



OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



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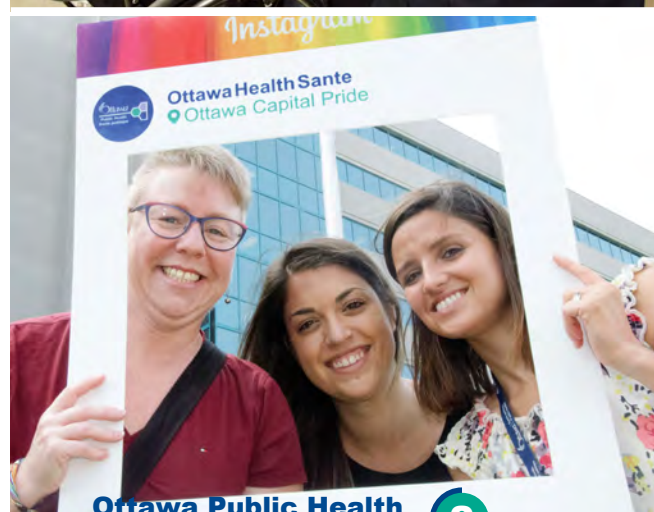
For more than 125 years, Ottawa Public Health has provided public health programs and services to individuals and communities, while advocating for public policies that make Ottawa and its residents healthier. Protecting and promoting health and preventing disease is embedded in all that we do.

Vision

All Ottawa's communities and people are healthy, safe and actively engaged in their well-being.

Mission

In partnership with the people and communities of Ottawa, Ottawa Public Health improves and advocates for health and well-being through prevention, promotion and protection.



Message from the Mayor

As the nation's capital, Ottawa hosted many festivals and celebrations to mark Canada's 150th anniversary in 2017.

I would like to thank the Chair of the Board of Health, Councillor Shad Qadri, Ottawa Public Health (OPH) employees and the Councillor and Public Members of the Board of Health for their leadership over this past year in helping to make these events safe for all to enjoy.

OPH protected and promoted the health and safety of Ottawa residents and visitors alike. Many of these special events involved food and beverage. OPH's Public Health Inspectors worked to prevent the spread of food-borne illness at these events by educating food providers on safe food handling practices and inspecting the many special event food premises. Efforts to protect the health of both residents and visitors were tremendous and the City was able to enjoy the many special events safely.

OPH also undertook significant work in disease prevention and health promotion. In my previous role as provincial Minister of Health Promotion, I saw firsthand the importance of promoting healthy communities through innovative public health initiatives. We know that investment in public health pays off. By immunizing children for measles, mumps and rubella early on, we save in health care costs for treatment down the road. Focus on early childhood health and development saves in future spending on health social and justice services. Public health investments support the health and wellbeing of Ottawa residents and create healthy, vibrant communities across the City.



Over the last few years, Ottawa like municipalities across Canada, has heard how drug addiction is becoming an increasingly complex problem that requires a multi-layered strategy to combat. I firmly believe we need a holistic approach to tackle these issues from a variety of angles and with many partners in order to reach people where they are in their journey. I want to thank Ottawa Public Health for their leadership and contribution to addressing this complex file in 2017.

Let us continue to work together to create a healthier future for all residents in the City of Ottawa.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Watson'.

His Worship, Mayor Jim Watson,
City of Ottawa

Message from the Chair of the Board of Health

As Chair of the Board of Health, I welcome this opportunity to reflect on 2017 and look ahead to 2018.

This year's annual report provides information about the affairs and operations of Ottawa Public Health (OPH), including how the organization is performing on requirements (programmatic and financial), practicing good governance, complying with legislative requirements and delivering quality public health programs and services.

We remain focused on our 2015-2018 strategic plan. Addressing healthy eating and active living, fostering mental health in our community, enhancing collective capacity to reduce preventable diseases, developing an adaptive workforce for the future and advancing healthy public policy were key strategic areas of focus in 2017 and will carry into the next year.

