



BETTER HEALTH is on the **HORIZON**

2012 **ANNUAL REPORT**

ML MIDDLESEX-LONDON
HEALTH UNIT
www.healthunit.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

4	A word from Ms. Viola Poletes Montgomery, Chair Middlesex-London Board of Health
5	A word from Dr. Chris Mackie, Medical Officer of Health and CEO
6-11	Oral Health, Communicable Diseases and Sexual Health Services
12-17	Environmental Health and Chronic Disease Prevention Services
18-24	Family Health Services
25	Emergency Preparedness
26	Communications
27	Finance and Operations



2012 MIDDLESEX-LONDON BOARD OF HEALTH

Front Row: Mr. Mark Studenny, Provincial Representative; Ms. Nancy Poole, Provincial Representative; Ms. Viola Poletes Montgomery, Chair, Provincial Representative; Ms. Patricia Coderre, Community Representative; Dr. Francine Lortie-Monette, Provincial Representative

Back Row: Mr. Marcel Meyer, Vice-Chair, County Representative; Mr. David Bolton, County Representative; Mr. Al Edmondson, County Representative; Mr. Stephen Orser, City Representative; Ms. Doreen McLinchey, Provincial Representative

Absent: Ms. Denise Brown, City Representative



A WORD FROM MS. VIOLA POLETES MONTGOMERY CHAIR MIDDLESEX-LONDON BOARD OF HEALTH

The role of the Middlesex-London Board of Health is to oversee the operation of the Health Unit and to ensure that both city and county residents have access to the public health services they need. From monitoring the region for communicable diseases, to delivering programs and services to local families at all stages of their children’s development, and working with partners to ensure the safety of the food we eat, the water we drink and the air we breathe, the Health Unit plays an important role in all of our lives. It is ultimately the Board of Health’s responsibility to ensure that the programs and services required under the Ontario Public Health Standards are readily available to everyone who lives in our communities.

As chair of the Middlesex-London Board of Health, I am pleased to present this Annual Report, which outlines the achievements, highlights and activities of our staff in 2012. The information provided over the following pages gives insight into the valuable work of our staff members who dedicate their efforts to improving the health of those who call London and Middlesex County home.

The Board of Health is made up of five Provincial Representatives, three

County Council Representatives and three City Council Representatives, two of whom are elected City Councillors and one of whom is a Community Representative.

For the Health Unit, 2012 was a year of transition that saw our Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Graham Pollett retire after a long and distinguished career of service, not only in Middlesex-London, but to Ontario as well. We are grateful for his many years of dedication to Public Health and for his leadership during his tenure here. We are also appreciative of Dr. Bryna Warshawsky’s efforts as the Acting Medical Officer of Health through the end of 2012 as we engaged in a comprehensive, national search for a new Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer.

On behalf of my Board colleagues and me, we will remain committed to working for you to make our communities healthier places in which to live healthier lives.

Sincerely,

Ms. Viola Poletes Montgomery
*Chair Middlesex-London
Board of Health*





A WORD FROM DR. CHRIS MACKIE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND CEO

Some have said that if public health does a good job, then nothing happens. The work of public health is often done behind the scenes, preventing the spread of disease and helping to build safer, healthier communities. The role of public health isn't to treat people who are sick or injured, but to look at the reasons why people become ill or why they get hurt, and then develop programs and services to address those realities to prevent the illness or injury.

In 2012, substantial work was done to implement the Health Unit's strategic plan. Strategic Action Groups were created to develop plans for Information Technology, Enhanced Communications, Operations and Facilities, Organizational Health and Vitality, Healthy Eating and Physical Activity, and Health Inequities. We also completely rebuilt our website, healthunit.com.

Transition was also taking place in the Health Unit's leadership. After 18 years as the MLHU's Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Graham Pollett announced his retirement. While a nation-wide search was launched to seek his successor, Associate Medical Officer of Health Dr. Bryna Warshawsky, stepped in to the role of Acting Medical Officer of Health and CEO.

Bryna fulfilled the role admirably, and carried the Health Unit through a period of intense introspection and scrutiny.

I am grateful for all the work that was done in 2012 as our staff went through this time of transition. In this annual report, you will find details about the initiatives our staff undertook in an effort to improve the health of everyone who calls London and Middlesex County home.

The public sector in Ontario and much of the world is going through a period of austerity. Resources will no doubt be stretched in this period. It will be critical that public health examines and re-examines how we work to identify the most effective and cost-effective methods. As we look to the future, we will continue to make it our priority to meet our community's needs and to provide programs and services as efficiently and effectively as possible that allow people to live healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Sincerely,

Dr. Chris Mackie
Medical Officer of Health and CEO
Middlesex-London Health Unit





ORAL HEALTH, COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES

One of the usual things people tend to associate with Public Health is the effort to prevent the spread of communicable diseases through immunization. While the community may be aware of annual influenza and HPV immunization campaigns, and the response to disease outbreaks, these are only part of the work of Oral Health, Communicable Diseases and Sexual Health (OHCDSh) Services.

Team members also inspect food premises in hospitals, child care centres, retirement homes and long-term care facilities. They also make sure that personal service settings like tattoo shops, spas, manicure and pedicure salons, and barber shops operate in compliance with provincial regulations, ensuring their clients' safety. Members of this Team also



provide a range of dental treatments to qualifying families at the Health Unit's downtown London dental clinic. In addition to managing the Immunization Clinics in London and Strathroy and making sure school-aged children's immunizations are up-to-date, staff also operate *The Clinic*, the Health Unit's sexual health and family planning clinic.

THE TEAM INCLUDES:

- Public Health Nurses
- Public Health Inspectors
- Dental Hygienists and Assistants
- Dentists
- Epidemiologist
- Administrative Support Staff

In addition to their front line efforts working with clients or monitoring the community for infectious diseases, staff members also develop education and promotion campaigns about important public health issues.

Efforts to use the Internet as an effective way to provide access to important local health information led to the launch of an online version of the Health Unit's *Community Health Status Report* in 2012. This web-based resource was designed to replace previous hard-copy versions which were published every few years. With the new *Community*

Health Status Resource website, researchers, health professionals, students and others can find data on a variety of health-related topics. The effort to develop the website was led by the Health Unit's epidemiologists and key staff in OHCDSh, Family Health Services and Environmental Health and Chronic Disease Prevention Services.

