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# Public Health Matters

Volume 11 Number 07

Annual Report of KFL&A Public Health

July 2011

■ **SEXUAL HEALTH** Chlamydia rates in teens in the KFL&A area have been steadily on the rise for more than ten years

## Tackling the chlamydia epidemic in KFL&A teens

**DR. IAN GEMMILL**

Medical Officer of Health

Chlamydia is epidemic among older adolescents and young adults.

In the KFL&A area alone, the rate of confirmed chlamydia infections in the past four years shows a disturbing trend with the number of cases more than 50 percent higher in 2010—644 confirmed cases—compared to 2007—430 confirmed cases.

It is important that youth understand the risks associated with this infection, and how to protect themselves against chlamydia, the most common reportable sexually transmitted infection (STI).

Most cases in women and some in men are asymptomatic: there are no symptoms indicating that infection has occurred.

The risk of infection is directly proportional to the number of sexual partners that a person has. That fact is compounded further because there are now many more people in the highest risk ages: older adolescents and young adults. For all of these reasons, the incidence of this infection has risen to epidemic levels.

If a case of asymptomatic chlamydia goes undiagnosed and untreated, it may have serious consequences, especially for women.

Women are at greater risk of contracting the infection than men, because the transmission rate to women is higher. It is very important for women to know what kind of complications chlamydia can cause, and

see **CHLAMYDIA** | Page 7



■ **RESEARCH & EDUCATION** Comparing various studies on wind turbines and health to understand the impact of the energy source

## The health effects of wind turbines

**DR. KATHLEEN O'CONNOR**

Director, Research & Education

Energy. Our way of life is dependent on it and our lifestyles require more and more of it every year. From 1990 to 2006, total Canadian consumption increased by 26 percent, according to Natural Resources Canada.

Along with the increase in energy demands, concerns about the safety of energy production

are growing. We worry about pollution, greenhouse gases, nuclear accidents, and health effects, such as asthma and cancer.

Wind energy has been promoted as a clean source of energy. It is renewable—we will never run out of it. An operational wind farm creates no greenhouse gases. Some people have concerns, however, that there are health effects from the noise produced by wind turbines.

Numerous news stories have suggested health effects, including anxiety, depression, dizziness, heart beat irregularities, high blood pressure, nausea, and insomnia among others.

Dr. Paul Masotti of KFL&A Public Health, with the help of Matthew Hodgetts, has done an extensive review of the literature on the health effects of wind turbines. This review included the results of published scientific

studies, as well as unpublished studies, internet resources, and press and technical reports.

Studies vary in methods and scope, and as a result, there are varying degrees of confidence that the results are valid—that is, that they tell us what is indeed the truth.

The highest quality studies are experimental. These studies compare groups of people, selected at random, who do and do not

experience the exposure—in this case it would be noise from wind turbines. They would have enough people in both groups to be able to say confidently whether there is or is not a difference between them in the number and kinds of health problems experienced.

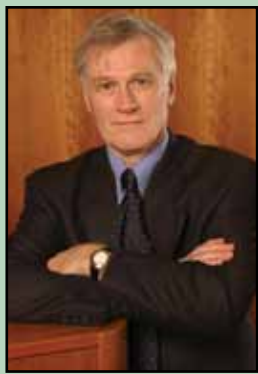
These studies measure health effects directly, instead

see **WIND TURBINES** | Page 4



## Report of the Medical Officer of Health

### The year in public health



I.M. Gemmill, MD, CCFP, FRCP(C)  
Medical Officer of Health

In the strategic plan for KFL&A Public Health from 2005-2010, the concept of excellence appears frequently. This document refers to 'a pervasive expectation for excellence', and 'providing programmes and services of the highest quality'...and 'excellent volunteer services'. Indeed, excellence has recently been reconfirmed as a core value of KFL&A Public Health in an agency-wide process that invited all staff to say what is important to them in their work.

Striving for excellence is a goal in everything that this agency does: programmes and services, communications to the public, advice to professional partners, and liaison with community agencies. It is at the top of every employee's and every volunteer's mind in their work to improve the health of the people in the KFL&A area.

The desire for excellence at KFL&A Public Health was recognised in 2010 with the award to this agency of the fourth straight accreditation. The accreditation process is carried out by a non-profit, arms length agency: the Ontario Council for Community Health Accreditation (OCCHA). Surveyors for OCCHA visited KFL&A Public Health in February of 2010 and the award was made by the OCCHA Board in April (see the article on page 5).

This continued achievement is a great credit to everyone associated with this agency: the Board members, the health professionals, the support staff and the volunteers. We are exceedingly proud of this achievement and want to recognise the contribution that each one of these dedicated people has made to it. It is a great credit to their hard work and thoughtful approach to what they do, whether it be counselling new mothers on succeeding at breast-feeding, helping seniors to learn to cook nutritiously, immunising children and travellers to keep them safe, ensuring that food premises meet provincial health standards, contributing to knowledge by conducting research into public health practice, helping pre-school children to improve their speech, assisting people seeking services to get to the right team, teaching adolescents about healthy personal behaviours, working with community partners to develop health policies and programmes, providing information to the community through the agency's website, helping people with communicable diseases, visiting new mothers and children in their homes or overseeing programmes to ensure that they provide the best value for tax dollars. It is their focus on service to the public that ensures that striving for excellence remains paramount in their work. I thank and congratulate each and every one of them.

