

The Health Index

Middlesex-London Residents React Positively to 100% Smoke-free By-laws

Issue 11, June 2004

Key Points:

- Public support for smoke-free places increased in the City of London following the implementation of the July 1st, 2003 By-laws making the City of London 100% smoke-free.
- Public support for smoke-free places continued following the implementation the August 1st, 2003 By-law making the County of Middlesex 100% smoke-free.
- More London residents now support 100% smoke-free bars, bowling alleys, billiard halls, and bingos.
- County residents continue to support 100% smoke-free public places and workplaces (restaurants, bars, bowling alleys, and billiard halls).
- Personal use of tobacco is associated with lower support.

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BACKGROUND

The City of London and Middlesex County have made great strides in the past two years to reduce environmental tobacco smoke in public places and the workplace. On July 1, 2003 the City of London Smoke-free Public Places and the Smoke-free Workplaces By-laws came into effect. The By-laws mandate that all public places and workplaces in the City of London be smoke-free. The Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) was identified as the enforcement agency and Tobacco Enforcement Officers (TEOs) were hired. On August 1, 2003 the Corporation of the County of Middlesex By-law (Number 5682) came into effect mandating all public places and workplaces in Middlesex County be smoke-free. Bingo parlours in Middlesex County are scheduled to become 100% smoke-free in August 2004.

The Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines (1997), which all health units in Ontario are required to implement has set the following objective:

- To increase the proportion of smoke-free public places and workplaces to 100 per cent by the year 2005.

Toward this end, the City of London and the County of Middlesex By-laws have successfully helped the community meet this objective by moving to 100% smoke-free public places and workplaces.

To monitor the change in public support following implementation of the By-laws a series of questions was used on the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS). RRFSS is an ongoing population health survey that collects approximately 100 telephone responses for the MLHU area in monthly increments (waves). The system is currently used for population health behaviour surveillance by 22 of the 37 health units in Ontario. Further information on RRFSS is provided below in the “Methods” section. The Health Unit first reported public support for smoke-free places in August 2002¹ and subsequently followed-up with a more thorough baseline analysis in November

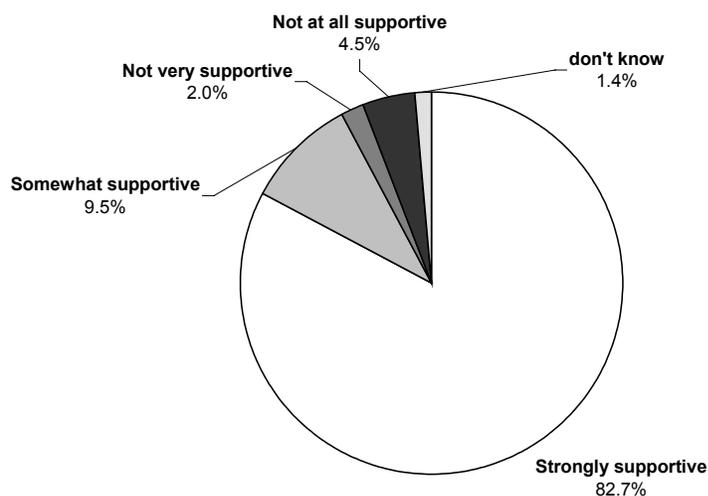
2002². This issue of The Health Index builds on these previous reports to assess the change in support for smoke-free places in the City of London and Middlesex County.

CITY OF LONDON

Overview of Results

Following the July 1, 2003 By-law, over ninety percent of City of London residents supported smoke-free workplaces marking an overall increase in support for 100% smoke-free places. The majority of residents were “strongly supportive” (82.7% \pm 3.5%) and an additional 9.5% (\pm 2.7%) were ‘somewhat supportive’ of 100% smoke-free workplaces (Figure 1). City of London residents now appear to be making the link between wanting smoke-free workplaces and the understanding that many public places are also someone else’s workplace. This is evidenced by the corresponding increase in support for public places such as bars, bingo and billiard halls as well as bowling alleys, all of which are also workplaces for many residents.

Figure 1: City of London Support for 100% Smoke-Free Workplaces Following the July 1, 2003 By-law
City of London , 2003



Source: RRFSS 2003, Waves 31-36

Support for the City of London By-law that made all restaurants 100% smoke-free has remained high and strong support continues; nine out of ten residents supported 100% smoke-free restaurants following the implementation of the By-laws.