The following outlines some notable achievements, activities and highlights from 2012.



SEXUAL HEALTH AND THE CLINIC TEAMS

Through 2012, the Sexual Health Promotion Team worked with a group of local youth to address gaps in specific services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) youth. From the original plan to meet bi-weekly for 12 weeks, the group has developed into *Youth Encouraging Acceptance (YEA)* and has taken on a partner role in developing Health Unit campaigns and resources. The group was actively involved in the development of the *Add Your Colour* videos, which encourage the community to speak out against bullying, and to show support and acceptance for LGBTQ individuals. The videos encourage viewers to show support for individuals facing discrimination.

The Teams were also involved, along with the Chronic Disease and Tobacco Control Team, in the *Tops and Bottoms: Cervical and Breast Screening Campaign*. Through the campaign, more than 30 presentations about cervical and breast cancer screening were made to audiences of women at various London locations.

As noted in the *Healthy Communities Injury Prevention Team* section of this Annual Report, a sequel to *Adventures in Sex City*, the popular online game, was launched in 2012. The follow-up was based on the storyline of the original *Adventures in Sex City* game, but this time the focus was sexual health and the influence of alcohol and substance misuse on behaviour. To reinforce the game's messages, staff members dressed as characters from the game visited the local bar scene to meet young adults and post-secondary students. In total, the original *Adventures in Sex City* and its sequel have been played more than 75,000 times.

STATISTICS

- **7,344** visits to the Family Planning/Birth Control Clinic
- **8,597** visits to the STI clinic
- **467** visits to the Strathroy clinic
- **32,154** contraceptive packages distributed from the London and Strathroy clinics
- **29,821** needles distributed from the Health Unit needle exchange
- **164** sexual health presentations/health fairs/clinic tours to vulnerable populations



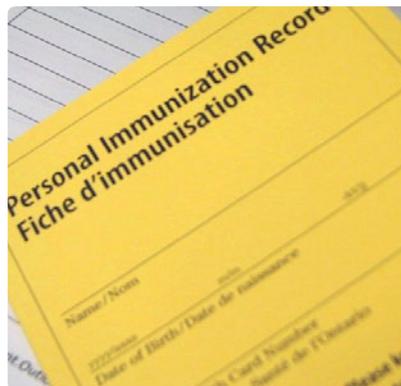
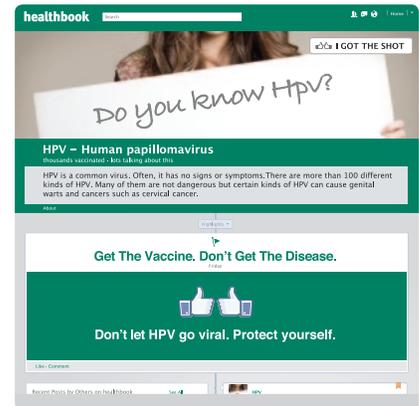
STATISTICS

- **7,388** clients seen at the Health Unit's immunization clinic
- **15,342** immunizations given
- **2,216** influenza shots given at the Health Unit's immunization clinic
- **16** community flu clinics, where **7,233** influenza vaccinations were given
- **70%** of grade seven students got a dose of meningococcal ACYW135 vaccine
- **56%** of grade seven students got two doses of Hepatitis B vaccine
- **56%** of grade eight female students got three doses of Gardasil HPV vaccine
- **9,352** questionnaires sent to parents to notify them that their child's immunization information was not up-to-date
- **2,360** school suspension notices were issued
- **829** students were suspended



VACCINE PREVENTABLE DISEASE TEAM

Among this Team's activities, it hosts annual vaccination clinics in schools to offer eligible female students an opportunity to receive the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine. The vaccine offers protection against diseases associated with HPV infections, including cervical cancer, vulvar and vaginal cancer, anal cancer, precancerous lesions and genital warts. In 2012, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care expanded Ontario's HPV Immunization program and announced a "catch-up program". Under the program, female students who did not receive, or complete, their HPV vaccinations in Grade 8, would be able to receive the publicly funded vaccine until the end of Grade 12.



In the fall, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care passed new regulations allowing pharmacists to give the flu vaccine to those over the age of five, under the province's Universal Influenza Immunization Program. The Health Unit carried out inspections at the 23 London and Middlesex County pharmacies which offered the flu shot, to ensure the vaccine was being stored and

handled according to Ministry guidelines. By the end of the year local pharmacies had given 11,190 doses of flu vaccine.

One of the diseases the Team saw rarely in previous years was more prevalent in 2012.

While there had only been one case of pertussis, or whooping cough, in Middlesex-London in 2011, and four in 2010, there were 68 reports of pertussis, and 44 confirmed cases in the community. Increases of the disease were noted across the province. Each case received a follow up call to discuss isolation strategies, and to provide advice to close contacts of those who were ill.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL TEAM

The Infectious Disease Control (IDC) Team combines the skill sets of Public Health Nurses and Public Health Inspectors to monitor and respond to cases of infectious disease and outbreaks, and to inspect numerous locations including hospitals, long term care and retirement homes, child care facilities, and personal service settings. The Team also assesses vaccine handling practices at hospitals, long term care facilities and retirement homes. Another service provided by the Team is Food Handler Training for employees of long-term care facilities and childcare centres and provides the information required to prepare food safely. The IDC Team also responds to community concerns about blood-borne diseases resulting from needle stick injuries, or bites.

The most intense influenza season in two decades took hold in the fall, resulting in greater demands on members of the IDC Team.

The Team issued weekly Influenza Surveillance Reports to community agencies, health care providers, the media and others to share information about local influenza activity. The Team also collaborated with local healthcare organizations to collect information about their staff vaccination rates, as these will be made public in 2013.

Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease which also keeps Team members busy. The IDC Team holds numerous TB clinics for adults and children, including individuals who are recent immigrants to Canada. The number of clients referred to these clinics for assessment, treatment and follow-up continues to increase.

Just BECAUSE times HAVE CHANGED
...doesn't mean the risk of Tuberculosis has.