**GOVERNANCE** The Board of Health for Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington

## 2010 KFL&A Board of Health



Mrs. Beth Pater, Chair,  
Community Appointee



Mayor Janet Gutowski, Vice Chair  
Frontenac County



Councillor Leonore Foster,  
City of Kingston



Councillor Mark Gerretsen,  
City of Kingston



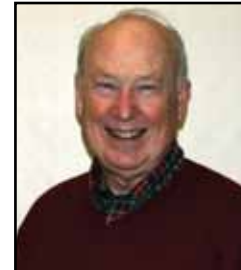
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Community Appointee



Mr. Ian Wilson  
Community Appointee



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Lennox & Addington County

Strong leadership and support for staff and programs is vital to the success of KFL&A Public Health. Employing more than 200 full-time, part-time, and casual personnel serving at four offices across the KFL&A area, KFL&A Public Health provides health promotion and protection services to a population of approximately 190,000 people, dispersed over an area of 6,660 square kilometres. That leadership is ably provided by the members of the Board of Health for Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington.

The Board of Health comprises municipal and community appointees and functions under the legal

authority of the Health Protection and Promotion Act. It is responsible for ensuring that KFL&A Public Health meets the Ontario Public Health Standards. The Ministry of Health and Long-term Care for the Province of Ontario develops these standards for public health programs, which address important health issues for all Ontarians. These programs and services aim to promote health, prevent disease and injury, and control health threats to human life and function, the ultimate goal of attaining health for all.

The KFL&A Board of Health has been instrumental in ensuring that all residents of the KFL&A area have access to public health services.

**FINANCIAL SERVICES** Programs funded both municipally and provincially

## Mix of municipal and provincial funding of public health programs and services

KFL&A Public Health is funded by the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport, the City of Kingston, Frontenac County, and Lennox & Addington County, as defined in the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

A number of programs administered by KFL&A Public Health received 100 percent funding from the provincial government. While municipalities do not contribute to the funding of these programs, they are

designed and administered to meet the local needs of residents wherever they live. The Board of Health appoints an auditor who is licensed under the Public Accountancy Act. Every year, the auditor is required to express an opinion on whether the financial statements of KFL&A Public Health present fairly, in all material respects the Board of Health's financial position, the results of operations, and cash flow in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles as recommended by the Public Sector Accounting Board of the CICA.

### Revenues for KFL&A Public Health Programs

Municipal Grants	
City of Kingston	\$2,831,985
County of Frontenac	\$547,433
County of Lennox & Addington	\$914,546
Provincial Grants	
Ministry of Children and Youth Services	\$2,533,724
Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport	\$5,036,146
Ministry of Health and Long-term Care	\$6,585,153
Other	
Special Project Grants	\$809,205
Environmental Inspection Fees	\$487,564
Interest Earned	\$26,568
Ontario Works Dental Program	\$440,039
Mandatory Program Recoveries	\$722,802

Total \$20,935,165

### Expenditures for KFL&A Public Health Programs

Mandatory Programs	\$14,012,035
Private Sewage Program	\$358,734
Ontario Tobacco Strategy	\$894,438
Syndromic Surveillance Project	\$164,626
Infection Control	\$513,900
Healthy Babies Program	\$1,206,328
Preschool Speech & Infant Hearing Program	\$1,229,393
Healthy Smiles Ontario	\$411,900
Research, Education, and Development	\$274,692
West Nile Virus and Vector Borne Diseases	\$96,992
Small Drinking Water Systems	\$185,525
Ontario Works Program	\$440,039
Special Project Expenses	\$809,254
Amortization	\$548,395

Total \$21,146,251

### Schedule of Operating Funds

Copies of the detailed Financial Statement are available for download from the About Us section of our website, [www.kflapublichealth.ca](http://www.kflapublichealth.ca), or by contacting KFL&A Public Health at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1242.



■ **DENTAL HEALTH** New program provides dental funding for low-income families

## Healthy smiles and healthy lives through new program

For families with low-incomes, juggling finances is tough. For these families, the reality is that there is little, if any, money available for dental treatment for their children.

For the families of 1,300 KFL&A children and youth, things got a bit easier thanks to a free dental program called Healthy Smiles Ontario.

The program is available at no-cost to eligible children and youth 17 years-old and younger in the KFL&A area. It provides access to regular dental care including check-ups, cleaning, x-rays, and fillings.

The program allows families to receive services through their dental provider of choice in the area, as well as services through a dental clinic at the North Kingston Community Health Centre.



KFL&A Public Health is also running portable hygiene clinics throughout the KFL&A area.

“This is such an important program for low-income families,” said Susan Stewart, man-

ager of the dental health program with KFL&A Public Health. “These families usually have limited or no access to dental services, yet they have the highest rate of cavities,” said Stewart.

“The longer treatment is delayed, the longer these children are in pain or discomfort, and the more extensive and costly the treatment becomes.” Healthy Smiles Ontario will allow families to get the dental services their children need when they need it.

To be eligible for this program, families cannot have dental insurance and their adjusted family net income must be \$20,000 or below.

To apply to the Healthy Smiles Ontario program, an application form can be picked up at any KFL&A Public Health office (Kingston, Napanee, Sharbot Lake, and Cloyne) or downloaded from our website.

For more information on this new program, call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875 ext. 1218 or 1605.

■ **FAMILY HEALTH** Infant feeding survey gives insight into breastfeeding rates

## Survey of new moms will help structure breastfeeding programs

Breastmilk is the optimal food for infants. In 2004, Health Canada updated its recommendations on infant feeding, stating the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, with the appropriate introduction of solids at 6 months and continued breastfeeding up to two years or even longer.

The benefits of exclusive breastfeeding have been well researched. Benefits to baby include decreased risk of ear, respiratory, and gastrointestinal infections, decreased risk of childhood obesity, and decreased risk of digestive diseases such as Crohn’s disease and colitis. The benefits to the mother include decreased risk of postpartum haemorrhage, decreased risk of breast, uterine, and ovarian cancers, and increased protection against osteoporosis.

