

Public Health Sudbury & Districts COVID-19 Response

Since early March 2020, Public Health Sudbury & Districts has been actively responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. Direct local public health actions combined with our strong relationships with communities and partner agencies mean that everyone benefits from the best system possible to protect us all from COVID-19.

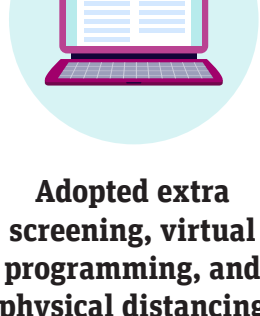
The response to the COVID-19 pandemic has meant many changes for all sectors. For Public Health we have:



Redeployed over half of all staff members to COVID-19.



Focused on critical services to meet urgent and time-sensitive needs.



Adopted extra screening, virtual programming, and physical distancing processes.

These changes allow us to deliver essential services in new ways that reduce the risk of virus spread. They permit us to concentrate on the critical public health response to COVID-19 while keeping our communities safe. The adaptation of our services to the current situation is regularly reassessed and adjusted as needed.

Staff redeployment and recruitment

Over the last two months, more than **250** public health professionals worked to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and deliver essential public health services across Greater Sudbury and the Sudbury and Manitoulin districts.

Public health nurses, inspectors, dietitians, nutritionists, dental hygienists, health promoters and support staff refocused their efforts to pandemic response or adapted essential public health programs and services.

***111%**
current working capacity

196
active staff members working on COVID-19 response

77%
of our staff members have been redeployed to support our pandemic response

253
total active staff members

* This number has fluctuated throughout our pandemic response based on response requirements and community need. While we have recently seen a decrease in our operating capacity, this number was much higher in the earlier days of our response.

Additional resources are also required to support our pandemic response, including:

Staffing supports:

- Additional students and volunteers
- Newly recruited COVID-19 response assistants to support the public health call centre and ensure we keep up our ability to connect with all close contacts of cases
- Staff overtime hours to support COVID-19 response and essential services

Financial implications

- The current financial impact of our COVID-19 response is **\$588,500**
- Salaries & Benefits amount to **\$414,000**
- Operational expenses in the amount of **\$174,100**

Response activities

- Over **9,600** calls received and responded to in our COVID-19 call centre.
- Contacted all **64** cases within **24** hours to discuss test results and explore possible exposure settings.
- Identified, traced, and advised **418** people who had come into contact with confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Conducted post-test follow-up calls.
- Provided support to prevent spread and respond to outbreaks in community settings.
- Coordinated targeted surveillance in **13** long-term care homes and **4** emergency child care centres.
- Posted daily status updates about testing and cases.
- Issued **20** news releases and **28** public service announcements on the latest COVID-19 developments with over **730,000** unique web page views.
- Processed and/or responded to over **182** media requests on COVID-19.
- Posted over **335** messages to Facebook. Reached **over 1,825,270** people and generated over **281,390** comments, clicks, reactions, or shares.
- Tweeted over **280** times. Had over **541,580** impressions and **over 36,800** clicks, retweets, likes, and replies.
- Developed and updated COVID-19 website content for over **689,000** unique page views.
- Encouraged testing with the development of **3** radio ads, **9** digital display ad series, and **1** search ad campaign.
- Launched health promotion and health protection campaigns to promote mental health, community supports, physical distancing, and handwashing.
- Engaged with community agencies and local partners including Indigenous partners, First Nation communities, municipalities, and partners supporting vulnerable populations.
- Conducted online and phone surveys of residents to better understand the public health impacts of COVID-19 in our community as well as how certain audiences are practising physical distancing.
- Maintained critical Public Health programs and services throughout COVID-19 response.

We are all making a difference

Public Health Sudbury & Districts works alongside stakeholders to coordinate activities at a local, provincial, and national level with the assistance of health care professionals and other agencies. Our combined response efforts are making a difference.

The combined effort of public health, our community and local partners is making a difference.



The **pink curve** shows the volume of COVID-19 cases that we would have experienced without public health measures.

The **blue curve** shows how public health measures, like physical distancing, help to contain the spread of COVID-19 and avoid a large spike in cases that could have overwhelmed the health care system.

But there is more work to do...

Adapted with permission from Halton Region Public Health.

Public health programs and services during COVID-19

Programs and services that are continuing (includes modified services)

- Immunization programming: by appointment only, with enhanced screening
- Needle Exchange Program, with enhanced screening
- Sexual Health Clinic: limited service, by appointment only, with enhanced screening
- Growing Family Clinic: limited service, by appointment only, with enhanced screening
- Healthy Babies Healthy Children home visiting: limited service, by appointment only
- Healthy Babies Healthy Children 48-hour postpartum calls
- Health Information Line
- Breastfeeding Clinic: limited service, by appointment only, with enhanced screening for clients
- Online prenatal classes: available via phsd.ca
- Quit Smoking Clinic: free one-on-one support by phone
- Circles Sudbury programming: limited services, by phone and modified for virtual platforms
- Dental:
 - Healthy Smiles Ontario: triaging for emergency care by phone
 - Seniors' Dental Program: triaging for emergency care and new applications by phone
- Health Protection programming including:
 - Food Safety: limited service
 - Communicable and Infectious Diseases Response and Control: by appointment only, with enhanced screening
 - Duty Inspector: by appointment only, with enhanced screening
 - Emergency Response
 - Safe Water Response (drinking/recreational water)
 - Rabies Control: enhanced screening measures for clients
 - On-site Sewage System Inspection: by appointment only
 - Health Hazard Response, including OBC complaints: by appointment only
 - Sporadic outbreak investigations
- Naloxone training, provision of kits, and reporting
- Redistributed deliveries from the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Stakeholder and partner engagement
- Community Drug Strategy work, including surveillance of local opioid-related events and community engagement
- North East Tobacco Control Area Network (NE TCAN) partnership, modified work
- Stay On Your Feet partnership; modified work
- Age Friendly Communities partnerships, modified work
- Support for food access initiatives such as community gardens
- Health promotion campaign development for topics such as mental health promotion, substance use, injury prevention, healthy eating, physical activity, and parenting
- Health promotion school-based and community-based programming, modified for virtual platforms

