

HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD
Public Health

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

From the Board of Health Chair and the Medical Officer of Health

In 2021, the COVID-19 Pandemic continued to bring some of the greatest challenges ever faced by Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH). We are incredibly proud of the professionalism and resiliency of the remarkable team at HPEPH. Day after day they continued to work tirelessly to prevent the spread of COVID-19, while also executing the largest mass vaccination effort in our history.

This formidable effort was undertaken in the face of much uncertainty both locally, provincially, and across the country. In response to constant change and challenge, staff prioritized and provided critical public health services to our community, including alternate service delivery for many programs such as sexual health services, breastfeeding consultations, healthy schools, harm reduction and infection prevention and control inspections.

We would also like to acknowledge the crucial role our partners played in the successful ongoing pandemic response. Without the critical support and action of elected representatives, municipal partners, healthcare providers, educational partners and community agencies, we could not have maintained the public health protocols necessary to keep case rates low, and delivered an unprecedented mass immunization program that by the end of 2021 saw 325,725 COVID-19 vaccines administered to HPEC residents.

As we look forward to the next year, we will continue to respond to both the challenges and opportunities presented by the pandemic as we address community needs and implement the Ontario Public Health Standards, maintaining our commitment to help people become as healthy as they can be.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ethan Toumishey".

Dr. Ethan Toumishey
MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC
Acting Medical Officer of Health & CEO
Hastings Prince Edward Public Health



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jo-Anne Albert".

Jo-Anne Albert
Chair, Hastings Prince Edward Board of Health
Mayor, Municipality of Tweed, County of Hastings

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County of Hastings

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Dr. Jeffrey Allin

Dr. Craig Ervine

JANUARY



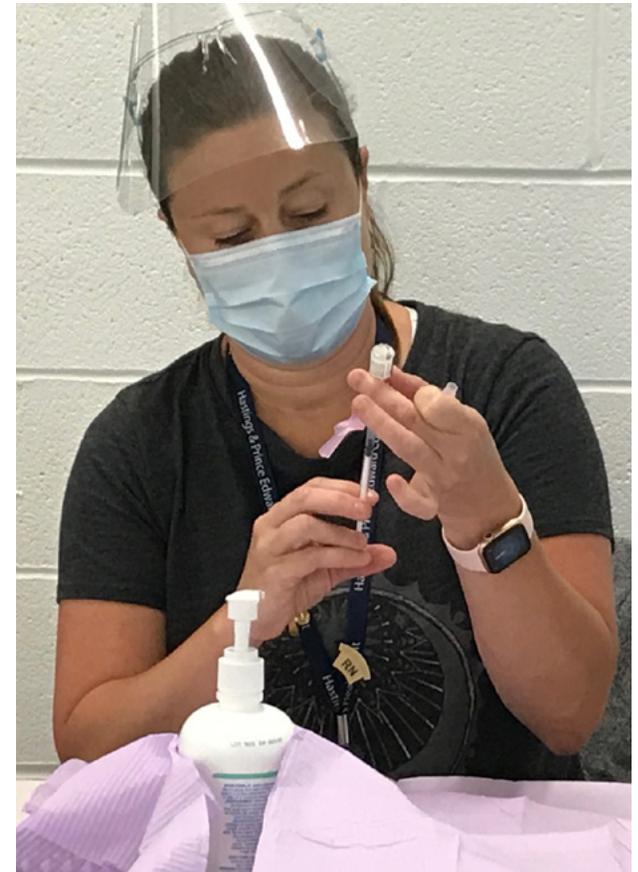
- **Jan. 1** There are 39 cases of COVID-19 and vaccine is not yet available in Hastings and Prince Edward Counties (HPEC).
- **Jan. 20** Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) and Ontario Ministry of Labour inspectors carry out an inspection blitz of local workplaces from January 20 to 22, with an aim to keep local workers and customers safe. The campaign results in 198 local businesses being inspected, building on continuous efforts to protect workers and customers at essential businesses by ensuring they are in compliance with COVID-19 requirements. Enforcement officials issue 12 tickets and six occupational health and safety orders.
- **Jan. 21** Phase 1 of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout officially begins in HPEC with vaccine administered at the largest long-term care (LTC) home in the region. Hastings County, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health, and Hastings Quinte Paramedic Services administer COVID-19 vaccine to 230 residents at Hastings Manor in Belleville. This significant step in pandemic response followed a successful pilot to bring vaccine directly to LTC homes in the south east region the previous week.
- **Jan. 25** Evidence shows that certain groups of residents are being affected by COVID-19 more than others and HPEPH launches #GetTestedHPE campaign to encourage young adults aged 20 to 29 to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and get tested.