To get a good understanding of how new mothers in the KFL&A area are feeding their babies, researchers from KFL&A Public Health conducted an infant feeding survey.

“We surveyed mothers in hospital prior to discharge and followed up at 2, 4, 6, and 12 months with questions on their breastfeeding practices,” said Connie Wowk, manager, family health with KFL&A Public Health.

The numbers from the survey showed 90 percent of new mothers in the KFL&A area initiated breastfeeding, 77 percent were breastfeeding exclusively when they left the hospital, and 55 percent were breastfeeding exclusively at two weeks. The numbers then showed a steep decline of 25 percent by the 2 month mark,



with only 30 percent of mothers breastfeeding exclusively.

The results provided interesting insight for program planners at KFL&A Public Health.

“According to Health Canada’s recommendations, the focus needs to be on succeeding at breastfeeding,” said Wowk. “We know that if we provide breastfeeding support to new mothers in the early weeks, they will be more likely to

meet Health Canada’s recommendation of continued exclusive breastfeeding to 6 months.”

KFL & A Public Health supports breastfeeding families through a number of programs and services such as the Child & Babytalk Phone Line, Breastfeeding Buddies peer support program, Babytalk Drop-ins, Prenatal Breastfeeding Classes, and the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Home Visiting Program.

## PROGRAMS IN BRIEF

### Eating well and being active

Motiv8 is KFL&A Public Health’s initiative designed to help individuals, families, and organizations adopt healthy lifestyle behaviours through specific strategies to improve awareness, enhance motivation, build skills, and provide opportunities that promote and support physical activity and healthy eating in a variety of settings.

Motiv8 is built around how to eat well, get fit, and live life. KFL&A Public Health has reviewed the literature and found eight practical solutions that will help residents reach and keep a healthy weight. They include eating a healthy breakfast, re-thinking snacks, being active every day, choosing water, enjoying more vegetables and fruit, making meals at home, breastfeeding babies, and watching less TV.

For information, call the Living Well Phone Line at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1180 or visit [www.eatwellgetfitlivelife.ca](http://www.eatwellgetfitlivelife.ca) for complete details.

### Community Food Advisors

This volunteer program uses group presentations, displays, and cooking demonstrations to deliver healthy eating and safe food handling information and education to KFL&A residents of all ages, from elementary students to older adults. The program is supported by the Nutrition Resource Centre and the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport, with KFL&A Public Health as the local sponsor.

For information call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1224.

### Walk ON!

This volunteer-led program motivates individuals to keep active over the winter months with the opportunity to walk indoors in a safe and social environment.

For information call the Living Well Phone Line at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1180.

### Stay on your Feet

This program works to create an injury prevention mindset, raise awareness about risk factors for falling, identify potential fall hazards, and encourage strategies and policies for falls prevention. It includes educational sessions for older adults and caregivers. For information visit [www.stepsafe.com](http://www.stepsafe.com) or call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1181.

### Day care inspections

Public health inspectors from KFL&A Public Health inspect all licensed day care operations in the KFL&A area. Public health inspectors work with day care operators to ensure that they follow safe food handling and infection control practices.

For information call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1248.

KFL&A

PublicHealth 

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Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health works together with our communities to promote and protect the public’s health. Our commitment is to provide public health programs and services of the highest quality.



## PROGRAMS IN BRIEF

### Toddler and Preschool Nutrition Class

This class helps parents understand the eating behaviours of toddlers and preschoolers with a focus on Canada's Food Guide and the nutritional requirements of children. It provides practical tips, tactics, and child-friendly recipes.

For information call Child & Babytalk at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1555

### Three-clicks to better health

Finding reliable information on the Web can be challenging at the best of times. KFL&A Public Health's website—[www.kflapublichealth.ca](http://www.kflapublichealth.ca)—received 105,162 visits with 460,627 page views, and an average of 4.38 page visits per visitor in 2010. The website provides KFL&A residents with the public health information they are looking for in three clicks. The website has sections dedicated to adults, health care providers, parents & caregivers, educators, youth, travellers, homeowners, and businesses and workplaces.

### Eating smarter at work

The Eat Smart! Workplace Program supports and offers recognition to workplaces that meet exceptional standards in healthy environments through safe food handling, healthier food choices, and a smoke-free environment. Eat Smart! is a program supported by the Nutrition Resource Centre of Ontario and is run by local public health agencies across Ontario.

For information on the Eat Smart! Workplace Program, call Dial-a-Dietitian at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1224.

### Keeping stock of the thousands of resources that help to promote health

Resources for teachers, educators, community partners, volunteers, students, and KFL&A Public Health staff are an integral part of promoting public health. With a catalogue of over 1,300 resources—including banners, resource kits, videos and DVDs, interactive games, and electronic resources—1,408 bookings were made through the KFL&A Public Health Resource Centre in 2010.

### Helping smokers take control

The Take Control program, delivered by KFL&A Public Health, helps people become smoke-free in three different ways.

Through individual support, people can meet with a public health nurse trained to help people quit smoking and work on a personalized quitting strategy. With group support, people who are thinking about quitting smoking or trying to stay smoke-free can participate in engaging, informative, and interactive sessions. In workplace support, employees and employers who want to be smoke-free can have group sessions in their workplace.

To find out more about quitting, call the Tobacco Information Line at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1333.

