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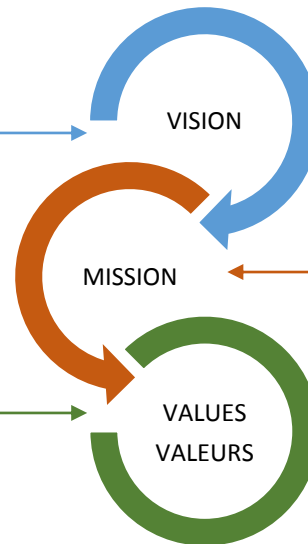
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Le respect • L'adaptabilité • Le fondement sur les données probantes



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La santé publique favorise et protège la santé et le bien-être de tous. Nous y parvenons grâce à la collaboration, à la recherche, aux services, à la communication et à la défense des intérêts.

2020 Mid-Year Program Highlights

Introduction

In addition to regular program planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation, staff were engaged in responding to the Ministry consultation on modernizing public health, and responding to a community pertussis outbreak in the early months of 2020. Since early March 2020, THU has been actively responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, working to protect the health of Timiskaming residents.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic has meant many changes for all sectors. For local public health we have redeployed staff to support the response, focused on essential services, adopted extra measures for health and safety, and adopted priority programs for virtual delivery. COVID-19 public health response activities from March to June include:

- Established virtual tables with system and community partners to engage, inform, and collaborate
- Disseminated numerous Health Care Provider Update Alerts
- Supported screening, testing and surveillance initiatives including the establishment of mobile testing
- Provided infection prevention and outbreak management support to long-term care and childcare facilities
- Conducted case and contact management
- Collaborated on initiatives to mitigate health equity disparities and support priority populations including a community connections line

- Issued media release, public services announcement and responded to media inquiries
- Responded to calls from the public, businesses and organizations
- Posted on social media and developed and updated a dedicated COVID-19 webpage in [French](#) and [English](#)
- Launched health promotion and health protection campaigns to promote physical and mental health, physical distancing, and handwashing in a COVID-19 context
- Maintained priority programs and services

More details can be found throughout this report.

Foundational Standards: Population Health Assessment and Health Equity

Goals: To increase the use of population health information to inform the planning and delivery of programs and services; and to reduce the negative impact of social determinants of health that contribute to health inequities.

- Provided tracking and contact tracing assistance for the local community pertussis outbreak
- Conducted surveillance activities and epidemiological summaries and tracking related to COVID-19
- Completed a Population Health Status Report and Reproductive Maternal, Child Health Report
- Began analysis of THU's first local data collection via the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance Survey
- Developed a briefing note and resolution for the Board of Health regarding THU's response to the Ontario government consultation on the Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Supported equity focused public health practice related to the local COVID-19 response (ensuring a mobile testing solution, identification of priority populations, supporting a community collaborative and related initiatives for mitigating health and well-being disparities related to COVID-19 response)
- Supported awareness raising related to Pride Month, National Aboriginal History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day, St. Jean Baptiste Day, racism and violence. This included social media posts, internal email blasts and Grand Rounds.

Anticipated Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID-19 (activity variance):

- Internal Health Equity Committee and organizational projects as well as equity impact assessments driven by program level work.
- Completion of the Social Determinants of Health Profile and SES and Demographic Data Collection/Question Proposal.
- Analysis of Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance Survey.
- Support for the development of local Opioid early warning and surveillance system
- Data extraction, analysis, interpretation and knowledge exchange support for program areas and local Ontario Health Team work.

Foundational Standard: Effective Public Health Practice

Goal: THU is responsive to current and emerging evidence, emphasizes continuous quality improvement and supports a culture of transparency.

- Supported content for THU's Annual Service Plan submission to the Ministry
- Several interventions were supported with planning, research, monitoring and evaluation related to the local COVID-19 response. These include Connexions Timiskaming Connections Line, a survey of local private and public transportation providers re: COVID-19 practices and needs, violence screening, monitoring and tracking

of COVID-19 cases and contacts, and the COVID call line and an evidence informed approach to recreation and physical activity promotion and policy within a pandemic context. More information can be found [here](#).

