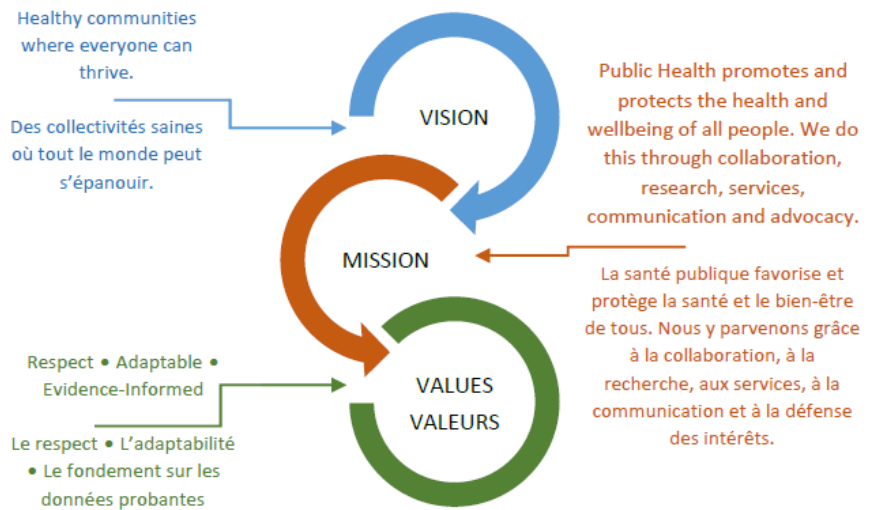


Report Content

- [On Our Radar](#)
- [THU in Action - Our Stories](#)
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Year-End Highlights Summary

At the time of this report capacity is limited due to ongoing local COVID-19 response. Managers and staff have put their best effort forward to convey local public health work of 2020 and importantly what work was postponed or cancelled as a result of COVID-19. THU's 2020 midyear report can be found [here](#).

Currently On Our Radar

February 2021 - At the time of creating this 2020 yearend report, a significant proportion of staff resources continue to be dedicated to the local COVID-19 response. The following public health topics and local initiatives are on our radar in February of 2021.

Local COVID-19 Response

Internal incident assessment and planning meetings are being held twice weekly to guide the overall response which includes:

- COVID-19 Vaccine Operations: planning, monitoring, evaluating and reporting on an equitable Timiskaming COVID-19 Vaccine Program including significant stakeholder engagement and the development and implementation of a communications plan to address vaccine hesitancy and expectations.
- Ongoing communications and liaison work for outbreak prevention and management with changing guidelines due to variants of concern.
- Ongoing case and contact management and COVID phone line operations.
- Actions to mitigate health and well-being harm and disparities due to COVID-19 and related public health measures.

Paid Sick Days

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgency to address the gap in access to paid sick leave. THU staff are preparing a briefing note for action for the March 2021 Board of Health. The briefing note recommends provincial government policy for paid sick leave during COVID-19 and beyond as well as support in principle of Bill 239 –Stay Home If You Are Sick Act. A small local public education campaign will be launched regarding paid sick leave as an effective way to limit the spread of COVID-19 and support health and well-being beyond the pandemic.

Timiskaming Drug Strategy

Work is underway to initiate a comprehensive drug strategy for Timiskaming district. After an initial information session in December 2020, THU is now working towards co-convening an initial Steering Committee meeting. A local drug strategy using a four pillar approach is recognized internationally as an effective way to address the harms associated with substance use focusing on Prevention, Harm Reduction, Enforcement, and Treatment. THU will embed our work on opioid surveillance and response into the drug strategy framework.

Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

With an updated requirement to be completed by July 1 2021, THU continues to engage with partner discussions to support the district-wide facilitation of a collaborative municipal [Community Safety and Well-Being Plan](#). THU staff have developed an inventory of locally available data that relate to the CSWB and allocated staff time within the 2021 program year to support communities in this work.

Health Canada consultation on Concentration of Nicotine in Vaping Products Regulations

THU staff are drafting a letter in support of the new regulation, proposed [Concentration of Nicotine in Vaping Products Regulations](#) to establish a maximum nicotine concentration of 20 mg/mL for vaping products in Canada and prohibit the sale of vaping products if the nicotine concentration exceeds that value.

Timiskaming Health Unit in Action

Our people – our stories.

Foundational Standards

Population Health Assessment and Health Equity Highlights

To address Population Health Assessment and related protocol THU allocates resources within this standard and across THU programs to achieve the PHA objectives. Activities highlights are described below.

- Analysis and reporting of local Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System data; [partial \(only a few modules were analyzed and draft reports available internally\)](#).
- Update THU health status report (morbidity, mortality, health and wellness); [completed](#).
- Update maternal and child health report; [partial \(is available to internal staff but not published\)](#).
- Participate in Mamow Ahyamowen, a Northern Ontario Indigenous Health Information Partnership, and offer support when culturally appropriate or requested; [canceled](#)
- Work with partners to create a sustainable opioid surveillance strategy to support early warning and response; [delayed](#). [Updated opioid data snapshot and supported Kirkland Lake Opioid Task Force](#).
- Participate in local Ontario Health Team "in-development"; [canceled](#).
- Routinely monitor and share diseases of public health significance surveillance data; [completed](#).
- Finalize and share Profile of the Social Determinants of Health in Timiskaming Report; [postponed](#).
- Supported surveillance and analysis of local pertussis outbreak; [completed](#).
- Maintain COVID-19 epidemiological data to inform action planning and weekly public report; [ongoing](#).
- Supported local launch of COVID-19 Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System online survey; [completed](#).

