

**We are**

**Public Health**

**2017  
Annual Report**



**Public Health  
Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

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## Message from Dr. Penny Sutcliffe

Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

I am very pleased to present to our communities the 2017 Annual Report for Public Health Sudbury & Districts.

I am very proud to present the work described in this report as it is a testimony to the dedication shown by our professional public health staff—their combined contributions are greater than their individual parts as they work to understand and respond to local community needs.

The connections we have in our communities with service agencies, partners, community groups, neighbourhoods, municipalities, and local leaders are invaluable to our work. For example, we have been on a path to ensure that we are meaningful and helpful allies, effectively and respectfully working alongside Indigenous communities and partners to achieve a common good.

The work of public health is constantly evolving to meet rapidly growing demands. For example, I think of the opioid crisis and concerns about addiction, the importance of mental health promotion, the impacts of poverty, the importance of achieving health equity, and making sure that we are there for those people who need us the most.

Communities can count on Public Health Sudbury & Districts to provide reliable information, to be there when we are needed, and to be looking out for the health of communities now and in the future. It is critical to have a strong, robust public health system to achieve health for all.

My thanks to the Board of Health for their leadership and to all of our municipal, provincial and local partners for joining forces in 2017 to create opportunities for health for all!





## Message from René Lapierre

Chair, Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts

The 2017 Annual Report illustrates how Public Health Sudbury & Districts is working to achieve its mandate—to promote and protect health, and to prevent disease for everyone. In contrast to other health care services, public health is unique in its deliberate actions to improve health *upstream*, investing in health for the long term.

The Board of Health truly appreciates the dedication of Public Health Sudbury & Districts' staff to serve the community. These public health professionals are inclusive, caring, and provide the best possible services to everyone, without judgement or prejudice. The organization's commitment to gather local information and to use it to develop and offer programs that meet the needs of our communities further reflects that dedication.

Having Board of Health members with diverse perspectives and backgrounds, representing the unique needs of our communities, is also invaluable to helping the organization identify and respond to community needs.

For example, the Board of Health and public health staff are committed to an ongoing process to work alongside our Indigenous community partners and communities to develop respectful and productive relationships to improve health.

Lastly, I am very proud of the process we followed in 2017 to develop the organization's 2018–2022 Strategic Plan, which included a great deal of community engagement. Our new strategic priorities and core values build on past successes and will direct our future actions, working in partnership toward optimal health for our communities.





# Board of Health

**LEFT TO RIGHT:** Nicole Sykes, Robert Kirwan, Thoma Miedema, James Crispo, Carolyn Thain, Rachel Quesnel (Secretary to the Board of Health), Dr. Penny Sutcliffe (Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer), Paul Vincent Myre, René Lapierre (Chair), Ken Noland, Jeffery Paul Huska (Vice-Chair), Mark Signoretti, Maigan Bailey, Rita Pilon, Janet Bradley, **ABSENT:** Monica Loftus





## Oral health screening

The impact of good oral health on an individual's overall health and well-being cannot be overstated. Access to oral health care is a major public health concern. Those who have the least access to preventive and dental treatment services have greater rates of oral diseases. In addition, the ability to access oral health care is associated with factors related to the determinants of health. Thanks to our efforts, more people are aware of the importance of oral health and have access to oral health care. In 2017, Public Health Sudbury & Districts' preventive oral health program for children under the age of 18 has more than doubled the number of clients served in the past year. We have screened more than 11 000 children in local schools.



**960** Indigenous children participated in oral health screening programs in daycares, elementary schools, and health centres.

## Food safety

Safe food is critical for a healthy population. The foods we eat are often taken for granted; however, there is a lot of behind-the-scenes work that goes into ensuring what we eat is safe for consumption. Anywhere food is prepared or sold, our public health inspectors are there ensuring standards are met to protect the community. This also extends to healthy menu checks and calorie counts on local menus. There are approximately 35 different types of facilities and hundreds of special events that are reviewed in a year. Furthermore, the results of inspections are available online via the new *Check Before You Go!* site. Thanks to the efforts of our public health inspectors, people can rest assured that the safety of their food is in good hands.



We conducted **3 435** inspections to make sure they comply with Ontario food premises regulations.



## School-based health promotion

Schools are more than a place where children learn their ABCs and 123s. They are also a place where positive and healthy behaviours are taught, setting children up for a lifetime of well-being and healthy living. Public Health Sudbury & Districts believes that students that are healthy are also better learners and we continued to be active in schools in 2017. A notable success of the past year was the *Mindfulness Pilot Project*, where weekly activities in the classroom supported students in their ability to cope with stress, adversity, and increase their critical thinking skills and decision-making abilities. By delivering weekly activities in the classroom focused on mindfulness, students reported that mindfulness helped them calm down, concentrate better, be more positive, and be happier at school. Not only did the students experience improvements in this project—adults in the school community did as well. When teachers and principals learn mindfulness, they also reap benefits, both professionally and personally. In total, four schools participated in mindfulness projects.

- ✦ We facilitated **807** activities that reached **20 040** school community members. Topics included resiliency, mental health promotion, healthy eating, healthy weights, physical activity, injury prevention, sexual health, tobacco use, and substance use.



