



# Public Health Services

## 2011-12 Year at a Glance

### CORE FUNCTIONS

- Population health assessment
- Surveillance
- Health protection
- Health promotion
- Disease and injury prevention

### Overview

Public Health works with others to understand the health of communities and takes action – together with partners and community members – to protect and improve the health of the population.

The results of public health action are all around us: from safe drinking water and smoke-free places to laws that prohibit unsafe activities (like tanning bed use by youth under 19) and schools that promote health through policy, education and access to support. We strive to protect and promote health and, equally importantly, to identify and address the many factors that affect health.

We carry out our work across the Capital Health district with a budget of \$10.5 million and approximately 120 staff. We are proud to invest in the development of both students and staff and to contribute our knowledge to the broader scientific and health communities locally, nationally and internationally.

### What We Do

We aim, first and foremost, to generate knowledge through surveillance efforts, evaluation and research. We use this knowledge to inform all of our work, including:

#### Protecting the health of communities

- Monitor, investigate and prevent further spread of disease outbreaks and potential threats in the air, water, food and environment.
- Prevent disease through vaccination clinics for school-aged youth and through education and support with community partners.
- Provide vaccine to physicians and other vaccine providers.
- Provide travel health counselling and vaccination through the International Travel Clinic.

#### Supporting moms and babies

- Identify and assess the needs of new parents and families, and match public health and community resources to appropriately meet those needs.
- Provide education and support to pregnant women, new moms and their families to prepare for birth and promote healthy child development.
- Work with Family Resource Centres and other partners to provide longer-term support to families facing additional challenges.

#### Promoting the health of children and youth

- Support the health and well-being of children and youth through partnerships, policy development and resources.
- Engage youth and community partners through high school-based Youth Health Centres to promote positive outcomes including school completion, safer sexual behaviours and healthy relationships, and to reduce risks associated with substance use and other risk-taking behaviours.



TO LEARN MORE VISIT  
[www.cdha.nshealth.ca/public-health](http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/public-health)

## What We Do (continued)

### Partner for community-wide supportive environments

- Work with academic, community and partners to conduct research, promote healthy public policy and reduce health risks.
- Participate in community initiatives to “level the playing field” so that health disparities are reduced, including work on food security, housing and other economic and social policies.
- Keep communities informed of key public health issues.

### A Transformation Initiative

In the fall of 2011, we set out to better understand our work with pregnant women, moms, babies and families with young children. We reached out to our community partners and asked: *Are we keeping up with the times? How could we be working differently?*

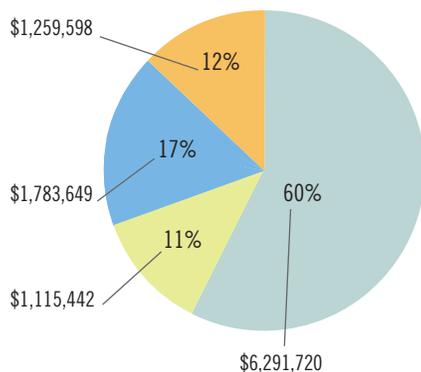
By February 2012, we were asking the public: What did moms and dads really want to know? Who helped them the most, and how? What would have made this time better for them? In person and online, we heard personal stories and feedback from more than 400 parents across the Capital Health district – including some of the hardest-to-reach voices in our communities.

This engagement initiative provided us with a wealth of information – not only about what today’s families need, but also about what they expect from the health system and the community around them. What we learned will influence how we work with moms and babies in the future and it will fundamentally change the way we involve people in the decisions we make.

To learn more about this initiative, visit [www.cdha.nshealth.ca/babystories](http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/babystories)

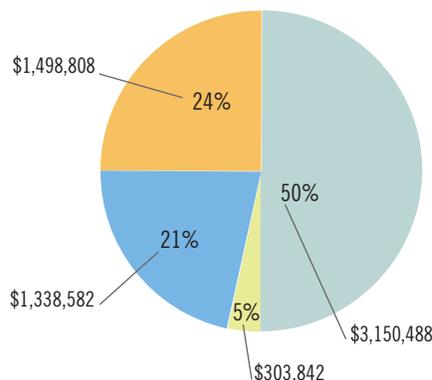
## Financial highlights

**Public Health Services total budget:**  
\$10.45 million



- Work in communities (geographic teams)
- Protecting Health Unit (immunization, communicable disease, environmental health)
- Understanding Communities Unit (surveillance, research, evaluation)
- Office space & supplies

**Work in communities budget (geographic teams):**  
\$6.29 million



- Healthy child and youth development
- Enhanced Home Visiting program (Children 0-3)
- Youth Health Care centres
- Management and administration

## How to contact us

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### Co-leads for Public Health:

Linda Young, director  
Dr. Gaynor Watson-Creed, medical officer of health

### Online:

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Public Health Services

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