### Food premises inspections

KFL&A Public Health is the agency responsible for inspecting all businesses that prepare or sell food to the public in the KFL&A area. These businesses include restaurants, hospitals, nursing homes and long-term care facilities, school cafeterias, grocery stores, day care facilities, catering facilities, bakeries, hot dog carts, and concession stands. Last year, public health inspectors conducted 2,341 inspections and audits of businesses that prepare and sell food in the KFL&A area.

For information call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1231.

## WIND TURBINES

# Reviewing wind turbine studies

### FROM PAGE 1

of relying on what the people themselves say, and have various other characteristics that add to validity. In the case of wind turbines, however, it is impossible to conduct an experimental study, so a natural experiment might be used.

A natural experiment might be one in which levels of health effects are studied in relation to the intensity of the noise, including a group exposed to no noise from wind turbines.

Studies in which only people exposed to the wind turbines are studied, without regard to the level of noise they experience, or in which only the people who indicate that they have experienced health effects are studied are regarded as less rigorous. These are called case series or uncontrolled studies.

They can produce results which are not accurate, particularly when the health effects are self-reported by people who assume they are caused by wind turbines, rather than measured directly.

The largest and most rigorously conducted studies to date have found no health effects of wind turbine noise except for sleep interruption.

"Windfarm Perception," a study of 725 Dutch residents living in proximity to turbines, found that there was no association between sound levels and health, except for sleep interruption (also associated with road traffic noise).

Another study, "Wind Turbine Noise, Annoyance, and Self-Reported Health and Well-being in Different Living Environments," of 754 Swedish residents living in proximity to turbines found no association between sound levels and health. Annoyance with turbine sound (4.1%, 31 respondents) was correlated with sleep quality and negative emotions.

Case series and uncontrolled studies often report adverse health effects. The most prominent example is the study "Wind Turbine Syndrome" by Dr. Nina Pierpoint.

Pierpoint coined the term "wind turbine



syndrome" to describe a constellation of symptoms, including sleep disturbance, headaches, ringing in the ears, balance problems, difficulties with memory or concentration, irritability, anger, and fatigue.

Pierpoint claims that these symptoms are

not show any symptoms, it was expected that they would eventually develop vibroacoustic disease because infrasound levels in their household were slightly higher than those in the grain elevator household.

Vibroacoustic disease

related effects of noise produced by other industrial sources. It is clear that there are health effects of noise, including hearing impairments, heart disease, and hypertension. These illnesses, however, occur at levels significantly higher than the levels associated

## To date, the research literature does not provide any convincing evidence of health effects, other than annoyance, related to wind turbines.

associated with exposure to wind turbine noise. Her study included only individuals who believed that they were affected by the noise of wind turbines; her goal was to generate a set of symptoms from the worst affected. She did not talk to others living close to the turbines. This kind of study cannot show that the health effects are caused by the wind turbines.

Another example is the study "On The Impact of Infrasound and Low Frequency Noise on Public Health: 2 Cases of Residential Exposure" by Alves-Pereira and Castelo Branco, who believed that low frequency noise from wind turbines could cause vibroacoustic disease.

Vibroacoustic disease is described as affecting all body systems; a main symptom is a thickening of the muscles of the heart.

Their contention is based on a comparison of two families, one living near a grain elevator and another near several wind turbines. The grain elevator family had been diagnosed with vibroacoustic disease.

Although the family living near the wind turbine did

has been studied as a result of exposure to low frequency noise from sources other than wind turbines, such as airplanes.

Studies of pilots and crew exposed to low frequency noise, however, have found a lower than expected death rate from cardiovascular diseases, which would refute the main symptom of vibroacoustic disease.

Vibroacoustic disease was also studied in residents of Vieques Island, who were exposed to sonic booms from USA military testing. These symptoms were not found when The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry tried to confirm the results.

Neither wind turbine syndrome nor vibroacoustic disease are syndromes recognized by the medical community. Low frequency sound and infrasound occur everywhere in the environment. Below a sound pressure of 90 dB, there is no evidence of harm. Modern wind turbines are well below this level, at 50 to 70 dB.

There have been a large number of studies investigating the health-

with modern wind turbines.

It is also clear that some people are more sensitive to noise and show more effects than others. It has been shown that people who are annoyed by wind turbines are more likely to report health effects. Because there are weaknesses in the methodology of the studies, however, it has not been shown that these health effects are indeed caused by the noise of wind turbines.

To date, the research literature does not provide any convincing evidence of health effects, other than annoyance, related to wind turbines. While a strong relationship has been found between annoyance and being able to hear the wind turbines, a strong relationship has also been found between annoyance and being able to see the wind turbines. This finding suggests it may not be the noise of the wind turbines causing the alleged health problems.

These findings do not mean that all research can or should stop. It is very important, however, that any future studies are carried out according to strict methodological criteria.



■ **SCHOOL HEALTH** Program has a positive impact on food security for youth

## Building and empowering youth one meal at a time

Many youth, especially those in single-parent homes or living on their own, are responsible for preparing food. Barriers around food—physical, skill, and economic—have a negative impact on health, development, and educational outcomes.

Under COOKstruction, a program provided by KFL&A Public Health Community Food Advisor volunteers and public health dietitians, is working to address the nutritional skills by working directly with youth in the KFL&A area.

The program is a four-week hands-on program designed to improve youth participants' confidence and ability to nourish themselves by addressing the challenges they face in preparing food.

The primary goal of Under COOKstruction is to assist young people to improve food preparation skills. The program also helps to build their



self confidence in their own food skills.

“Ideally, these participants are partially or completely responsible for preparing food for themselves or their families and have an interest in learning to prepare healthy, low-cost foods,” said Lisa Munday, public health dietitian with

KFL&A Public Health and co-ordinator of the program.