FEBRUARY



- **Feb. 10** Dr. Piotr Oglaza issues a Class Order to supplement provincial Green Zone restrictions and protect HPEC from risk posed by emerging variants of concern and high rate of infection in other regions. Additional restrictions include only accepting bookings for accommodation, personal service settings, and dine-in food services for individuals residing in regions where Stay at Home Order has been lifted and limiting dine-in services to six people per table.
- **Feb. 12** HPEPH completes first dose of COVID-19 vaccine to all residents of LTC homes, high-risk retirement homes and elder care lodges.
- **Feb. 22** In response to concerns about variants being more contagious than the original strain of COVID-19, HPEPH implements enhanced screening, testing, and isolation requirements with aim to prevent unintentional spread of COVID-19.



Note about case/vaccine counts:

Graphics included alongside each month throughout the report indicate the number of new cases of COVID-19 in HPEC by month and a running total of COVID-19 vaccines administered to HPEC residents.

#GetTestedHPE

MARCH



- **March 1** The region's first mass immunization clinic opens at Loyalist College. The clinic has a capacity to provide 800 to 1,000 vaccinations per day. HPEPH is grateful for the support of Loyalist College for providing access to the space required to ensure vaccine can be accessed throughout the region. Ongoing collaboration with community partners has been, and continues to be, critical to the success of COVID-19 response in the region.
- **March 1** HPEPH, along with five other public health units, participates in the pilot of Ontario's Vaccine Booking System by offering an invitation to book vaccination appointments to a small group of eligible individuals. The two-week pilot has an aim to test and refine components of the Provincial Vaccine Booking System to help ensure success when it is launched province-wide on March 15. HPEPH's participation in the pilot not only benefits the provincial launch, but also gives public health the opportunity to refine internal processes before it becomes widely available.
- **March 3** First mass immunization clinic opens in North Hastings at the Professional Building in Bancroft. The efforts of the Bancroft Family Health Team and the Quinte Health Care Team have been critical to the success of the vaccine rollout to residents of North Hastings and the surrounding area and resulted in the administration of 17,000 vaccinations in North Hastings in 2021.
- **March 5** The COVID-19 vaccination clinic opens in Picton at the Prince Edward Community Centre, ensuring residents don't need to travel too far to get their vaccine. In hosting a community vaccination clinic, the County of Prince Edward (PEC) and the Prince Edward Family Health Team support the administration of more than 24,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine in the community in 2021.
- **March 13** COVID-19 mass immunization clinic opens in Township of Madoc. 4,015 vaccines are administered at the clinic.
- **March 22** COVID-19 vaccination booking expands to individuals aged 75 and older. HPEPH encourages individuals not yet eligible to pre-register for notification when they become eligible. Throughout the vaccine rollout, HPEPH maintained extensive lists of individuals in an effort to ensure that all residents were kept informed about eligibility, had access to vaccine as quickly as possible and no vaccines were wasted.
- **March 30** Dr. Oglaza issues Class Order before Easter holiday in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19 and proactively protect the community and reduce strain on emergency medical services and hospitals.
- **March 31** The COVID-19 vaccination clinic opens in Quinte West at Trenton's Duncan McDonald Memorial Community Gardens. In hosting a community vaccination clinic, the City of Quinte West supports the administration of 14,442 doses of COVID-19 vaccine in the community in 2021.



APRIL



- **April 7** The Provincial Vaccine Booking System begins accepting appointments for individuals 60 and older. Pre-registration opens for Phase 2 essential workers and individuals 55+ are now eligible for vaccine at local pharmacies.
- **April 15** HPEPH advises the public that the province's recent decision to redirect vaccines to Ontario hot spots will reduce anticipated local supply of vaccine by 25% and may impact scheduled vaccine clinics.
- **April 17** As the number of COVID-19 cases in the region continues to remain high, HPEPH asks residents to comply with new Provincial Emergency and Stay-at-Home Order and do everything they can to stop the spread.

