

# Annual Report 2025



**Anniversary**

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# Vision, Mission and Values

## Vision

Optimized health and well-being for all.

## Mission

HPPH takes action to protect and promote population health and prevent disease, strengthening quality of life and well-being for all.

## Values

### Equity, diversity and inclusion

We value all community members. We are responsive to the communities we serve and commit to finding ways for people to feel safe and welcome.

### Evidence-informed practices

We will use the best available information and public health best practices in our work.

### Partnership and collaboration

We value our relationships and commit to authentic engagement in our work in order to meet the public health needs of our communities.



### People

We acknowledge that HPPH staff are the greatest asset to achieving our vision and mission, and commit to creating a healthy workplace together.

### Innovation

We embrace new ways to respond to the public health needs of our populations and will use bold and creative approaches as needed.

### Accountability

We focus on our public health mandate and are committed to transparent accountability for the use of our resources.

### Leadership

All staff are valued as HPPH ambassadors who continually show leadership by using public health knowledge, skills and expertise to improve population health.



# Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land where we gather today is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Neutral Peoples. Today, this land is still home to Indigenous Peoples, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to meet and work on this territory. We recognize the First Peoples' continued stewardship of the land and water, and that this territory was subject to the Dish with One Spoon wampum under which multiple nations agreed to care for the land and resources by the Great Lakes in peace.



We acknowledge and recognize the Upper Canada Treaties signed regarding this land, which include Treaty #29 and Treaty #45 ½, and our roles and shared responsibilities as treaty people committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation, gratitude, and respect with all Indigenous, First Nation, Inuit and Métis people.



Bernie MacLellan and Todd Kasenberg

## Remarks from Chair and Vice-Chair

As Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of Health, we are pleased to share this year's annual report. We thank the staff, partners, and communities who make this work possible.

Public health is often most visible during emergencies, but its greatest impact is built steadily through prevention, protection, and promotion that help people stay well, reduce health inequities, and reduce strain on the health-care system.

As we mark the five-year milestone of Huron Perth Public Health, created through the collaborative efforts to merge two public health units with a shared commitment to community well-being, we are proud of what has been achieved through a common vision and coordinated approach.

This report reflects the breadth of services delivered across our communities: from case and contact follow-up and outbreak management, to immunization, inspections, family and school supports, oral health, injury and substance misuse prevention, and initiatives that promote mental wellness and social connection. HPPH works to achieve health for all, and to protect those at greatest risk.

Throughout the year, the Board focused on responsible governance and oversight, evidence-informed decision-making, transparent accountability and supporting the conditions our teams need to deliver high-quality services. Together, we can build on the momentum of the past five years and improve health outcomes today while supporting long-term prosperity for individuals, families, and communities.



**Above Top-Bottom:** Bernie MacLellan, Board of Health Chair, Todd Kasenberg, Board of Health Vice-Chair

Dr. Miriam Klassen

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## Remarks from Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and CEO

Ralph Waldo Emerson is credited with saying "The first wealth is health". Health and happiness are linked; good health contributes to happiness and happiness promotes better health. Additionally, a healthy population is more productive, reduces health-care costs, and drives long-term prosperity. That is why local public health matters. Through community-based strategies and strong partnerships, Huron Perth Public Health programs and services contribute to better health not only for individuals, but for families and communities.

This annual report describes the work completed in 2025, preventing disease, and protecting and promoting health. HPPH staff work in our community,:

- preventing infectious disease spread by following up on reports of Diseases of Public Health Significance (DoPHS) and providing support to manage outbreaks in congregate settings
- supporting and providing immunization
- inspecting facilities such as food premises and personal service settings and investigating reports of health hazards
- providing support to young families and school communities to maximize healthy growth and development
- facilitating and providing oral health programs to seniors and children and youth
- promoting health through injury and substance misuse prevention



- promoting mental wellness and social connections
- keeping our community up-to-date with timely health information and evidence-informed strategies for good health

All this work is underpinned with considerations for health equity, working to ensure access and inclusion for all who live, work and play in Huron Perth. I invite you to take a closer look at what public health is doing for you.

I also recognize the milestone 5-year anniversary of Huron Perth Public Health in 2025. Created from the merger of two strong organizations with a shared commitment to public health, over the past five years our staff and partners have shown what is possible when we come together with a common vision, building a stronger, more responsive public health system. Thank you to everyone, especially staff and our Board of Health, who has contributed to this journey—I look forward to what we will continue to achieve together.

