, crosstabs were employed to determine in which newspaper respondents had seen the *Annual Community Report*. Most of this data is unreportable due to high variability and small cell sizes. However, 21.3% (95% C.I.: 10.2, 32.4)^E of respondents reported seeing the report in the *Brockville Recorder and Times* newspaper.



Summary of Key Findings

Some key findings in the study were:

1. 83.1% (95% C.I.: 78.6, 87.6) of respondents ($n = 270$) in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark stated that they receive a local newspaper.
2. 50.8% (95% C.I.: 42.2, 59.2) of the 270 respondents stated that they received the *Brockville Recorder and Times*.
3. In terms of viewing the *Annual Community Report* 32.8% (95% C.I.: 22.5, 43.1) of those who receive and read a weekly newspaper ($n = 80$) had reported they had “seen the seen or thought they had seen” the *Annual Community Report*, and 43.0% (95% C.I.: 26.4, 59.6) of those who had seen the report actually read it.
4. 87.5% (95% C.I.: 75.3, 99.8) of respondents who had read the *Annual Community Report* found it to be “very” to “somewhat” useful.

Strengths & Weaknesses:

The data provided in this analysis demonstrates a timely and local perspective of the percentage of adults (aged 18+) in the jurisdiction of the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit who have received and read the *Annual Community Report* generated by the health unit.

Although a larger sample size would have been desirable, memory recall and the potential of recall bias limited our window of opportunity for data collection.

This report may not be reproduced or distributed externally without the permission of the Epidemiologist. For more information about this report please contact the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, at 345-5685 or 1-800-660-5853. For more information on RRFSS consult the website at www.rfss.on.ca. Visit the Health Unit website at www.healthunit.org for more information.