- Maintain internal health equity committee and advance initiatives to build organizational capacity and address identified gaps; [postponed](#).
- Build relationships with priority populations as a step toward an engagement approach; [postponed](#).
- Strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities and apply learning from the NE First Nation Meaningful Engagement LDCP toward meaningful engagement of Indigenous partners; [ongoing and advanced related to COVID-19 response supports](#).
- Conduct health equity impact assessments for programs as requested; [reduced number](#).
- Advocate for healthy public policies that reduce health inequities (e.g., poverty reduction policies), and working with local municipalities to incorporate a health in all policies lens (as opportunities arise); [ongoing, provided a response to Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy, call for Basic Income for Income Security during Covid-19 Pandemic and Beyond, Monitoring of food insecurity and food affordability](#)

Throughout the pandemic, THU staff have worked with community partners to identify and collaboratively address inequitable impacts to people's health and well-being related to the pandemic or the pandemic response. This work was previously unplanned and included the following initiatives:

- Creation of a [Community Support Collaborative](#), made up of representatives from a broad group of agencies spanning the District of Timiskaming, whose purpose is to help local agencies to support

vulnerable and at-risk populations in identifying and responding to emerging needs and support coordination, information sharing, problem solving, and collaboration among community partners

- Implementation of the [Closing the Digital Divide project](#) to address the inequitable access to digital technology that exists in Timiskaming.
- Implementation of a project to support public transit, taxis and other transportation providers across Timiskaming with [evidence-based guidance on infection control measures](#) to protect drivers and passengers, the purchase of masks, and retrofit vehicles with protective dividers.
- Implementation and evaluation of [Connexions Timiskaming Connections](#) to connect those who need help (individuals or organizations in need of volunteers) with available community helpers.
- Established [Mask Depots](#) across Timiskaming to reduce barriers to community members needing a mask.
- Applied a health equity lens to all COVID-specific activities being carried out with schools, including considering impact/risk of advising specific types of masks, being sensitive to and careful to prevent stigma related to bus transportation and infection prevention, being supportive of the importance of children being at school for social and emotional well-being, building awareness of social/economic supports available to support families.

Effective Public Health Practice

Program Planning, Evaluation and Evidence Informed Decision Making, Research, Knowledge Exchange, Communication, Quality & Transparency

- Support program planning situational assessments/updates for routine programs; [largely postponed](#).
- Supported heat map analysis of programs to identify priority programs in an extended pandemic context
- Conduct intervention research; [reduced number completed](#).
- Finalize internal ethics policy and procedures and build internal capacity; [postponed](#).
- Explore opportunities to build relationships with academic research institutions; [postponed](#).
- Consult on data collection methodology (e.g. homelessness count project); [postponed](#).
- Internal research appraisal capacity building (journal club and adopting tools); [postponed](#).
- Develop strategic plan actions, monitoring indicators and reporting plan; [postponed](#).
- Explore a framework and approach for Continuous Quality Improvement; [postponed](#).
- Provided data and consulted on Vital Signs Community survey for Temiskaming Foundation.
- Reviewed the City of Temiskaming Shores Recreation Master Plan and shared findings.
- Evaluate Financial Incentives for Pregnant Women who Smoke; [postponed](#)
- Support evaluation projects upon request; sharrows evaluation, violence screening tool; [completed](#).
- Conducted intervention research and evidence briefs for COVID-19 related topics.
- Monitored and shared COVID-19 research to inform local action including mitigating harms.
- Conducted evaluation of COVID-19 response, digital divide project, COVID Connections Line.
- Supporting monitoring of local COVID-19 cases and contacts.
- Supported monitoring and reported on COVID-19 phone line data weekly.
- Monitored and shared school absenteeism data.

Emergency Management

- After-action debrief of local pertussis outbreak IMS; [canceled](#).
- Consulted on initial COVID-19 Incident Management System and structure, incident action plan and business continuity as requested during wave one. Also consulted on in-action review and evaluation surveys.
- Supported table top exercises, mock scenarios, trigger points, and flow charts for school and childcare setting.

Chronic Disease Prevention and Well-Being

Much of the work planned for 2020 in this program area was interrupted by the pandemic, pandemic response, and by temporarily redeploying staff to work on mitigating some of the health inequities that were brought into the forefront by COVID-19 and to back-filling other program priority areas of work.

Active Living

Activities planned in 2020 to meet stated objectives and yearend status:

- Consult with child care providers to determine needs related to physical activity, physical literacy and active outdoor play, also integrating sun safety. [Postponed.](#)
- Promote active outdoor play: develop playground community of practice, organizational policy, communications campaign. [Carried out 2 social media campaigns, remaining activities postponed.](#)
- Research interventions to support affordable access to recreation activities. [Postponed.](#)
- Partner with local champions to support affordable physical activity (PA) opportunities & focused community conversations to identify and address gaps in accessible affordable PA. [Supported ongoing work in Cobalt, remainder postponed to 2021.](#)
- Participate in local healthy kids municipal programming. [Attended meetings, supported when occurred.](#)
- Support municipalities in increasing shade in recreation areas. [Postponed.](#)
- Support and build on physical activity social marketing campaign(s). [Postponed.](#)
- Build on targeted diabetes prevention work with reach beyond the Diabetes Prevention Project Timiskaming (DPPT) participant group. [Cancelled.](#)
- Support Town of Kirkland Lake (TKL) and City of Temiskaming Shores (TS) with continued Age Friendly Community work & promote inclusion of PA while championing health equity. [Postponed.](#)
- Promote sleep toolkit published by Ontario Society of Physical Activity Promoters in Public Health to various audiences. [Postponed. Shared sleep messaging with partners as opportunities arose.](#)
- Built environment initiatives: [Participated on City of TS Bicycle Friendly Community Committee; Implemented Share the Road campaign; supported TKL's Bike Month in May.](#)
- Engagement with municipalities re. importance of across-the-lifespan lens: primer for councils, Share the Road, 8-80s & Green Communities. [Developed and distributed Municipal Active Travel tool which resulted in initiating an active travel project with TKL as well as interest in Matachewan.](#)
- Organize bike festivals (including bike exchange) in KL & City of TS. [Both events cancelled. Work carried on to find a suitable venue for 2021 events.](#)
- Respond to complaints re. Compliance with Skin Cancer Prevention Act. [No complaints received in 2020.](#)