# 2025 Board of Health



**Bernie MacLellan**  
**Board chair**  
Mayor, Huron East  
and councillor,  
Huron County



**Todd Kasenberg**  
**Board vice-chair**  
Mayor, North Perth  
and councillor,  
Perth County



**Marg Anderson**  
Deputy mayor, Central  
Huron and councillor,  
Huron County



**Leslie Biehn**  
Councillor,  
City of Stratford



**Sheryl Feagan**  
Provincial  
Representative



**George Finch**  
Mayor, South Huron  
and councillor,  
Huron County



**Marg Luna**  
Councillor,  
Town of St. Marys



**Robert Parker**  
Provincial  
Representative



**Jared Petteplace**  
Provincial  
Representative



**Paul Robinson**  
Provincial  
Representative



**Cody Sebben**  
Councillor,  
City of Stratford



**Bill Vanstone**  
Deputy mayor,  
Township of Ashfield-  
Colborne-Wawanosh  
and councillor,  
Huron County



**Adam Waxman**  
Provincial  
Representative



**Robert Wilhelm**  
Councillor, Perth South  
and councillor,  
Perth County

# Management Team

## Medical officer of health and CEO

Dr. Miriam Klassen

## Physician consultant

Dr. Lauren Hayward

## Directors

barb Leavitt

Julie Pauli

Tanya Sangster

Christina Taylor

## Managers

Karen Bergin-Payette

Megan Goss

Lori Collins

Annette Hoyles

Janet Jackson

Rita Marshall

Tanya Patry

Karen Sherwood

Jessica Thompson

Angela Willert

## Locations

### Clinton

77722B London Road

### Listowel

161 Inkerman Street West

### Stratford

Festival Square

10 Downie Street, 2nd Floor

### West Gore

653 West Gore Street

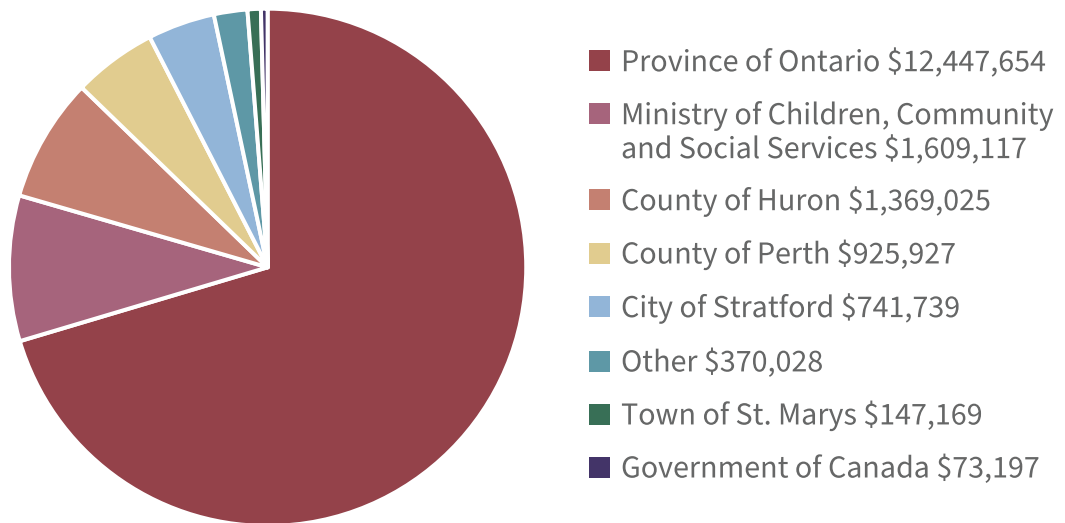


**Above L-R:** HPPH West Gore and Clinton offices

# Financials

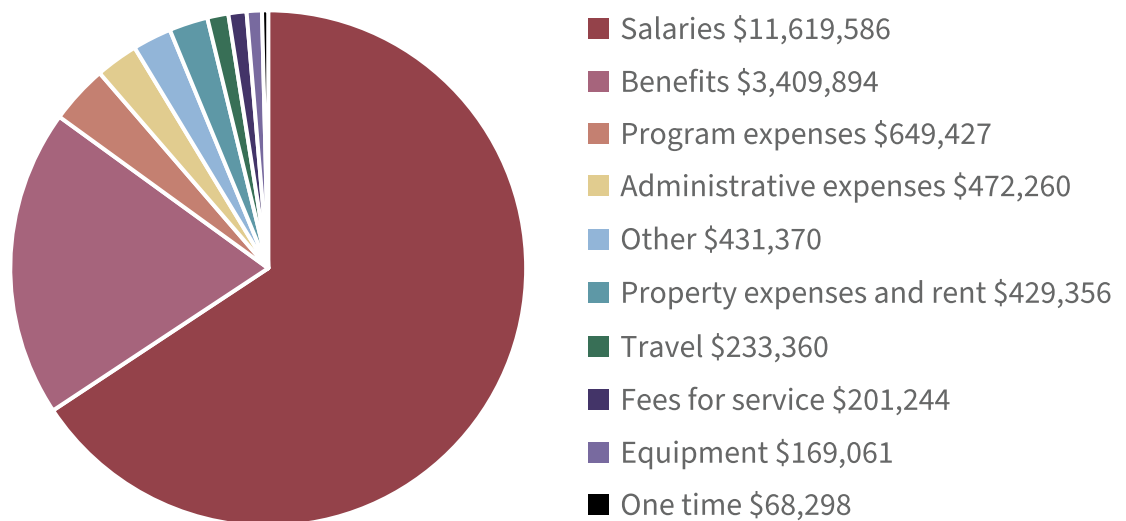
## 2025 Revenue

\$ 17,683,856



## 2025 Expenses

\$ 17,683,856



Health Protection

# Infectious Diseases

## Measles Outbreak

In 2025, Huron Perth became part of Ontario’s largest measles outbreak in three decades.

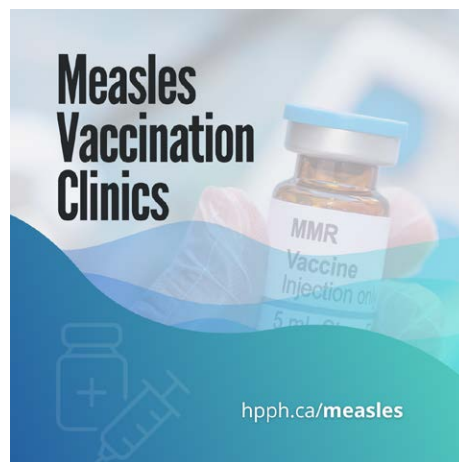
HPPH reported the first local case of measles on Feb. 28. In the following months, the infectious disease team completed over 420 measles investigations. Of these investigations, 297 met probable or confirmed case definition.

