



HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD
Public Health

2016
Community Engagement Report

Presented by:
Janet Moorhead-Cassidy
Director of Health Promotion

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Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to describe Hastings Prince Edward Public Health's (HPEPH) efforts towards achieving the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standard (OPHOS) #5.

Ontario Public Health Organizational Standard #5

To ensure the board of health is responsive to the needs of the local communities and shows respect for the diversity of perspectives of its communities in the way it directs the administration of the health unit in planning, operating, evaluating and adapting its programs and services.

2015/2016 Corporate Priority

Through an internal priority-setting process, to increase community engagement and responsiveness was identified as a corporate priority in 2015/2016 to ensure compliance with the OPHOS. This priority continues as a corporate priority for 2017. In response to this corporate priority, an internal working group, called the Community Engagement Workgroup, was developed to address this standard and integrate community engagement into our work.

Hastings Prince Edward Community Engagement Workgroup

Community Engagement Workgroup members included the Director of Health Promotion – lead for the project, the Chief Nursing Office (CNO), representing the Leadership Team, the Communications Specialist, and four staff from both the Health Promotion and Health Protection Departments. Our inaugural meeting was held in July 2015. The workgroup established terms of reference and a workplan. The workgroup received consultation and support from staff with HCLinks and Health Nexus.

Staff were kept informed about the workgroup activities through regular updates at Senior Staff meetings, Leadership Team meetings, and through the Health Unit internal newsletter, *One Voice*.

The following projects were completed by the workgroup:

1. Staff focus groups on community engagement;
2. Network mapping analysis;
3. Development of community engagement strategy; and
4. Community Engagement Workshop.

Staff Focus Groups

In the fall of 2015, staff focus groups were planned and delivered. Fourteen focus groups with 86 staff members were conducted. The focus groups were provided through all program team meetings in the Health Promotion and Health Protection departments, Leadership Team Committee meetings and corporate services.

The purpose of the focus groups was identified as the following:

1. To gain a better understanding of the kinds of community engagement staff were already involved in, the populations they are engaging with, and the challenges they might be facing.
2. To seek staff input into the creation of the Health Unit's Community Engagement Plan.

Five questions were posed to the focus group members:

1. What does community engagement mean to you?
2. As a health unit, what are we doing well?
3. As a health unit, what could we be doing better?
4. What challenges or obstacles do you encounter when trying to engage community members or organizations?
5. Other comments?

Staff identified many strengths and successes. For example:

- We use media effectively to get our messages out.
- We offer a wide range of high-quality programs and services.
- We have many good partnerships in place.
- We already do a lot of community engagement.

Areas of improvement were also identified. For example:

- Increase or improve our communication with the general public.
- Improve internal communication and collaboration.
- Expand when and where we provide services.
- Get out and participate in more community events.

Results from the focus group were compiled into a report: [Staff Focus Groups on Community Engagement – Key Findings 2016](#).

Next steps identified in the report include:

1. Complete a network mapping and analysis for HPEPH which would include developing a survey for public health staff to complete to develop a baseline of community relationships, partnerships and connections.
2. Create a HPEPH Community Engagement Plan or toolkit.

Network Mapping Project

In 2016 a plan was implemented to conduct a network mapping exercise and analysis for HPEPH. Health Nexus staff were hired to assist with this project. The project developed included developing an electronic survey that would be circulated to staff in positions and roles where they may be required to engage the community. This included staff from the Health Promotion and Health Protection departments and the Leadership Team. The purpose of this project was to establish a baseline of all the community partners staff engage with and the level of engagement. The levels of engagement were identified as inform, consult, involve and collaborate as described in the [Community Engagement and Communication – The Health Planner’s Toolkit, Health System Intelligence Project- 2006](#).

A total of 88 staff members completed the survey.