OPH maintained a strategic focus on these big-picture issues while responding to community needs as they came up. In 2017, unplanned events, like the opioid challenges in our community and spring flooding, required public health attention and resources. OPH responded to these unanticipated community needs and the work that followed is chronicled in the report.

This report provides you with an overview of the many dimensions and diversity of public health work. I am grateful to OPH employees



for their dedication in 2017 and look forward to continued success in 2018. I also thank my colleagues on the Board of Health and the multiple community partners for their contributions to the health of our community.

In late 2017, OPH said farewell to Medical Officer of Health Dr. Isra Levy and greeted Acting Medical Officer of Health Dr. Vera Etches. I welcome Dr. Etches to this role and look forward to working with her closely in 2018. I would also like to thank Dr. Levy for his contributions to OPH and wish him all the best in his future work with the Canadian Blood Services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shad Qadri'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

Councillor Shad Qadri
Chair, Ottawa Board of Health

Message from the Acting Medical Officer of Health

On behalf of the public servants of Ottawa Public Health (OPH), I am pleased to be presenting to our Board of Health, our partners, our funders, and all Ottawa residents, Ottawa Public Health's 2017 Annual Report.

In 2017, OPH reviewed our work in light of emerging new provincial standards and we aligned our organization to meet future health needs. We are excited to continue to work in partnership with the people of Ottawa to prevent disease and ill health, promote and protect health, with a renewed focus on health equity and engagement with clients and communities.

OPH is also exploring with the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) new ways to bring our perspective on the health of the whole population to inform health system planning. OPH worked with the Champlain LHIN and others to produce a joint health profile report of the newly created LHIN sub-regions as one of several joint activities in 2017. The profiles highlight the key health issues and some of the drivers of health, like income level, and point to areas with different needs across our region. The information has been used for Champlain LHIN consultations on priorities for health service delivery.

OPH joined not only health system partners, but also volunteers with lived experience, city departments, police, schools, and businesses to take further action to address the opioid crisis in 2017. Actions ranged from supporting parents, teachers and youth with accurate information, through to expanding access to naloxone and providing supervised injection



services to increase links to health and social supports and decrease overdose deaths among people who use drugs.

Preparations for proposed cannabis legislation also developed in 2017, including providing feedback to the provincial and federal governments about the proposed legalization of cannabis and program planning to tackle the potential public health impacts to come in 2018.

I would like to thank Dr. Isra Levy, former Medical Officer of Health for OPH, for his mentorship and support over the many years we worked together including in 2017. I would also like to extend thanks to our employees, our Board, our partners and our community for the dedication shown to improving health in our city. Working in concert with you to build on our community's health and wellbeing is an honour.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Etches', with a stylized flourish at the end.

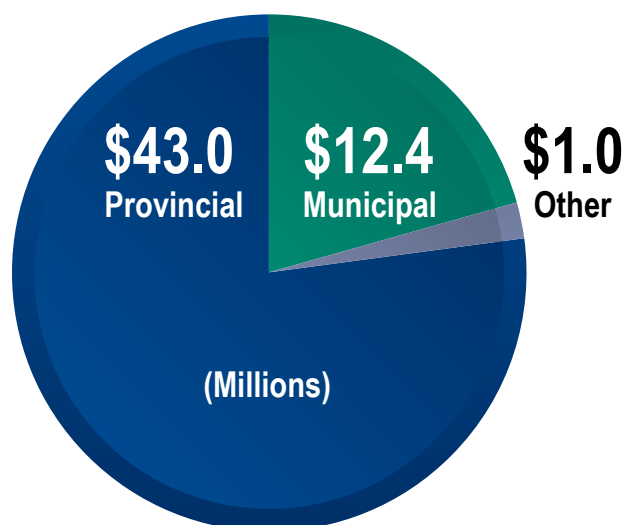
Vera Etches
Acting Medical Officer of Health



2017 Ottawa Public Health Budget

Funding Sources	Amount (in millions)
Provincial	43.0
Municipal	12.4
Fees and Services	1.0
Total	56.4

Program Delivery	Amount (in Millions)
Family Health	17.3
Infectious Diseases	16.1
Chronic Disease & Injury Prevention	10.5
Environmental Health	6.6
Foundational Standards	5.6
Emergency Response	0.3
Total	56.4





Fighting Food-Borne Illness

Ottawa Public Health's work supports a wide variety of events and celebrations in Ottawa, including activities for Ottawa 2017 – Ottawa's celebration of Canada's 150th birthday.