The majority of residents continue to support 100% smoke-free bowling alleys, billiard halls, bars and bingo halls; support for all these locations significantly increased following the implementation of the By-laws. Significant differences in support also continue to be observed when an individual's smoking status is considered.

Workplaces

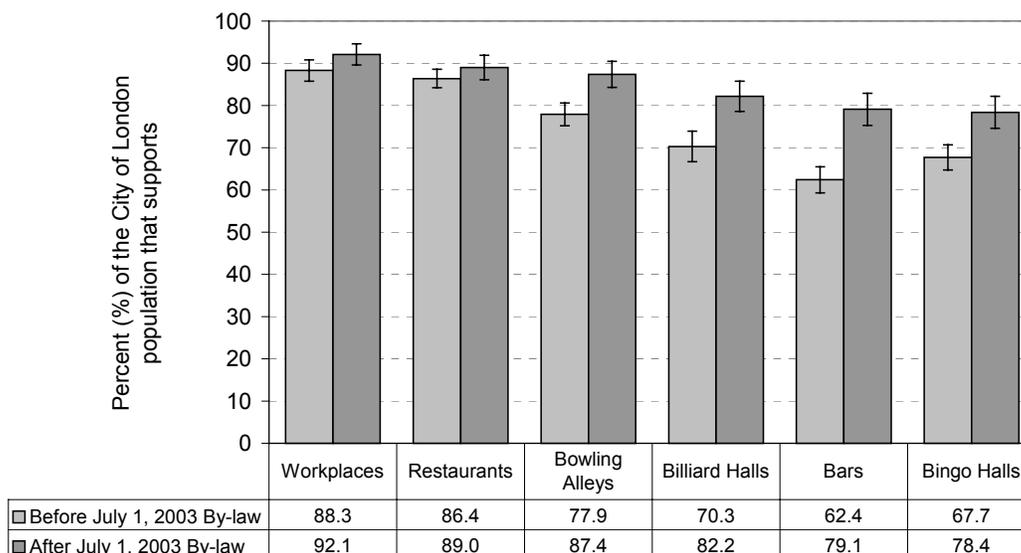
An increase in support for smoke-free places was observed following the implementation of the By-law. Prior to the By-law, 88.3% (± 2.5) of residents supported smoke-free workplaces.

Following the implementation of the By-law, 92.1% (± 2.5) of residents expressed their support for smoke-free workplaces (Figure 2). This increase in support is also evident in the results on public opinion for smoke-free bowling alleys, bingo halls, billiard halls and bars and may indicate a shift in attitude that now considers such establishments as workplaces.

Many workplaces are currently 100% smoke-free. Of the residents that worked outside the home, 81.1% (± 2.4) indicated that they worked in a smoke-free workplace. Just over one quarter of employed residents (28.0% ± 2.8) also reported that there were smoking cessation programs at their place of work.

Significant differences in support were observed when an individual's smoking status was considered. In the City of London, 20.1% (± 1.8) of residents reported that they were current smokers,

Figure 2: City of London Support for 100% Smoke-Free Places by Location Before and After July 1, 2003 By-law
City of London, 2002-2003



Source: RRFSS 2002-2003, waves 17-36

30% (29.7% ± 2.1%) were former smokers and half of residents had never smoked (50.2% ± 2.3%). Support for smoke-free workplaces by current smokers (78.0% ± 9.0%) continues to lag behind that of former (95.3% ± 3.7%) and never smokers (95.7% ± 2.6%) (Figure 3). Nevertheless, more than three-quarters (78.0% ± 9.0) of current smokers supported smoke-free workplaces.

