



Protecting and promoting
health in Grey-Bruce

2024 Annual Report

Grey Bruce Public Health

publichealthgreybruce.on.ca



We acknowledge this territory as an important meeting place for many Indigenous peoples spanning countless generations. We acknowledge the water, the forests, the open spaces, and the animals that roam here.

As part of our work to protect and promote health in this region, we are dedicated to learning from and engaging in meaningful dialogue and actions with our Indigenous neighbours. We acknowledge our pledge to better our relationships with the original stewards of this territory and all who call it home.

We recognize this land in the spirit of reconciliation - an intentional act that honours the history of Turtle Island and the original caretakers of this territory, now referred to as Grey and Bruce counties.



Grey Bruce Public Health

2024 Board of Health



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From the Office of the MOH

Dr. Ian Arra

Dear readers,

In 2024, Grey Bruce Public Health stood at the intersection of challenge and opportunity.

As we worked to address an escalating opioid toxicity crisis, counter misinformation about life-saving vaccines, and respond to infectious disease threats, GBPH also continued to lay the groundwork for a healthier future for everyone in Grey-Bruce.

This included updating our organizational strategic plan, renewing a commitment to Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) designation, and fostering partnerships, including with local Indigenous communities. Throughout it all, the Grey Bruce Public Health team remained laser-focused on our mission: protecting and promoting the health and well-being of all Grey-Bruce residents.

This annual report serves to highlight the organization's many accomplishments from 2024, along with the challenges our team navigated and overcame, and the opportunities we embraced throughout the year. As you will see, the highly skilled and compassionate Public Health professionals at GBPH support and provide services to people throughout the life course.

For example, our Healthy Babies Healthy Children program supports families with children who have not yet begun school, while our School Health team offers vision screening assessments for young children and operates School Health Centres in secondary schools, our Vaccine Preventable Diseases team holds vaccination clinics in local schools, our Environmental Health program includes services for homeowners and business operators, and our Oral Health team oversees a publicly funded dental program for low-income seniors.

Beyond these front-line services, we also conduct population health assessments, work to address the social determinants of health, support equity-deserving populations, and strive to promote health, prevent injury and illness, and improve community health.

Our work is only possible because of strong partnerships, including our collaboration with local Indigenous communities, community organizations, school boards, businesses, and individuals.

On behalf of the Grey-Bruce Board of Health, Grey Bruce Public Health's Senior Management team, and everyone at GBPH, I am thrilled to share this Annual Report.

I hope it serves as a testament to the critical importance of Public Health, a celebration of the amazing team we have at GBPH, and a thank you to the communities, partners, and individuals who we count on to assist us in our shared mission.



Dr. Ian Arra
Medical Officer of Health & CEO
Grey Bruce Public Health



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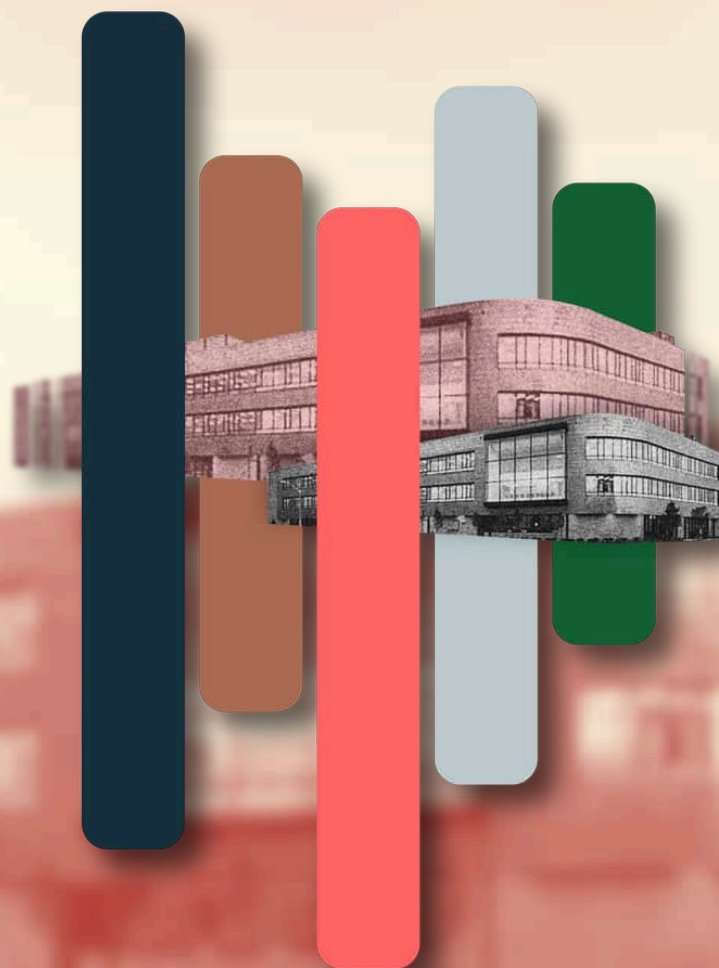
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Mission

Working with Grey Bruce communities to protect and promote health.



Vision

A healthier future for all.



Values

Respect, Integrity, Transparency and Excellence.

Projects

GBPH Updates Strategic Plan

Grey Bruce Public Health completed a mid-point review and refresh of its strategic plan in 2024.