Public health programs and services that are temporarily suspended

- Car seat inspections
- School dental health screening
- School health
- Vision screening
- Parenting programs including Triple P and Bounce Back and Thrive
- Reaching In Reaching Out (RIRO) programming
- Onsite and mobile preventive dental clinics for Healthy Smiles Ontario
- Onsite preventive dental clinics for clients of the seniors dental program
- Non publicly funded and travel vaccination
- Smoke-Free Ontario Act enforcement
- Tuberculosis (LTBI/active)
- Exposure to ultraviolet radiation/sun safety programming

Moving forward together

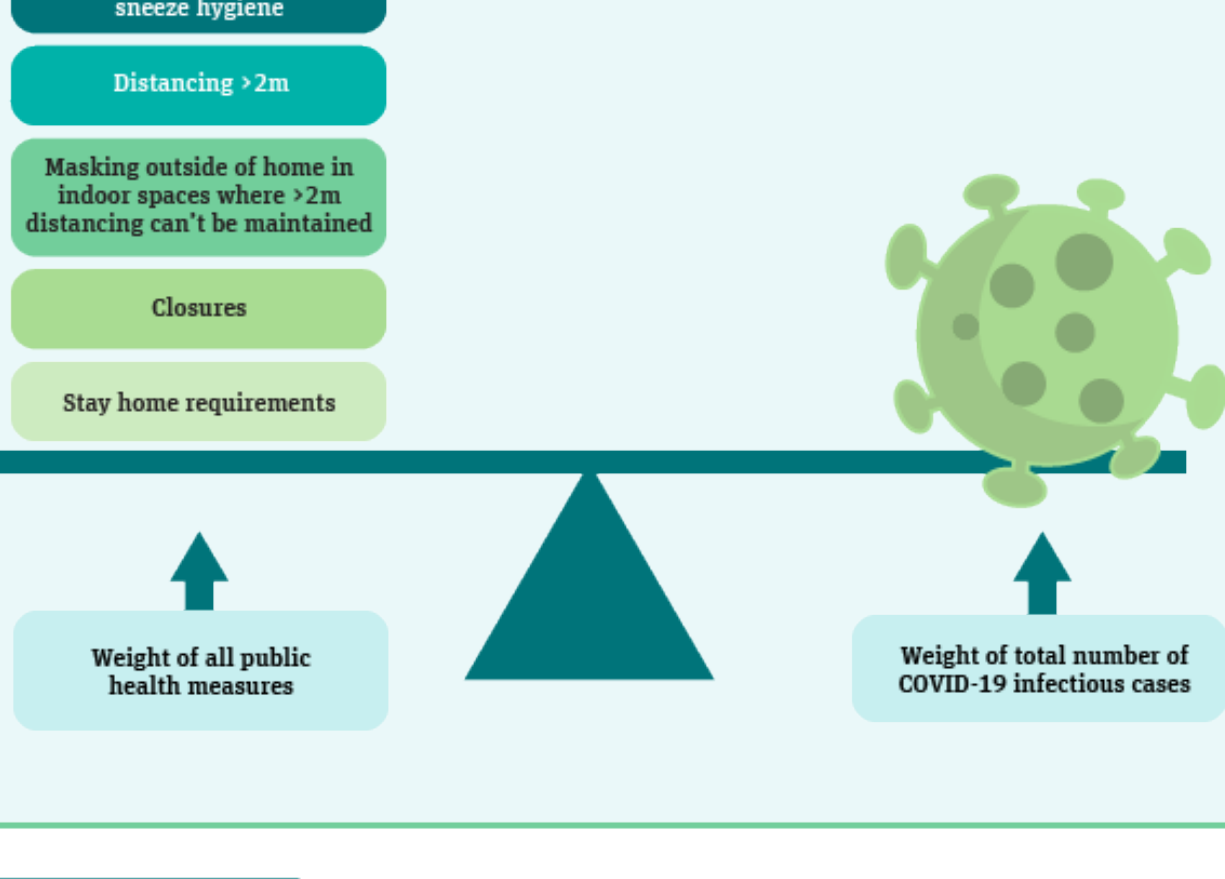
As public health measures scale back and businesses begin to open, we need to keep working together to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

We will assess local needs and relaunch public health programs and services as appropriate. We will aim to have the right balance of public health measures to keep COVID-19 cases in check.

It's important to keep following public health advice so that we can get through this together and stronger than ever!



Tipping the scales against COVID-19: Public Health measures need to be strong enough to keep COVID-19 cases in check



Adapted with permission from Ottawa Public Health.

Objectives:

- Get the economy going again by decreasing closures and stay home requirements
- Keep R effective less than 1 so that each day there will be fewer and fewer new cases

Strategy:

- Offset the decreases in weights of closures and stay home requirements by increasing the weights of the other public health measures