Restaurants

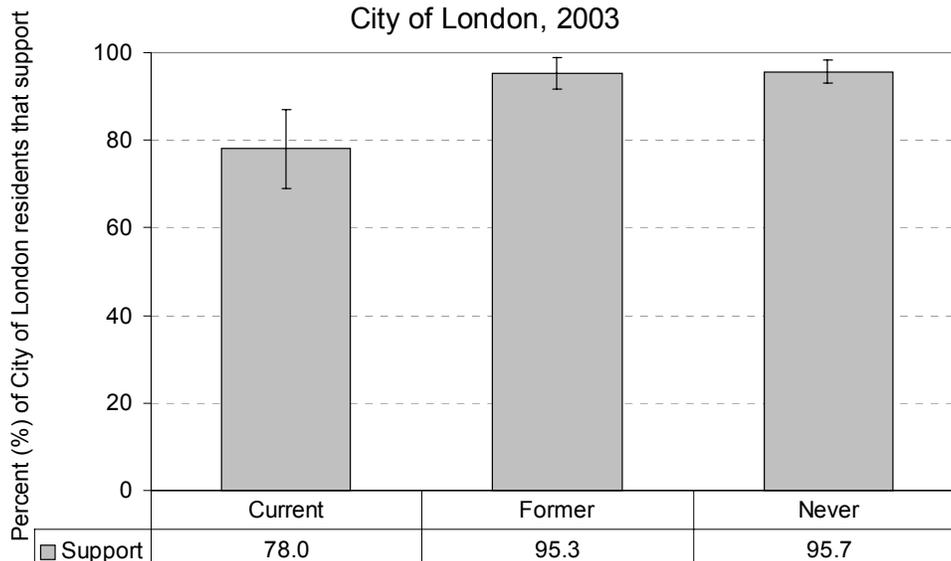
Support for 100% smoke-free restaurants has remained high since its implementation and strong support continues. Following the implementation of the By-laws 89.0% (± 2.9%) of City of London residents supported 100% smoke-free restaurants (Figure 2). Differences were observed according to smoking status; personal use of tobacco continues to be a key factor influencing support for 100% smoke-free restaurants. Support was highest for residents that had never smoked (93.1% ± 3.3%) and former smokers (92.9% ± 4.5%). Over two-thirds (72.0% ± 9.7%) of current smokers also supported 100% smoke-free restaurants.

Bars

Eighty percent (79.1% ± 3.8%) of London residents expressed their support for 100% smoke-free bars following the July 1, 2003 By-laws. This marks an overall increase in support. Prior to the By-law, 62.4% (± 3.1%) supported 100% smoke-free bars.

Significant differences in the percentage support by smoking status continue to be observed (Figure 4). Following the implementation of the By-laws, close to 90% of both former smokers (88.2% ± 5.6%) and respondents that had never smoked (87.1% ± 4.3%) supported smoke-free bars while 41.0% (± 10.6%) of current smokers supported smoke-free bars. While increased support for 100% smoke-free bars was observed across all levels of smoking status, a significant increase in support by former smokers (59.2% to 88.2%) living in the City of London was observed following the implementation of the July 1, 2003 By-laws (Figure 4).

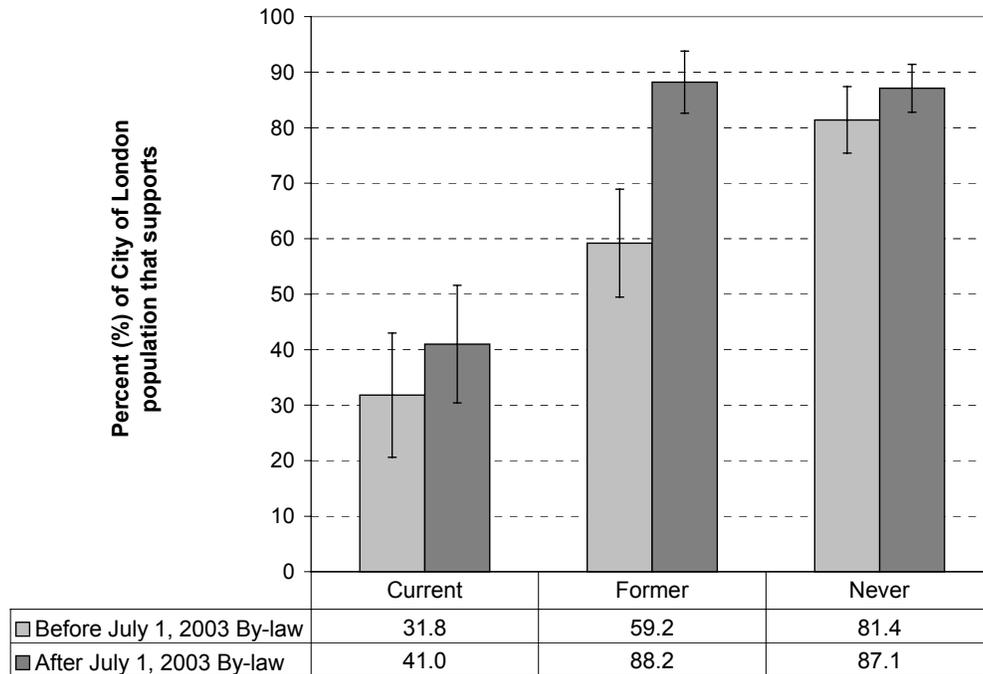
Figure 3: City of London Support for 100% Smoke-Free Workplaces Following the July 1, 2003 Bylaw by Smoking Status
City of London, 2003