Measles case breakdown:	# Reported
Confirmed	234
Probable	63
<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>
Hospitalizations (non-ICU)	34
ICU admissions	1

## Communicating with Our Communities

To ensure community members were able to ask questions and receive answers, HPPH created:

- A measles self-assessment tool available 24-7, so that people who were worried they had been exposed to measles could quickly determine their risk and what actions to take next. This tool was created by the HPPH surveillance, health assessment, research and evaluation team (SHARE).
- A dedicated Measles Information Line and email available during business hours. HPPH staff from other teams, such as the health equity and oral health teams, were re-assigned (re-deployed) to respond to phone calls and emails.



Above L-R: HPPH social media artwork.

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## Health Protection

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# Infectious Diseases

### Measles Immunization

Vaccination is best way to prevent measles. Two doses of measles-containing vaccine (i.e., MMR and/or MMRV) is over 97% effective in preventing a measles infection. The measles-containing vaccine is also a routine childhood vaccine publicly funded by the province of Ontario. Individuals who have not received the vaccine (including those too young to be eligible) are at increased risk of becoming infected with measles.

As measles cases increased, HPPH expanded measles vaccine eligibility to individuals 6 months or older who live, work, play, travel to, or worship within the Huron Perth Public Health region.

- HPPH distributed 10,532 doses of measles containing vaccine (MMR/MMRV) to primary care providers in 2025, compared to 4,800 doses in 2024.
- HPPH administered 1,251\* doses of measles containing vaccine (MMR/MMRV) in 2025, compared to 549 in 2024.

\*This includes doses administered at HPPH routine clinics, measles outbreak related clinics, and Mother and Young Child Clinics.

### Aftermath

Ontario's measles outbreak was declared over on October 6, 2025; however measles cases continue across Canada.

On November 10, 2025, the Public Health Agency of Canada announced that Canada lost its measles elimination status due to sustained transmission of the same measles strain for over 12 months. [[Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion \(Public Health Ontario\). Measles in Ontario](#). Toronto, ON: King's Printer for Ontario; 2026.]

Measles remains a reportable Disease of Public Health Significance (DoPHS). With measles circulating globally, HPPH continues to be vigilant in identifying possible cases of measles and encouraging vaccination to prevent the disease.

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Health Protection

# Infectious Diseases

## Outbreak Summary

Under the *Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act* (HPPA), HPPH is required to follow up on reports of suspected and/or confirmed outbreaks (OBs) of gastrointestinal and respiratory illnesses in retirement and long-term care homes (LTCH). There were 87 outbreaks declared in these facilities in 2025.



Number and Identified Pathogen of Outbreaks Declared in Retirement and Long-Term Care Homes in Huron Perth in 2025:

Respiratory Disease	Outbreaks
Influenza A	28
Other respiratory	23
COVID-19	14
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	1

## Gastrointestinal Disease Outbreaks

Gastroenteritis	21
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Health professionals and HPPH work together to help prevent the spread of communicable diseases in our communities. [O. Reg. 135/18: Designation of Diseases](#) under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, outlines which communicable diseases are designated as Diseases of Public Health Significance (DoPHS) in Ontario. There were 452 DoPHS cases (excluding sexually transmitted infections and COVID-19) reported to HPPH in 2025. The top six diseases were:

Disease	# Cases Reported
Measles	234
Campylobacter Enteritis	58
Salmonellosis	27
Cryptosporidiosis	25
Influenza	19
S. Pneumoniae, Invasive	17

**Left:** Jessica Millian is a public health nurse on the HPPH infectious disease team. This team does case and contact management for Diseases of Public Health Significance.

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# Infectious Diseases



## Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Hub

The Huron Perth Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Hub is hosted by Huron Perth Public Health. The role of the IPAC Hub is to provide ongoing support, guidance and IPAC expertise to congregate living settings, including long-term care homes and retirement homes, directly.

These services are available to all congregate living settings (CLS) in the Huron Perth area.

In 2025, the IPAC Hub:

- Facilitated 20 Community of Practice (CoP) meetings: 10 LTCH/RH and 10 CLS.
- Produced four IPAC Hub newsletters in collaboration with the Middlesex-London Health Unit and Southwestern Public Health. These newsletters were distributed to CoP members.
- Hosted an IPAC Fall workshop in September – approximately 50 staff attended from LTCH, RH and CLS.
- Performed Fall Preparedness Audits at 28 facilities.
- Completed 26 outbreak audits.

Health Protection

# Immunizations



## 2025 School-based Immunizations

HPPH provides in-school immunization clinics for routine Grade 7 and Grade 10 immunizations.

- Total school clinics: 125 (includes both elementary and secondary)
- Total immunizations provided: 6,287

Disease/Vaccine	Doses
Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	1,918
Hepatitis B (Hep B)	1,879
Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap)	1,299
Meningitis (Men-C-ACYW-135)	1,191

## Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA)

Immunization protects children from many serious diseases that are easily spread in schools. Under Ontario’s *Immunization of School Pupils Act*, children in elementary and secondary schools need to have proof of immunization against certain diseases, or a valid exemption, to attend school.

Huron Perth Public Health annually reviews the vaccination records of elementary and secondary school students to make sure they are up to date. Parents and caregivers are asked to update any incomplete records with information. Children who do not have a complete immunization record with all required vaccines, or a valid exemption, may be suspended from school.