TB IS NOT A DISEASE OF THE PAST, it's still here.
(just like Cousin Larry)

FOR MORE INFORMATION
(519) 663-5317 ext. 2330

ML BUREAU DE SANTÉ DE
MIDDLESEX COUNTY
HEALTH UNIT
www.healthunit.com

STATISTICS

- **100%** of required inspections completed at high-risk institutional food premises (long-term care facilities, hospitals and child care centres)
- **90%** of inspections completed for personal service settings (barber shops, hair and nail salons, etc.)
- Assisted in the management of **64** respiratory outbreaks in hospitals and long-term care facilities
- Assisted in the management of **34** enteric outbreaks in hospitals and long-term care facilities
- Followed-up **62** cases of blood-borne exposures
- **20** food handler training classes/
243 food handlers certified
- **35** TB clinics for adults and children;
98 clients received follow-up

IT'S WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE

THE INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL TEAM
your first line of defense

(519) 663-5317
ext. 2330

ML BUREAU DE SANTÉ DE
MIDDLESEX COUNTY
HEALTH UNIT
www.healthunit.com

STATISTICS

- **17,601** students in **130** elementary schools screened for cavities; **709** found to be in need of urgent dental work
- More than **250** oral health education sessions provided in **130** schools
- **68** oral health presentations made at community events
- **363** adults received low-cost dental cleanings through the Smile Clean program
- **538** children received no-cost preventive services (i.e. cleaning, fluoride and pit and/or fissure sealants)
- **640** children screened to determine eligibility for no-cost dental coverage under the Children in Need of Treatment (CINOT) Program; **389** eligible for coverage
- **751** new clients were registered into the Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) program

ORAL HEALTH TEAM

In addition to operating the Health Unit's Dental Clinic, the Oral Health Team takes part in several activities each year, which have a direct impact on oral health. Internal processes were improved through the use of a new system called the Oral Health Information Support System (OHISS). Through OHISS, Team members are better able to record dental health information when screening children in 130 local schools.

Early in 2012, Oral Health Team members, along with other Health Unit staff, were actively involved in the process undertaken by London City Council to consider the future of community water fluoridation.

At a public meeting in January, council members heard presentations on the subject of fluoridation from 59 individuals. On May 1st, after considering the matter for some time, City Council voted 10-5 in support of maintaining fluoridation of the City of London's water.



Later in the year, the Team collaborated with the London & District Dental Society to offer a Smoking Cessation Workshop as part of annual Oral Health Week activities. Free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (the "patch") was offered to the 21 people who took part. Team members also worked with the Chronic Disease and Tobacco Control Team to develop a presentation highlighting the link between smoking and oral health.



REPORTABLE DISEASES

More than 70 infectious diseases and conditions are reportable to the Health Unit.

Health Unit staff conduct follow-up with clients to prevent the spread of infection to others, and also to detect outbreaks and monitor disease trends. To the right are statistics indicating the reportable diseases investigated by the Health Unit in 2012.



STATISTICS

- 6 cases of tuberculosis
- 22 cases of HIV
- 1,555 cases of chlamydia
- 106 cases of gonorrhea
- 25 cases of infectious syphilis;
12 other cases of syphilis
- 136 cases of *Campylobacter*
enteritis
- 6 cases of *E. coli* O157:H7
- 35 cases of invasive Group A
Streptococcus
- 264 cases of Hepatitis C
- 400 cases of influenza
- 1 case of listeriosis
- 44 cases of whooping cough
(pertussis)
- 78 cases of salmonellosis
- 6 cases of West Nile Virus
- 8 cases of Hepatitis A
- 8 cases of *Legionella*
- 1 case of Lyme Disease



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION (EHCDPS)

The Environmental Health and Chronic Disease Prevention (EHCDPS) Team provides a wide ranging portfolio of programs including food safety, water and air quality, enforcement of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, healthier eating, physical activity, road safety, child safety, cancer prevention and vector-borne diseases.

THE SERVICE AREA IS MADE UP OF:

- The Healthy Communities and Injury Prevention Team
- The Health Hazard Team
- The Chronic Disease Prevention and Tobacco Control Team
- The Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network
- The Food Safety Program
- The Safe Water Program
- The Rabies Program

THOSE WHO WORK IN THIS SERVICE AREA INCLUDE:

- Public Health Inspectors
- Public Health Nurses
- Public Health Dietitians
- Health Promoters
- Tobacco Enforcement Officers
- Vector-Borne Disease Technicians
- Epidemiologist
- Program Evaluator
- Administrative Support Staff

These professionals draw on their skills and expertise to deliver and promote a broad range of services, which improve the overall health and well-being of Middlesex-London residents.

EHCDPS staff members conduct inspections at food premises as well as small drinking water systems, and they carry out compliance checks at retail tobacco vendors. They work with employers to promote healthy workplaces. They advocate for the creation of public policy that encourages people to be more active. They monitor standing water sites, mosquitoes, dead birds and ticks, in an effort to detect vector-borne diseases like West Nile Virus, Lyme Disease, and Eastern Equine Encephalitis.

Some of Environmental Health and Chronic Disease Prevention Services' notable achievements from 2012 are noted on the following pages of this Annual Report.



FOOD SAFETY

The final component of the Health Unit's *DineSafe* program came into effect in 2012, the enforcement of the food safety bylaws put in place in London and Middlesex County in 2011.

Although the impact of the *DineSafe* program is difficult to demonstrate, Public Health Inspectors achieved the highest inspection rate in more than 25 years, conducting necessary inspections in 98% of all food premises.

The high demand for certified food handlers called for under the *DineSafe* program and municipal bylaws led the Food Safety Team to develop a comprehensive food handler training database. The database streamlines processes and allows clients to register for training sessions and select classes. It also allows staff to track course payments, track test results and generate food handler certificates.

To enhance the functionality and quality of information available on the *DineSafe* website, team members initiated work with Resolution Interactive Media (ResIM) to redesign the popular online resource. Work on the new *DineSafe* website will be completed in 2013.

The team also partnered with the Thames Valley District School Board to create a new food safety resource called *Food Safety in Schools*.