MAY



- **May 6** COVID-19 vaccine rollout expands to include those 50 and older as well as the first group of the essential workers who cannot work from home.
- **May 11** COVID-19 vaccine booking expands to individuals with at-risk health conditions, such as dementia, diabetes and sickle cell disease as well as specific groups of people who cannot work from home.
- **May 12** Dr. Oglaza declares a COVID-19 community outbreak in Hastings Highlands with 11 confirmed cases of COVID-19 connected to several households. HPEPH offers testing in Maynooth for any residents who believe they may have been in contact with a case of COVID-19 or are showing any symptoms of COVID-19.
- **May 13** Residents aged 40 and older become eligible to book vaccines.
- **May 14** Dr. Oglaza issues a Class Order under Section 22 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act to protect the health and safety of all individuals employed at local farms.
- **May 18** COVID-19 vaccine rollout expands to everyone 18 and older and HPEPH urges those who don't immediately get appointment to be patient as more clinics are added daily.
- **May 23** COVID-19 vaccine rollout expands to youth aged 12 to 17 and HPEPH offers special clinics to ensure eligible youth can get their first and second dose of COVID-19 vaccine before the end of summer.
- **May 31** HPEPH's mass immunization clinic opens at the Quinte Sports and Wellness Centre in the Family Dental Centre (FDC) Arena, using the 'Hockey Hub' model in which clients remain in one place for both vaccination and observation.



JUNE



- **June 9** HPEPH invites individuals 12 and over who have not booked a first dose appointment and those who are eligible for an accelerated second dose appointment to register on the COVID-19 vaccination standby list.
- **June 24** HPEPH urges residents to get fully immunized with first available COVID-19 vaccine to protect themselves and avoid resurgence of cases in our region.
- **June 25** HPEPH youth aged 12 to 17 who have not yet received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine are invited to walk-in appointments in order to support the provincial commitment to ensure eligible students are fully vaccinated by the end of the summer.

JULY



- **July 1** HPEPH and Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development carry out an education and enforcement campaign at local workplaces over several days to ensure businesses have all the necessary public health protocols in place.
- **July 5** HPEPH invites youth to book their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine. HPEPH continues to offer special youth clinics through the HPEPH booking site.
- **July 12** Residents of HPEC are invited to book a second dose of COVID-19 vaccine as early as 28 days after first dose to build optimal immunity as Ontario prepares to enter Step 3 of the Roadmap to Reopen plan.



AUGUST



- **Aug. 1** HPEPH continues efforts to make it as easy as possible to get vaccinated by offering pop-up clinics throughout the region. Over the next five months HPEPH will hold more than 60 pop-up clinics at parks, markets, events, malls and other locations in an effort to reach as many residents as possible.
- **Aug. 9** HPEPH provides Hepatitis A vaccination to individuals 6 months and older who has eaten recalled frozen fruit in previous 14 days.
- **Aug. 31** HPEPH works together with local school boards to prepare for a safe return to in-person learning, including preparation of protocols and procedures to reduce the risk of COVID-19.
- **Aug. 31** HPEPH collaborates with community partners to host a virtual Overdose Awareness Symposium. Impacts of pandemic related isolation, changes in service delivery, and the presence of contaminated drugs in the community have increased the risk of drug poisonings in HPEC.

SEPTEMBER



- **Sept.1** Board announces that Dr. Oglaza has accepted the position as Medical Officer of Health for KFL&A Public Health starting October 15. Dr. Ethan Toumishey, Director of Clinical Programs is named as Acting Medical Officer of Health and CEO.
- **Sept. 30** HPEPH recognizes first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, and drafts a Land Acknowledgement which will be presented to the Board of Health in December 2021.

OCTOBER



- **Oct. 5** Dr. Oglaza issues Letter of Instruction requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccination for coaches, officials, volunteers 12 and older involved in indoor organized sports.
- **Oct. 15** Dr. Ethan Toumishey assumes role as Acting Medical Officer of Health and CEO.