Source: RRFSSS 2003, Waves 31-36

Figure 4: City of London Support for 100% Smoke-Free Bars by Smoking Status

City of London, 2002-2003



Source: RRFSS 2002-2003, waves 17-36

Bowling, Bingo, Billiards

City of London support for 100% smoke-free bowling alleys, bingo and billiard halls increased following the implementation of the July 1, 2003 By-laws. Support for bowling alleys (87.4% ± 3.1%), billiard halls (82.2% ± 3.6%), and bingo halls (78.4% ± 3.8%) all experienced an increase in support following the July 1, 2003 By-laws (Figure 2). Support differed by smoking status; lower support among current smokers was observed compared to both former smokers and residents that have never smoked.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

Overview of Results

On August 1st, 2003 the County of Middlesex By-law (Number 5682) came into effect mandating all public places and workplaces smoke-free. By the terms of

this August 1, 2003 By-law, all restaurants, bars, billiard halls, and bowling alleys were required to be 100% smoke-free. As of August 1, 2004 bingo parlours in Middlesex County will also become 100% smoke-free.

Following the August 1, 2003 By-law, eighty-five percent of Middlesex county residents supported smoke-free workplaces. Two-thirds of residents were “strongly supportive” (65.3% ± 9.4%) and an additional 19.4% (± 7.8%) were “somewhat supportive” of 100% smoke-free workplaces. Middlesex County residents also appear to be making the link between wanting smoke-free workplaces and the understanding that many public places are also someone else’s workplace. Three-quarters of County residents supported 100% smoke-free bowling alleys, billiard halls, and bars; support for these locations continued following the implementation of the By-laws. Significant differences in

support continue to be observed when an individual's smoking status is considered.

Workplaces

In Middlesex County support for smoke-free places continued following the implementation of the By-law. Following its implementation, 85.4% ($\pm 7.1\%$) of residents expressed their support for smoke-free workplaces (Figure 5). The results on public opinion for smoke-free bowling alleys, billiard halls and bars suggest that these establishments continue to be considered as workplaces by many County residents.

Significant differences in support are observed when an individual's smoking status is considered. In Middlesex County, 22% ($\pm 3.4\%$) of residents reported that they were current smokers, 30% ($29.6\% \pm 3.8\%$) were former smokers and just about half of residents had never smoked ($48.4\% \pm 4.1\%$). Support for smoke-free workplaces

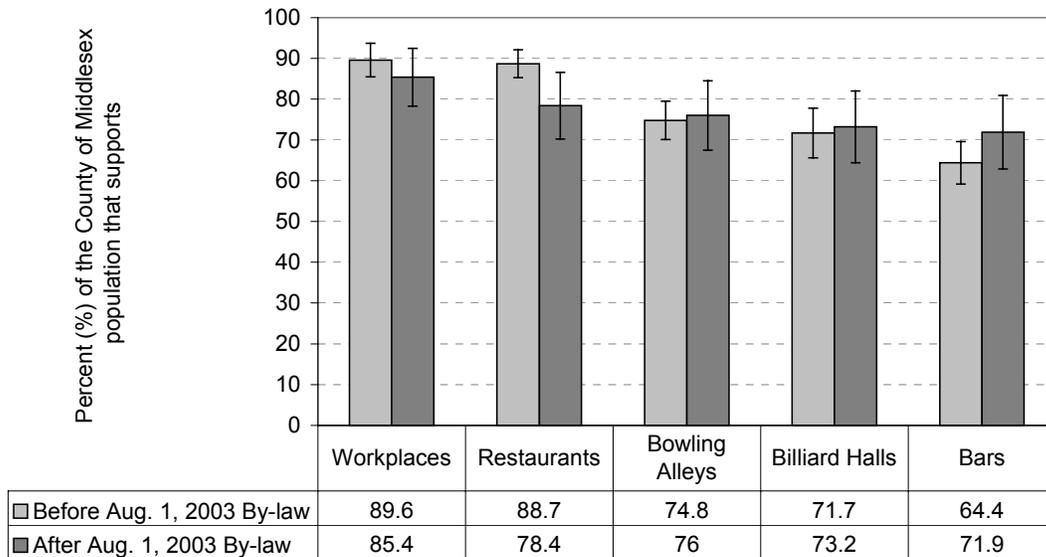
by current smokers ($69.6\% \pm 18.8\%$) continues to lag behind that of former ($95.5\% \pm 8.7\%$) and never smokers ($88.2\% \pm 8.9\%$). Nevertheless, greater than two-thirds ($69.6\% \pm 18.8\%$) of current smokers supported smoke-free workplaces.