## ISPA Review Process 2025

- Total Student Enrollment: 21,880 (including public, Catholic, private, and parochial schools in Huron and Perth)
- First notices sent late January: 3,362
- Second notices sent mid March: 1,518
- Suspension orders issued late April: 835
- Suspension orders enforced May 23-27: 36

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## Health Protection

# Immunizations

## Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFIs)

An adverse event following immunization (AEFI) is an unwanted or unexpected health effect that happens after someone receives a vaccine, which may or may not be caused by the vaccine. The unwanted or unexpected health effect could be a laboratory finding, symptom or disease.

Most AEFI reports are submitted by healthcare providers, who are mandated to report all AEFIs by the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. AEFI reports may also be submitted by vaccine recipients or their caregivers. Each AEFI report pertains to one individual vaccine recipient who experiences one or more adverse events within a certain timeline after receiving one or more vaccines.

In Ontario, all AEFI investigations are conducted by local public health units, as part of post marketing safety surveillance, and in accordance with provincial surveillance guidance.

There were 26 AEFIs investigated in 2025:

- Classified as Confirmed – 25
- Classified as Does Not Meet – 1
- Number that met serious definition – 2 (1 managed as anaphylaxis, 1 meningitis)

Infectious Disease Agent	# AEFIs
Influenza	11
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	11
COVID-19 - Spikevax - Moderna	4
Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio, and Haemophilus influenzae type b (DTaP-IPV-Hib pediatric)	3
Hepatitis A - pediatric	3
Meningococcal disease Men-C-ACWY	3
COVID-19 - Comirnaty - Pfizer-Biontech	2
Hepatitis A and B (HAHB)	2
Hepatitis B (HB)	2
Meningococcal disease Men-C-C	2
Pneumococcal disease Pneu-C-13	2
Pneumococcal disease Pneu-C-15	2
Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)	2
Rotavirus (Rot-1)	2
Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap)	2
Chikungunya (CHIK-LAV)	1
Cholera - E. coli Oral (Chol-Ecol-O)	1
Hepatitis A (HA)	1
Diphtheria, tetanus - adult (Td)	1
Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, inactivated poliomyelitis (Tdap-IPV)	1
Typhoid (Typh-I)	1

## Health Protection

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# Environmental Health

The environmental health team continued to focus on essential activities to protect health, prevent and reduce health hazards, and mitigate disease risks associated with both built and natural environments.

HPPH continued to finalize our [online disclosure website](#), Check What We Inspect (CWWI). In 2025, staff added personal services settings (hair salons, aesthetics, tattoo studios, etc.), recreational water facilities (public pools, spas, splash pads and wading pools), small drinking water systems and complaint inspections. This will allow members of the public to continue to access valuable inspection results and enforcement activities for all inspected premises across Huron Perth.

Other disclosures available at the [Inspections and Disclosures](#) webpage include status of beach water quality and convictions of tobacco and e-cigarette retailers.

## Public Inquiries and Investigations

HPPH completed 2,242 public inquiries and investigations in 2025. The top four topic areas were: rabies (734), food safety (442), safe water (361) and health hazards (225).

## Inspections

Public health inspectors completed 2,819 inspections in 2025, consisting of compliance (2,314), re-inspections (390), complaint (37) and pre-opening inspections (32).

## Beach Water Sampling

- Sampled 17 locations across Huron Perth.
- Collected 975 samples over 26 testing days from mid-June to end of August; received 32 adverse results (high bacteria levels).

## Vector-borne and Zoonotic Disease Monitoring

### West Nile virus

- 10 weeks of mosquito trapping occurred.
- 155 traps were collected.
- Testing of mosquitoes collected from two surveillance traps identified West Nile virus.

### Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

- Four reports of infected premises (poultry) reported to HPPH, resulting in investigations to rule out human exposure.

## Progressive Enforcement

- Provided 32 Small Drinking Water Systems (SDWS) warnings for lack of sampling.
- Issued 20 tickets.
- Issued five Section 13 orders.

A certified public health inspector may issue closure orders under Section 13 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, R.S.O. c. H. 7, 1990. This happens when they are of the opinion, upon reasonable and probable grounds, that a health hazard exists and that the requirements specified in the order are necessary to decrease the effect of, or to eliminate, the health hazard.

## Population Health

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# Health Promotion and Well-Being

## Reproductive Health

### Reproductive Health Status Report of Huron and Perth Counties 2024

Huron Perth Public Health released the [Reproductive Health Status Report of Huron and Perth Counties 2024](#) to support public health and community partner efforts to improve outcomes for pregnant individuals, infants, families, and communities. The report provides a snapshot of maternal and newborn health indicators and trends in Huron Perth and Ontario, and identifies strengths, disparities, and areas for targeted improvement and intervention across prenatal, maternal, and infant health.

### Online Prenatal Courses

291 expectant persons from Huron and Perth counties registered for the online prenatal course offered through HPPH.

## Infant Feeding

A total of 34 professionals and 10 peer supporters attended the health unit-hosted breastfeeding refresher training.

## Healthy Eating Behaviours

### Let's Get Cookin'

HPPH staff built and launched the Let's Get Cookin' [webpage](#) and portal. Let's Get Cookin'! is a group program to develop food skills in school and community settings. Over seven sessions, the program covers basic knife safety, chopping, slicing and dicing, reading and following recipes, and principles of kitchen and food safety. The program can help increase confidence and skills to participate in food preparation activities and is appropriate for ages 10 and up. The website makes facilitator training and program materials available to interested community partners and volunteers.