A Strategic Implementation Working Group was assembled to update the plan's strategic directions, initiatives, and outcomes under four pillars: **Community Focus; Capacity & Infrastructure; Quality & Performance; and Determinants of Health & Equity.**

The strategic plan, in effect from 2022 to 2027, states that GBPH will:

- Initiate and foster community engagement and collaboration to build trust;
- Invest in our human resources and optimize our financial stewardship to maximize potential in people, processes, and resources;
- Support community partners and the public to connect the importance and influence of social determinants of health with overall health and well-being; and
- Deliver effective public health programs that are evidence-informed and continually improved to best support population health.

The updated plan can be viewed at publichealthgreybruce.on.ca/About-Us/Strategic-Plan.



GBPH Celebrates Opening of New Dental Clinic

Grey Bruce Public Health began welcoming patients to its new state-of-the-art dental clinic in Walkerton in late summer 2024 – the culmination of years of work to create a bricks-and-mortar facility closer to home for Healthy Smiles and Ontario Seniors' Dental Care Program patients in southern Bruce County.

The 1,380-square-foot clinic, at 200 McNab St., provides a full range of dental services – from checkups to preventative care to treatments.

Members of the Grey-Bruce Board of Health, Grey-Bruce Medical Officer of Health Dr. Ian Arra, GBPH staff, and members of the media participated in a grand opening celebration at the new space on Sept. 5, 2024.

GBPH received Ministry of Health funding to upgrade its dental clinics in 2022, following the launch of the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program, which provides dental services to eligible, low-income seniors aged 65 and older.

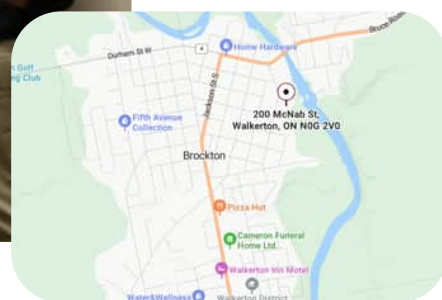
The funding was used to upgrade its Owen Sound and Markdale clinics and build a permanent clinic in Walkerton.

Construction of the new clinic began in March 2024, with substantial completion achieved in late July. The new clinic features two operatories, along with x-ray, sterilization, charting, and consult rooms, a reception area, waiting room, utility room, and lunchroom.

The permanent clinic includes full dental amenities, allowing for weekly dentist clinics.

Prior to the project, GBPH's Oral Health team provided services at two permanent clinics – in Owen Sound and Markdale – and mobile clinics in Wiarton and Walkerton.

In Walkerton, the team set up and dismantled a temporary clinic on each clinic day in a common space at a Bruce County-owned housing complex.



GBPH Launches Drug-Testing Pilot Project

Grey Bruce Public Health received positive feedback and encouraging results from a drug-testing strips pilot project, which ran from April to October 2024.

The project, made possible thanks to one-time funding from the Ontario Harm Reduction Network, allowed Public Health to provide rapid-response drug test strips – designed to detect the presence of fentanyl, benzodiazepines and xylazine in street drugs – to people in Grey-Bruce who use substances. GBPH received 3,720 test kits for the pilot project.

After an initial trial period of distribution to GBPH clients, the Harm Reduction team provided training to 38 staff from eight community partner organizations, including the two local First Nations communities, to support distribution of the strips from their organizations. The training included education for clients about test strip use and interpretation.

Drug-testing strips are a tool that help people who use drugs protect themselves from harm. For someone accessing the unregulated supply of drugs, drug test strips can help them have a better understanding of what is truly in their dose or not, which can lower their risk of experiencing a drug poisoning.

The use of the drug test strips facilitated positive behaviour change amongst clients, with more than three quarters of a sample of clients indicating that because of the test strip results they used a smaller amount, used more slowly, used with a friend, changed dealers, or rejected, returned or disposed of the substance.

Service providers reported that conversations regarding the test strips also helped to build rapport between service providers and clients, providing the opportunity for discussion about readiness to change and reintegration into mainstream medical and social services.

Based on these positive results, Public Health plans to continue offering drug test kits, as budget allows.

Engaging the Public on Climate Change

In 2024, GBPH's Climate Change Matrix team engaged partners, staff and the community to improve understanding of the health impacts of climate change.

The Matrix lead represented Grey Bruce Public Health on several local and provincial climate partnership tables and fostered relationships with Grey County and other local partners through the Public Sector Climate Community of Practice and the Grey County Adaptation Working Group. Participation has led to new relationships with important local voices, like the Nuclear Innovation Institute and Indigenous partners.