Bars, Bowling Billiards and Restaurants

The majority of Middlesex County residents support 100% smoke-free bars, bowling alleys and billiard halls. Following the implementation of the August 1, 2003 By-law, support for 100% smoke-free bowling alleys ($76.0\% \pm 8.5$), billiard halls ($73.2\% \pm 8.8$), and bars ($71.9\% \pm 9.0$) continued; bars saw a slight increase in support although the increase was not statistically significant (Figure 5).

Response differed by smoking status for all locations; lower support among current smokers was observed compared to both former smokers and residents that have never smoked. Following the implementation of the By-law, 95% ($\pm 8.7\%$) of former smokers and 70.6% ($\pm 12.5\%$)

Figure 5: County of Middlesex Support for 100% Smoke-Free Places by Location Before and After August 1, 2003 By-law
County of Middlesex, 2002-2003



Source: RRFSS 2002-2003, waves 17-36

respondents that had never smoked supported smoke-free bars while approximately half of current smokers supported smoke-free bars.

Following the implementation of the August 1, 2003 Smoke-free Public Places and the Smoke-free Workplaces By-laws 78.4% ($\pm 8.2\%$) of residents supported 100% smoke-free restaurants; restaurants saw a slight decrease in support although the decrease was not statistically significant. For the County of Middlesex, differences in support for 100% smoke-free restaurants were also observed according to smoking status. Support was highest for former smokers and residents that have never smoked and lowest for current smokers.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As of August 1, 2004, bingo parlours in Middlesex County will also become 100% smoke-free. Other communities are also following Middlesex-London's lead in becoming 100% smoke-free. Both Huron and Lambton are scheduled to become 100% smoke-free as of September 2004. St. Thomas has most recently passed a 100% smoke-free By-law that will take effect March 1st, 2005.

METHODS

All data are from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS). These data are collected for the Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) by the Institute of Social Research, York University. Data were collected in a series of monthly telephone surveys (waves). Households were selected randomly from all households with telephones in London and Middlesex County and respondents aged 18 and older were systematically selected from within each household for the adult that had the next birthday. Once a respondent was identified every effort was made to complete

the interview with the appropriate respondent. Although on average five calls were made to a single household in order to complete the interview with the designated respondent, up to 12 attempts was standard practice.

The sample was weighted to account for each respondent's probability of being selected within households of different sizes. Data related to support for 100% smoke-free places was collected from May 2002 to December 2002, and July 2003 to December 2003. The unweighted or household sample consists of 1187 and 582 respondents from London and Middlesex County surveyed during the respective time periods (waves 17-24, 31-36). The sample for Middlesex County residents for the July 2003 to December 2003 time period was 134 and for the City of London was 448. The sample for Middlesex County residents for the May 2002 to December 2002 time period was 274 and for the City of London was 913. All waves analyzed (17-24, 31-36) included questions related to support for smoke-free restaurants, workplaces, bars, bingos, bowling alleys, and billiard halls. The full questionnaire is available at <www.cehip.org/rfss>. Those that did not respond to any individual questions were excluded provided the non-response category represented less than 5% of the total respondents.

All percentages were provided with 95% confidence intervals. Difference in proportions were considered significant at $p < 0.05$. Where possible bar charts included error bars illustrating 95% confidence intervals.

The percentage that supports a given location being smoke-free is derived from combining those that reported that they were "strongly supportive" or "somewhat supportive". The never smoked group consisted of those individuals that had identified that they had not smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime. Former smokers were those individuals that had

smoked at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime but reported that at the time of the survey they did not smoke cigarettes at all. Region was divided into two areas, the City of London and the County of Middlesex (excluding the City). The City of London residents include all those respondents who identified that they live in London. All other respondents that identified they live in Middlesex County were included in the Middlesex County group.

REFERENCES

1. Sanderson, R (2002) Tobacco Use and Smoke-Free Places. The Health Index, 2, (Aug.).
2. Sanderson, R (2002) Support for 100% Smoke-Free Places. The Health Index 4, (Nov.).

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