Healthy Eating

Status of activities planned in 2020 to meet stated objectives:

- Promote sustainability of Healthy Eating in Recreation Settings (HERS) work at the City of TS and TKL arenas. TS: Carried out concession inspections and shared results as planned, all other activities cancelled. TKL: [all activities cancelled.](#)
- Continue promoting and updating the Local and Charitable Food Map. [Map updated and translated to French. Promotion postponed to 2021.](#)
- Conduct Healthy Menu Choices Act enforcement, as needed, and related advocacy. [Complete—0 new premises requiring inspection, 0 compliance complaints received.](#)
- Support local food security work through the Temiskaming Community Food Action Network. [Carried on meetings through 2020. Developed and delivered proposal for community fridge in partnership with the City of Temiskaming Shores.](#)
- Plan and implement local communication campaign for Nutritious Food Basket 2019 results. [Complete.](#)

- Work with ON Dietitians in PH Food Insecurity Working Group to support their efforts on provincial & federal advocacy for food insecurity. [Little participation among other health units due to pandemic.](#)
- Support coordination of the Food Literacy Network (2 meetings/year, ongoing communication). [Cancelled, with email updates exchanged with partners to maintain connection.](#)
- Support the planning and implementation of the FSFF program in the older adult population. [Cancelled.](#)
- Northern ON Dietetic Internship Program Research Project: serve as advisor for an intern-led project with primary care exploring ways to support older adults with nutritional risk, and work the Stay on Your Feet Program to define next steps. [Main projects completed: FSFF/Food Sense evaluation \(data analysis and draft report\); co-presented at THU on Food Insecurity; updated draft THU Healthy Eating Proposal; Grocery Store Tour & SCWW session; update THU website; data entry for Fresh Start pre-evaluation.](#)
- Cross-link: Supported THU's Healthy Growth and Development program with updated resources.

Diabetes Prevention

Activities planned in 2020 to meet stated objectives related to the prevention of Type 2 Diabetes (T2D):

- Build on the DPPT Partnership: meetings 3x/year (or as needed), connecting with partners individually by email, phone or in person. [Maintained connection with partners.](#)
- Enhance relationships with all priority population community partners. [Postponed.](#)
- Explore new and innovative partnerships to increase initiative reach and effectiveness. [Postponed.](#)
- Build community partners capacity to support their clients by identifying and/or providing training opportunities. [Postponed.](#)
- Enhance relationship with francophone community partners to improve reach to francophone individuals at risk of T2D. [Postponed.](#)
- Coordinate Food Skills for Families (FSFF) planning, implementation and evaluation. [Cancelled.](#)
- Support community partners in the FSFF implementation. [Cancelled.](#)
- Work on finding funding sources to support community partners in implementing FSFF. [Postponed.](#)
- Coordinate Fresh Start planning, implementation and evaluation. [Held 22 sessions with 35 participants across the district in 2019-2020 program. Last 5 sessions delivered as virtual due to COVID.](#)
- Continue to nurture Primary Care partnerships to enable continued Fresh Start delivery. [Postponed.](#)
- Support a collaborative communication campaign with northeastern public health units, with active involvement of the local partnership. [Cancelled.](#)
- Support local awareness raising initiatives focused on diabetes prevention. [Cancelled.](#)
- Coordinate a physical activity workplace & community challenge. [Cancelled.](#)
- Work with partners to develop and implement the Activating Community Action Grants program. [Cancelled.](#)

Substance Use and Injury Prevention

Much of the work planned for 2020 in this program area was interrupted by the pandemic, pandemic response, and by temporarily redeploying staff to work on mitigating some of the health inequities that were brought into the forefront by COVID-19 or to back-filling other priority areas of work.

Alcohol and Drug Use

Status of activities planned in 2020 to achieve the stated objectives:

- Support development of Community Safety and Well-Being Plan(s). [Postponed.](#)
- Monitor and respond to community substance use trends as identified within Enhanced Harm Reduction and Sexual Health Programs. [Carried out public communications re. substance use and COVID.](#)
- Develop and implement a comprehensive anti-stigma campaign. [Initiated in 2020, ongoing.](#)

- Seek, support, leverage or promote existing interventions and opportunities (internal and external ones) that relate to substance use risk and protective factors. [Postponed](#).
- Support the development and revision of municipal alcohol and cannabis policies. [Postponed](#).
- Influence parental attitudes and behaviours re. youth substance use. [Postponed](#).
- Explore interventions to promote moderate and lower risk alcohol use. [Postponed](#).
- Communications to reduce harms related to cannabis (vaping, edibles and impaired driving). [Postponed](#).
- Collaborate with THU’s harm reduction service providers with education and promotion. [Complete](#).
- Hosted a community stakeholder discussion toward a comprehensive drug strategy for Timiskaming which integrates opioid response. Attended Kirkland Lake Opioid Task Force meetings.

Harm Reduction Program (Enhanced) - Naloxone Distribution and Training

Design and implement local opioid response initiatives; [see above re: comprehensive drug strategy](#).

Implement or support implementation of opioid overdose early warning system; [environmental scan completed, approach drafted and connections made with EMS and OPP](#).

Act as a naloxone distributor for community organizations; [completed \(separate program reporting done\)](#).

Provision of harm reduction supplies and naloxone and offer of health teaching, high risk vaccination and BBI testing; [ongoing and separate Ministry reporting completed](#).