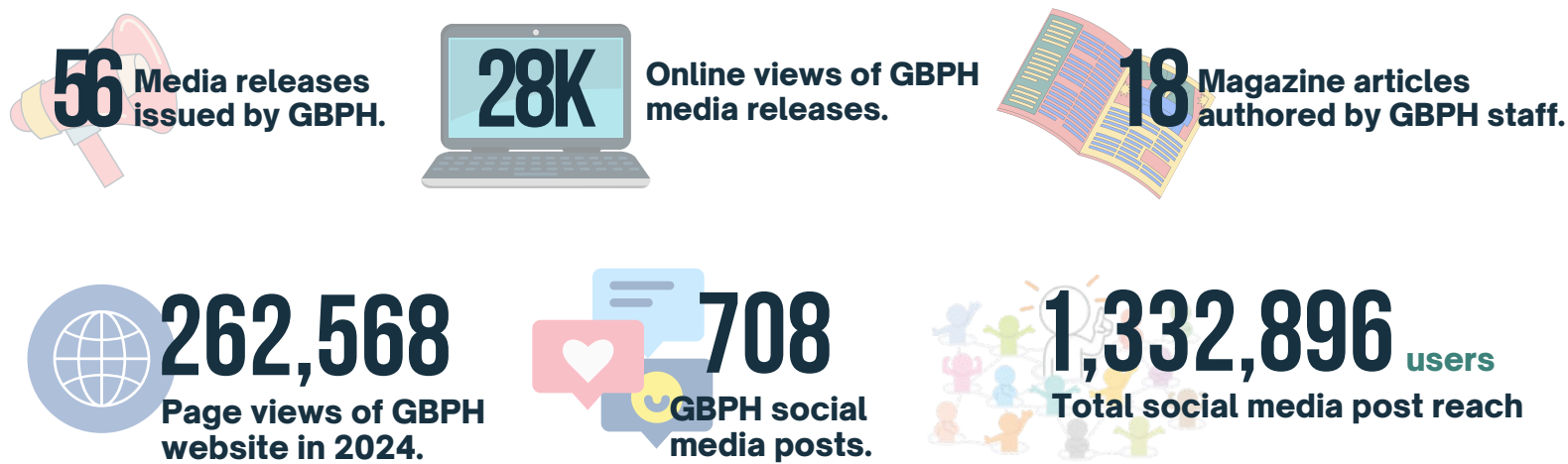
The Matrix Team developed new resources to engage the public on the health impacts of Climate Change, including materials and displays to share through social media, the GBPH website, and at community events like the Owen Sound Earth Day gathering and the Youth Climate Action Conference.

People

Promoting and protecting the health of everyone in Grey-Bruce is at the core of what we do at Grey Bruce Public Health.

In 2024, Public Health raised awareness of its programs and services as well as ongoing and emerging public health issues, and provided training, educational materials, and other resources to people and organizations in Grey-Bruce.

GBPH used various tools for promotion and to inform and engage with people. This included issuing media releases, participating in media interviews, authoring content for magazines, creating educational materials, utilizing social media and other online tools, and offering training sessions.



GBPH team members attended community events to engage directly with the public and promote Public Health programs and services, and participated in panel and roundtable discussions, presentations and other events to share information about GBPH projects, services and research. In 2024:

- Members of the Foundational Standards, Environmental Health, Vaccine Preventable Diseases, and Healthy Babies Healthy Children teams delivered a panel-style presentation at the “Welcoming the World: Diversity and Belongingness Conference,” held Sept. 25, 2024, at the Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre in Owen Sound. The presentation showcased the diverse work, stories, and strategies in supporting newcomers and immigrants across various Public Health programs.
- GBPH presented at the Community Health Nurses of Canada’s national conference on a collaborative approach to addressing the emerging issue of home takeover in our community.
- The School Health team participated in two carousels at the Bluewater District School Board where GBPH staff delivered public health education sessions to different categories of Board staff.
- Members of the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program co-chaired a community partnership table focused on children and youth, which hosted an Adverse Childhood Experiences and Community Resilience Workshop with 64 participants from various sectors and organizations.

- Members of the Infection Prevention and Control, Infectious Diseases, and Vaccine Preventable Diseases teams hosted in-person workshops on fall respiratory season preparedness in fall 2024 for long-term care/retirement home staff, congregate care setting staff, and environmental service workers.
- The Infection Prevention & Control team attended Grown in Grey, Roots of Bruce, and Progressive Safety Days in 2024 to help educate students about the spread of germs and importance of handwashing.
- The Sexual Health team had a booth at the Owen Sound Pride event, with trivia and educational resources/materials about healthy sexuality, and attended a Saugeen First Nation Health Fair in August 2024.
- Members of the Health Promotion team presented at a local Geriatric Refresher Day in October 2024, which was attended by healthcare workers, service providers, caregivers, and older adult advocates. A Public Health Dietitian presented on Geriatric Nutrition: Malnutrition of the Body and Mind, while a Health Promoter presented on Fall Prevention in Grey-Bruce.
- Harm Reduction regularly participates in outreach activities and community events to support community awareness and increase accessibility of harm reduction resources. The Harm Reduction team participated in 13 community events, served 2031 clients at 128 outreach events, including new outreach activities in Bruce County. Further, the team provided 26 education sessions to service providers and community members focusing on Substance Use Disorder, Harm Reduction philosophy and services, overdose response and safe sharps disposal, and updated several educational resources for health and social services partners and community members.





Grey Bruce
Public Health

THIS IS WHAT WE DO

**Here is a look at our 10 main
programs and their
accomplishments in 2024.**



Infectious Disease

The Infectious Diseases team is responsible for preventing the spread of infectious diseases in the community. The team includes Public Health Inspectors, Public Health Nurses, Infection Control professionals, and Program Assistants.

Infectious Disease Case and Contact Management

The team conducts case management investigations and follow-ups related to Diseases of Public Health Significance (DOPHS) and implements GBPH's tuberculosis prevention and control program. This work helps to prevent the spread of serious infections in the community.



1,181

Confirmed cases of DOPHS reported to Grey Bruce Public Health in 2024. This is the highest number ever reported.



over 500+ more cases than 2023.



1,152

Calls from the public to the Infectious Disease 'HelpLine' in 2024.

Outbreak Prevention and Management

The team also helps to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in higher-risk settings, like long-term care homes, childcare facilities and personal service settings (e.g. hair and nail salons and tattoo shops). The team ensures that these settings comply with infection control best practices and provides support on outbreak prevention and management.



526

The number of infection prevention and control consultations conducted in 2024.



182

Outbreaks investigated in 2024.



261

Personal Service Settings inspected in 2024.



