



**HEALTH UNIT**

Unité sanitaire

de Windsor-comté d'Essex

WINDSOR • ESSEX • LEAMINGTON

[www.wehealthunit.org](http://www.wehealthunit.org)

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2009

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit



# The Board of Health for 2009



**ALLISON, Bill**  
**TREASURER**  
City Appointee  
(Non-Council)



**MARRA, Bill**  
City Councillor, Ward 4  
City of Windsor  
City Appointee



**BAIN, Tom**  
Mayor, Town of Lakeshore  
**CHAIRPERSON**  
County Appointee



**MCDERMOTT, Ron**  
Mayor, Town of Essex  
County Appointee



**GROH, Eleanor**  
Provincial Appointee



**MCNAMARA, Gary**  
Mayor, Town of Tecumseh  
County Appointee



**HOLDSWORTH, Mike**  
City Appointee  
(Non-Council)



**MODESTINO, Rob**  
Provincial Appointee



**HURST, Wayne**  
Mayor, Town of Amherstburg  
County Appointee



**MONIK, Lynda**  
**VICE CHAIR**  
Provincial Appointee



**LEWENZA, Ken Jr.**  
City Councillor, Ward 4  
City of Windsor  
City Appointee

# A Message from the Medical Officer of Health



*Dr. G. Allen Heimann  
Medical Officer of Health*

In 2009, the central issue of public health concern was the H1N1 influenza outbreak. To give a brief overview of events, in April of 2009 there was an outbreak of a new strain of influenza in Mexico. The virus rapidly spread through North America with the first case identified in Windsor-Essex on May 4, 2009. The first local wave of H1N1 peaked by July 3, with 20 cases reported that week. A second wave began in October, peaking by November 6 with 129 cases reported that week.

While influenza is a public health concern every year, a number of factors made the 2009 flu season an unusual one. Unlike past years, the 2009 immunization campaign required the use of two separate vaccines, one to immunize against the traditional flu strains and the second to protect against H1N1 influenza. In total, the Health Unit distributed approximately 114 000 doses of each vaccine.

With the new strain of infection, there was also a shift in which groups of people were at greatest risk. As a result, Health Unit staff established clinics throughout Windsor and Essex County to try to reach these vulnerable populations. The 13 clinics held between October 27 and November 12 focused on the first priority groups: people under the age of 65 with pre-existing medical conditions, children between the ages of 6 months to under 5 years, and pregnant women. The obstetrics clinic at Windsor Regional Hospital also operated a clinic for the immunization of pregnant

women. On November 13, immunizations were expanded to include children between 6 and 13 years of age. Health care practitioners were also designated as a priority group due to their high risk of exposure. During the week of October 26, Health Unit staff conducted 4 clinics for this group, and partnered with area hospitals to provide additional immunization clinics for health care providers. Health Unit staff also worked with community care staff to provide immunizations to homebound patient populations. By November 18, sufficient vaccine was available to expand the immunization program to all residents of Windsor-Essex.

Overall, the influenza outbreak was much milder than was initially expected. A total of 425 confirmed cases occurred in Windsor-Essex. This resulted in 86 hospitalizations and 3 deaths. All the deaths were in males between the ages of 47 and 55. The population distribution of the cases was unusual in that 88% of the confirmed cases were in persons less than 35 years of age.

Despite the focus and energy required as a result of the influenza outbreak, the staff of the Health Unit continued their work in all other areas as well. As you will see in the pages that follow, our ongoing programming is dedicated to addressing a range of public health concerns in Windsor and Essex County, and we would like to share some of our success stories with you.

# Mothers Supporting Mothers with Postpartum Mood Disorder

## The Issue

Postpartum mood disorders (PPMDs), which include postpartum depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive, and bipolar disorders, are the most common complications after childbirth. PPMDs can lead to stress for a couple, alter the mother-child relationship, and affect a child's development.

## What We Did

“New moms who receive telephone-based peer support have a 56% less chance of developing a Postpartum Mood Disorder.”