The sessions are run during school hours and allow the participants to learn basic functional kitchen and food safety rules, to participate in hands-on small group food preparation, to dine together in the group

atmosphere, and to talk about their experiences with other youth.

The program depends on the mentoring by KFL&A Public Health's community food advisors—volunteers who use presentations, displays, and cooking demonstrations in safe food handling and healthy eating to KFL&A area residents.

“As the old saying goes, give someone a cooked fish and you feed them for a day. Teach them how to cook the fish and you feed them for a lifetime,” said Eugene Littlejohn, community food advisor.

“I have seen students walk into the program only able to microwave a snack or reluctant to do anything in a kitchen. At the end of the program, these same students want recipe books and are confident that they can provide and prepare meals for themselves,” said Roberta Millar, community food advisor.

## PROGRAMS IN BRIEF

### Oral health in the KFL&A area

Oral health is important to overall health. KFL&A Public Health provides a number of oral health programs and services, including dental screening in all elementary schools in selected grades. The purpose of the screening is to identify children who are in urgent need of dental treatment and also to identify those who would benefit from preventive oral services, such as topical fluoride. These school dental screenings are also used to monitor the oral health of local children.

In the past school year, KFL&A Public Health screened 5,430 elementary students. Over 120 children were identified as having an urgent dental need, according to the clinical criteria of the Children in Need of Treatment (CINOT) program. The goal of this province-wide program is to assist children in receiving dental treatment for urgent needs. Once children are identified as requiring urgent dental care, follow-up is commenced to facilitate access to treatment. For low-income families without dental insurance, the CINOT program will pay for urgent dental treatment for children and youth aged 17 years and younger.

For information call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1218.

### Food For You, Food For Two

This friendly, free program is offered weekly in Amherstview and Napanee. Pregnant women learn about pregnancy, healthy eating, the birth experience, and taking care of baby and family. Each week, women can meet new friends, prepare food and eat together, and receive information from a public health nurse, dietitian, and other community resources. Groceries and child care are provided and transportation may be available. This program is part of the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program and a financial contribution has been made by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

For information, or to get a ride, call the Food For You, Food For Two Information Line at 613-354-3357 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1416.

### Healthy Babies Healthy Children

Healthy Babies Healthy Children is an early intervention initiative to give children a better start in life. It is for pregnant women and families with children from birth to age 6. Helping new mothers with the transition after giving birth is a vital part of KFL&A Public Health's mandate.

In 2010, KFL&A Public Health received a completed newborn screening form on 1,456 families—81 percent of all births to new mothers living in the KFL&A area. A public health nurse contacted 975 of these mothers within 48 hours of discharge from hospital.

Healthy Babies Healthy Children also provides home visits by public health nurses, family resource workers, and a social worker who work with families to develop and improve their parenting skills, promote healthy growth and development in their children, and facilitate access to community resources. The program supports parents to obtain the help they need to be the best parents possible. In 2010, KFL&A Public Health's family resource workers completed 2,025 visits to families in the KFL&A area.

For information, call Child & Babytalk at 613-549-1154 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1555.

### Free drop-ins for new parents

Babytalk Drop-ins, located across the KFL&A area, offer parents a chance to meet with a public health nurse and receive resources and support. Visit [www.kflapublichealth.ca](http://www.kflapublichealth.ca) and click on the Events link at the top of the page for the dates and locations of Babytalk Drop-ins around the KFL&A area.

For information call Child & Babytalk at 613-549-1154 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1555.

■ **CORPORATE SERVICES** Agency recognized for commitment to quality improvement

## Accreditation award recognizes agency's commitment to quality improvement

While achieving high standards and striving for excellence is a goal for most agencies, for KFL&A Public Health it is a reality.

In April 2010, the area's public health agency received an unconditional accreditation award from the Ontario Council on Community Health Accreditation (OCCHA), the organization that surveys and accredits public health units in Ontario.

“The KFL&A Board of Health is extremely proud of the accomplishment that has been achieved,” said Beth Pater, Chair of the KFL&A Board of Health. “The Board continually sees evidence of the dedication of our staff and excellence of the services provided; this award

from a provincial accrediting body provides confirmation of this excellence.”

In a letter from OCCHA Board Chair Catherine Bloskie on the award, KFL&A Public Health was commended

for their dedication to accreditation and continuous quality improvement.

The OCCHA Board of Directors noted that KFL&A Public Health “has completed a great deal of work on healthy workplace policies, including breastfeeding, healthy eating, and workplace health. Staff

members have access to workplace fitness facilities and are encouraged and supported in their healthy workplace activities. KFL&A Public Health is recognized for its commitment to modeling and develop-

ing internal strategies in support of healthy policy and practice.”

KFL&A Public Health was also recognized for its efforts in ensuring that all staff members have the knowledge, skills, and understanding required to meet agency goals and objectives.

“This award is an indication of the high

quality of services and programs to which this public health agency is committed,” said Dr. Ian Gemmill, Medical Officer of Health for KFL&A Public Health. “The recognition of this dedication to service through a review by our peers is one of the highest honours that a public health agency can receive.”

“The accreditation award is a sign that our agency is in strong compliance with the accreditation standards set by OCCHA,” said Kris Millan, manager of continuous quality improvement and central resources for KFL&A Public Health.

“On a practical level it means that our staff are delivering high quality public health programs and services.”