54

Childcare facilities inspected by Public Health Inspectors in 2024.

Clinical Services

Sexual health clinical services are offered regularly by the team in Grey and Bruce Counties.



598

Appointments with Sexual Health Clinic clients in 2024.



Vaccine Preventable Diseases

The Vaccine Preventable Diseases (VPD) team works to improve local vaccination rates and promote the benefits of vaccination. They also provide educational support to healthcare providers and the public across Grey-Bruce; the team includes Public Health Nurses, Registered Practical Nurses, Program Assistants, inventory clerks, and a vaccine delivery driver.

Clinical Services

The team administers routine and recommended vaccines, complementing the work done by primary care providers, through community and school vaccine clinics. In 2024, the VPD team also developed a relationship with the Grey County supportive outreach team and Paramedic Services to ensure vaccine accessibility to members of the public who are experiencing struggles with housing or substance use.



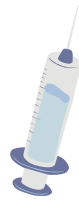
5,001

Clients received publicly funded immunizations at GBPH clinics in 2024.



250

GBPH immunization clinics held in 2024.



10,279

Publicly funded immunizations were administered at GBPH clinics in 2024.

Student Immunization Records

The VPD team reviews student immunization records to ensure compliance with the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) and supports students in meeting ISPA requirements.



1,490

Letters were sent to the families of students in the suspension cohorts whose records were not in compliance with the ISPA during 2023-24 school year.

93% of those students became compliant with ISPA legislation prior to the 2024 suspension deadline due to the work of the VPD nurses and program assistants to get records up to date.

Distribution of publicly funded vaccines

The team manages inventory for all publicly funded vaccines. This includes ensuring vaccines are available across Grey-Bruce through primary care providers, hospitals, shared living settings, and pharmacies. The team also upholds vaccine storage and handling standards to ensure vaccine safety and effectiveness.



13,134

COVID-19 vaccine doses were distributed to 75 facilities/partners through 295 orders in 2024.



24,970

Flu vaccine doses were distributed to 83 facilities/partners through 441 orders in 2024.



159

Vaccine fridges were inspected in 2024, with 153 passing the inspection.





Environmental Health

The Environmental Health team includes Public Health Inspectors and program assistants. Their work keeps residents and visitors to Grey-Bruce safe when they drink a glass of water, eat food from a restaurant, watch their kids play at an arena, take a relaxing dip in a public spa or swim at a public pool.

Water Safety

The team conducts inspections and provides education related to safe drinking water and recreational water safety in Grey-Bruce



84 Adverse drinking water sample results were followed up on in 2024.



349 Inspections of public pools and spas were carried out in 2024.



10,138 Samples from wells and other private drinking water systems were submitted for to the Well Water Testing Program.

Food Safety

The Environmental Health team inspects food premises and responds to complaints to ensure that food served to the public is safe to eat.



1,239 Routine inspections of food facilities considered moderate to high-risk were completed in 2024.



98 Inspections of low-risk food premises were completed in 2024 following food safety complaints

Infection Prevention

The team works to reduce the risk of infectious diseases that spread to people from animals and insects.



722 Potential rabies exposure investigations conducted in 2024, a 30% compared to the previous years' average.



19 Mosquito test locations in Grey-Bruce for the local West Nile surveillance program. In 2024, no mosquito pools tested positive for the virus. West Nile Virus was detected in three wild birds.



Health Promotion

The Health Promotion team, which includes health promoters and other public health professionals, focuses on promoting and improving population health by enabling people to increase control over, and improve their health. The team worked on various initiatives related to built environments, climate change, fall and injury prevention, mental health, nutrition and food systems, physical activity, smoking/vaping cessation and substance use.

Nutrition and Physical Activity



20

Community events, workshops and presentations were held by Public Health Dietitians to provide evidence-based nutrition education, reaching more than 555 participants across Grey-Bruce.



48

Early Childhood Educators trained in 2024 on strategies to foster physical literacy, motor skill development and positive food behaviours.



2

Reports on published about food affordability: *The Cost of Eating Well & The Urgent Issue of Food Insecurity*.

Substance Use Prevention



48,320

Impressions and 443 website clicks were recorded for a Snapchat video campaign during Earth Week 2024 that highlighted the impact of disposable vaping devices on the environment.

NOT AN EXPERIMENT



600+

More than 600 local students participated in interactive events featuring Not an Experiment campaign materials and activities in 2024. Not An Experiment is a comprehensive vaping prevention, education and cessation resource.



Healthy Babies, Healthy Children

Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) is a voluntary home-visiting program designed to support families needing extra parenting support – from pregnancy until their child transitions to school. The HBHC team includes Public Health Nurses, Family Home Visitors, and Program Assistants.

Home-visiting

The team receives referrals from community partners, including hospitals, and offers regular home visits with clients when needed. The Public Health Nurses and Family Home Visitors work with clients to break down challenges into manageable steps, celebrate family victories and support families in navigating complex systems. The team also collaborates with community partners to co-ordinate care, advocates for families' needs within community systems and build strong networks that support families.



1,531

Grey-Bruce families supported by the HBHC home-visiting program in 2024.



51% increase from 2023.



7,501

Client interactions were recorded in 2024.

Healthy Growth and Development

The team also focuses on prenatal health, positive parenting, mental health, breastfeeding, and early childhood development.



170

Parents received information related to pre-conception, pregnancy, labour and delivery, breastfeeding, and caring for their baby via a free online prenatal platform.



64

Participants from various sectors and organizations attended an Adverse Childhood Experiences and Community Resilience Workshop co-chaired by GBPH.



