

Infectious Disease Update



NEW! The Fentanyl Patch Return Program

Since the province's decision to limit the use of long-acting oxycodone, fentanyl has become the drug of choice for illicit use in our community. Evidence from local addictions treatment centres and the Emergency Department suggests that incidence of fentanyl overdose is increasing. The Peterborough County-City Health Unit (PCCHU) is collaborating with a group of healthcare providers and law enforcement to minimize the harms associated with fentanyl misuse.

The Fentanyl Patch Return Program is a local initiative to discourage fentanyl diversion. Under this program, fentanyl users will be required to return the used patches to their pharmacists before they are dispensed the next set of patches. This practice should discourage diversion of used patches from which the remaining drug is harvested for illicit use.

The success of this program requires collaboration among the prescribers, the pharmacist, and the patients. Physicians and other prescribers are being asked to discuss this practice with all patients who receive a prescription for fentanyl and to also direct pharmacists to collect used patches through an indication on the prescription. For convenience, it may be possible to program electronic medical records to automatically add this request to fentanyl prescriptions. When dispensing the patient's fentanyl prescription, pharmacists are asked to provide the patient with the [Opioid Patch Exchange Disposal Tool](#) along with their fentanyl patches. At the patient's next visit, the pharmacists are then being asked to collect the used patches as indicated on the prescription, ensure they are accounted for, and then dispose of them appropriately.

For more information, please visit our website at www.pcchu.ca and go to: [For Professionals](#) | [Health Professionals](#) | [Alcohol & Other Drugs](#) and from the [Resources](#) area in right sidebar download the [Frequently Asked Questions](#), and a copy of the [Opioid Patch Exchange Disposal Tool](#). These resources can be downloaded and printed for your use. To request a copy of the Sample Prescription, please contact the PCCHU's Substance Misuse Program below.

For further questions, please contact:
Deanna VandenBroek, Substance Misuse Prevention Program,
705-743-1000, ext. 223 or email dVandenBroek@pcchu.ca

Infection Prevention and Control Core Competencies

Public Health Ontario (PHO) is pleased to announce the launch of the new Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Core Competencies online learning course. This interactive course offers healthcare providers essential information on how to protect themselves, their patients, and co-workers from infections.

The IPAC Core Competencies course is free and easy-to-use. It provides options for individual study, group work with training materials, and a downloadable Learning Management System (LMS).

PHO is committed to delivering comprehensive strategies and programs to prevent and control healthcare associated infections and to support healthcare facilities and personnel in understanding and implementing sound, effective infection prevention and control practices. We look forward to your feedback via the survey contained within the course or email at ipac@oahpp.ca

For more information about the IPAC Core Competencies Online Learning Course visit: www.publichealthontario.ca/ipaccore or contact us at CEICN by calling 289-316-1000 or e-mail Barb Shea, Network Coordinator, barbara.shea@oahpp.ca, Denise Kearsey, Infection Control Consultant at denise.kearsey@oahpp.ca

In This Issue:

- Let's Get Flules!
- Free NRT For Young Adults Who Pledge to Quit
- Cancer Care Ontario Develops New Screening Resources

Cholera Risk in Mexico, Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is reporting increased cholera activity in Mexico, Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti. For all travel health notices issued by PHAC, including this current cholera outbreak, please visit www.pcchu.ca and click on [For Professionals | Health Professionals | Alerts](#).

Since the beginning of the cholera epidemic in October 2010, the Dominican Republic and Haiti have reported thousands of cholera cases and related deaths. Cases of cholera decreased in 2013 compared to 2012, although they continue to be reported throughout both countries. Cuba and Mexico have also reported cases recently.

People usually become infected with cholera bacteria from drinking or eating contaminated water or food. It is associated with watery diarrhea and rapid dehydration, which can be life-threatening. The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends practicing safe food and water precautions while in Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti or Mexico.

Cholera is a reportable disease.

For more information, contact: Infectious Disease Nurses at 705-743-1000, ext. 139

Let's Get Fluless This Season!

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is launching a province-wide campaign aimed at increasing flu shot uptake among healthcare workers (HCW). The campaign features the tag line "Let's Get Fluless: Give it a Shot" and will be shared on posters, floor graphics and displays at hospitals and long-term care homes.



