

Board of Health Meeting Summary

October 12, 2011

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

Day in the Life – Information Technology

Kerri Tojic, Computer Technician Analyst, gave a presentation on the many functions supported by the IT Team that enable Health Unit staff to perform their public health roles. She described how technology is incorporated into daily activities, such as multimedia devices during prenatal classes, wireless flu vaccination clinics, tablets for food premises inspections, and maintaining the overall phone system, servers, network security from hacking/viruses and individual workstations.

Hiawatha First Nation Health and Social Services Update

Ms. Penny Coppaway-Williams, Manager, Health & Social Services Program at Hiawatha First Nation presented an overview of the services and programs delivered by her team for the community. The LIFE Services Centre was established in 1999 and attained Silver Bar Accreditation in 2011. A wide variety of health services, social services and cultural programs are provided through this centre, including infant, toddler, preschool and school age children's programming, home visits, chronic disease prevention, diabetes foot clinics, child welfare support, court support services, counselling, addictions awareness and prevention, sexual health fair, cultural teachings and Ojibwe language and crafts. Hiawatha also has its own First Nation Water / Wastewater Worker who conducts testing to ensure acceptable levels of water and wastewater quality standards are met on all lake and community wells.

Social Determinants of Health – Presentation by Dr. Dennis Raphael, Professor, York University

Dr. Raphael provided a synopsis of the importance of the social determinants of health (SDH) and the role of public health units in advocating for change. SDH are the economic and social conditions that primarily influence the health of individuals and communities. In the Canadian context there are 14 factors including Aboriginal ancestry, disability, gender, education, employment and working conditions, food security, housing, income, race, and unemployment. SDH define the prerequisites for good health (i.e. can't be healthy without shelter, food, warmth, which adds stress), and limits people's choices to improve their health. Poverty is defined as the clustering of exposures to adverse SDH. Dr. Raphael's research has concluded that current social assistance levels do not allow for health. His presentation is available by clicking on this link:

<http://www.pcchu.ca/downloads/Dr%20Raphael%20SDOH.ppt>

Staff Report: Report on Alcohol Use in Peterborough City and County: Recommendations for a Healthier and Safer Community

Suzanne Galloway, Health Promoter of the Substance Misuse Prevention Program provided an overview of the Health Unit's *2011 Report on Alcohol Use in Peterborough City and County*. The report focused on the burden of alcohol-related problems and reviewed the best practice strategies and interventions designed to prevent or minimize alcohol-related harm. Alcohol use is recognized by the World Health Organization as the second largest risk factor for death, disease, and disability in high-income nations such as Canada (second only to tobacco). Health risks include higher rates of chronic disease, injuries, and societal problems. Fiscal costs of alcohol use in Peterborough City and County are estimated at over \$51 million annually. Indirect costs of alcohol use such as lost productivity account for much of this annual cost (64%), with direct costs accounting for 30% of the total. Enforcement is the largest of these direct costs, while only 6% relates to health care costs and 2% is spent on research, education and prevention. The Peterborough Regional Health Centre sees an average of 480 visits/year related to substance misuse, and 71.3% of these are related to alcohol misuse. The report provides a number of recommendations to improve the health and safety of the community, including increasing and maintaining measures for alcohol, restricting the promotion and

normalization of harmful alcohol use, and informing and supporting healthier choices around alcohol at the individual and community level. The board passed a motion to approve the report's recommendations.

Nutritious Food Basket Report

The 2011 report entitled *Limited Incomes: Recipe for Hunger* was received by the board for information. This report outlines the Health Unit's work pricing out the annual Nutritious Food Basket which looks at how affordable a nutritious diet is for people living in our community. The report found that people living on social assistance cannot afford to buy nourishing food after paying for rent and utilities. Almost 1 in 10 people in Peterborough City and County live in poverty, and the issue is not the cost of food for most people, it's that incomes are too low.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at the County Court House, Council Chambers, 470 Water St., Peterborough.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Rosana Pellizzari
Medical Officer of Health

Deputy Reeve Andy Sharpe
Chair, Board of Health

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