Respect



## Indigenous engagement

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Self-determination. Resiliency. Rich culture. These words capture the strengths of Indigenous people in our area as many people and communities tackle health and social challenges that are deeply rooted in colonization. Recently the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care introduced requirements for boards of health to engage with Indigenous peoples. The new *Relationship with Indigenous Communities Guideline, 2018*, recognizes the need to work together to improve health for all. As an agency with ties to Indigenous communities, Public Health Sudbury & Districts in 2017 began developing its own Indigenous Engagement Strategy ahead of the provincial guidelines. This public health initiative is guided by an Advisory Committee of First Nations community partners and Public Health Sudbury & Districts staff. With shared knowledge and direction, we are excited to work with Indigenous communities to strengthen public health systems for all.

✦ **As part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening respectful engagement, we hosted 3 Steering Committee meetings and convened an External Advisory Committee, which encompassed 11 community voices. We also trained 35 managers in cultural humility and 45 staff in cultural competency.**



## Public health research

At Public Health Sudbury & Districts, we use the best available evidence to inform our work and provide the best possible service to the community. Evidence comes from a variety of sources including research, which is conducted either independently by our staff or in partnership with local academic institutions or public health agencies. Examples of such research include understanding ways in which Public Health Sudbury & Districts can respectfully engage with First Nations communities, examining anti-texting and driving strategies that are effective for young drivers, investigating the role of adults in building resilient children and youth, and studying local food perspectives and experiences of people living in urban Northern Ontario cities.



We led or consulted on **18** research and evaluation projects, including one focused on relationship building with First Nations and public health (*Exploring principles and practices for engagement to improve community health*).

## Outbreak investigation

In 2017 Public Health Sudbury & Districts assisted operators of daycares, hospitals, long-term care facilities, and retirement homes in managing enteric illness outbreaks to minimize impact on the community and prevent further spread. A total of 44 enteric outbreaks were declared in 2017. The public can also play a role in reducing the spread of enteric outbreaks by not visiting sites with vulnerable populations if they are sick, and by practising good hand hygiene. Our staff visit sites before, during, and after enteric outbreaks, and work with the facility to improve their practices to keep an outbreak from happening in the first place.



We investigated  
**56** enteric outbreaks.



## Poverty reduction

Everyone in the community has a role to play in poverty reduction. To help people in the community transform their perspective on poverty, Public Health Sudbury & Districts began offering *Bridges out of Poverty*® workshops in 2017. Last year, 442 people from 70 community groups and agencies participated in a *Bridges out of Poverty*® workshop. The goal of *Bridges out of Poverty*® is to raise awareness of the realities of living in poverty and generate greater compassion within the community. Thanks to this incredible program, there are now several hundred more people in our community who understand the causes and impacts of poverty on families, and whose perspectives of those who live in poverty have changed.

✦ We hosted **20 Bridges Out of Poverty**® workshops.



Humility



## Harm reduction

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Harm reduction is a key approach in achieving healthier communities for all. Harm reduction aims to reduce health and social harms associated with addictions and substance use without necessarily requiring people who use substances to stop. It involves non-judgmental and practical strategies to provide or enhance skills, knowledge, resources, and support for people so that they can live safer, healthier lives. Public Health Sudbury & Districts follows harm reduction principles and practices to reduce drug-related harms in our community. *The Point*, a free and confidential program, provides harm reduction supplies and services to people who use drugs. It aims to reduce the risks of getting or passing on infectious diseases such as HIV and hepatitis C, and reduce other risks associated with drug use. 2017 was a year of growth for *The Point* as in addition to our Sudbury Rainbow Centre site, it is now offered in our Espanola and Mindemoya offices.

❖ **1 210 563** needles were distributed through *The Point*, our harm reduction supplies and services program.



## Prenatal education

- **345** women and their partners took part in our educational opportunities (**240** in-class, **105** online).

## Blue-green algae

- We issued **11** blue-green algae advisories to encourage the public to take precautions.

## Community sleep survey

- **1 295** people participated in our survey to help us learn about sleep health.

## Recreational water inspections

- We conducted a total of **456** beach inspections on **35** public beaches (weekly), which resulted in **2 718** bacteriological samples being collected, and **15** swimming advisories being issued.

## Quit smoking clinic

- We offered **229** appointments, and distributed **250** nicotine replacement therapy vouchers, each valued at \$20.

## Strategic plan engagement

- **300** surveys were completed by the public, partners, staff, and Board of Health members to inform our 2018–2022 strategic planning process.

## Health hazards

- We investigated **536** health hazard complaints, **33** of which supported marginalized populations in collaboration with partner agencies. Health hazards, for example, could be related to housing, drinking water, or air quality.

## Social media engagement

- We reached **806 988** Facebook users and generated **296 400** Twitter impressions.

Trust

## Financials

2017 approved budget: **\$27,364,416**



**9.1%**

operating and  
occupancy (cost-  
shared programs)



**16.8%**

provincially funded  
programs (100%)



**74.1%**

provincially and  
municipally funded  
(cost-shared) programs

# Strategic Plan

2018 • 2022

## Values



**Humility**



**Trust**



**Respect**

## Strategic Priorities



**Equitable Opportunities**



**Meaningful Relationships**



**Practice Excellence**



**Organizational Commitment**

## Vision

Healthier communities for all.

## Mission

Working with our communities to promote and protect health and to prevent disease for everyone.

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**phsd.ca**

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