DineSafe
MIDDLESEX-LONDON

STATISTICS

- Inspected **98%** of all food premises
- Responded to more than **1,100** food safety complaints/service requests
- Issued more than **3,700** MLHU food handler training certificates
- Inspected and approved more than **200** new food premises for licensing
- Inspected more than **30** special events



STATISTICS

- **746** *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* workplace inspections
- **760** *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* compliance packages sent to workplaces
- **650,307** views generated through online advertising campaign



STATISTICS

- **670** public pool and spa inspections conducted
- **132** Small Drinking Water System Assessments completed
- Responded to **22** recreational facility complaints
- Responded to **50** adverse water quality incidents
- Responded to **63** adverse lead reports, according to regulations and protocols
- Responded to **150** public inquiries about drinking water quality

SOUTH WEST TOBACCO CONTROL AREA NETWORK

The South West Tobacco Control Area Network, or South West TCAN, is administered by the Middlesex-London Health Unit on behalf of nine other health units in the region. More than 780 people attended 11 training sessions hosted by the South West TCAN in 2012. Through the sessions, public health staff and community partners were able to enhance their skills in the area of comprehensive tobacco control.



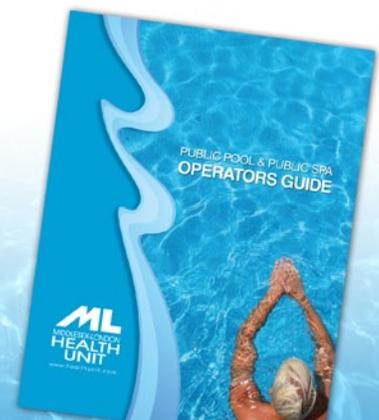
The South West TCAN also held its second annual *Nic-O-Time Challenge*. The challenge is aimed at high school youth across southwestern Ontario. Through the *Challenge*, 6,951 teens pledged to quit using tobacco, or to never start. In addition, the Network supported the promotion of the province's annual *Driven to Quit* Challenge across the southwest region.

The South West TCAN also developed a new workplace campaign, designed to educate businesses and organizations across southwestern Ontario about the provisions of the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*. The team also held its second annual *Youth Summit*, hosting more than 80 teens from across the region.

SAFE WATER PROGRAM

The Health Unit's Safe Water Program focuses on all aspects of water safety; from the quality and safety of drinking water, to the safe operation of pools and spas. Safe Water Program Team members inspect Small Drinking Water Systems located in London and across Middlesex County, and they ensure that recreational water and swimming facilities are operated in accordance with provincial regulations and laws.

In an effort to make sure pool and spa operators fully understand their legislative requirements, team members completely updated the Health Unit's *Pool and Spa Operators Guide*. Since the completion of this resource, several other health units have asked to adapt the manual for their own communities. To increase awareness and compliance, the team also began to offer regular *Pool and Spa Operators Information Sessions* throughout the year. By the end of 2012, five pool operator sessions and two additional sessions for both pool and spa operators had been held, with 92 participants having taken part.



RABIES PROGRAM

Rabies Program staff members investigate cases of local residents coming into contact with dogs, cats, bats, raccoons, squirrels, skunks and other mammals, where it can't be determined whether the animal had been vaccinated against rabies. In cases where an actual, or suspected, rabies exposure has occurred, the team advises clients about their treatment options and how they can prevent further infection or illness.

In addition to investigating animal bites in the community, the team also conducted an awareness campaign about bats and rabies.



STATISTICS

- Investigated **777** animal exposure incidents
- **120** post-exposure treatments for people exposed to suspected rabid animals

HEALTH HAZARD TEAM

From air quality, and climate change, to vector-borne diseases and more, the Health Hazard Team includes West Nile Virus Field Technicians, an Entomologist, and Public Health Inspectors who investigate complaints, conduct community surveillance and work with decision makers to influence public policy which is beneficial to the health of London and Middlesex County residents.

Health Hazard Team members worked with their colleagues on the Chronic Disease Injury Prevention Team to develop the *Middlesex County Official Plan Review 2012 – Middlesex-London Health Unit Recommendations* and

introduced the document to County Council. The team also provided similar information to the City of London through *ReTHINK London*, in a report addressing the environmental health impacts of municipal planning.

The team's Vector-Borne Disease team undertook monitoring and larviciding activities to detect and control West Nile Virus in London and Middlesex County as well as surveillance for Lyme Disease and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). A report of the team's activities and findings was produced and distributed to community partners and municipalities.



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES INJURY PREVENTION TEAM

The Healthy Communities Injury Prevention Team aims to raise awareness about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity (including advocating for policy change), alcohol and drug misuse, workplace wellness, injury prevention and more.

Team Members developed online resources to show how alcohol and substance misuse can have a lasting effect on people's lives. Working with the Sexual Health Promotion Team, staff developed a sequel to 2010's *Adventures in Sex City*, but this time the focus was on how alcohol and drugs can affect judgment and lead to risky behaviour. Team members also produced a new, easy to understand video to explain *Canada's New Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines*.

On the physical activity front, the Health Unit endorsed the international Toronto Charter for Physical Activity, widely seen as "a tool to assist in advocating for greater political and social commitment to support health enhancing physical activity for all." Part of this effort led to the Health Unit's participation in the year-long conversation known as *ReTHINK London*, which aimed to include a public voice at the table as the City of London prepared to revamp its official plan. The Team worked with the Human Environments Analysis Laboratory at Western University to draft the *HEALTHY CITY/Active London* report, which called on the City of London to embrace and promote people-powered transportation as part of its new Official Plan. The report was accompanied by a video, which highlighted how active transportation can help the community to be more active and improve the health of the population. Working with the Health Hazards Team, the Team undertook a similar effort for Middlesex County. In addition the team

worked with Tourism Middlesex and other partners to organize physical activity and healthy eating events across the community, and to develop a new Middlesex County Trails Guide.



As part of its injury prevention focus, the Team was also involved with community partners on a number of other projects. This included *Stepping out Safely*, the Health Unit's falls prevention program for seniors, which through collaboration with more than 60 community partners, was broken down into monthly events. Between April and October more than 4,000 seniors took part in over 100 activities.

The *Be Safe Be Seen* campaign was also developed with community partners. Its goal is to raise awareness about the necessity for cyclists and other road users to be visible at night. The effort included transit and Facebook advertising and an online contest.

Be Safe Be Seen

When you're out and about...

walking, biking, boarding,
blading, strolling...