- Conducted a [rapid review](#) of impact of stay home measure on low-income populations. This was part of a collaborative research project with Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit who were conducting a [Situational Assessment for mitigating harms related to COVID-19 public health measures](#).
- Supported survey development to increase understanding of local age-friendly business practice and services needs. Supported evaluation of the Food Sense and Fresh Start Programs and the sharrow initiative with the City of Temiskaming Shores Bike Friendly Community Committee.
- Supported internal practicum student in conducting a literature review for interventions to increase fruit and vegetable consumption among rural youth and adults.
- Conducted intervention research for positive parenting.
- Conducted a situational assessment to support planning of the Timiskaming Children’s Services Planning Table. Presented the assessment internally and with TSCPT partners.
- Completed the local qualitative research report “[All they ever see is the addict.”: Lived Experience of Opioid Use in Timiskaming](#) and presented to the Board of Health.

Anticipated Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID-19 (activity variance):

- Work to assess internal situation related to the OPHS quality and transparency requirements and establish a Continuous Quality Improvement Framework and plan
- Support of THU’s Strategic Plan next steps to develop a strategic activity and monitoring plan
- Support of THU’s smoking cessation intervention for pregnant women pilot evaluation and other planning and evaluation work driven by program areas

Foundational Standard: Emergency Management

Goal: to enable consistent and effective management of emergency situations.

In early 2020 THU was responding to an ongoing community pertussis outbreak which required the activation of the Incident Management System (IMS). As the prevalence of pertussis was nearing zero active cases, a global pandemic was on the horizon. On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. A provincial Declaration of Emergency under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act was issued on March 17th. Previous preparedness and experience from other emergency situations enabled THU to adapt and respond.

- The IMS structure was expanded as the situation evolved and staff were redeployed to various roles.
- IMS Leads met with Incident Command (Acting Medical Officer of Health) twice weekly. Management also initiated weekly meetings to ensure continuity of operations for essential services and staff support.
- A COVID-19 Response Incident Action Plan (IAP) was created and maintained as well as other response documentation tools related to
 - Situation Monitoring and Updates
 - Communications (internal and external including stakeholder groups and priority populations)
 - Liaison (numerous system and partner tables and calls)
 - Operations (e.g. case management and contact tracing, a dedicated screening and call line)
 - Surveillance, Planning and Evaluation
 - Continuity of Operations
 - Occupational Health and Safety
 - Logistics and Finance
- Staff also led work to mitigate health and well-being harms and disparities related to COVID-19 public health measures which was informed and reported on through the IMS structure.

- An evaluation of our IMS response for the first wave of COVID-19 was initiated to inform areas for improvement for subsequent waves and future emergency response situations.

Chronic Disease Prevention and Well-Being

While many activities for Q1-Q2 within this program were paused due the pandemic response, our team continued to support many initiatives.

Goal: Increase levels of physical activity among children and youth and make active living easier in our communities:

- In April, to support municipal decision-makers, we completed and disseminated the document [Evidence and Promising Practices for Management of Outdoor Recreation and Active Travel Spaces during COVID-19: A guidance document for municipalities in Timiskaming](#)
- Adapted delivery of the [Active School Travel Project](#) with 5 Timiskaming schools: completed baseline data collection phase and action planning phase and started project implementation phase; postponed some data collection and in-school activities
- Implemented [30 Days of Outdoor Play Challenge](#) in partnership with DTSSAB and City of Temiskaming Shores; reached 26,314 people via social media
- Supported successful funding application by Town of Cobalt for youth recreational programming project. Through funding hosted by our local community foundations and made possible with a donation from the [RBC Future Launch Community Challenge](#), *Get Out and Get Active with Cobalt Youth Rec!* was launched. Over 35 youth registered to participate in a variety of free after school activities suitable for the whole family.

