

The Community Health Reporter

From the Community Health & Well-Being: A Resource for Planning Report
Volume 1, Issue 1

Did you know ...

- Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) are high in Middlesex-London?
- Vaccination program was expanded?
- Flu shots save lives?

STDs are higher in your area

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) include AIDS, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, hepatitis B, and syphilis. STDs are 29% higher in Middlesex-London than in the rest of Ontario.

#1 STD is Chlamydia

Chlamydia infections account for 84% of all STDs in Southwestern Ontario. A person can get chlamydia through unprotected sex with an infected partner. Infections can occur without any symptoms. If untreated, chlamydia can cause infertility.

Teens most at risk

There were over 1300 reported cases of chlamydia among Southwestern Ontario teenagers aged 15-19 in 1991-92. Many teenagers practice unsafe sex, resulting not only in STDs but also in unplanned pregnancies. Take note of the following:

- Teen pregnancies increased 16.4% from 1986 to 1993.
- The amount of pregnancies ending in abortion are highest for teens under 15 years of age (76.9%), and for those aged 15-19 (41.1%)

Early childbearing can be linked to poverty, less marital stability, and higher welfare dependency. These factors in turn can be linked to poor health.

Your health and tomorrow's health care system

How to do more with less ...

This newsletter series will highlight facts about health problems and how to prevent their causes.

\$ Situation:

Health care budget cuts mean doing more with less. Consequently, you could lose services you need.

Fact:

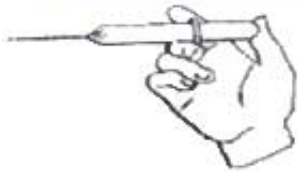
Most health problems are not linked to the traditional health care system (e.g., hospital beds, doctors, etc.). Instead, they are linked to such factors as poverty, low education, and poor lifestyle choices.

Solution:

To prevent health problems, people need a sense of well-being in a safe community with supportive people. First, you can find out what causes poor health. Then, take action to help reduce these causes in your community.

If fewer people become ill, we could reduce the demand for health care services ... we could do more with less.





Updated vaccination program

Routine vaccinations given to children have dropped the number of cases of many childhood diseases, such as the mumps, tetanus, and polio. The Ontario Government has **changed** the vaccination program for **measles** and **hepatitis B**. Now, **two doses** of free **measles** vaccinations are **given to children** after their first birthday and at **school entry**. **Hepatitis B** immunization is available for all grade seven students. Public health units played a **major role** in this change through their vaccine preventable disease programs.

Seniors ... Did you have your flu shot?

In Canada, an estimated 2000 deaths are related to flu each year. Over 80% of these deaths occur in the over 65 age group.

If you are 65 and over, flu shots are provided free by your family doctor or your local health unit. However, not everyone in this group most at risk gets a flu shot. For example, in 1995, 30% of residents living in Middlesex-London seniors' buildings did not get them. The Middlesex-London Health Unit is currently evaluating the usefulness of education programs and flu clinics to try and increase flu shots in seniors.



What's being done?

Many groups are currently tackling the causes of health problems that are beyond the reach of the traditional health care system. They need your active community involvement.

Volunteer!

For information regarding volunteer opportunities, please contact ...

Information London,
Volunteer Services London & Area
325 Queens Ave.
London, ON N6B 1X2
(519) 432-1105

Community Health and Well-being in Southwestern Ontario: A Resource for Planning To order a full copy of the report please contact:

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The University of Western Ontario
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This newsletter is based on information from the above report. The report includes a detailed statistical analysis of health-related issues for the City of London and each county in Southwestern Ontario.

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Faculty of Medicine, and the Middlesex-London
Health Unit. Data compiled by 16 health-research
experts from ten Southwestern Ontario organizations.

Information throughout the newsletter is provided courtesy of Dr. V. Mai, Dr. R. Alder, and B. Lueske of the Middlesex-London Health Unit. Additional information can be obtained by calling your local Health Unit.