Wear **Bright or Reflective** Clothing



CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND TOBACCO CONTROL TEAM

In 2012, Team members undertook a major advocacy effort to influence decision-makers to enact a local by-law to ban smoking in outdoor public places, including sports fields, and outside municipal buildings. The intent was not only to prevent exposure to second-hand smoke, but to minimize the opportunities for youth to see adults light up, which has been shown to influence young people's decisions to use tobacco products. This effort resulted in a new City of London Bylaw which bans smoking outside municipal buildings and within nine meters of playgrounds and sports fields.

Team members we actively involved in the Ontario Energy Drink Work Group, and took a leadership role in the development of an Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) resolution calling for the regulation of energy drinks. Staff also worked closely with the Team's *One Life One You* youth advocacy group to develop a series of youth-oriented videos about the myths, risks and sugar content of energy drinks. The videos are available on the Health Unit's website and its YouTube Channel.



To reach out to the community with its tobacco-free living message, the Team worked with *One Life One You* to hold a very successful outdoor Smoke-Free Movie Night in London's Victoria Park. Hundreds of families attended the free screening of *The Lorax* and took part in activities which highlighted the benefits of tobacco-free living.

Harvest Bucks, a new collaborative pilot project, was undertaken in the fall with participation from other Health Unit Teams and community partners. Through the program, food literacy resource kits and two dollar vegetable and fruit vouchers, redeemable at the Western Fair Farmers' and Artisans' Market, were produced and distributed. Resource kits and \$8,000 in harvest bucks were distributed to 411 individuals and families through community organizations, including Youth Opportunities Unlimited, the London Intercommunity Health Centre, and the Health Unit's Smart Start for Babies Program. More than \$5,000 in Harvest Bucks have been redeemed so far.

Cancer prevention and awareness is also an important part of the Team's work. Through staff efforts and in collaboration with the Sexual Health Promotion Team, a new campaign was developed. Called *Tops and Bottoms*, the campaign focused on raising awareness about cervical cancer and breast cancer screening. More than 30 *Tops and Bottoms* presentations were delivered to small groups of women, in London locations where women normally gather in the community.

STATISTICS

- **19** Education Visits to inform business owners about the Smoke-Free Ontario Act
- **16** Tobacco Retailer Information Workshops attended by **232** clerks or store owners
- **1,460** inspections to determine if tobacco products were being sold to minors resulting in **48** warnings and **103** charges
- **434** inspections to ensure retailers complied with tobacco display, promotion and handling requirements resulting in **21** warnings and **6** charges
- **7** warnings and **2** charges for other tobacco retailer infractions
- **5**, 6-month Automatic Prohibitions given to vendors with two or more tobacco sales convictions within a five year period
- **2,001** inspections to detect smoking in enclosed workplaces and public places resulting in **363** warnings and **108** charges
- **172** enquiries to the Tobacco Information Line
- **148** complaints responded to for exposure to second-hand smoke or vendors selling and/or supplying tobacco to youth





FAMILY HEALTH SERVICES (FHS)

Through collaboration and partnership, FHS staff works with community partners, social services agencies, schools, hospitals, physicians and other health care providers to assess needs and concerns of families, and provides direct support in the home, in schools and through outreach services.

The services and programs offered through FHS are designed to support families through all stages of their child's development, from before pregnancy through the teenage years.

FHS IS DIVIDED INTO THREE BROAD AREAS:

- The Reproductive and Early Years Program
- The Best Beginnings Program
- The Child and Youth Program

Each of these programs is made up of teams which meet specific needs. *The Reproductive and Early Years Program* includes: the *Screening, Assessment and Intervention Team* (which includes tykeTALK, Infant Hearing and the Blind Low Vision program), the *Reproductive Health Team* and the *Early Years Team*. *The Best Beginnings Program* is divided along geographic lines into three teams of Family Home Visitors: the *West, Central and East Teams*. *The Child and Youth Program* is made up of the *Child Health Team* and the *Young Adult Team*. Through its Public Health Nurses, Public Health Dietitians, Family Home Visitors, Health Promoters, Epidemiologist, Program Evaluator Social Worker and administrative support staff, FHS helps parents, guardians and caregivers to make the most of the opportunities, programs and services available to their families.

Through the work of Family Health Services, the Health Unit began work on attaining its *Baby-Friendly Initiative*, or *BFI*, designation in 2012 after the province made certification a requirement for all Ontario health units. The *Baby-Friendly Initiative* was created by the World Health Organization and UNICEF in 1991 to promote, protect and support the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding. It encourages and recognizes organizations which offer an optimal level of care for mothers and infants.

Family Health Services also expanded the number of staff trained in the new *Triple P*, or *Positive Parenting Program*, in 2012. *Triple P*, which includes community-focused initiatives, will continue to grow at the Health Unit through 2013, as the *Triple P* principles guide the MLHU's parenting programs.

In July, the 2012 Polaris Award was presented to the Health Unit by Youth Opportunities Unlimited. The Polaris Award recognizes an individual, organization or private company that has been a guiding light to youth through strong leadership and personal commitment in the area of youth services in London and Middlesex County.

Following is an overview of the highlights and achievements of the *Screening, Assessment and Intervention Team*, the *Reproductive Health Team*, the *Early Years Team*, the *Best Beginnings Program*, the *Child Health Team*, and the *Young Adult Team*.



SCREENING, ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION TEAM

tykeTALK

The tykeTALK program is aimed at families whose children have difficulties and/or delays in learning speech or language and/or being able to swallow. The program provides early intervention services to these families from birth to school age across the entire Thames Valley region including Middlesex-London, as well as Oxford and Elgin Counties.

In 2012 the Thames Valley region was awarded provincial government funding to a pilot a new Speech and Language Integration Project. The project will develop innovative strategies to improve speech and language services and supports for families from the time their children are born until they enter Grade 3. Its goal will be to reduce wait-times, improve outcomes, and make services more cost effective.



Infant Hearing Program (IHP)

Infant Hearing program staff assess the hearing of all babies in the Thames Valley region (Middlesex-London, Oxford County and Elgin County), as well as Huron, Perth, Grey, Bruce, and Lambton Counties, shortly after they are born, and identify those with permanent hearing loss. The program provides support and services to families, including audiological services and communication development, until the child is ready to enter school.