Manage inventory; [Onboarding of provincial database to track harm reduction services](#). HRSPs will use NEO to record information about the clients who access, participate in, and/or are reached through the provincial harm reduction programs including their respective satellite/mobile needle exchange sites. This information will help service providers manage their programs, and increase the Ministry’s ability to monitor and analyze trends, as well as provide a tool for efficient and standardized data collection

Engage community partners for program expansion; [Elk Lake nursing station as well as the Englehart and District Family Health Team have been added](#)

Increase awareness of naloxone and its availability among stakeholders, the public and priority populations; [completed](#).

Harm Reduction and Naloxone Program

Internal THU Program						External Program		
<i>Client Services</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
<i>Client Encounters (NEP and HR Supplies)</i>	189	297	329	498	353	149	489	582
<i>Client encounters for Naloxone</i>					168			45
<i>Encounters with friends/family for Naloxone</i>					30			11

Harm reduction (HR) programs and practice aim primarily to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of the use of legal and illegal psychoactive drugs without necessarily reducing substance consumption. HR interventions respect the rights of individuals to use such substances, increase awareness regarding lower risk use, and address risk and protective factors related to harms. The distribution of HR supplies has proven to be an effective method in reducing blood-borne infections associated with injection drug use, such as HIV and hepatitis C. The distribution of safer drug supplies also provides a point of access into health and social services for clients who may not otherwise have access to such services, as well as opportunities for education and safer drug use practices.

Tobacco

Status of activities planned in 2020 to achieve stated objectives:

- Engage youth re: e.g. vaping, industry advocacy, sacred vs. commercial tobacco. [Cancelled](#).

- Provide resources to schools on priority topics work with school team to assess. [Cancelled](#).
- Research and implement evidence-based interventions in schools work with school team. [Postponed](#).
- Promote smoke-free campuses: build on-campus support, advocate for policy (Northern College, 5th Wheel). [Smoke Free Campus CTV media ads through TCAN; remainder postponed](#).
- Implement community-based awareness strategies re risks of vaping and emerging topics. [Postponed](#).
- Contribute to mass media campaigns- deliver testimonial campaign district wide. [Complete \(ran on CTV\)](#).
- Provide Nicotine Replacement Therapy to those without other access. [Complete](#).
- Provide cessation counselling and resources to the community as needed. [Information was added to THU website about the added risk of smoking with the risk of COVID-19. NRT vouchers supplied to Latchford medical centre who does not have a STOP program](#).
- Engage trades-based workplaces in quit programs. [Resources were shared with one local large employer](#).
- Promote the implementation of the Ottawa Model/comparable in 3 hospitals. [Partially complete](#).
- Pilot financial incentives cessation intervention for pregnant women, increase access to STOP and promote the use of the Ottawa Model as regular practice within Family Health Teams: [Postponed](#).
- Support organizations that work with priority populations by sharing resources as needed. [Complete](#).
- Collaborate with THU teams on ways to support clients who use nicotine. [Postponed](#).
- Promote the establishment of smoke-free outdoor areas during public events on municipal property; research the effectiveness of signs in curbing the behaviour vs having designated areas. [Ongoing](#).
- Provide resources on smoke-free outdoor areas to workplaces upon request. [Complete](#).
- Home environments: Multi-unit housing, single family dwellings - add information to THU website. [Complete: Multi-unit housing media campaign](#)
- Determine impact of non-regulated tobacco on local population and most appropriate intervention. [Postponed](#).
- Advocate for the implementation of policies that regulate tobacco/vaping industry. [Participated in Smoke-Free Movie advocacy prior to removal of ratings system](#).

Mental Health Promotion:

Status of activities planned in 2020 to meet stated objectives:

- Build THU staff's capacity to do MHP work: follow up to internal environmental scan of THU program needs; collaborate with other THU teams to identify programming gaps. [Postponed](#).
- Build stakeholders' capacity to do MHP work in the community: share knowledge on key concepts, approaches, evidence-based workplace initiatives, and health inequalities; Modify discussion guide for use with stakeholders; Share with partners; tailored conversations/learning with CMHA, NEOFACS; Broker/facilitate training as able/needed. [Partially complete; work ongoing](#).
- Collaborate with partners to enhance/implement MHP programs and services across the life course in a range of settings: Support programs and services to increase opportunities for social connectedness Leverage/reinforce community-based programming. [Postponed](#).
- Build internal capacity to educate partners re: trauma-informed care (ACEs) and how to mitigate the harms. [Initiated, work ongoing](#).
- Develop and implement strategies to increase individuals' knowledge of: Mental health vs mental illness (including treatment options and how to seek help); protective and risk factors associated with positive MH (including coping skills); relationship between mental and physical health. [Complete](#).
- Offer educational sessions related to enhancing skills related to MH: Implement sustainable programs that aim at enhancing coping skills; Implement suicide risk and prevention education activities (e.g. safeTALK). [Pivoted to online learning and registered for START – suicide alertness training. Had 12 registrants by end of December 2020](#).
- Monitor policy window opportunities to advocate for positive MH and/or educate the public on how they can advocate for it. [Ongoing](#).

- Mental Health Parity policy advocacy as opportunities arise (provincial and federal). [Ongoing](#).
- Develop and implement MHP initiatives for THU staff: Support the establishment of a common understanding of key concepts; Provide MH literacy training to staff; Implement activities that promote social connectedness; Provide resources on coping and how to achieve positive MH; Assess workplace environment and perform research on evidence-based initiatives based on need. [Partially completed](#).
- Build internal capacity to promote MH in THU as a workplace: Integrate MHP perspective into THU Policies (policy review and recommendations); Provide management with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote MH in the workplace. [Postponed](#).

