

Public Health Update from Southwestern Public Health



For Health Care Providers in Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas

February 28, 2023

An Update from Dr. Ninh Tran, Medical Officer of Health at Southwestern Public Health

Public Health: What You Need to Know

SURVEY

- Southwestern Public Health is conducting a feasibility study to assess the need, support, and service models related to local consumption and treatment services.
- Now through March 7, 2023, adults who live, work, or go to school in Elgin County, Oxford County, or the City of St. Thomas are invited to [complete a survey related to this work](#).
- **ACTION:** Consider completing the survey or encouraging your staff or eligible patients to do so. Here is the link:
www.swpublichealth.ca/cts

MEASLES

- On February 22, Southwestern Public Health [issued an alert](#) regarding a measles workplace exposure in Oxford County.
- The Public Health Agency of Canada reminds healthcare providers that the MMR vaccine is authorized for individuals 12 months of age and older, but **may be given to infants as young as 6 months of age** travelling to areas where measles is circulating.
- 2 additional doses (a total of 3) must be administered after the child is 12 months old to ensure long-lasting immunity.
- References:
 - [Measles advice for travellers](#) (Government of Canada)
 - [Routine childhood immunization schedule](#) (Ontario's Ministry of Health) (UPDATED)
 - [Guidelines for measles outbreaks in Canada](#) (PHAC)

PERTUSSIS

- Southwestern Public Health continues to receive confirmed cases of pertussis with 5 cases reported during the week of February 20th. Refer to the [Health Advisory issued January 18](#) for further information and guidance.
- Use this [Bad Cough? It Could be Whooping Cough](#) poster in your office.

PHO REPORT: SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

- Public Health Ontario published the [Burden of Health Conditions Attributable to Smoking and Alcohol by Public Health Unit](#) on February 6. Key points:

Southwestern Public Health
www.swpublichealth.ca
1-800-922-0096



- Each year in Ontario, smoking causes approximately 16,673 deaths, 68,046 hospitalizations, and 125,384 emergency department visits. These make up 17% of deaths, 8.7% of hospitalizations, and 3.4% of emergency department visits from all causes in people aged 35 and older.
- Alcohol consumption causes approximately 4,330 deaths, 22,009 hospitalizations, and 194,692 emergency department visits each year in Ontario. These make up 4.3% of deaths, 2.1% of hospitalizations, and 3.7% of emergency department visits from all causes in people aged 15 and older.
- Comprehensive tobacco and alcohol control strategies are needed to prevent and reduce smoking and alcohol consumption.
- Refer to the [backgrounder](#) for a sample Q&A to support patient discussions (not for distribution).
- Use this [Drinking Less is Better](#) poster in your office or to guide conversations.

SWPH EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

- Southwestern Public Health uses the Rave Alert system to issue emergency communication updates.
- Rave Alerts issued through this system inform you about:
 - events, situations, or conditions that cause or are very likely to cause illness, injury, or death;
 - are taking place or are about to take place within the jurisdiction; and
 - require your immediate action.
- You may receive an email or phone call or both. Emails come from swph@getrave.ca and may have an attachment. Phone calls come from 1-800-922-0096 and include a voice recording with instructions.
- Unsure if you are on the list to receive these updates? Contact Kim Eitel at keitel@swpublichealth.ca.