STATISTICS

- **1,161** new referrals were received
- **39%** of the children referred were under the age of two years
- Services delivered at **176** sites across the Thames Valley region
- The average wait-time for services from the time of referral was **6** weeks for assessment and **14** weeks for intervention
- **1,209** new children were assessed
- **3,266** children received services through tykeTALK

STATISTICS

- **10,723** babies born in the region (London, Middlesex, Elgin, Oxford, Grey, Bruce, Huron, Perth and Lambton) had their hearing screened in hospital, or in the community
- **33** children were identified as having a permanent hearing loss
- **127** children between birth and six years of age received follow-up support and services

STATISTICS

- **34** new children referred to the BLV Program
- Average age of referral was **20** months
- **124** children received services through the BLV Program

STATISTICS

- **11** *Becoming a Family* classes with **140** participants
- **37** *Prenatal Breastfeeding* classes with **521** participants
- **89** prenatal series (5 classes in each series) with **1,495** participants
- **326** registrants for online prenatal e-learning

Blind Low Vision Early Intervention Program (BLV Program)

Like the Infant Hearing Program, the Blind Low Vision (BLV) Program provides specialized support and services to families whose children have been diagnosed as blind or having low vision, from the time they are born until they are ready to enter school. Also like the Infant Hearing Program, services are provided to families who live in the Thames Valley region (Middlesex-London, Oxford, Elgin), as well as Huron, Perth, Grey, Bruce, and Lambton Counties.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH TEAM

In 2012, the Reproductive Health Team set out to determine the best ways to support and encourage individuals and families so they could have healthy pregnancies and the healthiest newborns possible - all while preparing for parenthood. Significant planning was done to achieve these goals, including working towards the Health Unit's *BFI* designation, which was done by focusing on policy development, revising teaching materials, reviewing resources, and educating staff.

In an effort to advocate for additional services for refugee claimants and individuals without OHIP coverage, the Team collaborated with community partners to develop the *Community Resources for Newcomers with No Health Coverage* booklet. The booklet outlines health-related services and programs in London and Middlesex County, which are available free of charge, or at low cost.

Members of the Reproductive Health Team also took part in the work of local, regional and provincial groups, which focus on prenatal health issues, such as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), normal birth practices, perinatal mood disorders, reproductive and preconception health, and prenatal education. The team also provided programs and services to the Middlesex-London community through online e-learning, and in-class prenatal education.

Skin-to-skin... the healthiest place to begin

When a mother holds her baby skin-to-skin:

- dries less and is calmer
- breastfeeds easier
- stops weaning
- has better blood sugar levels

MOTHER

- creates more breast milk
- starts when baby is getting hungry
- babies more with baby
- is more relaxed

BABY

Health Connection 518-850-2280

Skin-to-skin... is easy

Here's how:

1. Take off your baby's blankets and clothing. Leave a diaper on.
2. Move clothing away from your chest and tummy.
3. Hold your baby, facing you, against your chest or tummy.
4. You can put a blanket over you and your baby.
5. Enjoy the closeness and bonding with your baby.

When you are ready to sleep, place your baby in their crib, on their back, in your room. It is important that you and cradles meet current Canadian safety regulations.

Partners and family

Your partner can also spend skin-to-skin time with your baby. Your partner and baby will experience many of the skin-to-skin health benefits.

Family members can join skin-to-skin time with your baby, too. It's a great way to bond with your baby.

References:

Morse ES, Altemus DC, Segman H (2007). Early skin-to-skin contact for mothers and their newborn infants: benefits beyond breastfeeding. *The Canadian Family Physician* 53: 1495-1498.

Baron-Godreau M, Martin JL, Lussier J, Vohler U, Jansen R, Poirer M (2010). Randomized controlled trial of early skin-to-skin contact in the mother and the newborn. *Acta Paediatrica* 99(11): 1630-34.

For more references please visit www.healthunit.com/skin-to-skin.aspx.

Skin-to-skin... the healthiest place to begin

Health Connection 518-850-2280

EARLY YEARS TEAM

The Early Years Team provides a range of direct services to young families in London and Middlesex County which focus on breastfeeding, nutrition, child safety, healthy growth and development, immunization, parenting and early identification of developmental concerns. Team members also provide services through *Well Baby/Child & Breastfeeding Clinics* which are held at numerous community locations, the *Health Connection* telephone support line, where callers can speak to a Public Health Nurse, and the after-hours *Infantline*.

In 2012, more than 150 people attended an educational workshop in London hosted by the Early Years Team. The workshop, focused on early childhood development, provided an opportunity to launch the province's *Best Start On Track* program.

The Team also began developing a new *Breastfeeding Video Library*, with an initial three videos designed to increase awareness about breastfeeding and provide an educational resource for the community. Three videos entitled *Breastfeeding Support – Introduction*, *Milk Supply – Do I Have Enough Milk* and *Milk Supply – Strategies for Increasing Your Supply* are available on YouTube and the Health Unit website. They provide basic information for breastfeeding mothers links to Health Unit resources and services.

STATISTICS

- Nearly **700** *Well Baby/Child and Breastfeeding Clinics*, providing services to **6,491** participants
- *Just Beginnings* sessions attended by **324** mothers
- Clinic talks and other community requests to **163** participants



STATISTICS

- More than **1,450** clients seen at Nurse Practitioner clinics in London; **161** high school student seen at the Glencoe drop-in clinics
- **1,986** follow-up calls to families within **48** hours of discharge from hospital
- **1,798** telephone assessments with families who had a new baby to determine support needs
- **300** families participated in the *Home Visiting Program* as a result of telephone assessments
- **143** clients participated in **119** *Mommy and Me* sessions

BEST BEGINNINGS TEAM

Members of the Best Beginnings Team contact families within 48 hours of being discharged from hospital after the birth of a child and make it easier for families to access health care services so they can have the best start in life they can. The Team also offers Nurse Practitioner-led clinics at six locations in London and Middlesex County. High school students living in the western part of Middlesex County can also have access to health services through Nurse Practitioner drop-in clinics held in Glencoe.