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- Development and promotion of sleep hygiene guidance for children and youth
- Development and distribution of a childcare settings survey
- Provision of implementation support for Cobalt Youth Recreational Programming
- Supporting municipalities in developing affordable access to recreation programming
- District-wide cycling education program delivery
- Support of planning and delivery of bike Festivals scheduled for Temiskaming Shores and Kirkland Lake

Goal: Improve population eating habits and make health eating easier in our communities

- Supported 2 practicum placements from the [Northern Ontario Dietitian Internship Program](#) (NODIP)
- Supported the NODIP Research Project *Identifying nutrition education needs in community dwelling older adults and how to best address them*
- Completed inspections for [Healthy Eating in Recreation Settings](#) winter concessions
- Prepared and presented a Board of Health Briefing Note on the 2019 NFB Costing Results and Interventions to address household food insecurity as part of an awareness campaign which also included distribution of a related [infographic](#) to community partners, a media release, and 2 webinars. The campaign encouraged participation in the Poverty Reduction Strategy of Ontario consultation.
- Prepared [resources on healthy eating for COVID-19](#) (food security, food banks, Facebook posts)
- Supported [City of Temiskaming Shores COVID-19 older adult grocery gift card initiative](#)
- Initiated [Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program](#) (NFVP) contingency plan due to COVID-19 school closures as per the Ministry and Ontario fruits and vegetables growers association (OFVGA). From week of April 20th to June 29, the NFVP supported on average 330 households every week in the THU district with the delivery of fruits and vegetables. A local partnership group was formed to support the distribution and included

(Schools, volunteers, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Royal Canadian Legion, Haileybury Food Bank, City of Temiskaming Shores, Stock Transportation, Matachewan and Temagami First Nation Band Office). A Facebook campaign was developed to help promote the program.

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- Support to Food Literacy Network
- Body diversity work
- Collaborative work with the Community Food Action Work Group
- Healthy Eating in Recreation Settings work, including implementation in Kirkland Lake

Goal: Help community partners to deliver diabetes prevention behaviour change programming

- Fresh Start program 2019-2020 edition completed, with the last 5 sessions delivered virtually due to COVID-19 public health measures

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- Diabetes Prevention Project Timiskaming (DPPT) Partnership meeting and continued partnership-building
- Support partners in delivery of Food Skills for Families Program

Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program. Goal: provide free, routine dental services for low-income seniors 65 years of age and older.

- We have 7 dental offices that have signed on with the program to date and 2 denturists.
- Clients have started to receive treatment (new dentures, cleanings, extractions) with local offices.
- Staff are preparing to offer COVID-19 safe cleanings in house starting the end of September if possible.

Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program	Jan-June 2020
Applied at THU	131
Applied Online	18
# of Unique Seniors Served THU	0
# of Total OSDCP Preventive Appointments at THU	0
# of Unique Seniors Served by Providers	32
# of Total OSDCP Appointments by Providers	38

Substance Use and Injury Prevention

While many activities for Q1-Q2 within this program were paused due the pandemic response, our team continued to support a number of priority initiatives.

Goal: Reduce Tobacco use and exposure

- Delivered tobacco cessation program (NRT) to 38 clients (January to June) which is a reduction in reach
- Implemented communication messages related to tobacco use and COVID-19 as well as cessation resources
- Worked with youth regarding vaping

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- Meetings with the Timiskaming Tobacco Cessation Network
- Youth tobacco prevention work: testimonials, ongoing youth engagement work
- Northeast Tobacco Control Area Network meetings and communication campaigns

- Pregnant Women Tobacco Cessation Incentive pilot program
- Municipal bylaw work/communication

Goal: Reduce the frequency, severity and impact of substance use

- Implemented a communications campaign about acute harms and chronic diseases associated with alcohol consumption, promoting the Canadian Cancer Society’s Lower Risk Drinking Guidelines
- Completed presentations about lower risk cannabis use guidelines to 2 older adults groups, 1 youth group
- Developed and presented a briefing not to the Board of Health on the public health link to Community Safety and Well-Being Plans.