### Weight Bias in Healthcare

HPPH's public health dietitian was invited by the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance's Equity, Inclusion, Diversity and Anti-Racism Committee to provide staff professional development on Weight Bias in Healthcare. The 90-minute virtual session brought together 40 participants and was recorded for anyone unable to attend live. The goal of the session was to foster a meaningful conversation about the ways weight bias can contribute to stigma and discrimination, ultimately affecting patient health outcomes. We focused on understanding the impact of weight bias in healthcare and explored strategies to reduce it in order to improve the overall quality of care.

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## Population Health

# Health Promotion and Well-Being

## Substance Use

- 115 tobacco quit kits were distributed to healthcare providers that offer cessation services.
- HPPH participated in regional and provincial social media campaigns focused on substance use prevention messaging:
  - Before the Floor - harm reduction messaging for alcohol focused on young adults.
  - Rethink Your Drinking (RYD) - focused on women 30-60 with information on the harms of alcohol, links between cancer and alcohol use and the Canadian Guidance on Alcohol and Health.
  - Quash – vaping cessation messaging for youth and young adults.
  - Smoke Free Ontario Housing – landlord messaging for the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA).
  - Not an Experiment – vaping prevention messaging for parents.
- HPPH reviewed and recommended updates to smoke-free municipal policies; the recommended updates were about language around vaping and the prevention of waterpipe use in certain spaces.
- HPPH adapted and released an [Alcohol Primer for Municipalities](#), which focused on presenting local Huron and Perth data on alcohol and outlining potential roles municipalities could play in alcohol prevention strategies.
- HPPH reviewed and provided comments and recommendations to four different municipal alcohol policies. Municipalities included North Huron, St. Marys, Goderich, and Morris Turnberry.

## Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA)

- Total vendors across Huron and Perth: 128
- Total number of complaints: 92, schools 63
- Sales to persons under 19 years: 10



**Above L-R:** Substance-related social media artwork posted by HPPH.

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## Population Health

# Health Promotion and Well-Being

## Municipal Liaison Program and Built Environment

The municipal liaison program helps inform programming, establish or strengthen relationships with municipalities, and support municipalities in how they interact with public health. In 2025, nine municipal alignment meetings took place between HPPH and municipal staff, which resulted in 75 action items. Outcomes from some municipal interactions:

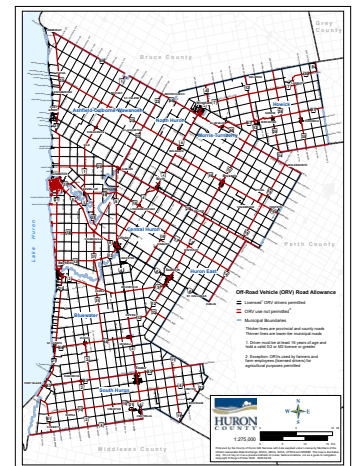
- Supported Huron County in their Climate Vulnerability and Risk Assessment.
- Submitted feedback and delivered council delegations to Huron County, Central Huron, and Bluewater in relation to their Official Plans.
- Provided council delegations on social connection to Huron County and North Perth and presented to Stratford Public Library staff and North Perth's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Advisory Committee.
- Submitted a comprehensive Parks and Trails Assessment Report for the Town of Goderich, informed by an on-site audit.
- Provided letters of support for municipal infrastructure and recreation projects in Goderich and Stratford.
- Commented on over 30 site plan and development-related planning documents across North Perth, Stratford, and Bluewater, providing input on active transportation, connectivity, accessibility, housing mix, greenspace, shade, and social infrastructure.

## Injury Prevention

### Unique Solutions for Unique Contexts

In 2025, HPPH and partners created the **Off-Road Vehicles (ORVs), On-Road Huron County** map. Consultations with decision-makers had led to greater standardization of bylaws, making expectations clearer for ORV users and police. With 11 authorities setting these laws, partners—including municipalities, the Ministry of Transportation, the OPP, and HPPH—worked together to address the need for consistency.

HPPH provides backbone support to intersectoral partnerships that are uniquely positioned to respond to our local context.



**Above L-R:** The ORVs On-Road Huron County resource provides information on ORV Road Allowances in Huron County, as well as information on restrictions and required paperwork and equipment.

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## Population Health

# Health Promotion and Well-Being

## Mental Well-Being

### Social Connection

Building on work initiated in 2024, HPPH implemented a strategy to increase awareness of municipalities' roles in advancing social connection, recognizing their influence on community design, policy, and social environments. Staff delivered nine presentations to municipal audiences, including the HPPH Board of Health, Huron County Council, Municipality of North Perth, The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario, Huron Perth Drug Strategy, Huron Economic Development THRIVE Summit, Stratford Library, North Perth Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee, and the Huron County Housing Symposium. During these presentations and through municipal liaison meetings, staff distributed [Social Connection: A Municipal Primer](#). This resource provides evidence-informed interventions to support social connection through municipal policy, planning and community design and programming.

HPPH partnered with United Way Perth Huron, the Huron County Immigration Partnership, and the Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement to plan Belonging Matters, which brought together over 200 attendees, including 90 youth from local high schools. Participants viewed the documentary *Join or Die*, received community engagement training from the Tamarack Institute, and took part in facilitated regional conversations. In 2026, HPPH will continue to build on the momentum generated by this event.