In 2005, Dr. Cindy-Lee Dennis, Faculty of Nursing at the University of Toronto, conducted research that looked at the effectiveness of telephone-based peer support for new mothers. She found that moms who receive this support have a 56% less chance of developing a Postpartum Mood Disorder (PPMD). To lower the risk of PPMD in moms in Windsor-Essex County, *Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC)* launched a peer support initiative, *Mothers Supporting Mothers*, in 2009. HBHC recruited volunteers in May, completed the training in October, and made the first connections before year end.

### What is *Mothers Supporting Mothers*?

*Mothers Supporting Mothers* offers volunteer, telephone-based peer support. These volunteers are moms who have

experienced and recovered from a PPMD. They receive special training through the *HBHC* program. This is a prevention program. At the time of the postpartum phone call or home visit, the *HBHC* nurse assesses the mom. If the nurse determines the mom to be at risk of developing a PPMD and the mom is willing, the nurse refers her to *Mothers Supporting Mothers*. A Volunteer Coordinator (Public Health Nurse) connects the new mom with a volunteer. The volunteer contacts the mom by phone to offer support. Together they determine the frequency of calls. When the mom decides she no longer requires support or after one year, the telephone relationship is ended. The volunteer refers any concerns beyond her scope to the coordinator for follow-up.

*Mothers Supporting Mothers* Volunteer Coordinators  
In photo from left: Public Health Nurses  
Stacey Lanoue, Michelle Tremblett, and Kelly Cuerrier



# Teacher Support for Sexual Health Education in Schools

## *The Issue*

In 2009, there were 159 cases of Chlamydia reported in Windsor and Essex County among youth 19 years and younger, with the majority of cases between the ages of 17 and 19. In 2008, the teen pregnancy rate for Windsor-Essex was 25 per 1 000 females 15 to 19 years of age. Support for sexual health teaching in the schools was identified as an issue for our teachers in a recent survey conducted by the Health Unit.

## *What We Did*

“Over 35 public schools and other community agencies received the sexual health program in 2009, reaching approximately 1800 students between the ages of 13 and 16.”

A number of programs have been initiated to respond to this problem. Workshops are offered each year to help teachers provide the sexual health component of the curriculum. In 2009, 23 teachers attended the *Empowering Teachers in Healthy Relationships* workshop.

By request, in-class sexual health programs are also provided by public health nurses and community partners to students in Grade 8 and Grade 9. This is a collaborative program with the Teen Health Centre and AIDS Committee of Windsor. Content for elementary and secondary students is consistent with the curriculum requirements, and includes topics such as puberty, abstinence, birth control, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, and healthy relationships. Over 35 public schools

and other community agencies received the sexual health program in 2009, reaching approximately 1 800 students between the ages of 13 and 16.

Nurses also reached older students by participating in health fairs at the local college and university, answering questions about sexual health, and providing resources and referrals to community services as needed.

Finally, a new partnership developed this past year with the Multicultural Council, delivering sexual health workshops to youth and adults new to Canada. This program was delivered by our French-speaking nurse and also through translators. A total of 4 workshops were held with discussions about birth control, sexually transmitted infections, and community services.

*Empowering Teachers in Healthy Relationships* workshop



# Sore Tooth? No Benefits? Under 18? New Dental Care Program for Youth

## *The Issue*

Oral health is an important part of good general health. However, Windsor and Essex County has the highest unemployment rate in Canada, leaving more and more families without dental insurance or the financial means to pay for dental care.

## *What We Did*

“We screened 474 youth between the ages of 14 and 18 and provided urgent dental care to 108 of these students.”

“Poor oral health can lead to pain, tooth loss, infections, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, respiratory diseases, and premature and low birth-weight babies. As well, poor oral health can affect school performance, a child’s ability to thrive and his or her sense of self-worth. All children are at risk for poor oral health but children living in poverty are particularly susceptible to tooth decay” (Ontario Dental Association, 2008).