Harm Reduction

Internal Harm Reduction Program						External Harm Reduction Program	
<i>Client Services</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019 (Jan-Dec)</i>	<i>2020 (Jan-Jun)</i>	<i>2019 (Jan-Dec)</i>	<i>2020 (Jan-June)</i>
<i>Male Clients</i>	121	189	197	323	121	284	158
<i>Female Clients</i>	68	108	132	175	68	205	127
<i>Needles Distributed</i>	12,906	20,953	36,549	38,888	23,430	14,481	7953
<i>Safer Snorting Kits</i>			107	473	369	258	225
<i>Pipes</i>			1386	8459	8071*	5567	4710
<i>Naloxone Dispensed</i>			51	128	115	97	37

*Increase in distribution of supplies can be attributed to (1) a “natural” increase since starting the program and which NEP programs are seeing across the province and country (2) more clients accessing our program (3) we provided bulk supplies as many external providers were closed due to COVID-19 making THU the primary distributor since March (4) the most prevalent drugs in our community require the use of pipes.

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- Northeast Alcohol and Cannabis Team: Attend regularly scheduled teleconferences, participate in working groups, contribute to discussions, planning and activities and follow up on action items as required
- Opioid response and drug strategy work including knowledge exchange related to the local research on lived experience of opioid use in Timiskaming. Cross-link to opioid early warning and surveillance system.
- Inform and participate in the process and planning of Community Safety and Well-Being Plans
- Parent and caregiver-focused communications, education and capacity-building about youth substance use including positive parenting approaches. Provide parenting strategies to address youth substance use including positive parenting approaches.
- Support the development of municipal alcohol and cannabis policies related to location density, hours, etc.
- Collaboration with local establishments to protect youth from alcohol-related advertising
- Promote lower-risk cannabis use guidelines including focus on edibles
- Promote pharmacies’ sharps disposal program

Goal: Promote healthy aging and reduce the number and impact of falls for those aged 65 years plus (funded 50% by NE LHIN)

- Contributed to the development of a regional [Stay on Your Feet](#) (SOYF) Communication Strategy including regional website and Facebook page (work included supporting hiring of VS Marketing Consultants, creation of and focus testing of key messages, translation). Website and FB page to go-live September 2020
- Supported [Senior Centre Without Walls](#) partnership and program enhancement which included work with Timiskaming Home Support to expand the calendar in response to the increased participation due to the pandemic, offering COVID-19 info sessions including a Q&A session to older adults living at seniors apartments and how to stay socially connected while physically distancing
- Contributed to [Age Friendly Communities](#) work which included progress reporting on last year's plans, setting priorities for the upcoming year, and input provided to the Temiskaming Shores Recreation Master Plan
- Worked to reduce social isolation among older adults which included promotion of the [Cyber Seniors Program](#) that connects youth mentors with seniors looking to learn to use technology and developing an inventory of virtual exercise programs to promote to seniors as a way to stay active
- Delivered the [Rising Stars](#) senior volunteer networking event and workshop (coordinated a workshop for all senior volunteers across the northeast)

Goal: Reduce the frequency, severity and impact of injury

- Continued to support the Active School Travel project through road safety lens

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- Working towards Vision Zero for municipalities
- Promotion of increased safety on Highway 11
- Promote ATV/Snowmobile safety
- Promotion of Safe Kids Week focused on preventing childhood falls
- Safe boating campaign

Goal: To increase positive mental health in THU as a workplace and the community.

- Low key promotion of mental wellness in the workplace (THU) -second phase of Not Myself Today
- Shared resources with workplaces across Timiskaming about supporting mental health within COVID
- Promoted local Mental health week with 5 ways to wellbeing (related to COVID) campaign (social media)
- Began work towards National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace for THU

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- Mental Health First Aid Training for front line staff
- Conduce internal environmental scan of THU programs and their relation to mental health
- Build internal capacity to apply trauma and violence informed care and understand and mitigate the impact of adverse childhood events
- Build community partner capacity to do mental health promotion work in Timiskaming
- Deliver SafeTalk program in partnership with NEOFACS
- Implement strategies to increase public mental health literacy

School Health

Many activities were not carried out as planned due to the closure of schools in mid-March related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some highlights of activities for January to June are listed below.

