



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



**Together with  
our communities,  
we help people  
become as  
healthy as they  
can be.**







## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*Hastings Prince Edward Public Health is situated and provides services on the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee people.*

In 2023, artist Kory Parkin created a piece of art to illustrate the Hastings Prince Edward Public Health organizational land acknowledgment. The artwork references Indigenous stories and symbols, as well as elements of the modern landscape. The artwork will be on display in all HPEPH offices in 2024.

### About the artist

Kory Parkin is a proud member of the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte for over 30 years. He has grown up learning about Indigenous traditions and symbolism from several cultures. Over the years he has taken an interest in many creative mediums including photography, acrylic painting, silk screening, and glass etching.

### Artist's statement

This art piece aims to show how the land in Hastings and Prince Edward Counties connects the past to the present by blending traditional Indigenous stories,

such as the Creation story and the story of the Three Sisters, to the land on which we live today. Before this city was known as Belleville, it was referred to as Asuhknosk and was known for its great fishing. For this reason, the image of a fish has been included. The eagle is a sacred bird to all Indigenous cultures, and is seen as the messenger that flies closest to the Creator and overlooks everyone upon Turtle Island, hence the reason for the large Eagle wing. In Haudenosaunee culture, there are nine clans: Turtle, Bear, Wolf, Heron, Hawk, Snipe, Beaver, Deer and Eel, which are all represented in this image. Lastly, the Two Row Wampum has been included, since this is seen as a living treaty, and a way the Haudenosaunee have established for their people to live together in peace. The Two Row Wampum reinforces that each nation will respect the ways of the other as they meet to discuss solutions to the issues that come before them.



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## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF HEALTH CHAIR AND THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

The year 2023 was one of change, challenges, and achievements for Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH).

HPEPH, like many of the health units in Ontario, faced a number of financial challenges in 2023. Provincial changes in the funding formula for public health units, and provincial plans to clarify the role of health units, reduce overlap, and improve access to services prompted the Board to endorse investigating the feasibility of a merger between Hastings Prince Edward Public Health and our neighbours to the east: Kingston, Frontenac, and Lennox & Addington Public Health, and Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit.

Many programs were also put on hold in the late summer and early fall due to labour disruptions when members of the Ontario Nurses' Association and Canadian Union of Public Employees exercised their legal right to strike.

Despite being faced with uncertainty and unexpected challenges, the staff at HPEPH continued to deliver high-quality public health services to our communities, protected the health and well-being of our residents, and continued to make progress toward our strategic goals.

We stand committed to our core values of collaboration, advocacy, respect and excellence as we continue our work delivering evidence-based public health programs and services in our community. This Annual Report highlights the work undertaken in 2023 to support the health and well-being of our residents as we fulfil the requirements of the Ontario Public Health Standards.

*Janet C. O'Neill*

**Janet O'Neill**  
Chair, Hastings Prince Edward Board of Health  
Mayor, Municipality of Marmora and Lake  
County of Hastings

*Ethan Toumishey*

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



# 2023 BY THE NUMBERS

In 2023, we worked to advance our strategic priorities. We continued to deliver programs and services to ensure our compliance with the Ontario Public Health Standards and help the residents of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties (HPEC) achieve optimal health. This infographic highlights some key statistics from our work.

**720 visits**

completed by Healthy Babies Healthy Children and Nurse-Family Partnership Public Health Nurses

**365 in-person breastfeeding consultations**

**343 visits** completed by Family Home Visitors

**432 cases** of reportable sexually transmitted infections followed-up to ensure treatment and contact notification

**6,973 routine immunizations** at HPEPH clinics

**6,517 Grade 7 school-based immunizations**

**695 investigations** of diseases of public health significance

Investigated **150 facility outbreaks**

Completed **159 tuberculosis investigations**

**5,399 naloxone kits** distributed with community partners

**165k unique users** visited the HPEPH website

**55 media releases** issued

**114 small drinking water systems inspections**

**720 smoking cessation consultations by phone**

**65 youth access compliance checks** of tobacco and/or vapour products retailers

**10 recreational camp inspections**

**297 recreational water facility inspections**

**238 inspections** under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act

**2,479 food premise inspections**

**259 personal services setting inspections**

**702 rabies investigations**

13 HPEC schools completed **Healthy Schools Action Plans** to support positive school climates

**76 inspections** of international agricultural worker accommodations

**2,032 student visits** to secondary school public health nurse clinics

**289 curriculum support presentations** to classes and school staff

**5,481 school oral health screenings** completed at 65 schools

**3,040 appointments** for seniors at HPEPH clinics and other dental partners under the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program

# 2023 PROGRAM AND SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

In 2023 we identified and responded to many emerging local public health issues and implemented new and innovative programs, while also continuing to deliver our regular programs and services.