Injury Prevention

Status of activities planned in 2020 to meet stated objectives:

- Share local road safety data, resources and information with community partners regarding health inequities in order to establish communication, cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders. [Partially completed](#).
- Actively participate in community coalitions (TDRSC) and regional networks (NIPPN, OIPPN). [Reduced](#).
- Promote safety on municipal and provincial roadways (e.g., Vision Zero, school drop-off zones, active travel etc.) [Complete](#).
- Promote school bus safety, Young Riders Day, I Stop You Stop Campaign Support and promote National teen Driving Week held October 22nd to 28. [Implemented Virtual Young Riders Day, promoted Canada's Safest Driver contest, school bus safety with return to school](#).
- Support and promote Parachute's National Teen Driving Safety Week 2020. [Cancelled](#).
- Winter driving 2020 campaign (with TDRSC) (work with auto partners). [Cancelled](#).
- Promote impaired driving campaigns (and other complementary campaigns). [Cancelled](#).
- Promotion of safe riding and helmet use messaging (point of sale, enforcement, under age ridership risks etc.) (Promote Helmet access program in partnership with OPP, retailers, helmet fit clinic. [Postponed](#).
- Concussions: prevention promotion, Rowan's Law and related requirements. [Postponed](#).
- Support and promote Parachute's Safe Kids Week 2020. [Cancelled](#).
- Promote web-based resources to early childhood service providers. [Cancelled](#).
- Promote Home Safety Checklist and Independent Living Guide. [Postponed](#).
- Support Seniors Centre Without Walls (SCWW) program to reach socially isolated seniors. [Completed](#).
- Promote transportation services and work with partners to explore rural solutions. [Postponed](#).
- Work with community partners to apply health equity lens to SOYF activities. [Postponed](#).
- Work with local hospitals to incorporate SOYF resources into packages given to seniors discharged from hospital back into the community. [Completed](#).
- Continue to support AFC work in the City of TS. [Some work completed, most postponed](#).
- Support the TKL AFC work including AF needs assessment. [Postponed to 2021](#).
- Network with regional partners in Northern Ontario Age Friendly Network. [Completed](#).
- Develop and share key messages around Fall Prevention Month and increase awareness of PA options for older adults. [Modified to meet pandemic needs—created an inventory and promote quality virtual exercise options for seniors as well as promote the kitchen sink exercises to stay active at home](#).
- Support partners in planning and delivery of campaigns, services, tools and programs including exercise programs, healthy eating (SCREEN/Food Skills for Families), medication management etc. [Cancelled](#).
- Support the coordinated planning and delivery of Stand Up/PIED and Community Exercise Classes and promote PA options across the continuum to partners and older adults. [Cancelled](#).
- Support 3 peer to peer senior volunteer performance troupes in sharing SOYF messages. [Cancelled](#).
- Work with Regional WG to determine & promote medication management messages. [Postponed](#).
- Work with partners to promote Staying Independent Checklist (self-risk assessment). [Complete](#).
- Support health care providers in implementing falls risk screening and assessment. [Cancelled](#).

- Share SOYF resources with health care providers (integration into EMR). **Complete.**
- Promote RNAO Best Practice Guidelines for Fall Prevention within institutions and work with partners on gap analysis tool to improve on guideline implementation. **Modified: being completed at regional level.**
- Participate in the Regional SOYF Strategic Committee and working groups. **Complete.**
- Maintain and expand a diverse network of key stakeholders engaged in fall prevention via Local SOYF Timiskaming Coalition and relevant working groups. **Complete.**
- Engage a diverse group of older adults to inform local planning and identify champions to take action. **Postponed.**
- Support knowledge sharing and networking among local exercise facilitators. **Cancelled.**
- Connect local stakeholders with updates about new and emerging information and best practices related to falls prevention. **Complete.**

Healthy Growth and Development

Many staff were redeployed to the COVID-19 response. Below is the status of 2020 activities, programs and services as outlined in the Annual Service Plan.

The Timiskaming Children’s Services Planning Table led by DTSSAB was cancelled for all of 2020.

Reproductive Health Status of activities planned in 2020 to meet stated objectives:

- Offer prenatal education consisting of online and in person prenatal classes: **No in-person prenatal groups were offered in 2020. Prenatal classes continued to be offered online. A supplementary prenatal class on labour and delivery was created due to demand.**
- one-on-one and group lactation consultations: **We have maintained virtual and in office appointments. A virtual breastfeeding class was created.**
- Co-teach in schools as requested; **cancelled**
- Implement/support communications campaigns; **Some communication campaigns were supported through collaboration with other internal programs**
- PPDM screening and service referral: **mothers have been called at 48 hours, 2 months and 6 months. Analysis of PPMD and 18 month spreadsheet and PPMD infographic on hold.**
- Car seat inspections clinics and training: **cancelled. Virtual supports available and 1:1 appointments as needed.**

Deliver all components of the MCCSS funded Healthy Babies Health Children Program. We continue to offer virtual and in-office HBHC visits as well as some in-home visits as.

- Hospital Liaison: daily visits to Temiskaming Hospital were canceled due to COVID-19 requiring reliance on hospital staff to complete screens.

HBHC Screens	2017	2018	2019	2020
Prenatal	78.5%	71.3%	82.2%	65%
Postpartum	101.8%	96.9	96.2%	70%
Early Childhood	7.24%	6.19%	3.14%	2%

HBHC Client Visits	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total # of Home Visits	325	418	206	140*
Family Resource Worker Visits (FRW)	158	254	116	51
Public Health Nurses (PHNs) Visits	167	164	90	68
FRW and PHN Joint visits	--	--	--	21

*In 2020 the number of families with a service plan initiated (new families on blended HV program) = 10. Total # of live births born within and out of the health unit district 307.