Goal: to achieve optimal health of school-aged children and youth through partnership and collaboration with schools.

School Health Program

- Supported contact tracing related to the community pertussis outbreak
- Completed PALs (Playground Activity Leaders) training at Holy Family School
- Supported implementation of the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program in all schools until mid-March
- Provided KLDCS resources and tools on anti-vaping
- Participated in DSB1's [Virtual Pride Parade](#) through the submission of staff photos of support
- Sacred Heart, Central PS, Federal PS and St. Jerome school were given resources around daily physical activity for students and activities to tie positive mental health messages into fun group-based activities
- Created and disseminated a school newsletter for the month of May to keep schools informed on THU updates, school programs and plans that were relevant to COVID-19

School Immunization Program

- Supported in-school immunization clinics in response to the community pertussis outbreak (unanticipated).
- Staff have been re-deployed to in-house clinics offering immunization catch-up with appropriate client screening and PPE.

School Oral Health Screening and Vision Screening Program

- Completed 2019-2020 school year oral health screening as planned.
- The 2019-2020 vision screening program was not completed as planned due to school closures as a result of provincial emergency orders to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Oral Health - Dental Screenings						
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 (Jan-Jun)
<i>Pre-Kind/Kind & Grade 2 In-School Mandatory Program</i>	555	937	800	---	---	---
<i>Pre-Kind/Kind, Grade 2, 4 & 7 In-School Mandatory Program</i>				985	915	632
<i>Additional Grades In-School Screening</i>	1043	2217	1350	654	n/a	n/a
<i>Office Screenings</i>	292	238	248	231	193	50

School Vision Screening Program			
Senior Kindergarten Students	2018	2019	2020 (Jan-Jun)
<i>Number Screened</i>	146	143	28
<i>Number Referred to Optometrist for Vision Exam</i>	62	63	14

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- 2020 in school-vaccine clinics were not held as planned (Grade 7 Program second dose and secondary school clinics). Enforcement of the Immunization School Pupils Act is on hold and related education sessions for non-medical exemptions.
- With school closures, not all schools were reached with the vision screening program. Schools that did receive the vision screening program: Elk Lake, Kerns, Englehart and Temagami public schools, école catholique St-Louis, école publique des Navigateurs.

Healthy Growth and Development

Goal: to achieve optimal preconception, pregnancy, newborn, child, youth, parental, and family health.

- Prepared and presented a briefing note to the Board of Health on discontinuation of the FairStart Program.
- Number of children treated with fluoride varnish at day care (Jan to June 2020) was 56 noting that the program was put on hold due to COVID-19.
- Staff began work on establishing a virtual breastfeeding class and prenatal class on labour and delivery.
- Staff are exploring a partnership with Brighter Futures to offer an online parenting classes.
- Continued to promote the online prenatal class and communications on other healthy growth and development topics were adapted to integrate a COVID-19 context.

Healthy Babies – Healthy Children Home Visiting Program

The HBHC Screen helps to identify families in need of assistance and guidance in achieving their parenting goals. THU has maintained a high percentage of screen completions as per benchmarks established by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS).

The table below reflects the percentage of mom and baby dyads who were screened at different times. Partnership efforts with Temiskaming Hospital result in greater postpartum screen completion and increased connections of families with public health services (Source: BORN database).

**Note that prenatal reflects the period of time before the baby is born, postpartum reflects the newborn to 6 weeks of age period of time and early childhood is the 6 weeks to 6 years period.*

HBHC Screens	2017	2018	2019	2020 YTD
Prenatal	78.5%	71.3%	82.2%	64.7%
Postpartum	101.8%	96.9	96.2%	71.9%
Early Childhood	7.24%	6.19%	3.14%	1.23%
HBHC Client Visits	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total # of Home Visits	325	418	206	101
Family Resource Worker Visits (FRW)	158	254	116	41
Public Health Nurses (PHNs) Visits	167	164	90	51

- Received Ages and Stages screening training in Englehart along with community partners.
- Prenatal and postpartum phone follow-up as well as postpartum mood disorder follow up was maintained at 2 months and 6 months.
- While many staff were redeployed to COVID-19 response, essential services remained available.