Harm Reduction

Harm Reduction works to increase community awareness of substance use and associated harms, harm reduction strategies, and service availability, increase the accessibility of services to marginalized and high-risk populations, reduce stigma associated with substance use/addiction; and increase the availability of Naloxone and training on overdose prevention and response. The Harm Reduction team includes Public Health Nurses and Registered Practical Nurses.

Client Services

The team supports clients who use substances through a Needle Syringe Program (NSP). The NSP program prevents infections by providing sterile drug-use equipment, promotes the proper disposal of used equipment, and offers connections to local mental health and addiction services.



23

Needle Syringe Program sites in Grey-Bruce, including 22 partner sites.



11,548

Client interactions recorded through all NSP sites in 2024.



2,443

Sharps containers distributed through NSP sites in 2024.



901

Wound care kits provided to clients in 2024, along with 216 snack kits

Overdose Prevention

The Harm Reduction team also serves as the lead for Naloxone distribution and training in Grey-Bruce.



2,298

Individuals were trained on Naloxone in 2024.



5,582

Naloxone kits distributed by GBPH and partner NSP sites in 2024.

Response Coordination

The team implements the Grey Bruce Opioid Overdose Early Warning System to ensure rapid, co-ordinated, multi-sector responses to local opioid-related events.



215

Reports of suspected opioid-related overdoses were received by Grey Bruce Public Health in 2024.



Tobacco Enforcement

The Tobacco Enforcement team, which includes two Tobacco Enforcement Officers, three Tobacco Test Shoppers, and as-needed program assistant support, plays a key role in ensuring compliance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA) to protect the public from the harmful effects of tobacco and vapour products.

Smoke-Free Spaces

The tobacco enforcement team regularly inspects public places, schools and workplaces identified in the SFOA to ensure they are smoke free.



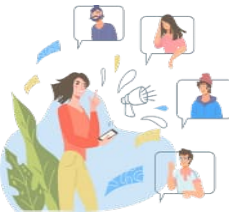
96.3%

of total tobacco enforcement inspections were completed in 2024.



148

Complaints regarding workplaces and other public spaces where tobacco/vape use is prohibited were responded to in 2024.



63

Students referred to the School Health team for vaping cessation support as part of the diversion pilot program.

Retail Settings

The Tobacco Enforcement team also inspects retail stores selling tobacco and vapour products to ensure that they are compliant with legislation regarding the sale and advertising of tobacco and vaping products. In addition, the team provides education to business owners and staff about their responsibilities under SFOA and the public about where smoking and vaping are prohibited.



133

Tobacco vendor display, and promotion inspections were completed in 2024.



390

Youth test shopping vendor compliance inspections were completed in 2024.



951

Premises that sell tobacco products were visited in 2024.



Oral Health

The Oral Health team – made up of Dental Health Educators, Registered Dental Hygienists, a program assistant, and several contract dentists.

Dental Services



2,502

Clients received oral health treatments at GBPH dental clinics in 2024.



4

Dental clinic locations, including Owen Sound, Markdale, Walkerton, and Wiarton. The Walkerton clinic opened in 2024.

Dental Care for Children

The Oral Health team provides dental care to children in Grey and Bruce Counties.



5,819

Elementary school students had dental screenings in 2024. The team provides these government-funded screenings in all Grey-Bruce elementary schools.



526

Grey-Bruce children enrolled in the Healthy Smiles Ontario program in 2024.



58

Children were provided services as part of the Children's Oral Health Initiative.

Dental Care for Seniors

Seniors are also able to access dental services with GBPH.



898

Dental appointments were completed in Grey-Bruce in 2024 as part of the Ontario Seniors' Dental Care Program. 76 referrals for dentures were initiated.



School Health

The School Health team includes Public Health Nurses who are supported by a shared Program Assistant and Health Promoter. The program works with local school boards, schools, teachers, students and parents to provide programs and resources that support overall student health and well-being.

Student Health Services

Public Health Nurses on the School Health team offer Student Health Centres in all local secondary schools, where students can learn about and receive support related to the spread of infectious diseases, smoking/vaping cessation and mental health.



157

Students seen during a total of 326 visits/appointments in Student Health Centres.



63

Students were referred to Public Health Nurses for support with vaping cessation.

Vision Screening

The School Health team also partners with District A-9 of Lions Club International and school boards to offer free in-school vision screenings for senior kindergarten students in Grey-Bruce.



1,496

Senior kindergarten students, or about 87% of eligible SK students, had their vision screened. 38% of the students who were assessed had visual concerns identified during their screening.

Healthy School Environments

The team makes school environments healthier by running programming for staff and students, providing curriculum support, and working with school boards and schools to develop health-related policies.



532

Students were reached as part of a Catch My Breath program, which helps students understand the dangers of nicotine vaping.



189

Local Youth Wellness Champions were trained in 20 participating schools in a peer-to-peer program to support mental well-being and substance use prevention among youth.



Foundational Standards

Foundational Standards underlie and support all Grey Bruce Public Health programs to ensure they are informed by evidence, local population health data, and support people to reach their full potential. In 2024, the team included a Program Evaluator, a Social Determinants of Health Public Health Nurse, two Health Promoters and two Health Data Analysts.

Effective Public Health Practice and Population Health Assessment

Effective Public Health Practice involves using research and best-available evidence, knowledge exchange, program planning and evaluation and quality improvement to ensure GBPH is delivering the best possible programs and services. The team also gathers and analyzes local health data as part of its work related to Population Health Assessment.