Child Health Status of activities planned in 2020 to meet stated objectives:

- Policy and Supportive Environments:
 - Maintain BFI designation increase staff’s capacity to meet clients’ needs using a multi-disciplinary and holistic approach. [BFI maintenance activities postponed.](#)
 - Support external partner knowledge for effective child health programs and supportive environments; healthcare provider newsletter, THU website; [Cancelled.](#) Planning table [supported situational assessment and positive parenting research.](#)
- Post-Natal Education, Awareness and Skill Building
 - Deliver group parenting programs such as Mother Goose and Nobody’s Perfect. [Cancelled](#)
 - Implement public communication campaigns including THU website. [Cancelled.](#)
 - Support breastfeeding peer to peer initiatives including Timiskaming Breastfeeding Peer Facebook group. [Breastfeeding buddies FB page was maintained.](#) [Evaluation postponed.](#)
- Post-Natal Programs and Services
 - Collaborate with and support community partner knowledge to provide programming support, training (e.g., car seats, breastfeeding) and resources. [Brighter Futures and EarlyOn supported with virtual parenting/child health support, in the KL area.](#)
 - Implement well baby clinic visits (including immunization, screenings and referrals as needed); [immunizations and WBC visits continued.](#)
 - Training was completed on Infant Child Mental Health, however partnership discussions for action have not continued.

School Health

Oral Health Screening:

Oral Health - Dental Screenings						
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<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	105

Due to resources being redeployed to the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that schools were shut down at times and/or not allowing outside people in when they were open, screening numbers are lower than usual this year.

Vision Screening Program:

School Vision Screening Program			
Senior Kindergarten Students	2018	2019	2020
<i>Number Screened</i>	146	143	0
<i>Number Referred to Optometrist for Vision Exam</i>	62	63	0

Unfortunately, the vision screening program was not able to take place this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are working on plans for 2021 to be able to offer this service in some form again, along with educational resources to be shared in the interim.

School Health Immunization and Licensed Childcare

Enforce the ISPA and deliver mandatory non-medical exemption sessions; [cancelled](#).
 Assess immunization records for those attending school and enrolled in licensed child care; [completed](#).
 Conduct screening and send notices for missing immunization information; [completed](#). [Process for school-aged was modified due to pandemic IPAC measures in schools and ability to see clients. Used periodic targeted phone calls and some direct mail notices mass media.](#)
 Support child care operators in their related duties; [completed](#).
 Deliver immunization awareness and education sessions to Grade 7 students [cancelled](#).
 Promotion of school-aged immunization; [completed](#).

School Health - Other

Most of the work planned for the school setting in 2020 was interrupted by labour disputes, school closures, and by the redeployment of staff to back-filling other priority public health and pandemic response work. Much of this work applies to public, private and First Nation schools, and to some extent child care settings.

Activities fall under each of the categories below, carried out based on school need, interest and capacity. The following were carried out in 2020 to address stated objectives:

Healthy eating supportive environment and policy.

- Participated in advocacy for Bill 216 Food literacy in school, advocacy for universal Student Nutrition Program (SNP) and improvements in SNP
- Actively participated in Ontario Dietitians in Public Health Student Nutrition Working Group initiatives and providing input on SNP improvements; assisted Red Cross with ensuring menu items follow the nutritional standards outlined in the SNP guidelines; created a SNP COVID protocol, FAQ and provide guidance on running SNP for each school when needed; supported schools struggling with running SNP during COVID by suggesting funding opportunities, or better ways to run SNPs
- Actively participated in meetings with Red Cross and Porcupine Health Unit RD; carried out planning, implementation and monitoring/support of Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program.

Healthy eating education, awareness and skill development

- Provided back to school social media posts to provide tips for healthy lunches during COVID-19
- Supported student hydration as part of a healthy diet through supplying water bottles to schools
- Wrote healthy eating section of school newsletters and provided consultation/resources to school staff as needed

Physical activity and sedentary behaviour supportive environment & policy

- Promoted active school travel (AST): developed district wide charter to guide coordinated approach to promoting active school travel, endorsed by municipalities and school boards
- Implemented Sidewalk Stencils project: purchased stencils and painted along AST routes & family-oriented community spaces in TKL, City of TS and Cobalt. Also made available to schools for playgrounds
- Referred schools to Physical and Health Education Canada resources for COVID-19 context.
- Supported schools in developing COVID-safe extra-curricular plans for planned sports for the students
- Collaborated on funding applications for healthy schools work (healthy eating, physical activity)

Physical activity and sedentary behaviour education, awareness and skill development

- Promoted AST and safe cycling skills programming and implementation virtual Young Rider's Day.

Healthy Sexuality supportive environment & policy Postponed.

Healthy sexuality education, awareness and skill development

- Offered STI/Contraceptive teaching boxes to teachers to support curriculum needs in secondary schools
- Offered virtual presentations in-lieu of in-person co-teaching

Mental health promotion & resiliency supportive environment and policy -Postponed.

Mental health promotion & resiliency education, awareness and skill development

- Offered support to schools in offering Roots of Empathy through their trained staff
- Participated in meetings with school staff including to plan and promote youth mental health activities

Substance use and Harm reduction supportive environment and policy- Postponed.

Other injury prevention, UV exposure, Violence, Infectious diseases and suicide prevention

- Supported schools in outbreak prevention and management (Pertussis Outbreak) and supported case and contact management

COVID-19 School Program Outbreak Prevention and Management

With Ministry of Education funding additional nurses were added to the school health team. The funding focus was to support COVID-19 response work in addition to supporting routine school health work and child care settings. Highlights of this work in 2020 include:

- On-site Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) visits at every school with ongoing answering of questions, real-time support related to COVID and IPAC
- Ongoing review of plans/proposals from school boards and schools (e.g. re. music class, school procedures, extra-curricular activities)
- Implementation of School COVID phone line for school staff, weekly Directors of Education/Public Health Unit teleconference and Zoom calls with school staff from each school board

- Implemented school nurse contact for child care operators and staff, offered to join weekly calls with Operators, regular zoom calls with DTSSAB CAO, Children’s Services Manager, and child care supervisor.
- Correspondence to school staff, parents supporting/encouraging/promoting IPAC measures
- Provided liaison and support to school bus consortia
- Ongoing Social media for parents/caregivers (e.g. promoting PH measures, promoting mental health)
- Co-teaching related to hand hygiene and proper mask use
- Development of school COVID and child care COVID web page on THU website for schools, operators and parents/caregivers
- Developed preparatory resources for outbreak response—internal flow charts/decision tools, pre-drafted communications.
- Biweekly Timiskaming Health Unit-Porcupine Health Unit collaborative call

