

# Board of Health Meeting Summary

*October 10, 2012*

Peterborough County-City  
**HEALTH UNIT**  
...because health matters!

## **Farewell to Former Chief Keith Knott**

The Board of Health expressed their sincere appreciation for the significant contributions of Keith Knott, former chief of Curve Lake First Nation, who served on the board since 2002 and retired earlier this year. Former Medical Officer of Health Dr. Garry Humphreys was on hand to extol the many ways former chief Knott helped advance the public health, not only for Curve Lake, but for all communities across of Peterborough County and City.

## **Launch of Strategic Planning Process**

This fall, Board of Health has embarked on a community consultation process to help guide the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan. Board members are looking for input from the public as well as from local stakeholders. Four Community Open Houses will be hosted throughout the area including in Norwood (October 29), Lakefield (October 30), Millbrook (November 5), and Peterborough (November 6). Residents will also be invited to participate in an online survey. Health Unit representatives will also hold focus groups with members of Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations, youth, and local community and health care partners. Further details are available on the Health Unit's [website](#).

## **Day in the Life – Social Determinants of Health Nurses**

Melinda Wall and Ruth Walker provided an overview of their work as Public Health Nurses focusing on the social determinants of health, positions specially funded by the province to support residents who experience health inequities, such as poverty. Their needs assessment identified children living in poverty, adults with mental health issues and vulnerable seniors as priority populations for this area. Ms. Wall and Ms. Walker have partnered with a number of community groups to identify partnerships and opportunities to improve the health outcomes of these populations, such as the Mental Health Promotion Work Group, Partners in Aging Well, Home Response Coalition, the Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network, Neighbours in Action and the Baby-Friendly Initiative Committee. Upcoming projects include promoting “skin to skin” campaign to promote parent-infant attachment, accessible communications for parents to prevent school suspensions for missing immunization, assisting with community consultations to protect discretionary benefits for social assistance recipients, support for immigrant health education, planning a Seniors Summit, and organizing a mental health promotion planning day.

## **Rural Youth Engagement: 2010-2012 and Next Steps**

Peer Leaders Zoey Wilton, Emma Warner-Chee and Jenny Carr together with Keith Beecroft, Youth Development Worker, described their efforts over the past two years working with township councils to address youth health issues. Youth priorities were gathered from a county-wide Photo Voice project and other data collection projects, and following this Peer Leaders presented these results to all eight local townships in the county. Their objective is to suggest townships create youth rural action teams to assist in community planning to improve quality of life for youth in each area. Next steps include organizing a coffee house in Asphodel-Norwood Township and developing a Facebook group to share ideas and support rural youth in getting involved with township planning initiatives.

## **Shade Audit of Rogers Cove**

The Health Unit in partnership with Fleming College developed a protocol for conducting shade audits by piloting on for Rogers Cove in central Peterborough. A shade audit assesses the quality and location of existing shade, compares that with the usage patterns at the site to determine the risk of over exposure to ultraviolet radiation and proposes ways in which the risk can be reduced. This pilot project was developed in response to increasing melanoma rates in the Peterborough area. Local rates are

25% higher in men than provincial average, and 22% higher in women. It is well established in the scientific literature that 80% of all sun exposure happens before age 18. The City of Peterborough provided GIS mapping data to analyze high and low use areas and existing shade coverage. Results showed that only 26% of the park is shaded, and that there are opportunities for plantings and shade structures to increase sun safety for the public. The shade audit, when finalized, will be a useful tool for municipal planners, daycare and school operators, and anyone interested in minimizing UV exposure.

### **Radio Frequencies Report for the City of Peterborough**

This report provided the results of a radio frequency (RF) survey of the City of Peterborough conducted in partnership with Public Health Ontario. The results are used to assess risk to health from exposure to RF, establish a benchmark, and provide the public with additional information about their exposure levels within the city. The RF survey was conducted by Public Health Ontario on July 25 and August 3, 2012 to measure levels of RF energy from cell phone communications stations at 15 locations throughout the City. All of the sites measured by PHO were in compliance with [Health Canada's Safety Code 6](#) (SC6). The cumulative six minute time-averaging SC6 levels for all of the 15 sites were only a small fraction of the SC6 limits for the general public. The site registering the highest cumulative maximum value was 0.02200%, or 4,545 times below the recommended limit.

### **Tobacco Cessation Services Report**

A report outlining the effectiveness of past and current [tobacco cessation programs](#) was reviewed by the board. Reducing tobacco use is among the few strategies that has repeatedly been shown to simultaneously improve health outcomes while producing significant cost savings at the population level. It is estimated that almost half of the 23,000 people in Peterborough County and City who smoke, are planning to quit within the next six months. With high motivation to quit among tobacco users, our community requires improved integration of cessation services and tailored interventions to support tobacco users to quit and remain smoke free over the long term. While there have been some successes, the Tobacco Use Prevention program still has a lot of work to make smoke-free living an integral part of our community. As cessation projects are at or near completion, it will be a challenge to sustain the positive impact. Without funding, the Health Unit is unable to sustain the in depth cessation support we have been providing beyond December 31, 2012. The effects of dedicated funding for the continuation of cessation services would be far-reaching, particularly in light of the current economic situation for the most vulnerable. The board requested that a letter be sent to Minister Deb Matthews at the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care advocating for more support for local smoking cessation programs.

### **Bill 126, Healthy Decisions Made Easy, 2012**

MPP France G linas has introduced a new private member's bill, [Bill 126, Healthy Decisions Made Easy Act, 2012](#) that combines a number of proposed measures. The proposed new and revised legislation can contribute to positive public health outcomes by: reducing harmful tanning practices by those under the age of 18; eliminating flavoured tobacco products and the introduction of new tobacco products, especially those targeted at youth; and ensuring informed decision making by those who purchase meals in restaurants and fast food outlets. One-fifth of food consumed by Canadians is now purchased from restaurants. The bill would require disclosure of nutritional information, including calories and salt. The board approved sending a letter to the provincial government in support of this legislation.

### **Municipal Alcohol Policies Update**

Strong municipal alcohol policies (MAPs) are a key component in a comprehensive approach to reducing the harms from alcohol use, as identified in the [2012 Report on Alcohol Use in Peterborough City and County](#). This year staff from the Substance Misuse Prevention program have been supporting the townships of Otonabee South-Monaghan, Douro-Dummer, Cavan Monaghan, and Smith-Ennismore-Lakefield in the process of developing or updating MAPs in accordance with the revised Liquor License Act. Further communication with the remaining four townships, Hiawatha and Curve Lake Band Councils, and the City of Peterborough will be initiated in 2013.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday, November 14, 2012 at 4:45 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Peterborough County Court House located at [470 Water Street, Peterborough](#).

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Rosana Pellizzari  
Medical Officer of Health

Deputy Mayor Andy Sharpe  
Chair, Board of Health

*Please contact Brittany Cadence, Communications Supervisor, with any questions at [bcadence@pcchu.ca](mailto:bcadence@pcchu.ca) or (705) 743-1000, ext. 391.*