The City of Ottawa hosts more than 400 special events yearly, including but not limited to, marathons, competitions, fairs, and festivals. Many events involve the sale and consumption of food and that's where we come in. OPH supports events with risk assessments on food safety and provides public health inspections of food premises, to ensure that Ottawa residents are protected from foodborne illnesses.

Since 2014, the City of Ottawa has experienced a 5% increase in special events per year. With the 2017 celebrations planned in Ottawa, the number and size of events increased.

In 2017, OPH conducted over 10,000 food safety inspections, including more than 1,000 inspections at 153 special events.

Despite the rise in special events, the importance of food safety remains the same. Foodborne illness, sometimes called food poisoning, usually results from eating food or drinking water contaminated by disease-causing bacteria or their toxins.

The good news? Most cases of foodborne illness can be prevented through safe food handling and cooking practices. Over the year, through education and inspection, our team of Public Health Inspectors worked to keep celebrations safe.

For more information and inspection results, [visit us online](#).

Responding to Overdoses in Ottawa

In 2017, Ottawa Public Health (OPH) worked with partners to respond to the local opioid crisis. OPH's response was multi-pronged and sought to support people across the spectrum of substance use in an effort to reduce overdoses in people who inject drugs. A central element of the work included OPH chairing the Overdose Prevention and Response Task Force, which sought to increase communication between agencies and alert the public of increases in suspected drug overdose-related emergency department visits.

The taskforce also collaborated on the local **Stop Overdose Ottawa** campaign and naloxone administration training. Naloxone, a medication that can temporarily reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, was made available to firefighters, police officers and first aid providers, high school principals as well as through OPH's **Peer Overdose Prevention Program**. As opioid challenges persisted, OPH moved into enhanced response, deploying additional resources to prevent overdoses and overdose deaths. Parents and teachers were looking for overdose awareness training and information on what they could do to address youth substance use. In partnership with local school boards, the Ottawa Police Service and community partners, OPH launched 12 parent information sessions across the city and offered Facebook Live engagement.

Public Health Nurses provided over 400 presentations on substance use prevention to over 12,000 students across all four Ottawa school boards.



OPH also worked closely with local bars and festival organizers on opioid awareness. Six opioid awareness trainings were provided to over 190 staff and volunteers at Ottawa festivals.

To further harm reduction services, in September OPH began operating an interim Supervised Injection Service. Two injection booths were made available 12 hours a day, 7 days a week in an effort to reduce overdose in people who inject drugs. A total of 97 % of surveyed clients reported that because they have been accessing OPH's Supervised Injection Service, they find that they inject in public or inject alone less often.

Working with partners across the City, OPH continues efforts to prevent overdoses, supporting those who use drugs and providing information to youth, parents and teachers to prevent and delay youth use of substances.



Increasing Physical Activity Through Active Transportation

This year, OPH joined Safer Roads Ottawa in supporting the Vanier Community Service Centre's free bike-lending program - **Vélo-Vanier**. The program encourages residents to use active transportation to get around Ottawa.

Providing access to bicycles and helmets opens doors for residents to be more active while getting to the places they need or want to be. In the summer of 2017, 130 bicycle loans provided residents with transportation to jobs, volunteering, summer school, language classes and personal errands. These same bicycles were used almost 200 times for activities promoted or offered through Vanier Community Service Centre such as outdoor field trips, social activities, bike rodeos and neighbourhood safety initiatives.

Vélo-Vanier youth volunteers participated in a cycling course and received training on basic bike repairs. As a result, these youth have an increased ability to role model safer cycling and teach residents how to fix simple mechanical problems at their neighbourhood bike repair station.