The Team also leads several family-focused Health Unit programs including *Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC)*, *Smart Start for Babies* and *Mommy and Me*. *HBHC* is a program for young families who have questions about parenting, who want to learn life skills or encourage their child's growth and development, and also for those who need help adjusting to life with a new baby. *Smart Start for Babies* is a federally-funded prenatal nutrition program which provides information and advice about nutrition and healthy eating to vulnerable pregnant women and their support person, while *Mommy and Me* provides support to these same people through group sessions with Health Unit staff.

In collaboration with the Early Years Team, the Best Beginnings Team rolled-out the *Healthy Baby Healthy Brain* campaign in 2012, focusing on the importance of early brain development through healthy child growth. The campaign directed parents to a website which contained several short videos showing everyday interactions between parents and children which encourage brain development.

healthy baby  healthy brain

To help your baby have a healthy brain,
visit this interactive website:
www.HealthyBabyHealthyBrain.ca

best start
meilleur départ

best start health 1800-455-1000

CHILD HEALTH TEAM

Most Child Health Team members are most visible as the nurses at the region's 141 elementary schools, providing a range of public health services and programs. One such program is the *Healthy Living Champions Awards*, through which gold, silver and bronze awards are presented to schools in recognition of their efforts to promote healthy eating and physical activity in their school communities. In 2012, the Child Health Team presented awards to 73 elementary schools in London and Middlesex County.



Child Health Team members also host the TVNELP (Thames Valley Neighbourhood Early Learning Program) sessions where parents complete questionnaires which focus on child development. The questionnaires are designed to ensure children with possible developmental concerns are identified so they can be referred to the supports they need before they enter school.

STATISTICS

- **699** nursing consultations with students, parents and school staff
- **1,268** presentations in schools, reaching an audience of more than **22,000** people
- Participation in **260** health fairs and events attended by more than **10,000** students
- **47** TVNELP sessions where **479** questionnaires were completed; **183** parents had follow-up conversations with Public Health Nurses
- **23** *Triple P* seminars with **238** participants



STATISTICS

- **4,891** students assisted by their high school nurse
- **54** parenting sessions attended by **3,377** parents
- **13** parent nights held at high schools between June and December, attended by **2,165** parents
- Direct to support to **244** parents at school-based parent nights

YOUNG ADULT TEAM

Members of the Young Adult Team work as nurses in high schools across the Middlesex-London region. They work with teens and their families on a wide range of topics including mental health, healthy eating, physical activity and more, in an effort to meet challenges and achieve successful outcomes.

In 2012, the Young Adult Team collaborated with community agencies to develop and release twelve new videos in its video series developed for parents of teenagers. The new videos focused on healthy sexuality and mental wellness. So far, 25 videos have been developed, which can be watched online at anytime from anywhere. By the end of 2012, the videos had been watched more than 12,000 times.



Team members' time and efforts are spent reaching out to educators, parents and youth, encouraging teens to achieve better overall health. They led 232 small group sessions and also supported and assisted youth in specific school situations. In addition, 617 referrals were made for youth to community health agencies, and by the fall the team had started a new quarterly newsletter for parents of teens.

The Team also hosted the *Health Promoting Schools* conference in September, attended by more than 150 students and staff from 16 high schools, who developed action plans for the upcoming school year. In November, the team partnered with the Thames Valley Parent Involvement Committee to host a community parenting night which focused on building resilient children and was attended by 434 parents.

Staff with the Young Adult Team also mentor and facilitate the Youth Create Healthy Communities (YCHC) advocacy group. In 2012, this group began a grass-roots effort to make public transportation more accessible to youth, by calling for the creation of a reduced price bus pass for youth. An affordable bus pass would allow youth to be better able to get to and from work, school, sports and other activities. Their efforts will continue into 2013.

The team also worked with community partners in youth group homes to highlight the importance of nutrition and healthy eating. One of the outcomes of this effort was the creation of a new *Nutrition Checklist Manual*, now used at Fanshawe College as part of its course curriculum for Child and Youth Workers.





EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Emergency Preparedness (EP) program aims to prepare Health Unit staff to respond to crisis situations effectively and to educate the public so they know how to respond in times of emergency.

In 2012, EP staff worked with community organizations and partners to develop the necessary response strategies for incidents, emergencies and catastrophes. The Team also worked with these organizations to create and share emergency information, resources and supplies with those in the community who need it most.

Training sessions were also provided to the Health Unit's Family Home

Visitors, who work with local families, to support them with emergency planning information for their clients. Through this effort more than 200 battery-free crank flash lights were distributed to families. Similar presentations were provided through the Health Unit's Well Baby Child/Breastfeeding Clinics held in Middlesex County, and to the South London Neighbourhood Resource Centre, where emergency products and information were provided to those in attendance.

To ensure the proper use of respirators by several organizations in the community, the Team provided fit-testing sessions to volunteer fire fighters in Middlesex County, and to the employees of the Chippewa and Munsee-Delaware First Nations. Fit-testing ensures that individuals are

taught how to use special respirators to protect themselves from airborne contaminants, and that people are matched with the respirator model which best suits them.

Emergency Preparedness' Community Emergency Response Volunteers (CERV) program expanded again in 2012. The Program has been in place for six years and ensures that a group of specially trained citizens is prepared to support Health Unit staff during a public health crisis or emergency. It is the only health unit-based program of its kind in Ontario.

Through its Emergency Preparedness Program, the Middlesex-London Health Unit plays an important role in emergency planning in London, Middlesex County, and across Southwestern Ontario.



COMMUNICATIONS

The MLHU's Communications Department supports the internal needs of the Health Unit's Service Areas and also generates awareness of the MLHU's many programs and services through a combination of media relations, advertising, marketing, online and Social Media strategies.

The Communications team also streams all Board of Health meetings live to the Internet. Interested community members can watch the Board's monthly proceedings live through the Health Unit's website.