Immunizations and Infectious and Communicable Disease Prevention and Control

Infectious and Communicable Disease Prevention and Control

COVID-19 Case and Contact Management

- In 2020 there were 97 cases of COVID-19 requiring case management and contact tracing. Timiskaming experienced a significant uptick in cases in late December.
- Staff from various THU programs were trained as case investigators or contact tracers

Reportable Diseases and Infection Control					
Client Services	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Reportable Disease Investigations (non-STI)	67	59	102	50	n/a
Outbreaks - Institutional	21	36	33	21	21
Outbreaks - Community	0	0	0	1	n/a
Animal Bite Reporting	29	85	77	72	64
Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)	82	61	78	85	81
Personal Service Settings Inspections <i>(hair salons, tattoos, piercings, aesthetics)</i>	47	50	52	49	31

- With an ongoing outbreak of pertussis carrying over from 2019, THU staff were involved in significant case management and contact tracing and updates to schools and area health care providers. THU worked closely with Public Health Ontario and received technical support and validation on our public health actions. Additional vaccine clinics were held.

Immunization – Vaccine Safety and Vaccine Administration

Immunization Program				
Immunizations Administered in Office	NL	KL	ENG	Total
# of clients receiving immunizations	1328	470	242	2040
# of immunizations administered	2610	904	501	4015
Note: These numbers do not include Influenza Vaccine Generated from PANORAMA-R07090 Immunization Administered or Wasted at Health Unit				

- Primary immunization and high-risk immunization clinics were maintained in office.
- School-age immunizations were promoted to be received by THU and in-office due to COVID-19
- In-school immunization clinics were held by the school health team in the north end of our district.

Year	Vaccine Fridges - Cold Chain Inspections					
	KL		NL		ENG	
	Total inspections	Total failures	Total inspections	Total failures	Total inspections	Total failures
2017	12	10	28	7	5	2
2018	15	11	32	10	5	1
2019	15	7	30	12	10	2
2020	18	11	24	3	8	1

2020-21 Universal Influenza Immunization Program

- Community flu clinics were modified this year to adhere to COVID-19 protocols. Clinics were offered in regularly scheduled communities. One notable change was the requirement for appointment booking and the elimination of the walk-in concept. Clients could book their appointment online or call THU to make an appointment. In preparation for each influenza season, the THU reviews data to inform planning of our local program and allocation of resources. This season, we utilized information from our surveys last year to inform our communications campaign. We saw a slight decrease at each community clinic; however, the pharmacies' availability to acquire and administer the influenza vaccine, including the high dose and health unit's limited supply of the high dose can explain the lower attendance. Additionally, widespread provincial and national media coverage may also have contributed to overall increase in community immunizations.
- We continued limited in-office clinics by appointment.
- Along with all other health units, we experienced significant delays in vaccine shipments and also received less than what we were originally allocated. This presented a challenge as we needed to ensure enough vaccine for both our community clinics and district health care providers. The high dose influenza vaccine was also in high demand.
- Community pharmacies continued to administer flu vaccines to individuals over the age of five. Pharmacies receive their influenza vaccines directly from their suppliers rather than through Health Units, however Health Units are required to track pharmacy influenza inventory in Panorama. Between October and December, local pharmacies provided over 3,400 vaccines.

Travel Health Vaccine Program

Travel vaccine clinics were put on hold during phases of the pandemic.

Travel Health Consultations					
Office	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Kirkland Lake	272	259	210	208	109
New Liskeard	595	620	695	611	324
Englehart	<i>(included in New Liskeard Statistics)</i>				

Sexual Health Program:

Sexual Health					
Client Services	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male Clients	129	127	164	308	292
Female Clients	864	805	644	1014	690
% of clients between 12-24			66%	63%	56.3%
Contraceptives (sold)	929	846	198	195	72
Contraceptives (prescribed)					138
Plan B	41	25	23	25	16
STI Tests	215	201	257	329	241
Pregnancy Tests	28	36	37	39	20
Blood-Borne Infection Tests	124	97	140	148	58

- Promote and deliver sexual health clinical services; [virtual and in-office appointments were maintained during the pandemic.](#)
- Support school co-teaching and healthy relationships clinics; [School Health Team healthy relationship clinics were put on hold in 2020.](#)
- Conduct case and contact management/tracing for STI/BBI cases; [completed](#)
- Promote public communication campaigns and stakeholder awareness of healthy sexual practices; [cancelled.](#)
- Provide support and education to health care providers; [health care provider newsletters were cancelled.](#)

Sexual health services at THU include:

- Information on sexually transmitted infections (STIs), free testing and treatment of STIs;
- Confidential and anonymous HIV testing;
- Pregnancy testing and information about Emergency Contraception Plan B, affordable contraception and free condoms. The OHIP+ program (2018) decreased the demand for THU contraceptives.
- Pap tests to those less than 25 years of age.

Land Control

Septic Systems	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
<i>Permits Issued</i>	131	111	124	38	66	76
<i>File Searches</i>	60	60	66	28	55	65
<i>Severance/Subdivision</i>	15	15	29	10	13	8

Although the Land Control Program had a delayed start this year due to the pandemic, once construction projects related to this program were allowed to begin again the activity picked up. The volume actually ended up much better by year's end than the first indication we had at the beginning of the pandemic.

Tobacco Enforcement

Tobacco Enforcement					
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Inspections	432	355	336	357	220
Charges	5	6	9	7	1
Warnings	126	103	82	166	73

Tobacco inspections and test shopper program were also affected by the pandemic. Fewer inspections were able to be completed and the test shopper program was not able to take place this year.