**Safer Roads
Ottawa**
Toward Zero

**Sécurité des
routes Ottawa**
Vers zéro





have THAT talk videos

+1,000,000 views

Fostering Mental Health

One in five people experience a mental health problem or illness in any given year. Unfortunately, stigma still prevents people from talking about mental health, getting the support they need and supporting each other through difficult times.

In 2017, OPH unveiled a new *have THAT talk* video series on mental health. The video series and activity guide gives Ottawa residents helpful tips, tools, and information about how we can all work together to promote and protect positive mental health.

With the support of Bell Let's Talk, OPH worked with over 15 national and local partners to create the evidence-based videos and activity guide.

The videos have been viewed over 1 million times across the world and can be found along with the guide at havethattalk.ca

"These videos helped me talk about mental health in the classroom, it was fun and easy to understand. Thank you!"

– Ottawa Carleton School Board Teacher

"Bravo! I will be sharing these videos far and wide."

– Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Employee





Supporting the City of Ottawa's Flood Response

As many in our community will recall, the Ottawa River saw higher water levels in the spring of 2017. Melted snow and higher-than-average rainfall resulted in flooding for many homes in the Cumberland, Britannia and Constance Bay areas.

As the City of Ottawa enhanced its operations to respond, Ottawa Public Health (OPH) worked collaboratively with City of Ottawa, provincial and community partners to support affected residents. Emergency Community Support Centres were set up and OPH had a Public Health Inspector at each Centre to answer questions, provide well water sample bottles and review sampling instructions.

In addition, OPH and provincial partners increased services to include a daily pick-up

of well water samples and followed up with residents who received an adverse water quality result from the lab.

Residents were engaged to share their experience, ask questions and identify concerns as public health nurses and inspectors went door-to-door with other City of Ottawa staff including first responders. In response to resident concerns, OPH provided facts sheets on various topics and answered questions including how to safely clean-up a home after a flood.

The community's willingness to come together during this extraordinary event was remarkable and OPH was proud to be among those who responded to the needs of residents.



Leading in Nursing

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) nurses contribute significantly to the health of the community and in 2017 they were acknowledged in a big way.

To mark the 150th anniversary of Confederation, the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) recognized 150 nurses from across the country who continue to pioneer health innovation in Canada and around the world. Four of these nurses work at OPH. From serving clients who inject drugs and are at particular risk of blood-borne illness, injury and overdose, to launching a Facebook page for new parents – OPH nurses were celebrated for their diverse contributions.

The CNA also profiled OPH nurses in a “[Canada Nurses 150](#)” video. These nurses

demonstrated the range of nursing services offered by OPH, from a school immunization clinic to outreach work done with vulnerable populations on OPH’s SITE van.

OPH nurses are strong public advocates and leaders in advancing a client-centered approach to quality health care through traditional, innovative or inter-professional practices. They inspire a passion for nursing through professional development, leading and sharing best practice, and mentoring students studying the profession.

OPH’s nurses will undoubtedly influence the next 150 years and we cannot wait to see how they will continue to support the community’s health.



Taking Steps Towards Reconciliation

The message was clear as employees came together for an annual all-staff meeting. Every Ottawa Public Health (OPH) employee can be a leader in promoting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action. After hearing perspectives and experiences from Indigenous Elders and leaders, employees gained awareness of historical injustices and current challenges facing First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and reflected on actions they could take to promote reconciliation.

Also in 2017, OPH received one-time funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to collaborate with Indigenous and non-Indigenous health sector partners on the creation of an Urban Indigenous Health Strategy for Ottawa. Indigenous cultural safety training was the top priority identified

by the community. Funding will support the development of cultural safety training resources for local health service providers.

OPH is committed to advancing Indigenous health equity and promoting reconciliation through meaningful engagement with local Indigenous partners. As an example, public meetings are increasingly opened with an honour statement that acknowledges that Ottawa is located on unceded Algonquin territory. This recognition is seen as an important sign of respect. It also promotes cultural continuity by preserving, revitalizing and strengthening local indigenous knowledge, languages, traditions and protocols.