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Financial statements for 2021 are reviewed annually by the Board of Health and are available at hpePublicHealth.ca.

NOVEMBER



- **Nov. 9** HPEPH begins offering third doses/booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine to highest risk residents.
- **Nov. 12** HPEPH and Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development work together to carry out a two-day inspection blitz to ensure businesses are taking steps needed to ensure employees, customers and public are safe by confirming compliance with Reopening Ontario Act.
- **Nov. 15** HPEC reaches a significant milestone in the fight against COVID-19 with 90 per cent of residents aged 12 and older having received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine and 85 per cent of this age group having received two doses.
- **Nov. 19** HPEPH declares community outbreak of COVID-19 in Quinte West. The outbreak initially involves 18 people with COVID-19 infections, acquisition traced to multiple linked social gatherings.
- **Nov. 23** HPEPH begins vaccination clinics for children aged five to 11 as COVID-19 cases continue to rise in the region.



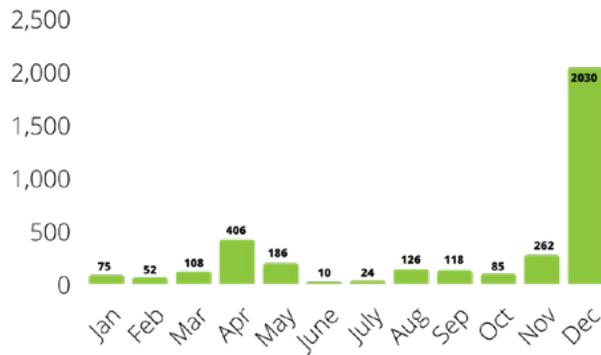
Welcome to the Clinic!

Follow along with a family as our brave volunteer demonstrates what it is like for five to 11 year olds to be vaccinated at a community COVID-19 vaccine clinic.

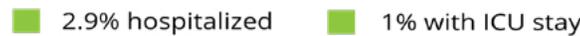


Click the image, or scan the QR code to play on YouTube!