25

Evaluations of Public Health initiatives completed in 2024.



5

Journal Club meetings held in 2024. These events support evidence-based public health practice and professional development by increasing understanding of current research, promoting critical thinking, and fostering scientific communication.

Healthy Equity

Health equity ensures that everyone can reach their full potential and are not disadvantaged because of their gender, age, education, socio-economic, cultural or other socially determined factors and that programs and services are tailored to meet the needs of equity-deserving groups and communities.



In 2024, the team led the development of a Recommendations for Strengthening Indigenous Relations document, which supports the organization's goal of meaningful engagement with Indigenous peoples, organizations, and communities.

Emergency Management

Emergency Management ensures GBPH has capacity to respond to new and emerging events and can cope, adapt to and recover from disruptions and hazards.



In 2024, GBPH initiated its Emergency Management Committee (EMC) to oversee the organization's emergency preparedness in accordance with provincial guidelines. Further, GBPH updated its Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment to support emergency preparedness.

Partnerships

Grey Bruce Public Health is an active and engaged community partner that collaborates with Indigenous communities, all levels of government, school boards, schools, agencies, organizations, local and provincial committee and working groups and other partners to protect public health, strengthen the local response to public health-related issues, deliver services to vulnerable and high-risk clients, and foster a healthy, safe and vibrant community.

Indigenous Partners

GBPH values its collaborative relationship with Saugeen First Nation, the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, the M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre in Owen Sound, the Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre, and other Indigenous partners.

- The Oral Health team partners with daycares, schools, community health representatives, and the Maternal Child Health Co-ordinator at both Saugeen First Nation and the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation to deliver services under the Children's Oral Health Initiative, a program funded by Indigenous Services Canada and geared towards improving oral health for First Nations children.
- The School Health team works with the Kikendaasogamig Elementary School at Neyaashiinigmiing to provide vision screening for students in a culturally appropriate way.
- The Sexual Health team collaborated with Saugeen First Nation to participate in the community's Health Fair, which focused on increasing awareness of various services available in the community.
- The Harm Reduction team collaborated with local Indigenous communities to hold human trafficking and drug trafficking town halls at both Saugeen First Nation and the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation in November 2024.



Schools & School Boards

GBPH collaborates with school boards, schools, and teachers in Grey Bruce, along with Georgian College and other post-secondary institutions in Ontario.

- The School Health Team collaborates with District A9 of Lions Club International, local school boards, and schools to deliver an in-school vision screening program for senior kindergarten students in Grey-Bruce.
- The Oral Health team works with the Bluewater District School Board (BWDSB) and the Bruce Grey Catholic District School Board (BGCDSB) as well as École Catholique St-Dominique Savio and local Mennonite/Amish schools to offer in-school dental screenings in all elementary schools in Grey-Bruce.
- GBPH works with the BWDSB and BGCDSB to deliver Student Health Centres, a vaping cessation program, a school immunization program, and other health promotion activities and programs in area schools.
- The Tobacco Enforcement and School Health teams collaborates with local school boards to divert youth caught smoking or vaping on school property from the justice system and into the healthcare system by connecting them with their school health nurse for counselling and nicotine replacement therapy, as needed, and providing them with an opportunity to discuss any other health and wellness concerns.
- GBPH collaborates with multiple partners, including school boards, schools, and teachers to deliver a local Roots of Empathy program, delivered to elementary school children who are coached to recognize and connect with the vulnerability and humanity of a baby who visits their classroom throughout the school year with their parent(s), along with a trained Roots of Empathy instructor.
- The School Health team works with the BGCDSB to deliver the Challenges, Beliefs, and Changes program, which trains high school students to deliver public health messages to students in elementary schools.
- GBPH partners with the BWDSB and BGCDSB to train teacher/adult leads to co-ordinate the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario's Youth Wellness Champions program in Grey-Bruce. Youth Champions are trained in the fall at participating schools to develop and deliver peer-led mental health and anti-stigma initiatives within their schools.
- GBPH partnered with Western University in 2024 to preceptor a post-graduate dietetic community and research placement, which saw Public Health Dietitians and a dietetic student engaging local leaders in Indigenous Foodways.
- GBPH strengthened its partnership with Georgian College in 2024 by providing professional development for students in the Early Childhood Educator and Child Development Practitioner (Apprenticeship) programs. Training covered physical literacy, nutrition, and risky play, ensuring future educators are equipped with practical skills to support healthy child development.



Priority Populations

GBPH collaborates with partners on working groups and partners with community organizations on initiatives aimed at supporting and promoting the health and well-being of vulnerable residents.

- GBPH collaborates with partners as a member of the Grey Bruce Elder Abuse Prevention Network, a response system developed to assist seniors who may be experiencing or are at risk of experiencing abuse.
- GBPH is a member of the Grey Bruce Local Immigration Partnership, which works to reduce health inequities experienced by newcomers and immigrants, and to foster an inclusive and welcoming community for all.
- GBPH is a member of the Bruce Grey Poverty Task Force, which champions collaborative responses to local poverty and related issues.
- GBPH teams support the Supportive Outreach Services (SOS) team, which provides fixed-site and mobile care to clients. In September 2024, the SOS team was awarded the Ontario Health System Quality & Innovation Award for its success in improving health outcomes for marginalized people in the region. Services include addiction medicine, counselling, assessment and case management, general education, primary care (including testing, treatment, wound care, medications, etc.) and other support and referrals as needed.
- The Harm Reduction team collaborated with pharmacies and local prescribers on an opioid stewardship project, which encouraged participants to provide take-home naloxone and training on how to recognize and respond to an overdose to all patients receiving an opioid prescription.
- The Harm Reduction team partnered with the Owen Sound Attack and Rexall Pharma Plus in Owen Sound to offer the annual medication return campaign, which encourages individuals to properly dispose of any unused medication. Held in November 2024, the campaign saw 150 Owen Sound Attack game vouchers exchanged for 172 bottles of medication.
- GBPH served as co-ordinator of the Community Drug & Alcohol Strategy (CDAS) in 2024, which includes representatives of 25 agencies, organizations or groups and 12 sectors. CDAS developed a new four-year strategic plan, which involved collaboration with people with lived and living experience.
- GBPH is a member of the Community Advisory Committee on Urgent and Emergent Public Health Issues, a collaborative that shares knowledge and resources on how to prepare and respond to emergencies, with a focus on helping vulnerable individuals and populations in Grey-Bruce.