By taking steps toward reconciliation, OPH aspires to support the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples in Ottawa.

Ottawa Public Health by the Numbers

- 34** intranasal naloxone administration trainings for Ottawa School Boards
- 40** training sessions on overdose response and naloxone administration provided to community partners serving high risk clients, reaching more than 900 staff
- 90** staff spaces dedicated for Indigenous cultural safety training in 2018
- 835** media inquiries
- 1125** patient visits to the new Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health dental clinic
- 1300** naloxone kits distributed to people at risk of opioid overdose and their family and friends through OPH's Peer Overdose Prevention Program (POPP)
- 5443** views of Facebook Live to provide Parents with Information on Opioids (4,166 English, 1,277 French)
- 10 529** food safety inspections
- 15 240** followers on our Parenting in Ottawa Facebook page (12,451 English, 2,789 French)
- 41 121** clients assisted through the Ottawa Public Health Information Centre
- 51 964** immunizations given in schools





OPH Publications in Peer Reviewed Journals 2017

1. Kothari A, Valaitis R, Etches V, Lefebvre M, Martell C, McElhone S, et al. **How political science can contribute to public health: a response to Gagnon and colleagues.** Int J Health Policy Manag. 2017;6(x):x-x.
2. Willmore J, Marko TL, Taing D, Sampasa-Kanyinga H. **The burden of alcohol-related morbidity and mortality in Ottawa, Canada.** PloS one. 2017;12(9):e0185457.
3. Mah CL, Minaker LM, Jameson K, Rappaport L, Taylor K, Graham M, et al. **An introduction to the healthy corner store intervention model in Canada.** Can J Public Health. 2017 Sep 14;108(3):e320-e4.
4. Taing D, McKay K. **Better Strength, Better Balance! Partnering to deliver a fall prevention program for older adults.** Can J Public Health. 2017 Sep 14;108(3):e314-e9.
5. Russell K, Taing D, Roy J. **Measurement of Fall Prevention Awareness and Behaviours among Older Adults at Home.** Can J Aging. 2017 Sep 14:1-14.
6. Dickson C, Taljaard M, Friedman DS, Metz G, Wong T, Grimshaw JM. **The antibiotic management of gonorrhoea in Ontario, Canada following multiple changes in guidelines: an interrupted time-series analysis.** Sex Transm Infect. 2017 Aug 26.
7. Russell K, Ali A. **Public Attitudes Toward Breastfeeding in Public Places in Ottawa, Canada.** J Hum Lact. 2017 May;33(2):401-8.

8. Sampasa-Kanyinga H, Hamilton HA, Willmore J, Chaput JP. **Perceptions and attitudes about body weight and adherence to the physical activity recommendation among adolescents: the moderating role of body mass index.** Public Health. 2017 May;146:75-83.
9. Sampasa-Kanyinga H, Hamilton HA. **Eating breakfast regularly is related to higher school connectedness and academic performance in Canadian middle- and high-school students.** Public Health. 2017 Apr;145:120-3.
10. O'Byrne P, MacPherson P, Roy M, Orser L. **Community-based, nurse-led post-exposure prophylaxis: results and implications.** Int J STD AIDS. 2017 Apr;28(5):505-11.
11. Dickson C, Arnason T, Friedman DS, Metz G, Grimshaw JM. **A systematic review and appraisal of the quality of practice guidelines for the management of Neisseria gonorrhoeae infections.** Sex Transm Infect. 2017 Mar 30.
12. Gilbert M, Salway T, Haag D, Fairley CK, Wong J, Grennan T, et al. **Use of GetCheckedOnline, a Comprehensive Web-based Testing Service for Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections.** J Med Internet Res. 2017 Mar 20;19(3):e81.
13. McKay K, Nigro S. **Policy at play: The implementation of Healthy Eating and Active Living Guidelines in municipal child care settings.** Can J Public Health. 2017 Mar 01;107(6):e556-e61.