KFL&A PUBLIC HEALTH  
**ACCREDITATION 2010**

*Ready. Set. Excel.*





## PROGRAMS IN BRIEF

### Helping control the spread of infection

KFL&A Public Health plays a lead role in helping long-term care facilities and health care providers to control the spread of infectious diseases. KFL&A Public Health staff provide leadership by participating in the infection control committees of all hospitals and long-term care facilities in the KFL&A area and by developing policies and procedures to reduce the incidence and spread of infections within these institutions. In the case of an enteric or respiratory disease outbreak, KFL&A Public Health staff work closely with staff of the facility to put control measures in place to stop the spread of infection.

For information call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1287.

### Infant Hearing Program

This program is designed to identify babies who are born deaf or hard of hearing, or are at risk for developing hearing loss in early childhood, and to provide them and their families with the support and services they need. Parents with infants who missed hearing screening in the hospital can call the Infant Hearing Program to make a screening appointment.

For information call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1145.

### Child & Babytalk Line

A public health nurse is available Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to answer questions on prenatal, infant and child care, preconception health, healthy pregnancies, postpartum mood disorders, breastfeeding, child growth and development, parenting, nutrition, and child safety. The nurse will link callers to the community services that they need. Individuals and service providers can make referrals to the following programs: Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Mothers Helping Mothers, and Breastfeeding Buddies.

For information call Child & Babytalk at 613-549-1154 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1555.

### Family Immunization Clinics

KFL&A Public Health provides immunization for routine childhood illnesses at Family Immunization Clinics at KFL&A Public Health's main office, 221 Portsmouth Avenue in Kingston. In addition, these clinics also provide tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough vaccine for adults. Special clinics are also held throughout the year at locations around the KFL&A area, by appointment, in Napanee, Sharbot Lake, and Cloyne. Please check the Events calendar at [www.kflapublichealth.ca](http://www.kflapublichealth.ca) for dates and locations.

For information call the Immunization Information Line at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1451.

### Breastfeeding Buddies

Breastfeeding buddies provide telephone peer support to mothers who wish to breastfeed. These volunteers receive eight hours of training and must attend networking meetings for the purpose of education and support. Volunteers must have breastfed for six months, believe in the value of breastfeeding, and commit to a minimum of one year after training is completed. This opportunity allows for volunteers to share their knowledge and experience with other mothers, learn more about breastfeeding, meet new people, and develop communication skills.

To connect to a breastfeeding buddy, call Child & Babytalk at 613-549-1154 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1555.

To volunteer as a breastfeeding buddy, call the co-ordinator of volunteers at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1159.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS Planning for emergencies in the KFL&A area

# Assessing the risks and identifying the hazards

When an emergency hits the community—from a train derailment to the outbreak of an infectious disease—KFL&A Public Health plays a role in protecting the public's health.

Emergency Management Ontario has identified 34 generic hazards. While communities can't plan for every emergency, in 2010, KFL&A Public Health identified five hazards most likely to occur and affect the KFL&A area.

"The goal of emergency preparedness is to enable and to ensure a consistent and effective response to public health emergencies with public health impacts," said Adrienne Hansen-Taugher, manager, emergency preparedness and health

hazards with KFL&A Public Health.

To understand the hazards and risks to the KFL&A area, public health inspector Sarah Le Roy, a Masters of Public Health student at Queen's University, undertook an assessment for the agency.

"By looking at risk and consequence, you can understand the potential for an emergency," said Hansen-Taugher.

The assessment by Le Roy identified five hazards that could most affect the KFL&A area, hazards that form the basis for emergency planning.

"By understanding and setting priorities for these risks, we have a much better way of preparing for emergencies that can affect our residents," said Hansen-Taugher.

### Five hazards identified by KFL&A Public Health

- 1. Human health emergencies and epidemics:** The KFL&A region has had significant outbreaks of pandemic H1N1 influenza, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), pertussis, measles, and typhoid fever.
- 2. Critical infrastructure failures:** The region served by KFL&A Public Health has been involved in two major incidents in which the area's critical infrastructure was compromised: the North American Blackout (2003) and the Ice Storm (1998).
- 3. Transportation emergencies (road):** The KFL&A region has numerous county roads within its boundary, as well as King's Highway 401. Transportation emergencies involving roads are a significant risk in the KFL&A area.
- 4. Severe weather-extreme heat or cold:** Since 2008, KFL&A Public Health has issued 16 cold weather alerts and 2 cold weather warnings, as well as 1 heat alert and 1 heat warning.
- 5. Civil disorder:** The Aberdeen Street party, a student event held off campus by some Queen's University students in Kingston, had more than 6,500 attendees in 2007. That year alone, dozens of arrests were made owing to violence, intoxication, and mischief.

## IMMUNIZATION Reviewing and updating children's immunization records

# Up-to-date immunization records for children at child care facilities

Keeping a child's immunizations up-to-date is vital in preventing outbreaks of deadly diseases.

In Ontario, the Day Nursery Act requires that all children's immunizations for tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, and meningococcal disease be kept current. These records are managed by KFL&A Public Health and in 2010 the agency conducted a review of all children who attended child care facilities to ensure that their records and immunizations were current.

"New requirements through the Ontario Public Health Standards require the review of immunization records for children attending licensed child care facilities," said Fairleigh Seaton, manager, vaccine preventable disease program with KFL&A Public Health.



"By conducting a review of the immunization records of all children in the KFL&A area who attend licensed child care facilities, we were able to identify children whose immunizations weren't updated, as well as children whose families have conscientious exemptions. In the event that there is an outbreak in those facilities, we can identify children who are at risk."

The program has expanded in 2011 to review the immunization records of children who

are newly registering for a licensed child care facility. Parents are now asked to have their child's immunization record reviewed by KFL&A Public Health to ensure that the record and the child's immunizations are current.