Government, Municipal & Healthcare Partners

- The Vaccine Preventable Diseases team partners with hospitals, healthcare providers, pharmacies, long-term care/retirement homes, paramedic services, nursing agencies, and private nurse practitioner practices to provide publicly funded vaccines in Grey-Bruce as well as with school boards, schools, and community organizations to hold immunization clinics.
- The VPD team collaborated with the Grey County supportive outreach team and paramedic services to ensure vaccine accessibility to members of the public who are precariously housed or experiencing substance use. Vaccine clinics were held in conjunction with SOS, EMS and GBPH at various high-risk congregate housing units, OSHaRE, Safe 'N Sound, and other outreach locations.
- GBPH worked with Huron Perth Public Health to create a cross-Public Health Unit networking group that shares challenges and strategies in delivering tuberculosis-related care. The group meets monthly, with attendees from 11 PHUs across Southwestern Ontario.
- The Infectious Diseases team holds monthly Community of Practices for long-term care, retirement home and congregate living centres meetings, while a member of the ID team participates in a Public Health Ontario Working group that collaborates on developing provincial resources for infection prevention and control in childcare settings.
- The Health Promotion team supported the development of age-friendly strategies for Grey County, Bruce County, and Hanover.
- The Environmental Health team regularly works with county housing, municipalities, landlords and tenants to assist them in dealing with issues such as infestations, mold, and potable water.
- GBPH is a member of the Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network, which collaborates to plan, develop and implement various campaigns to prevent the initiation of commercial tobacco and vaping products, as well as raise awareness of cessation supports and resources.
- GBPH participates in the PLAY in Bruce Grey initiative, which works with municipal recreation departments, libraries, and childcare centres to promote equitable access to physical activity.
- GBPH meets regularly with staff at each municipality in Grey and Bruce to discuss topic areas relevant to both organizations. In 2024, GBPH launched a municipal newsletter to serve as an additional line of communication between Public Health and local municipalities.
- The Environmental Health team collaborates with: the agricultural sector and provincial and federal agencies to ensure the protection of international agricultural workers in Grey-Bruce; Public Health Ontario, municipalities and local couriers to ensure equitable access to Public Health Ontario's well water testing program in Grey-Bruce; the Ontario Association of Veterinary Technicians and Canadian Food Inspection Agency to conduct animal investigations; the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, municipalities and businesses to ensure the safety of small drinking water systems; and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and numerous businesses to promote and protect food safety. The team also works with the RentSafe committee, Grey Bruce Children's Water Festival Committee, and the Climate Change workgroup.



- The Healthy Babies Healthy Children program collaborates with multiple community partners, including Grey and Bruce counties, local school boards, and other organizations working with the early years and transitions to school-aged population. The HBHC team works with local hospital systems, Bruce County Outreach, SOS in Grey County, the Grey Bruce Children's Alliance, School Board Early Learning Planning Committees/Partnership, the Early Years IDEA working group, the STAR Initiative, the Anabaptist (Amish Mennonite) Working to Serve Committee, Violence Prevention Grey Bruce, the Grey Bruce Infant Mental Health Community of Practice, the Complex Special Needs Working Group, Public Health Ontario's Healthy Growth and Development Evidence Network, and the Ministry of Health's Management networks.
- The Tobacco Enforcement team joined efforts with the Owen Sound Police Service and Ministry of Transportation in 2024 to conduct a vehicle inspection initiative. GBPH's Tobacco Enforcement Officers completed 14 inspections of enclosed workplaces (motor vehicles), including taxis, company vehicles, and trucks.
- GBPH Health Promotion staff chair the Regional Road Safety committee, a collaborative of professionals from the Southwest and Central West Regions of Ontario that provides a community perspective on road safety issues and promotes public awareness, education, enforcement, and engagement programs and initiatives to reduce injuries and fatalities of all road users.