This communications campaign is one strategy being used by the province to reach its goal of 95% of HCWs immunized with the flu shot by 2016. The local average vaccine coverage rate in 2012 for long term care homes was 75%, while at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre it was 27%. This includes employees on payroll, licensed independent practitioners, adult student/trainees, volunteer staff and other contract staff.

According to the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), each season 20% of healthcare workers get influenza, and 28% to 59% of young healthy adults who get it have asymptomatic or subclinical infections. Some of them may shed virus up to a day before symptoms appear. NACI considers the provision of influenza vaccination for HCWs who have direct patient contact to be an essential component of the standard of care for the protection of their patients. Annual immunization of people at high risk, and of HCWs and others, who are capable of transmitting influenza to those at risk, is the most effective measure for reducing the impact of influenza.

Better HCW influenza immunization not only increases the level of protection in the community, it reduces healthcare costs and staff absenteeism by averting more cases of influenza.

Influenza vaccine for the 2013-14 season has arrived at the Health Unit and is being distributed to long-term care homes and Peterborough Regional Health Centre.

For further information about the communications campaign, please contact: Brittany Cadence, Communications Supervisor, 705-743-1000, ext. 391.

OR

To order vaccine, contact: Zina Allen at 705-743-1000, ext. 283.

Shortage of Tdap (Adacel) and DTaP-IPV (Quadracel) Vaccines

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care advised about delays in the supply of these vaccines manufactured by Sanofi Pasteur. It is unclear when adequate supply levels are expected to resume. The Public Health Division will continue to monitor the situation and are working to manage supply in order to minimize disruption of immunization programming. In the interim, the Ministry recommends the following:

1. Ensure that vaccines are being used according to the Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule for Ontario;
2. Ensure appropriate inventory control measures and vaccine storage and handling practices are in place to make the best use of these vaccines and to minimize wastage;
3. Only order a week supply and re-order when supply is depleted.

For more information, contact: Vaccine Preventable Disease Program 705-743-1000, ext. 139.



Narcolepsy and 2009 Pandemic Influenza Vaccine

In September 2012, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control reported a possible link between the 2009 Pandemic Influenza vaccine and narcolepsy.

The vaccine in question was Pandemrix which is an H1N1 pandemic flu vaccine that was administered in a number of European countries in 2009/2010. This vaccine is manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline in Europe and is NOT available and has never been authorized or used in Canada. This news may cause apprehension regarding the influenza vaccine among the healthcare providers and the public at large. However, when a pooled analysis of data from the affected European countries was done, there was no significant link in either children or adults. A brief summary of findings from studies conducted in Europe was contained in the Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety report of February 8, 2013. To view the report go to www.who.int and search [wer8806](#).

Arepanrix, the 2009 pandemic influenza vaccine manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline and used in Canada in 2009, has not been implicated in this link. It was manufactured using a different processes and in different facilities.

In Canada, given the frequency of narcolepsy in the population, the number of reported cases compared with the number of doses of Arepanrix administered does not suggest a vaccine safety concern. There was less than one case of narcolepsy per every million doses given and it is estimated that 11 million doses of Arepanrix were administered.

The health of the population remains our utmost priority. The yearly influenza vaccine is one of the most effective and safest means to reduce influenza-associated mortality and morbidity. Therefore, we strongly encourage immunization to protect the population from influenza.

For more information, contact:
Vaccine Preventable Disease Nurses at
705-743-1000, ext. 139.

Free NRT For Young Adults Who Pledge To Quit!

More young adults than teens or older adults use tobacco. The most recent Canadian Tobacco Use Monitoring Survey by Health Canada reported that 18% of young adult Ontarians are current smokers. Finding ways to help young adult smokers quit is important. The **wouldrather...** contest is a unique way of encouraging young adults to stop using tobacco. Recent research shows that about 20% of students who participate in the **wouldrather...** contest successfully quit smoking and stay smoke-free. Without the motivation and support of the contest, about 5% would do so.