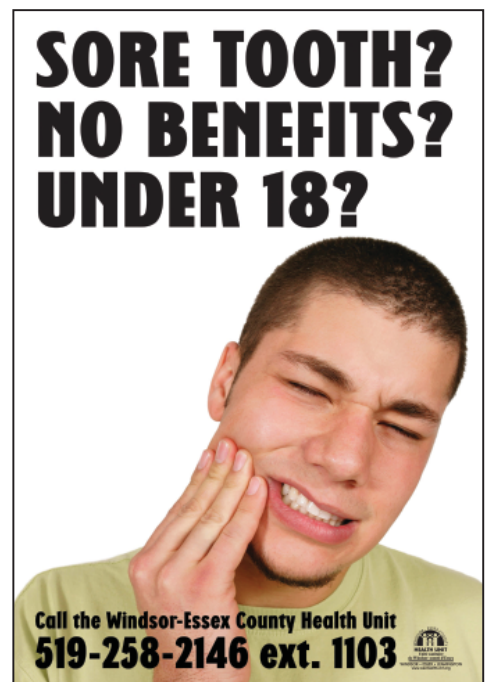
The *Children In Need of Treatment (CINOT)* program run by the Health Unit has been providing urgent dental care for children up to the age of 14 for many years. In 2009, the Ministry of Health Promotion expanded the *CINOT* program to include children up to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

We launched the new program by holding a media conference and dental screening clinic at a Windsor secondary school. As well, we distributed posters supplied by the ministry to all local secondary schools.

In the fall of 2009 the ministry provided funds to conduct a local mass media campaign. We ran advertisements on buses and bus shelters, in county newspapers, and at Devonshire and Tecumseh Malls.

We held a dental screening clinic at a county secondary school. As well, tooth brushes and pens with “Sore tooth? No Benefits? Under 18?” were distributed to Grade 9 and 12 students throughout Windsor and Essex County. We screened 474 youth between the ages of 14 and 18 and provided urgent dental care to 108 of these students.

Poster promoting the *CINOT* expansion program



# Have Fun and Play Safe at the Playground

## The Issue

Playgrounds are a great place for children to be active, make friends, and develop skills. Playgrounds can also be a place where children get hurt. In fact, falls are the number one cause of injuries at the playground for children up to the age of nine.

## What We Did

The Child Health and Comprehensive School Health teams collaborated to develop the *Have Fun and Play Safe at the Playground* campaign. The campaign focused on:

- Teaching children simple playground safety rules.
- Reinforcing the importance of children being properly supervised when playing at the playground.

“Teaching kits were distributed to 200 Grade 2 teachers and 215 daycare and Early Years Centres.”

A video was produced with the help of Leonora Cummings (Zoleo the Clown), Faithville Gospelcast Productions Inc., and Riverside and Roseville Optimist clubs. A teaching kit was created to go along with the video. It included classroom and playground activities for Junior and Senior Kindergarten and Grade 2 children. The teaching kits were distributed to 200 Grade 2 teachers and 215 daycare and Early Years Centres. An interactive Cootie Catcher game was developed for older children and distributed to all Grade 4 students.

A poster, pamphlet, and parent activity guide were also developed to reach parents. Articles were written for the *Windsor Star Health Watch* column and for *Windsor Parent Magazine*. A display was developed for an annual Mom2Mom event and over 100 parent activity guides and pamphlets were distributed. As well, playground safety workshops were held at over 25 local Ontario Early Years Centres.

The campaign was launched at Bellewood Public School. Media were invited and the video was first shown at an assembly for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 2 students. Zoleo made a special appearance to reinforce the safety messages. All the resources are free on our website for parents, teachers, and childcare providers to access.

The *Have Fun and Play Safe at the Playground* Safety DVD



# Tuberculosis and Directly Observed Therapy

## *The Issue*

Individuals with Tuberculosis (TB) disease are often perceived to be poor, homeless, and from a developing country. The reality is that TB disease is also seen in our community. One third of the world's population is believed to be infected with the TB germ but they don't have the active TB disease. The germ remains dormant until the individual's immune system is weakened by another stressor like an illness or substance abuse.

## *What We Did*

“A public health nurse...observes the client taking their medication. Over 350 home visits were made by the TB nurses.”

In 2009, the TB program managed 17 residents with the disease. TB disease can affect any part of the body, but the type of TB that can spread to other individuals is pulmonary TB. In 12 of the 17 TB cases, the organism was found in the lungs. In the other 5 cases it was found in areas like lymph nodes. As well, 14 cases were under the age of 60 and were probably active members of the community, increasing the chances of spreading the germ.