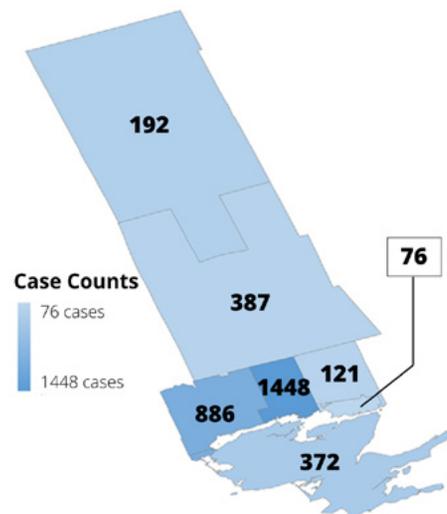
2021 Cases



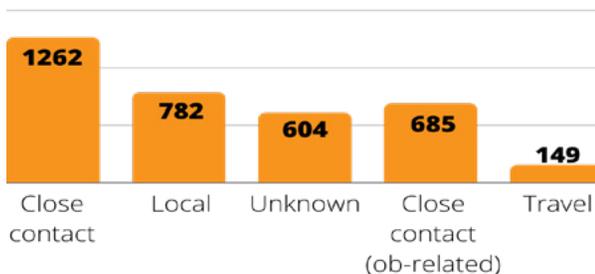
Interventions



Cases by Geography



Acquisition Categories





- **Dec. 1** HPEPH presents draft Land Acknowledgment to the Board of Health (BOH) and receives feedback from the BOH to further refine the acknowledgement.
- **Dec. 7** HPEPH works with local school boards to implement enhanced infection prevention in schools.
- **Dec. 10** HPEPH urges residents to make changes to social behaviours as local COVID-19 cases reach record number with the highest reported single-day case count since the beginning of the pandemic with 38 new cases in one day and a total of 203 active cases. HPEPH warns residents it is just a matter of time until there is a local case with the Omicron variant and updates contact tracing protocols and isolation requirements.
- **Dec. 16** The rapid increase of COVID-19 cases in the region causes a backlog in HPEPH's case and contact management process and individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 are instructed to self-isolate and immediately notify their high-risk contacts.
- **Dec. 17** HPEPH informs residents of the first lab-confirmed case of the COVID-19 Omicron variant of concern in the region. The case has no history of travel outside the region.
- **Dec. 17** In response to the alarming increase of COVID-19 cases and the emergence of the highly contagious Omicron variant of concern in Ontario, HPEPH introduces additional restrictions to protect the community, keep schools and businesses safe and open, and reduce the impact on health care resources.
- **Dec. 21** In order to respond to increasing COVID-19 case rates, while continuing to administer COVID-19 vaccines, the HPEPH case and contact management team concentrates its effort on responding to cases that arise in the highest risk settings. Cases that arise in other settings will be managed by the provincial COVID-19 workforce.
- **Dec. 30** HPEC has highest single-day COVID-19 case count with 258 new cases.
- **Dec. 31** HPEPH informs residents about changes to provincial COVID-19 testing eligibility and isolation requirements prioritizing resources where they are most needed. Publicly funded polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing is now only available for high-risk individuals who are symptomatic and/or at risk of severe illness from COVID-19, including for the purposes of confirming a COVID-19 diagnosis to begin medical treatment, and workers and residents in the highest risk settings, as well as vulnerable populations.
- **Dec. 31** HPEPH prepares to deliver a fourth dose of mRNA vaccines to residents of long-term care homes, retirement homes, elder care lodges and other congregate care settings.
- **Dec. 31** HPEC has the highest number of active COVID-19 cases with 1,216 active cases. 325,725 COVID-19 vaccines have been administered to residents in HPEC.

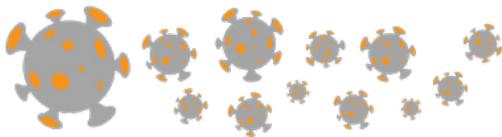
Land Acknowledgment

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health is situated and provides services on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people. The land that we preside on today lies on unceded Indigenous territory. Our catchment area is adjacent to the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory to our east, and the Kijicho Manito Madaouskarini Algonquin First Nation to our north. We recognize that when settlers came to this land they created a legacy of inequities that are ongoing. We are committed to reducing these inequities, and through our work strive to improve health equity. We recognize the importance of the land and environment in establishing and sustaining optimal health, and we vow to respect this land as we undertake our work. Our organization pledges to build relationships with Indigenous friends and neighbours and recognizes the rich contributions they have provided and continue to provide to this region. This acknowledgment is a first step in our ongoing commitment to reconciliation.

2021 by the Numbers

325,725
COVID-19
VACCINES

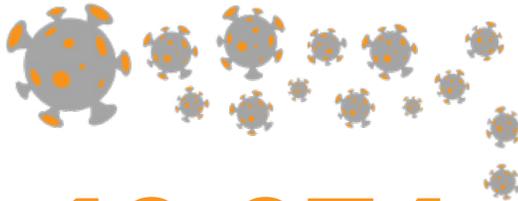
administered to residents



90 outbreaks with
713 confirmed cases of
COVID-19 managed



3,482 local cases
of COVID-19



10,074

inquiries to the COVID-19
information line

(calls, texts, emails)



2,049 COVID-19 related
concerns investigated

58 COVID-19 related
charges laid



>10K high-risk
contacts

followed by case and contact management

2.7 million
pageviews of the

HPEPH COVID-19 Dashboard

67 infection
prevention
and control
assessments
completed in
schools



131 clients received at least one contact for **postpartum/breastfeeding support**

595 home visits (including virtual) completed by Healthy Babies Healthy Children nurses

12.2K Facebook followers
4.2K Twitter Followers 

648 breastfeeding consultations were completed in 2021



131 families supported by the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program

144 media releases issued 

5.5 million pageviews on the HPEPH website



1,208 food premises inspections



41 inspections under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act resulting in **7 charges and 14 warnings**



1,665 Naloxone kits distributed in conjunction with community partners



154 personal services setting inspections (e.g. hair salons, tattoo parlours) 

107 recreational water facilities inspected (e.g. wading pools, swimming pools)

439 cases of reportable sexually transmitted infections followed-up to ensure appropriate treatment and contact notification

620 rabies investigations 



HASTINGS PRINCE EDWARD
Public Health

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