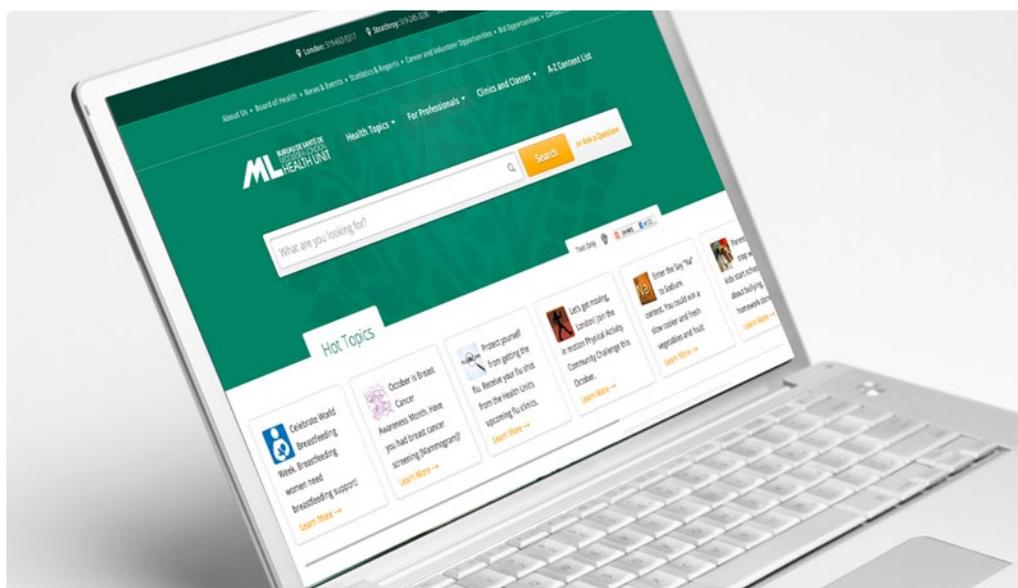
One of Communications most ambitious undertakings of 2012 was redeveloping the Health Unit's website. After a competitive bid process, London and Toronto-based website development company Resolution Interactive Media (ResIM) was selected to undertake the work. Consultations took place with Health Unit staff, clients and online users to gain an understanding of what information audiences wanted to access and how they wanted to find it. After the site's architectural design was established came the labour-intensive task of assessing and rewriting the website content. All Service Areas and teams provided support for the project and the majority of the project was completed by the end of 2012. The website

was launched in April 2013 and will continue to be refined and developed in coming months and years.

Communications also became more involved in social media as a means of capturing new audiences and providing real-time information, increasing its use of Twitter and adding more videos to the Health Unit's YouTube channel. Significant work was also done to develop policy to govern the use of social media at the Health Unit. It is expected the MLHU's social media presence will continue to grow in 2013.

In 2012, the Communications Department issued 49 news releases. Over-all, 1,389 media reports referencing the Health Unit's involvement and activities in the community appeared or aired in London and Middlesex County media outlets, including television, radio and newspapers.

Although the coverage was spread widely across the Health Unit's Service Areas, some stories received greater media attention than others. The top story of 2012 was influenza, which arrived earlier than normal and developed into the most active flu season in more than 20 years. The Health Unit's Tobacco Control Program also received significant media attention during the year, including the effort to create a municipal by-law for London regulating smoking in outdoor public places, automatic prohibitions given to retailers who contravened the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*, and the *Smoke-Free Movie Night* held in September. Significant media attention also focused on West Nile Virus, the mosquito situation in Parkhill, matters related to the Health Unit's budget, extreme weather alerts, the launch of *Adventures in Sex City II* and the Health Unit's effort to raise awareness about home-based tattoo businesses.





FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

EXPENDITURES 2012

Cost-Shared Public Health Programs:

(Funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, The City of London and the County of Middlesex)

Mandatory Programs	\$23,291,615
Vector-Borne Diseases	\$594,797
Small Drinking Water Systems	\$71,311
CINOT Expansion Program	\$63,002
TOTAL COST-SHARED PROGRAMS	\$24,020,725

100% Ministry-funded Public Health Programs:

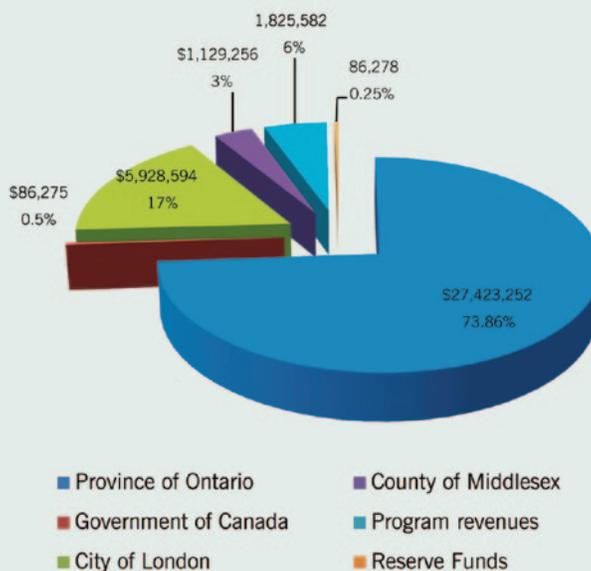
Infectious Diseases Prevention and Control	\$1,166,722
Needle Exchange	\$234,992
New Nursing Initiatives	\$367,383
Healthy Babies Healthy Children	\$2,675,603
Smart Start for Babies*	\$86,275
Enhanced Safe Water Initiative	\$35,627
Enhanced Food Safety Initiative	\$80,000
Other Public Awareness Initiatives	\$174,943
Integrated Communicable Diseases Systems Implementation	\$97,007
Shared Library Services	\$90,105
Healthy Smiles Ontario (dental treatment program)	\$1,600,910
Dental Treatment Clinic	\$264,670
Smoke-Free Ontario	\$1,007,870
tykeTALK (speech and language program)	\$1,554,272
Infant Hearing & Screening Program	\$997,423
Blind Low Vision Program	\$186,812
TOTAL PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS	\$34,641,339

REVENUES 2012

Sources of Funding:

Province of Ontario	\$25,585,354	73.86%
Government of Canada	\$86,275	0.25%
City of London	\$5,928,594	17.11%
County of Middlesex	\$1,129,256	3.26%
Program Revenues	\$1,825,582	5.27%
Reserve Funds	\$86,278	0.25%
TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDING	\$34,641,339	

MIDDLESEX-LONDON BOARD OF HEALTH FUNDING SOURCES





50 King Street (at Ridout), London, Ontario N6A 5L7

ML MIDDLESEX-LONDON
HEALTH UNIT
www.healthunit.com