All the respiratory cases were placed on Directly Observe Therapy (DOT) until it was determined they were no longer infectious. DOT is the gold standard in the treatment of TB cases. A public health nurse visits the individual on a daily basis and observes the client taking their medication. Over 350 home visits were made by the TB nurses.

In 2009, individuals in Windsor-Essex diagnosed with TB came from Canada (3), the Philippines (2), Bangladesh (2), and India (2). The Public Health Agency of Canada reports that new Canadians are more likely to develop the disease within two to five years of arrival. Local cases reported in 2009 support this research for new Canadians as these individuals arrived three years ago (1), within two years (2), and within one year (1). One individual arrived with TB disease.

We partnered with local school boards 20 years ago. Since then, we have worked together to screen new Canadians before entering the classroom in an effort to prevent new residents from developing TB and to educate them on how to access health care if they develop symptoms.

A Public Health Nurse observing a DOT client taking their medication.



# Food Safety in Windsor-Essex County

## *The Issue*

Every year between 11 and 13 million Canadians suffer from a food-borne illness. For most people, the illness will not be a serious problem. For higher risk individuals, food-borne illness can be very dangerous or even fatal.

## *What We Did*

“In 2009, the online food handler course was created, allowing food handlers easier access to this important training.”

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit rolled out two new programs in 2009 to lower the risk of food-borne illness and make the public more aware of food safety.

### **Online Food Handler Course**

In the past, food handlers had to take a course taught by a Public Health Inspector at the Health Unit. This was a challenge for those who couldn't fit an in-class course into their schedules. In 2009, the online food handler course was created, allowing food handlers easier access to this important training. Food handlers who take the course are doing their part to reduce the risk of food-borne illness and receive certification from the Health Unit that is valid for five years. The course covers important topics including microorganisms, cleaning and sanitizing, time and temperature, food safety management, and food-borne illnesses.

### **Safe Food Counts**

This year also marked the beginning of the *Safe Food Counts* program. This comprehensive program takes inspection results for facilities serving food and translates them into a single rating based on their use of safe food handling practices. Each facility is then given a rating sign to post at their establishment. Eventually, the ratings will also be available to the public on the Health Unit website.

The program was implemented in 2009 in the majority of local food premises, with the exception of institutional facilities and those exempt from the Food Safety Regulations. By the end of 2009, the majority of restaurants received their initial inspection, with the communities of Amherstburg, LaSalle, and Tecumseh passing bylaws in support of the program.

The food handler course being taught by a Public Health Inspector at the Health Unit.



# Medicine Cabinet Cleanout a Success

## The Issue

Unused medications kept at home are a poisoning risk for young children. Disposing of unused medications incorrectly harms our environment. A 2009 Medicine Cabinet Clean Out survey found that 50% of Windsor-Essex County residents kept unused medication, while 37% disposed of unwanted medication in ways that are bad for the environment.

## What We Did

“The campaign was a success with 59 pharmacies participating and hundreds of thousands of doses of medication returned to local pharmacies for safe disposal.”

Several partners in Windsor-Essex County (WEC) came together with Health Unit staff to work on the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Medicine Cabinet Clean Out (MCCO) campaign. The goal of the campaign was to increase knowledge and action related to the safe removal of unused and expired over-the-counter and prescription medicine from WEC homes. According to the Ontario Poison Centre, medication exposure issues made up 60% (40 000) of all calls received in 2008, and 5 of the top 10 most common poison exposure calls involved children under 6 years old.

The 2008 MCCO survey found that 37% of respondents disposed of unwanted medication in ways that were bad for the environment: 23% threw it in the garbage and 14% flushed it down the toilet. The active ingredients in these products end up in our water supply. Of all prescription medications returned during the MCCO 2008/09 campaign, about two thirds was unused. Some of these unused medicines are controlled substances that are sold and used as street drugs.

*MCCO was promoted in a number of ways:*

- Medication return bags were delivered to 145 000 WEC homes.
- Promotional materials were given to 100 WEC Pharmacies and 250 WEC workplaces.
- The campaign was promoted to Ontario Early Years Centres and child care facilities throughout WEC.