Planned Q1-Q2 activities impacted by COVID-19 (data/activity variance):

- Hospital access was limited at the beginning of the pandemic, it took a few weeks to map out a plan to access prenatal and postpartum discharge information. We continue to work with the hospital to assure we get timely paperwork.
- Well Baby Clinics were completely paused but are now resumed on a reduced basis per demand. Screening is being completed over the phone.
- The family home visiting program stopped during the early stage of COVID-19. Virtual visiting has started as well as looking to offer outdoor home visiting in July.
- The fluoride varnish program in licensed childcare was put on hold.
- Collaborative initiatives through the Timiskaming Children Services Planning Table.
- We continue to wait for guidance from the ministry.

Immunizations, Infectious & Communicable Diseases Prevention & Control

Goal: to reduce or eliminate the burden of vaccine preventable diseases through immunization and to reduce the burden of communicable diseases and other infectious diseases of public health significance.

- Offered priority adult and primary series immunizations with appropriate screening, PPE and environmental controls in place as the local COVID-19 situation improved and reopening businesses, services and public spaces progressed.
- As noted under school health, catch-up for the 2019-2020 Grade 7 and high school students was also offered in office. This involved directly calling parents and some awareness and promotion activities.

Planned Q1-Q2 activities postponed due to COVID (activity variance):

- In house clinics were not held as planned and demand was lower.

Immunization Program					
	2019	2020	2020	2020	2020 YTD
Immunizations Administered in Office	<i>Total</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>KL</i>	<i>ENG</i>	<i>Total</i>
# of clients receiving immunizations	1648	723	201	96	1020
# of immunizations administered	2263	1231	370	188	1789
Travel Health Consultations	<i>Total</i>	<i>NL</i>	<i>KL</i>	<i>ENG</i>	<i>Total</i>
# of consultations	882	317	109	N/A	426
Note: These numbers do not include Influenza Vaccine					

Year	Vaccine Fridge - Cold Chain Inspection					
	KL		NL		ENG	
	Total inspections	Total failures	Total inspections	Total failures	Total inspections	Total failures
2016	13	2	24	5	5	0
2017	12	10	28	7	5	2
2018	15	11	32	10	5	1
2019	22	7	30	12	10	2
2020 YTD	6	11	8	2	3	1

The majority of cold chain inspections are completed during the summer months.

Sexual Health					
<i>Client Services</i>	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 (YTD)
<i>Male Clients</i>	129	127	164	308	122
<i>Female Clients</i>	864	805	644	1014	265
<i>% of clients between 12-24</i>			66%	63%	39%
• <i>Contraceptives</i>	929	846	198	112*	75*
• <i>Plan B</i>	41	25	23	25*	2*
• <i>STI Tests</i>	215	201	257	329	85
• <i>Pregnancy Tests</i>	28	36	37	39	10
• <i>Blood-Borne Infection Tests</i>	124	97	140	148	16

*Note: [OHIP+](#) launched January 1st, 2018, dramatically shifting where the majority of youth under the age of 25 obtain their contraceptives and Plan B.

Infection Control					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 YTD
Reportable Disease Investigations (non-STI) ¹	67	59	102	37	66
Outbreaks - Institutional ¹	21	36	33	21	20
Outbreaks - Community ¹	0	0	0	1*	1*
Animal Bite Reporting	29	85	77	74	28
Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) ¹	82	61	78	67	32
Personal Service Settings Inspections (<i>hair salons, tattoos, piercings, aesthetics</i>)	47	50	52	44	2

Pertussis outbreak declared in November 2019 and ended in April 2020

Tobacco Control

Tobacco Enforcement					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Inspections	432	355	336	357	81
Charges	5	6	9	7	1
Warnings	126	103	82	166	28

