

WDG Board of Health

Highlights

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Allen Taylor

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County of Dufferin

Dennis Lever

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Mayor, Township of Puslinch

Dr. Nicola Mercer

Ex-Officio Member
Medical Officer of Health & CEO,
WDG Public Health

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Keith Perron

City of Guelph

Chris White

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Mayor, Township of Guelph-Eramosa

Public Health is governed by a Board of Health consisting of provincially appointed local municipal councillors, mayors and community members and is mandated to support the well-being of individuals and communities.

Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO, shared:

Preconception Health Study: Approximately 50% of all pregnancies are unplanned. By shifting attention to Preconception Health (PCH) it is possible to improve reproductive, maternal and child health outcomes. In partnership with Boston Medical Centre, WDG Public Health has developed a risk assessment tool for women of reproductive age called *My Health eSnapshot (MHeS)*. The results of MHeS are automatically integrated into the physician's Electronic Medical Record and a physician can discuss the results with the patient while providing a customized patient handout. Public Health conducted a study across seven local primary care sites involving 300 patients to evaluate whether the use of MHeS during primary care visits could result in a better understanding of preconception health and lead to positive behaviour change among women of reproductive age. Preliminary results indicate that a majority of participants were motivated to make positive changes and understood how their current health will impact the health of any children. The MHeS research study is the first of its kind in Ontario and contributes to the growing momentum around PCH in Canada and internationally. The Women's College Hospital has provided a grant to Public Health to present this study at various conferences and contribute to the knowledge exchange of the project results.

Opioid Use Locally: Public Health will continue to support community partners by providing data, surveillance, evidence and best practices based on the community picture as it develops. Locally we are seeing generally higher rates of opioid-related Emergency Department (ED) visits and opioid-related hospitalizations than the province of Ontario. Furthermore, locally the rate of opioid-related ED visits appears to be highest in the 15-24 year old age group; and, for Ontario as a whole, it is highest for the 25-44 year old age group. As new local data highlights local impacts of opioid use, Public Health and community partners are coming together to develop a coordinated and comprehensive approach to reduce harms. Opioid work in Wellington County and the City of Guelph is coordinated by the Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy and supported by Public Health. In Dufferin County, Public Health is working with the Dufferin Coalition for Kids to educate parents and students about substance misuse and mental health.