- We implemented the Nurse-Family Partnership Program (NFP), an evidence-based, nurse home visitation program that improves the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of low-income, first-time parents and their children. The NFP program removes transportation barriers, improves access to programs for high-risk prenatal clients throughout our region, and provides significant health benefits to both parents and babies.
- We launched the Steps to Wellness program, a nine-week cognitive behavioural therapy program that supports the development of skills

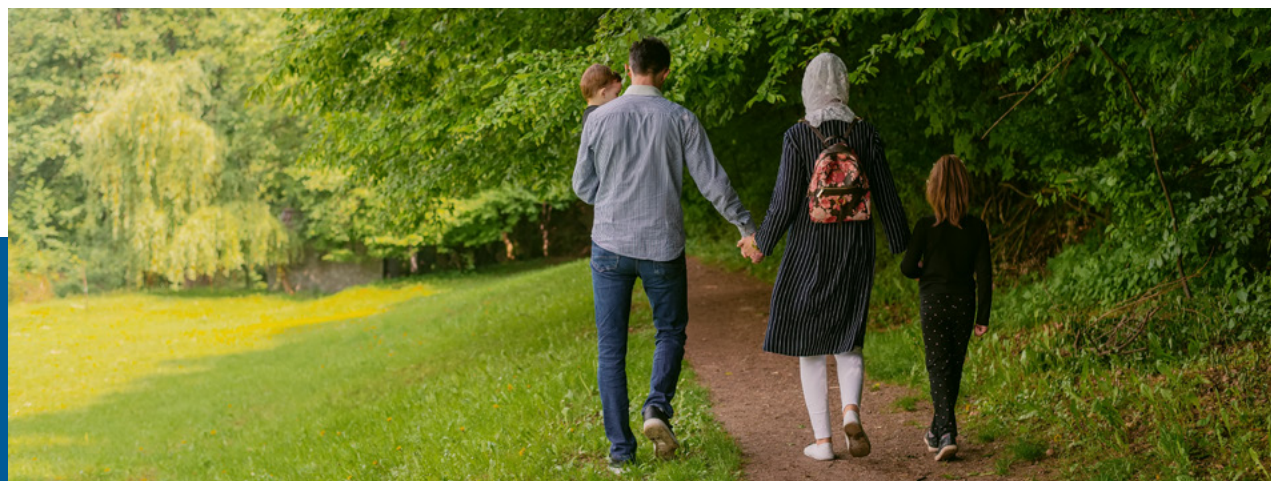
needed to help manage prenatal and postpartum depression and anxiety.

- In response to the ongoing drug-poisoning crisis, we worked with community partners to raise awareness of naloxone kits and provide training, share messaging to improve knowledge of the signs of overdose, and help connect people who use drugs to support services.
- We created an opioid monitoring dashboard, a monthly summary of opioid harms and other early warning indicators in Hastings and Prince Edward Counties. The interactive online dashboard consolidates and reports information about emergency medical service calls, police incidents, emergency department visits, deaths related to opioid poisonings, and opioid poisonings reported through the HPEPH website.

- We developed a surveillance plan to support use of the dashboard by HPEPH and community partners. The surveillance plan outlines when and how alerts and media releases are issued, based on key indicator thresholds, such as a spike in opioid-related deaths or emergency department visits.
- HPEPH staff conducted an evidence review of violence prevention. Exposure to violence can have long-term health implications and is linked to increased risk of substance use, mental health issues, and chronic and infectious diseases. Staff reviewed local, provincial, and federal research to understand what strategies have been effective for other health units. Recommendations from the evidence review informed strategies to help prevent violence, including teaching healthy relationship skills in childcare and school settings, strengthening supports for women and families, and creating supportive environments.
- We continued our municipal liaison work to support municipal decision-making that will improve population health. Through this initiative, municipal liaisons are assigned to each municipal area that HPEPH serves: North Hastings, Centre

Hastings, Belleville, Quinte West, and Prince Edward County. Decisions such as zoning, green space, active transportation routes, access to physical activity options, positive food environments and safe environments all play a role in helping community members thrive and reach their full health potential.

- We continued work to address the modifiable risk factors associated with chronic disease, including smoking, alcohol consumption, physical inactivity, and healthy eating, through a number of innovative programs. Our Healthy Schools Team, in partnership with three elementary schools in Trenton, applied for and received a \$5,000 Community Challenge grant from ParticipACTION to support community organizations in removing barriers and increasing physical activity and sport participation and retention for equity-deserving groups.
- Our Get the Facts and Get Tested campaign raised awareness about sexual and reproductive health. It encouraged individuals to access reliable sexual health support, discuss their risks with their healthcare provider and get tested for sexually transmitted infections.



## 2023 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Financial statements are reviewed annually by the Board of Health, and are available at [hpePublicHealth.ca](https://hpePublicHealth.ca).

## ACCESSIBILITY

We are committed to providing accessible information to all. To request this document in an alternate format, call 613-966-5500; TTY: 711, email [accessibility@hpeph.ca](mailto:accessibility@hpeph.ca), or visit [hpePublicHealth.ca](https://hpePublicHealth.ca).



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**Public Health**

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Belleville | North Hastings | Prince Edward County | Quinte West