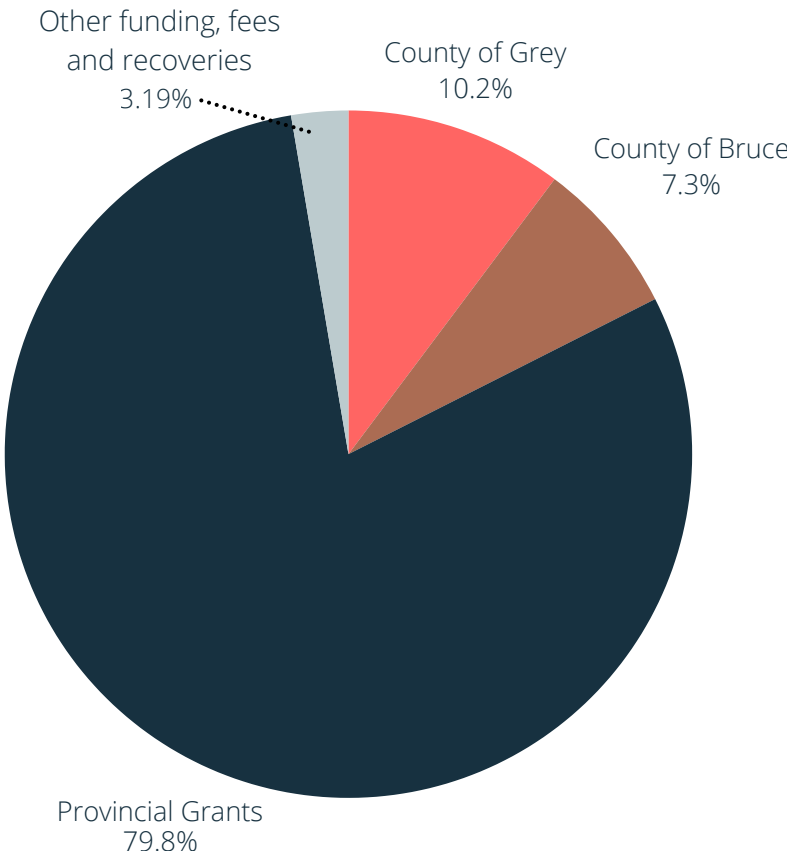


Financials

2024 Budget

Total: \$17,216,129.00

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Provincial Grants | \$13,734,227 |
| County of Grey | \$1,762,973 |
| County of Bruce | \$1,258,254 |
| Other funding, fees and recoveries | \$460,675 |

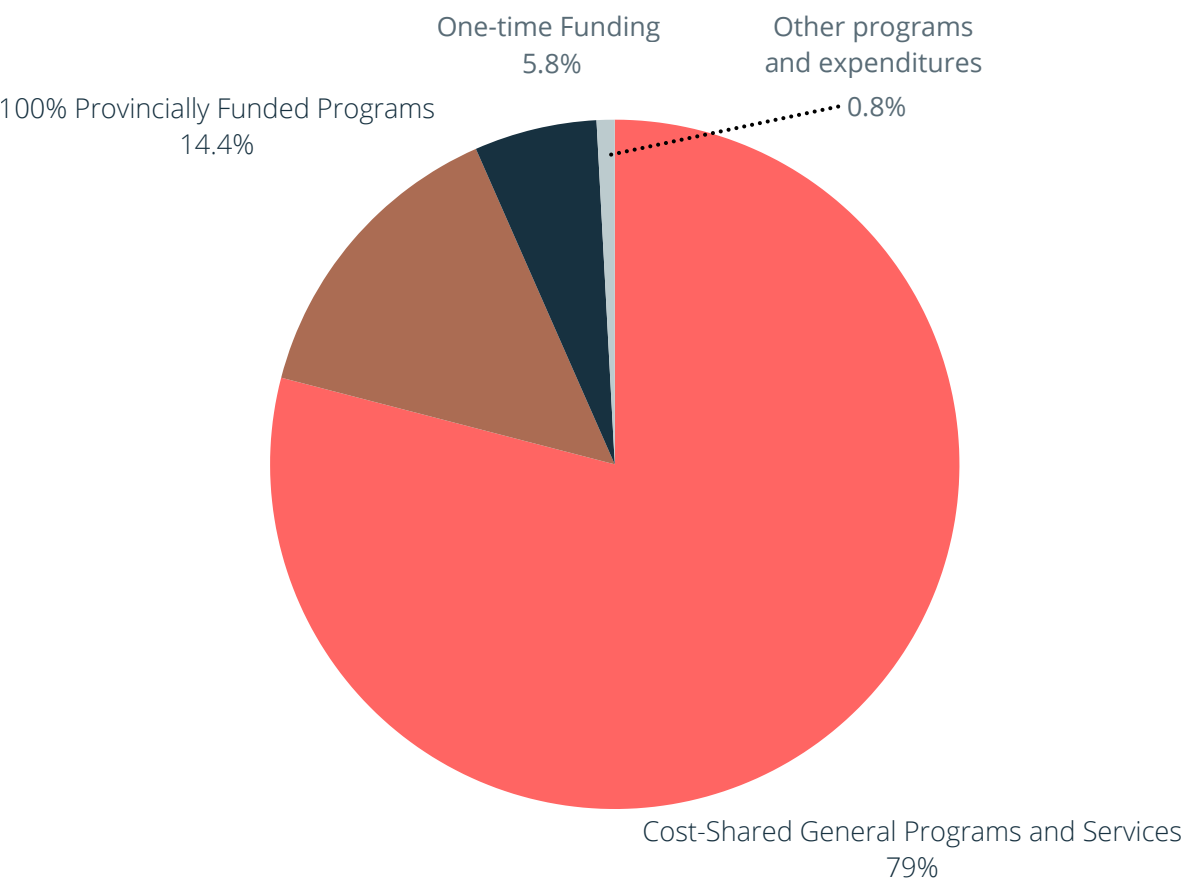


Financials

2024 Expenses

Total: \$16,882,042.00

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Cost-Shared General Programs & Services | \$13,344,562 |
| 100% Provincially Funded Programs | \$2,423,332 |
| One time funding | \$971,469 |
| Other programs and expenditures | \$142,679 |





Grey Bruce
Public Health

THANK YOU.