Overview of Results:

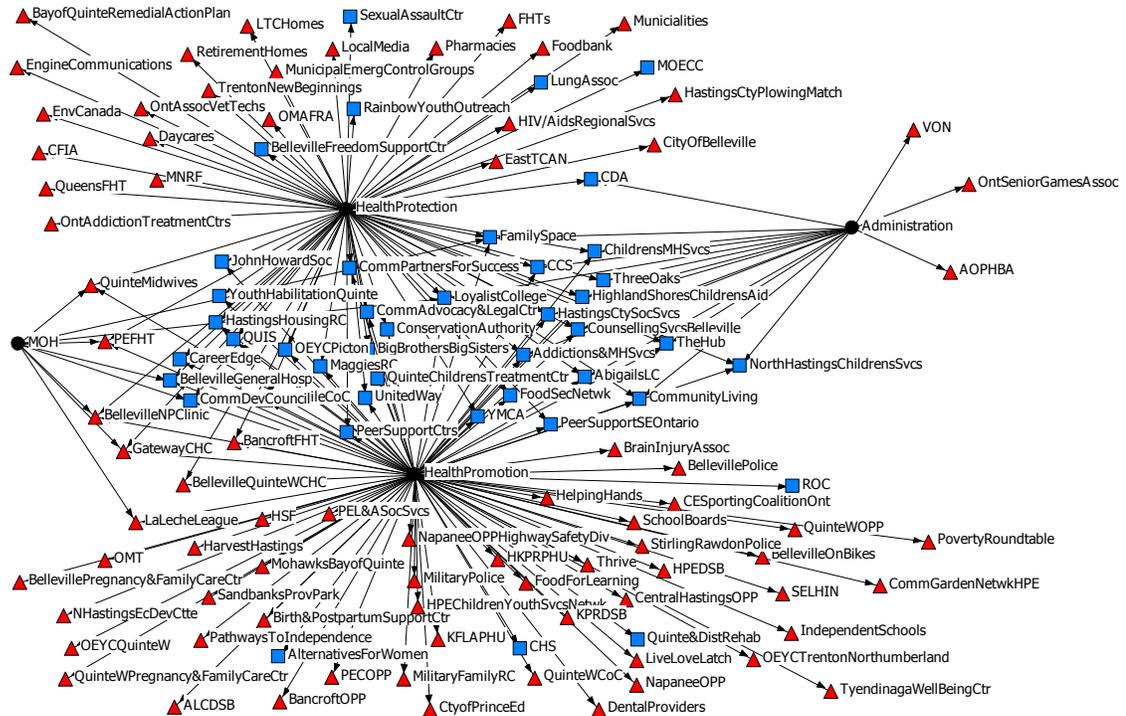
- Total number of links to organizations = 538
- Total number of links to sectors = 474
- External organizations listed (122 + staff added an additional 80) = 202
- External sectors listed (35 + staff added an additional 11) = 46

The network maps show all the connections between the departments and organization as well as the weighted links to community partners and stakeholders, according to the level of community engagement.

Through the network mapping exercise, we gained valuable insights into the number of community partners we have engaged with and the strength of those relationships. We also received valuable information on potential new sectors and connectors in the community that we can build upon in order to amplify our reach and impact.

This network mapping and information supports our corporate priority to review, expand and strengthen community partnerships that will maximize service opportunities and heighten community engagement.

All Links to Organizations



Community Engagement Snapshot

A [Community Engagement Snapshot](#) was created as the mode to present our Health Unit communication strategy. It has been designed as a helpful quick reference tool.

The Snapshot highlights the community engagement process, the four levels of community engagement, community engagement interventions, and an illustration of one of the Health Unit network maps.

Community Engagement Workshop

The Community Engagement Workgroup hosted a workshop for Health Unit staff in January 2017. Over 50 staff participated in the workshop.

Next Steps

Increasing community engagement and responsiveness continues to be one of our corporate priorities for 2017. Many programs have already incorporated a variety of community engagement practices into their work, and we will continue to build capacity across Hastings Prince Edward Public Health.