The [Ontario Early Adversity and Resilience Framework](#) was released in the spring. HPPH hosted a community conversation for over 50 partners representing diverse sectors. HPPH staff presented the Framework to establish a common language and understanding for early adversity and resilience, facilitated an exercise to map community assets according to the Framework and supported tabletop activities to identify ideas to collectively advance. This work will continue in 2026 to establish new priorities for a community collaborative. Internally, a mental health promotion collaborative network has been formed to identify opportunities for the Framework to inform our internal public health work.



**Above:** Public Health Promoter Laura O'Rourke, *second from right*, on stage at the THRIVE Summit in Blyth, April 2025. HPPH, as part of the Community Safety and Well-Being for Huron, participated in the event that addressed key opportunities and challenges facing our local communities.

## Population Health

# Health Equity

## Building Understanding Through Training

Throughout 2025, the health equity team delivered introductory training on the HPPH Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (AREDI) Lens to all HPPH teams. The training emphasized identifying individual and team learning goals, practicing self-reflection, and recognizing personal biases that may influence our work. Teams also explored how systemic and structural barriers impact equity-deserving groups and discussed upstream approaches that support long-term, community-wide health improvements. Team-specific examples were incorporated to help staff apply concepts directly to their program areas.

## Providing Expert Consultation Across the Organization

The health equity team continued to support staff and external partners by responding to 20 health equity consultation requests. In response, staff offered input on community plans, internal policies and programs, and delivered health-equity-focused presentations. These consultations reinforced HPPH's commitment to embedding equity considerations across programs and services.

## Honouring Dates of Significance

In collaboration with the anti-racism, equity, diversity, and inclusion committee and the indigenous public health sub-committee, the health equity team helped facilitate recognition of select dates of significance throughout the year. These observances highlighted important historical events and celebrated the leadership, strength, and resilience of communities that continue to experience systemic inequities.

Indigenous-related dates of significance were also shared through HPPH's social media channels to help increase public awareness and engagement.



**Above L-R:** HPPH recognized September 30, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day, on both social media and at our sites.

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## Population Health

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# Health Equity

## Strengthening Capacity Through Education

Members of the anti-racism, equity, diversity, and inclusion committee completed the *Anti-Racism Foundation Program* offered by Western University. This program covered a range of foundational topics, including building inclusivity, the history of racism in Canada, transforming power and white privilege, and understanding bias and microaggressions. One participant summarized her experience by saying, “Anti-racism is a continuous learning process. The goal is progress, not perfection.”

In November, Dr. Ana Boller, Senior Learning Specialist at Western University's Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion presented an interactive workshop, *The Power of Using Inclusive Language*, for HPPH staff. The workshop explored why language evolves, how language can reinforce respect and belonging, and practical strategies for incorporating inclusive language in everyday communication.

The health equity team attended the *In Good Relations* workshop, hosted by the Indigenous Primary Health Care Council in Toronto. This experience provided valuable insight and guidance to support HPPH in building meaningful relationships with Indigenous Peoples, providers, and communities as part of our ongoing journey toward reconciliation and culturally respectful public health practice.



## Reinforcing Organizational Commitments

The health equity team supported the completion and posting of HPPH's [commitment statements](#), which are now displayed in public spaces at all HPPH office locations. These statements reaffirm HPPH's ongoing dedication to equity, inclusion, and anti-racism.

**Above:** Public health nurse, Donna Parsons supports HPPH teams with integrating health equity into their programs and services.

## Population Health

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# School Health and Vision Health

During the 2024-25 school year, HPPH continued to deliver school health supports using an approach rooted in health equity and the social determinants of health. This approach provides health promotion support to all schools ('universal supports') and offered more support to some schools where families need it most ('enhanced supports').

### Universal Supports

- All schools could access a school health public health nurse (PHN) for questions and consultation via a dedicated phone number and email address for schools.
- Curriculum kits are a popular tool to support educators to teach health-related content in their classrooms. Kits are available for loan and/or for download on our website. In the 2024-25 school year, local educators borrowed these kits 47 times.
- While the enhanced school program includes specific in-school offerings, all schools were given access to the related digital resources through our Educators page. This ensures every school can use evidence-based prevention programs such as Let's Get Cooking, Playground Activity Leaders, and My Brain, My Choice.
- All schools could access health curriculum support through our Educator section on the HPPH website:
  - Educators page: 873 page views
  - School health request form: 388 page views
  - School Supports Guide page: 92 page views

### Enhanced Supports

For the 2024-25 school year:

- Six schools received enhanced support
- 265 sessions delivered within enhanced schools (e.g., Let's Get Cookin', Playground Activity Leaders, My Brain My Choice)
- 3,405 students reached

### Work with School Boards

The school health team worked closely with local school boards to support the implementation of Policy/Program Memorandum (PPM) 128, which outlines guidance on anti-vaping and personal mobile device use in schools. Support included facilitated brainstorming with AMDSB students, educators, and parents; recommendations for evidence-based resources and campaigns; and support for educator resources used during the May Professional Development Day. During this development, 187 AMDSB educators accessed the Not an Experiment vaping e-module.

### Vision Screening

HPPH helped to coordinate vision screening to all senior kindergarten students to help identify visual health concerns and connect families with a local optometrist. Screening was provided in partnership with the University of Waterloo School of Vision Science and Optometry and local Lions Clubs. In the 2024-25 school year, vision screening was offered at 45 schools where 1,268 students were screened, and 471 students were referred to an optometrist.

Community and Family Health

# Sexual Health and Harm Reduction



- 3,353 appointments at sexual health clinics.
- Sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections (STBBI) testing was the most common reason for attending clinics.
- 247 lab-confirmed sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections.
- 2,864 doses of naloxone provided to clients and community partners for further distribution.