"We've made the process as simple as possible," said Seaton. "We issue parents a green pass if everything is up to date or a yellow pass if elements are missing, either immunizations or the child's record. Child care facilities now

have a much easier time identifying children who would need to be excluded if there is an outbreak."

Parents are encouraged to retain their child's immunization records from family physicians. "Some families think their family doctors send immunization information to KFL&A Public Health automatically, but in reality that isn't always the case. If a child's record isn't current on our system, parents can bring in the yellow immunization card they receive from their family doctor and we can update the record quite quickly," said Seaton.

For parents who need to update their child's immunizations, or to have their record reviewed, KFL&A Public Health's Immunization Clinic is available four times each week, Tuesday and Thursdays from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m., Wednesdays from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m., and Fridays from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.



■ **ADULT HEALTH** Creating an environment that supports employee health

# Workplace wellness series supports area employers

A healthy workplace is one of the most important factors to help an organization in today's market.

To support wellness in the workplace in the KFL&A area, the workplace wellness staff of KFL&A Public Health have been working with employers from across the KFL&A area in implementing health promotion initiatives.

"The most beneficial wellness strategy for a company's bottom line is creating an environment that supports employees' health and wellness through occupational health and safety compliance as well as a healthy organizational culture and a supportive environment for healthy lifestyles," said Megan Laan, public health nurse with KFL&A Public Health.

To help workplaces adopt these strategies, KFL&A Public Health began working with 50 workplaces in 2010 to implement a comprehensive workplace health promotion framework that integrates health and safety with organizational culture, and healthy lifestyles.

"We want to give workplaces the information for employers and managers to set up wellness committees, to get the tools for assessing their workplace, and to create a plan for their staff



that deals with awareness, skills, and looking at the environment around them and how it affects workplace wellness," said Laan. "One of the services offered was the Motiv8 Workplace Series."

In 2007, KFL&A Public Health launched Motiv8, an initiative designed to help individuals, families, and organizations address healthy lifestyle behaviours. The program works by focusing on specific strategies to improve awareness, enhance motivation, build skills, and provide opportunities that promote and support physical activity and healthy eating in a variety of settings.

The five-part Motiv8 Workplace Series is a workplace program directed at employees. It focuses on behaviour change for physical activity and healthy eating, along with support for management on ways in which they can develop

a work environment that promotes and supports healthy choices. The Motiv8 program highlights eight evidence-based behaviours that can help individuals achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

The program aims to increase participants' knowledge and skills to support the adoption and maintenance of health-enhancing behaviours. Participants learn how goal setting and using logbooks to track their progress can help in overcoming barriers to eating well and being active.

A public health dietitian from KFL&A Public Health leads the discussion of healthy eating basics using Canada's Food Guide and helps participants to find ways to make small changes to their eating habits that can have a big impact.

"It's important to dispel nutrition myths and to get back to the

basics of healthy eating," said Heather McMillan, public health dietitian from KFL&A Public Health. "It's about finding practical solutions to the barriers we face in making healthy choices."

The healthy eating sessions include food demonstrations and samples of healthy breakfast and snack ideas. Participants also learn to make sense of food labels to increase their ability to choose and prepare healthy meals and snacks.

A public health physical activity specialist leads the physical activity component of the program, helping employees to find ways to be active throughout their day, both at home and at work. Pedometers are used to track the number of steps employees take in a day to increase awareness of their daily activity, and as a motivator to increase their daily step count. Through the program, employees also get a chance to practise stretching and strengthening exercises that they can do at work or at home.

A comprehensive approach to health in the workplace will help businesses to attract and to retain the best and brightest, to reduce absenteeism, to improve productivity, to increase staff morale, and to enhance the organization's reputation.

## PROGRAMS IN BRIEF

### Sexual Health Clinic

KFL&A Public Health offers confidential and non-judgemental sexual health services through the Sexual Health Clinic located at the Kingston Office at 221 Portsmouth Avenue. The clinic is offered as a drop-in clinic on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. A teen clinic is offered, by appointment only, every second Monday from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. from September through June. Other appointments may be available. Residents must call ahead to schedule an appointment.

The clinic offers free and confidential sexually transmitted infection (STI) counselling, testing, and treatment. Pregnancy testing and low-cost emergency contraception is available along with contraception at a reduced cost for women under the age of 19, and for some women between the ages of 19 and 24.

PAP testing is available for all women under the age of 19, and for women 19 years and older who do not have a regular health care provider (e.g., a family doctor or student health services).

For information, including clinic appointments, call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1213 or 1275.

### Expert consultation for travellers

KFL&A Public Health provides expert travel advice and immunization to travellers. Travellers can, by appointment, receive all travel immunizations and health information related to their destination. This counselling includes precautions to take with food and water, sun protection, and insect bite prevention. Anti-malarial medication is also available to travellers, as well as antibiotics for treatment of travellers' diarrhea to patients over 18 years of age. Consultations take place on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and may take up to an hour to complete. Travellers should bring their Ontario Health Card and immunization record to the appointment. Travel consultation fees apply for appointments.

For information call the Travel Clinic Line at 613-549-2335.

### General Immunization Information Line

KFL&A Public Health staff can answer questions about immunization, specific vaccines, immunization records and schedules, adverse reactions to immunization, and more. Childhood immunizations can also be reported to this line to update vaccine records; callers should leave the child's name, date of birth, health card number, the vaccines given, the date given, and a phone number. Doctors do not automatically send this information to KFL&A Public Health.

For information call 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1451.

### Classes for parents-to-be

KFL&A Public Health prenatal classes—both in person and the new online classes—focus on promoting healthy lifestyles to pregnant women. Early registration (before 20 weeks of pregnancy) is recommended. Class topics include healthy lifestyle, healthy eating, labour and delivery, and breastfeeding.