The contest offers young adults who smoke daily or socially three different ways to change their smoking behaviours. They can quit smoking altogether; they can cut their smoking in half; or they can refrain from smoking any time they are socializing and drinking alcohol. Non-smokers can also enter the contest by pledging to remain smoke-free. Besides the chance to win great prizes, all contestants receive motivational emails and support from a buddy. They also have the option of **receiving FREE nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)**, like the patch and gum.

To participate in the six-week long contest, any young adult between the **ages of 18-29** or Ontario post-secondary student can sign up at www.wouldrather.ca from **December 1, 2013 until January 26, 2014**. Two \$2,500 grand prizes are awarded to two lucky contestants who quit smoking all together.

Encourage and motivate your young adult clients to participate in the contest and live a tobacco-free life!



For contest promotional items (posters, postcards, and screen cleaners) please contact: the Peterborough County-City Health Unit at 705-743-1000, ext. 238

Resources for HCPs

Cancer Care Ontario Develops New Resources for Ontario's Three Screening Programs

We are pleased to provide you with information and recently developed resources for Ontario's three cancer screening programs: ColonCancerCheck, the Ontario Cervical Screening Program and the Ontario Breast Screening Program. Click on each of the titles below for more information. They can also be found at www.pcchu.ca by going to [For Professionals | Health Professionals | Cancer Prevention & Screening | Resources](#)

NEW: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on Serologic Blood Tests for Colorectal Cancer Screening

- These FAQs address your questions related to the use of serologic blood tests to screen people for colorectal cancer.
- Cancer Care Ontario cannot recommend the use of serologic blood tests for colorectal cancer screening.
- Cancer Care Ontario recommends that individuals participate in ColonCancerCheck-Ontario's colorectal cancer screening program.
- ColonCancerCheck offers screening free of charge through fecal occult blood tests (FOBTs) every two years for eligible individuals at average risk aged 50 to 74 and colonoscopy for eligible individuals with a family history of colorectal cancer. Serologic blood testing is not part of ColonCancerCheck.

Ontario Cervical Screening Program App

- The Ontario Cervical Screening Program's free app includes quick access to Ontario's cervical screening guidelines, easy-to-navigate recommendations for follow-up of abnormal cytology, and instant viewing, printing and emailing of patient resources.
- To access:
 - For iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad, scan the QR code or search "Ontario Cancer Screening" in the Apple App Store.
 - For other mobile devices (BlackBerry, Android, Windows), visit <https://screening.cancercare.on.ca>.

Updated: Ontario Breast Screening Program Information for Healthcare Providers Handout

- This concise but thorough handout is a quick reference tool for information on the Ontario Breast Screening Program.
- It includes a one-page summary table that outlines screening recommendations, eligibility criteria and the enrolment process for women at average risk vs. high risk for breast cancer.

For further information, please visit www.cancercare.on.ca/pcresources, call 1-866-662-9233 or email primarycare@cancercare.on.ca.

Resources for HCPs

Engaging New Video Gives the Best Advice for People Considering or Taking Opioid Medications

A new video is available for you and your patients that tackles the question "what is the best advice for people on, or about to start, opioid medications"? It is narrated by Dr. Mike Evans who is known for his unique health videos with almost six million YouTube views.

This video is freely available, in English and French, for anyone to view: [English](#)
[French](#)

Visit www.pcchu.ca and go to: [For Professionals | Health Professionals | Alcohol & Other Drugs](#).

Resources for Patients

Visit our website www.pcchu.ca for information on:

[Food in Peterborough](#) [Fluoride Information](#)
[Radon](#) [Immunization](#)

and many other health topics.

Looking for a specific health topic?

Visit the FYI Newsletter archive at www.pcchu.ca

Health Events for Patients

Food Handler Training and Certification Course (FREE)

Close to 12,000 people have taken this course from the Peterborough County-City Health Unit since 1997. Are you one of them? If not, register now!

This six-hour course is essential for anyone who prepares and serves food to the public. It is offered free of charge.

This course concludes with an exam. Successful participants will receive a Certificate in Safe Food Handling which is valid throughout the province for five years.

**To register, call the
Peterborough County-City Health Unit
705-743-1000**