Sexually Transmitted Infection	Cases
Chlamydia	183
Gonorrhea	36
Syphilis	16
Hep C	10
HIV/AIDS	2

## 16 Days of Activism

Huron Perth Public Health participated in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign organized by STOP VAW Coordinating Committee of Perth County. This included sharing daily social media posts to raise awareness of gender-based violence and provide practical knowledge and tips to community members. Posts were viewed over 20,000 times on HPPH Facebook and Instagram accounts.

Social Media	Interactions*	Views†
Facebook	74	18,218
Instagram	60	2,949

\*Interactions indicate likes/reactions and reshares of posts.

†Views indicate the number of times a video, post or ad was played or displayed.

*continued on next page*

Community and Family Health

# Sexual Health and Harm Reduction



## Take Back the Night

HPPH also participated in the Take Back the Night event organized by STOP VAW Coordinating Committee of Perth County. We shared social media posts on HPPH Facebook and Instagram accounts to promote the event. Posts were viewed 4,767 times on social media.

Social Media	Interactions*	Views†
Facebook	32	3,296
Instagram	18	1,741

**Above:** Public health nurses, Christina Cuglietta, left, and Kate Underwood, right, host the HPPH booth at the Take Back the Night event organized by STOP VAW Coordinating Committee of Perth County, in September 2025.



## Red Scarf Initiative

HPPH supports Regional HIV/AIDS Connection (RHAC) in the Red Scarf Initiative. The Red Scarf initiative raises awareness and knowledge about the positive advances in HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention. Volunteers knit red scarves, which are tagged with information about HIV and shared with our community to be worn as symbols of solidarity, support, and awareness.

On December 1, 2025, members of the sexual health team, with some community knitters, hung up red scarves in downtown Stratford for World AIDS Day. Scarves were free for the taking.

**Above:** Public health nurses, Jaclyn Dietz, left, and Julie Bergman, right, hung up red scarves in downtown Stratford to mark World AIDS Day.

## Community and Family Health

# Oral Health

## Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP)

OSDCP is a free, routine dental program for low-income seniors who are 65 years of age or older.

- In 2025, an additional 34 seniors were enrolled in the OSDCP. A total of 915 dental appointments were completed for the entire client caseload.
- In 2025, we had agreements with 11 general dental providers, two specialist offices (endodontist and oral surgeon) and three denturists to facilitate enrollment in and provision of the OSDCP.
- These dental offices are in Exeter, Goderich, Milverton, Mitchell, Seaforth, St. Marys, Stratford and Wingham. In addition, clients are able to access local denture clinics in Clinton, Goderich and Stratford.

## Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO)

Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) is a free dental program for eligible children and youth 17 years old and under from low-income households. Through HSO, HPPH offers free preventive dental health services to eligible children and youth from families living with low income, and for children and youth who are identified through dental screening at school.

- In 2025, 417 children were enrolled into HSO.
- 651 children received preventive services at HPPH clinics.

## Dental Screening

- 525 children received dental screening (HPPH site clinics, non-school and remote clinics).
- 6,913 children were screened in schools (JK, SK, Grades 2, 4 and 7).
- 472 children identified at school were eligible for HSO-Emergency Essential Services Stream. This includes 118 students identified at school and 354 clients visiting clinics via enrollment.
- Staff helped connect families to the Healthy Smiles Ontario program and to the Canadian Dental Care Plan as needed.



**Above:** Dental hygienist Allison Houston, left, and dental assistant Stacy Crandon perform routine cleaning in the HPPH oral health clinic space.

## Community and Family Health

# Healthy Babies Healthy Children and Anabaptist Community Work



## Mother and Young Child Clinic (MYCC)

The Mother and Young Child Clinic (MYCC) delivers nurse practitioner-led services to perinatal clients and families with young children in Anabaptist communities who may face barriers to accessing primary health care.

MYCC operates five clinic locations across Huron and Perth counties, supporting families with infant and child growth and development monitoring, perinatal healthcare, dental health services, immunizations, and referrals to additional supports.

In 2025, the clinics recorded a total of 1,620 visits. Approximately 50 per cent of visits included immunizations, 25 per cent required Low German interpretation. In addition, 51 per cent of clients did not participate in OHIP, and 35 per cent did not have a primary healthcare provider.

## Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC)

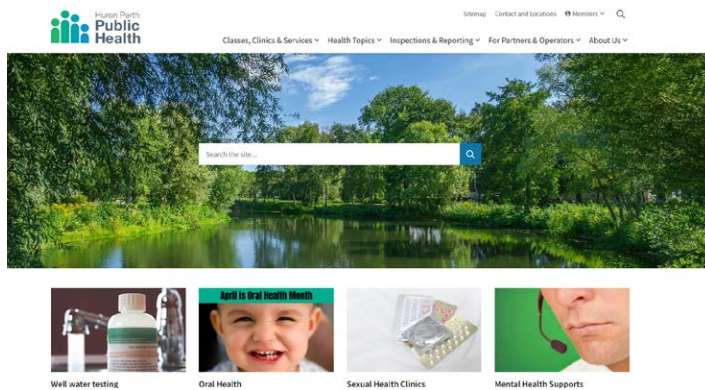
Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) is a free, voluntary program for expectant parents and families with children from birth up to transition to school. The program helps identify children and families who may benefit from extra support.