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some premises were closed by order from the province. The greater impact on the lower inspection rates are due to the fact that we were not able to conduct our test shopper program due to

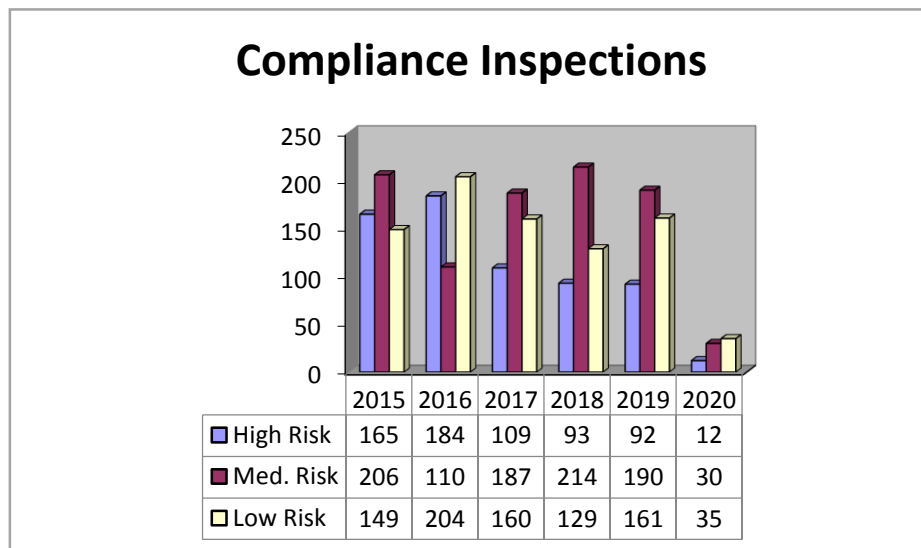
health and safety concerns related to COVID-19. We also had reduced capacity overall within the Tobacco Enforcement Program in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Safe Water

Safe Water Inspections				
<i>Drinking Water</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
Small Drinking Water Systems	19	13	48	0
<i>Recreational Water</i>				
Public Beaches (<i>Seasonal Jul-Aug</i>)	16	17	17	0
Pools	25	18	28	5
Recreational Camps/Beachfront (<i>Seasonal Jul-Aug</i>)	11	9	11	0

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, pools and recreational camps were closed by order from the province. Many premises with small drinking water systems (SDWS) were also closed or simply not operating by choice. Our beach sampling does not begin until July, therefore it is usual to not have data at this time. This, along with our Public Health Inspector (PHI) resources being re-assigned to our Incident Management System (IMS) to deal with the pandemic, accounts for the low volume of inspections. We also had reduced capacity overall in our PHI team in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Food Safety



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority of premises were closed by order from the province. This, along with our Public Health Inspector (PHI) resources being re-assigned to our Incident Management System (IMS) to deal with the pandemic, accounts for the low volume of inspections. We also had reduced capacity overall in our PHI team in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Land Control

Septic Systems	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Permits Issued</i>	131	111	124	106	66	20
<i>File Searches</i>	60	60	66	64	55	21
<i>Severance/Subdivision</i>	15	15	29	20	13	2

Due to COVID-19 the land control program had a very late start this year as operations were not allowed under the provincial order at the beginning of the building season. Since it has been authorized for this area of work to commence the program has been more active, although numbers for the year are still expected to be lower.

In the Spotlight

Local Public Health Stories



THU Staff Featured in the OPHA Public Health Hero's Campaign

THU staff Angie Manners (Manager and CNO), Christina Baier (PHN), Ray Gullekson (PHI) were featured through a public health hero campaign led by Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA). The campaign aims to share a glimpse of the work that happens behind the scenes among public health teams working tirelessly during the COVID-19 pandemic and every day helping communities stay healthy and safe. The campaign and public health profiles can be found here [https://opha.on.ca/What-We-Do/Projects/what-is-health-equity-\(1\).aspx](https://opha.on.ca/What-We-Do/Projects/what-is-health-equity-(1).aspx)