For information, call Child & Babytalk at 613-549-1154 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1555.

### Grades 5 and 9 Physical Activity Pass

Designed to promote an active lifestyle, the Grade 5 and Grade 9 Activity Pass is offered to all grade 5 and grade 9 students in the KFL&A area. The pass allows free access to community recreation centres and is organized by Kingston Gets Active, KFL&A Public Health, and area school boards.

For information call the Raise a little health! Teacher Info Line at 613-549-1232 or 1-800-267-7875, ext. 1102.

## ■ SEXUAL HEALTH

# Chlamydia rates on the rise

FROM PAGE 1

to learn how to prevent that from happening.

If untreated in women, chlamydia can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), an infection of the ovaries and fallopian tubes. PID can cause tubal pregnancies, as well as infertility. Chlamydia poses a major risk to health and future re-

production in women, but knowing about prevention can greatly reduce that risk.

There are several actions people can take to decrease the risk of infection, such as consistent use of condoms, and limiting the number of sexual partners. In addition, testing is available to detect both symptomatic and asymptomatic infec-

tions.

If an infection is detected before it spreads, it can be treated with a course of antibiotics, and the complications of chlamydia can be prevented.

All sexually active women who have more than one partner, or whose partner does, should be tested for chlamydia regularly: at least once per year, or more of-

ten if the number of partners is higher. Men who have symptoms should be checked and treated before they have any further sexual contact.

You can stay sexually healthy by being smart: use condoms, limit the number of sexual partners that you have, know your partners' sexual histories, and have regular testing.



# We're here to help!

Call these extensions for answers to your public health questions at 613-549-1232 or toll free at 1-800-267-7875.

## **Child & Babytalk Phone Line.....1555**

Public health nurses answer prenatal, infant, and child care questions, and provide resources on family health issues.

## **Communicable Disease.....1287**

Public health nurses, inspectors, and infection control practitioners answer questions about infectious diseases and childhood illnesses.

## **Dental Health.....1218**

Information on services including treatment programs, dental screenings in elementary schools, and sports mouthguards.

## **Dial-a-Dietitian.....1224**

Registered dietitians answer questions about food, nutrition, and healthy eating.

## **Environmental Health.....1231**

Public health inspectors provide information on indoor air quality, food safety, private sewage system inspection, and well water testing.

## **Flu Info Line.....1433**

Information on KFL&A Public Health's FREE influenza vaccine clinics across the KFL&A area, including dates and locations.

## **Infant Hearing.....1145**

Parents of newborn babies in southeastern Ontario are offered free hearing screenings to detect newborns with signs of hearing loss.

## **Immunization Information Line.....1451**

Information on immunization, including provincially funded childhood immunizations is provided.

## **Immunization Reporting Line.....1451**

Parents can call to report their child's immunizations so that immunization records are kept current.

## **Living Well Phone Line.....1180**

Information on getting and staying active, community programs, workplace wellness, and walking routes is provided.

## **Raise a little health!.....1102**

This educator information line assists teachers with their health teaching and booking resources.

## **Preschool Speech & Language.....1184**

Early Expressions is a system of partner agencies that provides speech and language services to preschool children living in the KFL&A area. Early Expressions will accept referrals for children not yet eligible for senior kindergarten.

## **Sexual Health.....1275**

Confidential counselling and information about birth control and sexually transmitted infections are provided by public health nurses.

## **Tobacco Information Line.....1333**

Information on quitting smoking, tobacco and the law, community resources, and other tobacco issues is provided.

## **Travel Clinic Line.....613-549-2335**

Travellers can call to book appointments for the Travel Immunization Clinic.

## **Volunteer Programs.....1159**

Volunteers are an important part of a dedicated team delivering educational programs to KFL&A area residents.

## Volunteers, the heart of public health services and programs

KFL&A Public Health volunteers are an important part of a dedicated team working towards better health. Volunteer programs are designed to be creative, meaningful, and available to everyone in the community. As each of us is an individual, so are our interests, skills, and availability. Volunteers at KFL&A Public Health receive orientation and training, gain new skills and valuable experience, and make a difference by working together for better health.

- Last year, 160 volunteers contributed 7,068 hours of service reaching 9,984 people throughout the KFL&A area. Services included providing breastfeeding support, providing information on healthy eating and safe food handling, promoting falls prevention messages, and encouraging the community to walk more and be active.
- Nine new Breastfeeding Buddy, six new Raise a little health!, and two new Early Expressions Preschool Speech & Language volunteers were recruited and screened, and received training in 2010.
- Community Food Advisor volunteers and KFL&A Public Health staff hosted the provincial two-day CFA Conference at St. Lawrence College, bringing 120 participants to the area.
- Last year, the Walk On program added new walking opportunities.
- Networking meetings for specific programs provided continuous opportunities for education updates for volunteers.
- A cross program team developed "Effective Display" training for Community Food Advisors and Falls Prevention Ambassador volunteers.
- Volunteers took part in the initial Acces-

sibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act training.

- The Volunteer Programs Team provided training and leadership development to Kingston & Area Association of Administrators of Volunteers and continues to collaborate with other community partners.
- The Volunteer Programs Team took a lead role in recruiting youth to participate in "Bring your Grade 9 Kid to Work Day."

- Rolling on the Runway involved youth from the Youth Diversion Program.
- In 2010, the Walk On volunteer program involved youth as walking leaders.
- University, college, and secondary students continued to be attracted to KFL&A Public Health for volunteer experience.
- A poster for Volunteer Programs information and general recruitment was developed and displayed in all KFL&A Public Health offices.