Through public health nurse-led home visiting, HBHC offers support and education related to pregnancy, infant feeding, child growth and development, parent-child attachment, responsive parenting, and referrals to other programs and services.

In 2025, HPPH received 1,396 screens or referrals to determine program eligibility. Of those referrals, 385 unique families chose to access services through the HBHC program, including 104 families who participated in the ongoing home visiting component. The HBHC team, which includes public health nurses and parent resource visitors, completed approximately 1,817 visits to families in Stratford, St. Marys, and Perth and Huron counties in 2025.

## Foundational Standards

# Communications



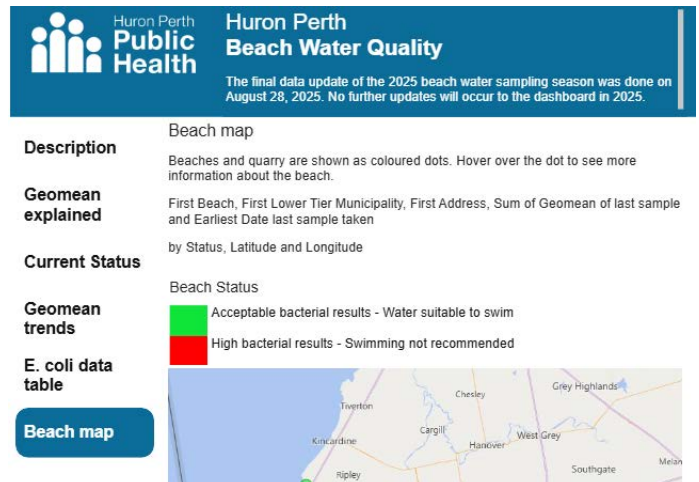
## Website

The HPPH website welcomed 157,379 visits and 94,128 unique visitors in 2025.

### Top pages viewed

1. [HPPH home page](#)
2. [Measles](#)
3. [Beach Water Quality](#)
4. [Immunization Records and Reporting](#)
5. [Careers](#)

**Above:** HPPH home page.



## Media Relations

In 2025, HPPH issued 54 media releases, provided 18 media interviews and were mentioned in 243 media articles.

**Above:** The Huron Perth Beach Water Quality information and dashboard was the third most popular topic on the HPPH website for 2025.

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## Foundational Standards

# Communications

## Social Media

### Facebook

- 11,585 lifetime followers.
- 3.6 million views (content played/displayed).
- 20,100 content interactions (likes, reactions, saves, comments, shares, replies).
- 17,800 link clicks, taps or swipes on links within content.
- 67,400 visits to page or profile.
- 83 accounts messaged us.

### Top content by views

1. Dec. 1 World AIDS Day/red scarf post with PHNs Jaclyn Dietz and Julie Bergman (32,200 views).
2. Sept. 16 media release re: human case of West Nile virus (27,400 views).
3. Dec. 3 media release re: Spread cheer, not germs (respiratory illness) (20,100 views).
4. Oct. 14 media release re: Respiratory illness season is here (19,300 views).
5. Sept. 10 job posting for public health promoter (17,700 views).



### Instagram

- 2,312 lifetime followers.
- 174,500 views (content played/displayed).
- 18,400 reach from organic distribution of content (no paid ads).
- 1,500 content interactions (likes, reactions, saves, comments, shares).
- 3,100 visits to IG profile.
- 12 accounts messaged us.

### Top content by views

1. Aug. 8 Hand, foot and mouth disease post (2,000 views).
2. Aug. 8 media release re: Dog incident (2,000 views).
3. Aug. 11 media release re: Human case of West Nile virus (2,000 views).
4. Oct. 14 media release re: Respiratory illness season is here (1,900 views).
5. Aug. 8 media release re: Multi-day heat event (1,900 views).



Above L-R: HPPH social media artwork.

## Foundational Standards

# Surveillance, Health Assessment, Research and Evaluation

The SHARE team (Surveillance, Health Assessment, Research and Evaluation) continued to advance population health assessment, effective public health practice, and program monitoring and evaluation throughout 2025. The team also supported capacity building across the organization in these core areas.



## Population Health Assessment

A major achievement in 2025 was the completion of the *Reproductive Health Status Report of Huron and Perth Counties, 2024*. This report supports public health and community partners in improving outcomes for pregnant individuals, infants, families, and communities. It provides a comprehensive overview of maternal and newborn health indicators and trends in Huron Perth and Ontario, highlighting strengths, disparities, and opportunities for targeted improvements across prenatal, maternal, and infant health.

**Above:** Justin Liu, data analyst, is part of the SHARE team at HPPH.

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## Effective Public Health Practice

The SHARE team continued to support the production of routine surveillance and data products related to Diseases of Public Health Significance, as well as respiratory and enteric illnesses, to inform programs and services. In early 2025, the measles outbreak required enhanced surveillance and data supports to quickly identify emerging patterns, monitor the progression of the outbreak in real time, and support timely decision-making related to case and contact management, communications, and community outreach. For the public, an online self-assessment tool was created to help residents who felt sick or had been exposed to measles understand what to do next, including when to get vaccinated or seek medical care.

## Program Evaluation and Monitoring

Throughout 2025, SHARE contributed to a variety of evaluation and monitoring initiatives, including survey-based assessments and multi-year evaluation projects. Examples include:

- Evaluating clinical services to enhance client experience and ensure services are meeting community needs
- Evaluating HPPH's *Check What We Inspect* initiative
- Assessing how school health promotion supports are delivered across Huron Perth
- Providing support for the *Lived Experience Expert Panel*.



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