THU work to mitigate unintended health and well-being harms and disparities

Much of THU's capacity was diverted due to COVID-19 to pandemic response. In addition to infection prevention and control work, THU facilitated a number of initiatives to mitigate unintended harms related to the public health measures put in place to protect against the COVID-19 virus:

- Implemented the [Connexions Timiskaming Connections](#) service to connect those who need support due to COVID public health measures with community volunteers or services. By June 30, 33 request for help had been received and responded to, with a total of 61 volunteers registered by that time.
- Responded to inquiry from community partner about the infection prevention needs of public transportation providers by adapting a COVID-19 guidance document for [transportation providers](#) and [passengers](#), conducting a COVID-19 needs assessment survey with transportation providers (taxi, public transit, non-profit agencies), releasing an [Evidence Brief](#) regarding safe management of transportation services during COVID-19 and guidance to support transportation in Timiskaming.
- Responded to local partner-raised issue of inequitable access to digital information and services—due to limited access to affordable and quality Internet, digital devices and/or related skills with development of an evidence brief [Access to Technology in Timiskaming: The digital divide](#)

On Our Radar: Timiskaming's Digital Divide

- There is a digital divide in the District of Timiskaming: a discrepancy between those who have access to information and communication technologies and the benefits they provide and those who don't. This divide can be the result of many factors including high costs for technology and online access and limited Internet connectivity in rural Northern Ontario.

- Lack of equitable access to technology has become a critical issue for many and the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the issue. Now more than ever there is a need to be connected as many mental and physical health services are being delivered virtually, financial supports often require online applications, many are required to participate in distance learning, and/or have the ability to work from home and family and friends are able to maintain social connections through online tools while physically distancing from each other.
- Barriers to technology was raised by partners as a gap needing to be addressed. As a result, an [evidence brief](#) was put together by THU, which included an outline of the problem and potential solutions based on a scan. The *Closing the Digital Divide* Community Partner Project aims to address inequity through the provision of technology and Internet to those experiencing barriers. Funding has been received from DTSSAB, United Way and Temiskaming Foundation, totalling \$120,000 to implement this program. These funds will allow technology to be more accessible to local seniors, individuals and families experiencing financial hardship.

Human Resource Update



The comings and goings of our colleagues

New Staff:

- Public Health Nurse – Kirkland Lake - Contract (*Jan-2020-Jul 2021*)
- Research-Policy-Planning Analyst – Permanent – New Liskeard (*Dec 2019*)
- Epidemiologist – New Liskeard - Contract (*Jan-2020-May 2021*)
- Program Manager/Family Health – New Liskeard - Contract (*Jan-2020-Jun 2021*)
- Public Health Promoter – Permanent – New Liskeard (*Jan 2020*)
- Research-Policy-Planning Analyst – Permanent – Kirkland Lake (*Jan 2020*)
- Registered Dietitian – Kirkland Lake – Permanent (*February 2020*)
- Research-Policy-Planning Analyst/Collaborative Project – Contract – New Liskeard (*Feb-June 2020*)
- Dental Assistant – Permanent – Kirkland Lake (*Mar 2020*)
- Registered Dietitian – Kirkland Lake – Permanent (*July 2020*)
- Public Health Nurse – Kirkland Lake - Permanent (*July 2020*)
- Public Health Nurse – Kirkland Lake - Contract (*Oct 2020*)

Resignations:

- Research-Policy-Planning Analyst – Permanent – Kirkland Lake (*Dec 2019*)
- Community Health Worker/RPN – Kirkland Lake, Contract (*Jan 2020*)
- Public Health Nurse – Kirkland Lake, Permanent (*May 2020*)
- Registered Dietitian – New Liskeard, Permanent (*August 2020*)
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard, Permanent (*September 2020*)

Current Vacancies:

- Public Health Nurses –District Wide/NL – Contract
- Public Health Inspector, Kirkland Lake, Permanent
- Program Manager-Human Resources/Special Projects, Contract, Kirkland Lake, 2-Year Contract



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