The campaign was a success with 59 pharmacies participating and hundreds of thousands of doses of medication returned to local pharmacies for safe disposal. The campaign will continue in 2010 because nearly half of those who completed the 2009 MCCO survey indicated they don't clean out their medicine cabinet on a yearly basis.



# Prevention and Education of Syphilis

## *The Issue*

The Sexual Health and Family Planning Clinic have been dealing with the high rates of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) in Windsor-Essex County. Due to the proximity of the American border and complacency among individuals entering new and casual relationships, the rates of STIs have remained significant with local rates of syphilis going up from 2008 to 2009.

## *What We Did*

“The clinic does its part to raise awareness about the importance of safer sex practices and reduce the risk of STIs.”

Syphilis is a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) that attacks the nervous system, and is spread by genital, anal, or oral sex with an infected person. In 2009, more than half of the public health units in Ontario reported increases in infectious syphilis cases during the first 8 months of the year as compared to 2008. Windsor-Essex County was no exception, with 37 cases locally in 2009, up from 29 in 2008.

Unsafe sex practices contribute to the spread of STIs. This includes unprotected sex, not knowing your partner, and partners not getting tested before sex. The clinic does its part to raise awareness about the importance of safer sex practices and reduce the risk of STIs. It offers free confidential testing and counselling on how to make safer choices about sex. The nurses in the clinic also provide outreach presentations to high-risk groups in Windsor-Essex County to increase awareness.

In addition, the clinic also provides condoms to the community. In accordance with the Public Health Standards, each year the Sexual Health Clinic distributes 125 000 condoms to agencies dealing with high-risk individuals throughout Windsor-Essex County. The AIDS Committee of Windsor, the University of Windsor, New Beginnings, Street Health, Drouillard Clinic, Byng Clinic, and the House of Sophrosyne all receive condoms from us. Departments within the Health Unit also request condoms, and clients visiting the clinic are able to access condoms at each visit.

A Public Health Nurse from the Sexual Health and Family Planning Clinic doing a pregnancy test for a client.



# Program Stats

## Health Inspection

### Animal Bites

- 717 Total for city and county

### Vaccines Issued for Animal Bites

- 39 Total for city and county

### Boil Water Advisories

- 135 Total for city and county

### Food Safety Program Inspection

- 4 968 Total inspections

### Food Handler Training Certificates

- 709 People were issued food handler certificates

## Dental

### School Screening

- 122 Schools completed
- 17 704 Students screened in schools
- 497 Students who qualified for CINOT

### CINOT CLINICS - Up to age 14

- 3 585 Children screened
- 1 118 Children who qualified for CINOT
- 1 059 Preventive services provided

### CINOT CLINICS - Age 14 to 17 Years

- 474 Clients screened
- 180 Clients who qualified for CINOT
- 183 Preventive services provided

## Reproductive Health

### Prenatal Classes

- 15 Six-week series
- 334 Participants

### Building Blocks for Better Babies

- 12 Thirteen-week series
- 243 Participants

## Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention

### Losing Weight the Healthy Weigh

- 72 Participants in the ten-week program
- 202 kg Weight loss
- 331 cm Waist circumference loss

### We Lose We Win

- 8 Community forums held in 8 Windsor-Essex Municipalities
- 250 People attended We Lose We Win Workshops
- 250 People registered for the on-line Healthy Weights Challenge

### Nutrition Hotline

- 156 Calls to the Nutrition Hotline

### Workplace Wellness

- 279 Windsor-Essex County Workplaces reached
- 92 000 Employees reached

### Tobacco Hotline

- 144 Calls to the Tobacco Hotline

### Tobacco Enforcement

- 49 Charges laid under the Smoke Free Ontario Act

## Healthy Babies Healthy Children

- 1 223 Pregnant women screened
- 4 123 Live births in Windsor-Essex
- 4 052 Postpartum screens received
- 4 044 Postpartum nurse contacts
- 2 064 Postpartum home visits
- 442 Families received ongoing services

## Clinical Services

### Reported Cases

- 592 Chlamydia
- 54 Gonorrhoea
- 57 Hepatitis B
- 172 Hepatitis C
- 24 HIV
- 37 Syphilis