Safe Water

Due to the pandemic some inspections were not able to take place. For small drinking water systems many locations were not operational. At some points of the pandemic pools were also not operating and therefore fewer inspections took place.

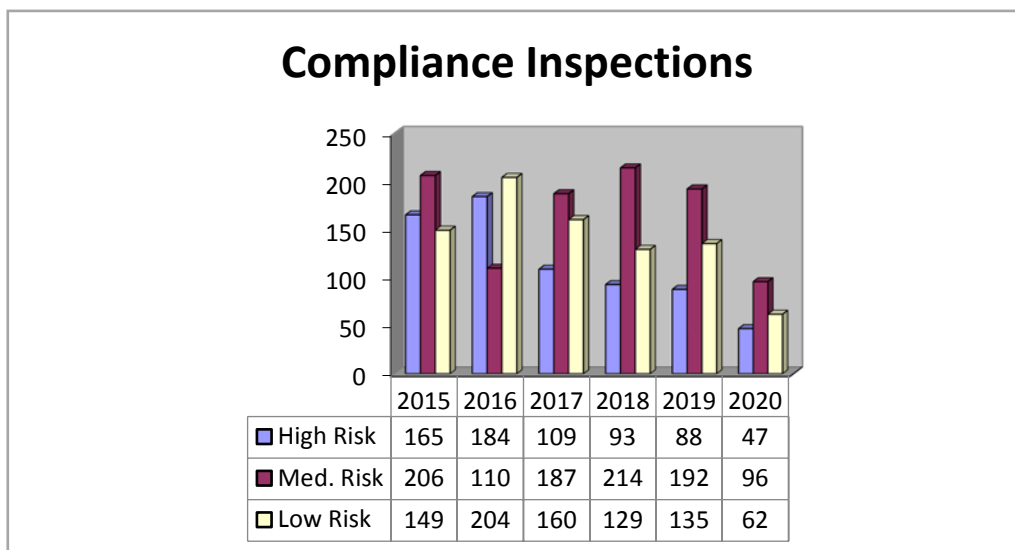
By provincial order, recreational children's camps were not authorized to operate in 2020, therefore no inspections were needed. During this time our Public Health Inspector team supported the recreational camps through education and interpretation of provincial orders and regulations relating to the state of emergency.

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	2
<i>Recreational Water</i>				
Public Beaches (<i>Seasonal Jul-Aug</i>)	16	17	17	19
Pools	25	18	28	8
Recreational Camps/Beachfront (<i>Seasonal Jul-Aug</i>)	11	9	11	0

Healthy Environments and Climate Change

The collaborative climate change adaptation project between the seven northern public health units was largely put on hold during 2020 due to the pandemic. At the beginning of the year the team had developed a workplan for moving forward, which unfortunately was delayed as the pandemic hit. Work has recently started up again with the collaborative, with community engagement being a priority next step.

Food Safety



Due to the pandemic the number of inspections is lower in 2020. Many of the premises were not operational due to restrictions. Also, our internal resources were re-deployed in other areas of covid work. We did spend an increasing amount of time working to inform the owners/operators of the continued requirements and changes for them to follow in relation to the orders/regulations set by the province during the pandemic. We also followed up on various complaints with respect to covid requirements at these locations.

Food Handler Certifications						
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Englehart	63	26	23	75	58	3
New Liskeard	90	68	144	351	182	19
Kirkland Lake	70	41	58	127	15	34
Total	223	135	225	553	255	56

In order to support the reduction of close contact between individuals during the pandemic, in person Food Handler courses were very limited. Support was given to people by providing them with on-line course opportunities as well as proctoring their exam if they wanted to challenge it after self-study. Since they had on-line options there were still food handler certificates issues by these systems for residents in our area, so it should be noted that our 2020 numbers do not mean this is only people that received training and certificates within our district.



Upcoming Events

The following list contains *some* of the upcoming events and opportunities that THU staff are participating in or supporting.

- *Nutrition Month - March*

2021 marks THU's 70th Year! 2021 will be a memorable year in many ways. We will monitor for some capacity to consider how to acknowledge this occasion.

Human Resource Update

The comings and goings of our colleagues



New Staff:

- Public Health Nurse – Englehart - Contract *(September 2020-December 2021)*
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard - Contract *(September 2020-December 2021)*
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard - Contract *(September 2020-December 2021)*
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard - Casual *(September 2020-June 2021)*
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard - Contract *October 2020-October 2021)*
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard - Contract *(October 2020-April 2021)*
- Public Health Inspector – Kirkland Lake - Permanent *(October 2020)*
- Public Health Promoter/Communications – New Liskeard - Contract *(Nov 2020-Nov 2021)*
- Public Health Promoter – New Liskeard - Permanent *(December 2020)*
- Public Health Nurse – Kirkland Lake - Contract *(January 2021-June 2021)*
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard - Permanent *(December 2020)*
- Secretary I – Kirkland Lake - Permanent *(February 2021)*
- Health Data Analyst – New Liskeard - Contract *(March 2021-June 2021)*
- Secretary I – New Liskeard - Contract *(March 2021-December 2021)*
- Secretary I – New Liskeard - Contract *(March 2021-December 2021)*

Resignation:

- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard - Permanent *(November 2020)*
- Epidemiologist – New Liskeard - Contract *(December 2020)*
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard - Contract *(March 2021)*

Retirement:

- Senior Public Health Nurse – Kirkland Lake *(December 2020)*
- Dental Hygienist – New Liskeard *(December 2020)*
- Public Health Nurse – New Liskeard *(December 2020)*
- Public Health Promoter – New Liskeard *(November 2020)*

Current Vacancies:

- COVID-19 Immunizers, Clerical Support – District Wide
- Public Health Nurses
- Public Health Promoter – Active School Travel



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