

2019-2020

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH + BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE

As reported in the 2018-2019 Annual Report, the Board of Health and the Medical Officer of Health were challenged, like all health units, with the province's plans to transform the public health system.

While we were unclear what the announcement was going to mean for our future, we began to prepare for the possibility of significant change by both reviewing our mandate and operations while mounting a vigorous response highlighting the importance of public health. We could not have foreseen that in just a year the world would be consumed by a pandemic that has disrupted our societies and economies – indeed our entire way of life.

Public health plays a critical and necessary role in the health and well-being of our communities and that has never been more obvious than now. Since the activation of our Incident Management System on January 24, 2020, we have worked full out in an effort to control the spread of COVID-19 in our region. At peak community transmission of COVID-19 in April, the health unit had paused most routine programming and had redeployed about 180 staff to the Infectious Diseases and Health Connection programs. More than 50 other staff remained in their department and program, but devoted 100% of their time to COVID-19 work. As we write this message, the pandemic continues and most of the health unit's employees continue to work on COVID-19, including shifts and weekends for those in the Infectious Diseases, COVID-19 and Health Connection programs.

While the pandemic had dominated our work for most of 2020, it's important to acknowledge that responding to threats to the health of our communities is at the core of what public health does. In 2019 our health unit investigated two Legionella outbreaks, vaccinated hundreds of residents of Muskoka and Barrie in response to a Hepatitis A outbreak and exposure, and worked with our partners in Muskoka to ensure those affected by severe flooding had the information they needed for safe water and food.

What is less visible is our preventive work that sets the stage for good health in the long term, the work that is done in our immunization and dental programs, and our family health teams. That work has been on hold due to the pandemic, and we now have thousands of children who have missed their Grade 7 vaccinations, hundreds of low-income families who have been unable to access our dental clinics, and many more families who have not received the in-home health unit and breastfeeding support to help their children get a healthy start in life. New programs, like in-school vision screening, are still on hold. Sexual health clinics, tobacco cessation workshops, infection prevention and control inspections, prenatal classes, and inspections of restaurants and other food service providers are a few of the other health unit programs and services that will need to resume as our economy and our businesses continue to reopen, while we balance the demands of our COVID-19 response.

Our federal, provincial and municipal governments have done a commendable job responding to the pandemic, as has public health with its support of that response. We have averted thousands of cases and deaths in Simcoe Muskoka, through flattening of the curve, provincial policy, and case and contact management, and have avoided overwhelming our health care system. Our partners in health, in local government, and in our communities have also responded admirably.

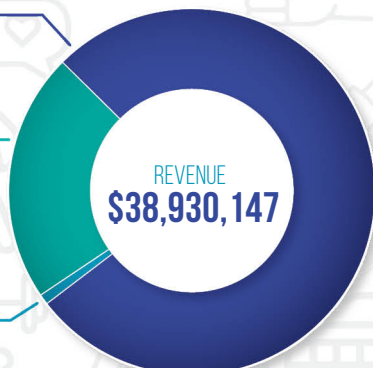
The pandemic is something we are going to live with for some time and the next months and beyond are going to be among the most challenging the people of our communities may ever experience. We will continue to offer the leadership and support that our communities expect, while working to ensure that the excellent public health programs and services so important to the health of our residents are resumed as soon as we are able.

2019 HEALTH UNIT FINANCIALS

PROVINCIAL GRANT **77.5%**

MUNICIPAL LEVY **21%**

OTHER **1.5%**



77.4% COST SHARED MANDATORY & RELATED PROGRAMS

6.4% HEALTHY SMILES ONTARIO

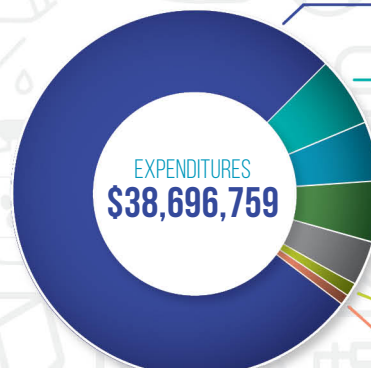
6.3% HEALTHY BABIES HEALTHY CHILDREN

5.3% 100% FUNDED PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES

3.4% SMOKE-FREE ONTARIO

0.7% OTHER

0.5% ONTARIO SENIORS DENTAL PROGRAM



2019 YEAR IN NUMBERS

CLINICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT



Personal service setting and child care inspections
1,307



Client visits to sexual health clinics
3,580



Children screened for tooth decay
23,305



Vaccines given at schools
22,256



Community and institution outbreak: Hep A investigation
946



Immunizations administered
869 + 79
adult pediatric

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Food premises inspections
7,916



Recreational water facility inspections
1,097



Rabies exposure investigations
1,719



Tick submissions
380



Number of Smoke-Free Ontario Act inspections for smoking and vaping including retail compliance and test shopping with youth
3,592



Number of large-scale incidents/emergencies or public health community-wide outbreaks requiring IMS activation
5

COMMUNITY AND FAMILY HEALTH DEPARTMENT



Number of expectant parents who registered for online prenatal classes
933



Expectant parents registered in-person prenatal classes
1,061



Total number of parent/caregiver visits to Breastfeeding Place
1,882



Families who received Triple P - Positive Parenting Program support from SMDHU
428



Number of schools with public health nurses supporting student health and well-being
30



Home visits by public health nurses and/or family home visitors
4,127

PROGRAM FOUNDATIONS AND FINANCE + HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENTS



Number of times our Facebook posts were seen
1,346,741



Health Connection inquiries
89,321



Visits to SMDHU website (homepage)
88,004



Number of times health unit mentioned in local news
604



Visits to the Simcoe Muskoka HealthSTATS website
100,867



Number of staff as of Dec 31, 2019
304

For more information about our programs and services:

T. 705.721.7520 | TF. 1.877.721.7520 | www.simcoemuskokahealth.org