# Comprehensive School Health

## Active & Safe Routes to Schools

- 7 Elementary schools in Windsor and Essex County implemented the program

## Quit 4 Life Smoking Cessation 10-Week program

- 8 High schools were delivered the program
- 160 Students were reached

## Rule Out Drugs Campaign for Grade 5 Students

- 94 Classes participated
- 2 764 Students were reached

## Nutrition Month Campaign for Grade 5 Students

- 88 Classes participated
- 2 552 Students were reached

## I Can Be Healthy Booklet

- 135 Elementary schools received the booklet
- 1 350 I Can Be Healthy physical activity booklets distributed

## Intake

### Interactions

- 2 859 Total number
- 2 757 Phone calls
- 92 Walk-ins

### Most Common Topics Addressed

- 18.5% Breastfeeding
- 10.9% Child Health and HBHC programs
- 9.1% Nutrition (birth to age five)
- 7.8% Parenting
- 5.7% Child Car Seat and Road Safety

## Nurse Practitioner

- 1 242 Total visits
- 239 Total new clients
- 1 211 Total visits from clients without a physician
- 635 Total visits from pre and postnatal clients
- 358 Total visits for children 0 to 6 years

# Program Stats

## Child Health

### Evening Workshops

- 12 Workshops
- 179 Participants

### Ontario Early Years Drop-in Centre Workshops

- 80 Workshops
- 648 Participants

### Community Partner Workshops

- 16 Workshops
- 405 Participants

### Just For Moms and Babies

- 19 Six-week series
- 129 Participants

### Mother Goose

- 3 Six-week series in Essex
- 32 Participants

### Developmental Screening Clinics

- 18 Clinics held
- 69 Children screened
- 11 Children referred for further assessments

## Infectious Disease and Vaccines

### Number of Outbreaks

- 10 Respiratory
- 15 Enteric

### Vaccines

- 51 252 Total number of injections (shots) given by Health Unit
- \$6 751 666 Estimated value of vaccine distributed to health care providers
- 2 857 Number of vaccine orders filled

### TB

- 2157 Total school client screenings



# 2009 Management Team

## Medical Officer of Health

**Dr. G. Allen Heimann**

## Directors

Finance & Administration  
**Sharon Kelly**

Health Promotion  
**Elizabeth Haugh**

Health Protection  
**Deb Bennett**

## Managers

Support Services  
**Deb Gemmell**

Human Resources  
**Nancy Smith**

Information Technology  
**Fernando Bayuga**

Information Resources  
**Julie Fraser**

Comprehensive School Health  
**Theresa Marentette**

Family Health - Reproductive & Child Health, and Dental Department  
**Debbie Silvester**

Family Health - Health Babies Healthy Children  
**Elizabeth Kinnaird-Iler**  
**Shirley Davies**

Clinical Services and Education & Evaluation  
**Nichole Fisher**

Health Inspection  
**Robert Lyons**  
**Kristy McBeth**

Infectious Disease Control  
**Line Lauzon**

Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention  
**Neil MacKenzie**

Epidemiology  
**Ali Artaman**

# Funding for 2009

## Cost Shared Funding Sources

Ontario Ministries	\$11 248 851
City of Windsor	\$2 063 261
County of Essex	\$1 683 621
Township of Pelee	\$2 735
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$14 998 468</b>

## Directly Funded by Ontario Ministries

Healthy Babies Healthy Children	\$2 555 841
Genetics	\$187 080
Heart Health	\$98 160
Nurse Practitioner	\$138 000
Infection Control	\$383 984
West Nile Virus	\$222 510
Smoke Free Ontario	\$730 197
Infection Prevention Nurse	\$80 000
Small Drinking Water Systems	\$12 900
CINOT Expansion	\$436 183
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4 844 855</b>





Windsor Office  
1005 Ouellette Avenue  
Windsor, ON N9A 4J8  
519-258-2146  
fax: 519-258-6003



Essex Office  
360 Fairview Avenue West  
Suite 215  
Essex, ON N8M 3G4  
519-776-5933  
fax: 519-776-6102



Leamington Office  
215 Talbot Street East  
Leamington, ON N8H 3X5  
519-326-5716  
fax: 519-326-4642