



# Medical Officer of Health Updates

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Medical Officer of Health/CEO

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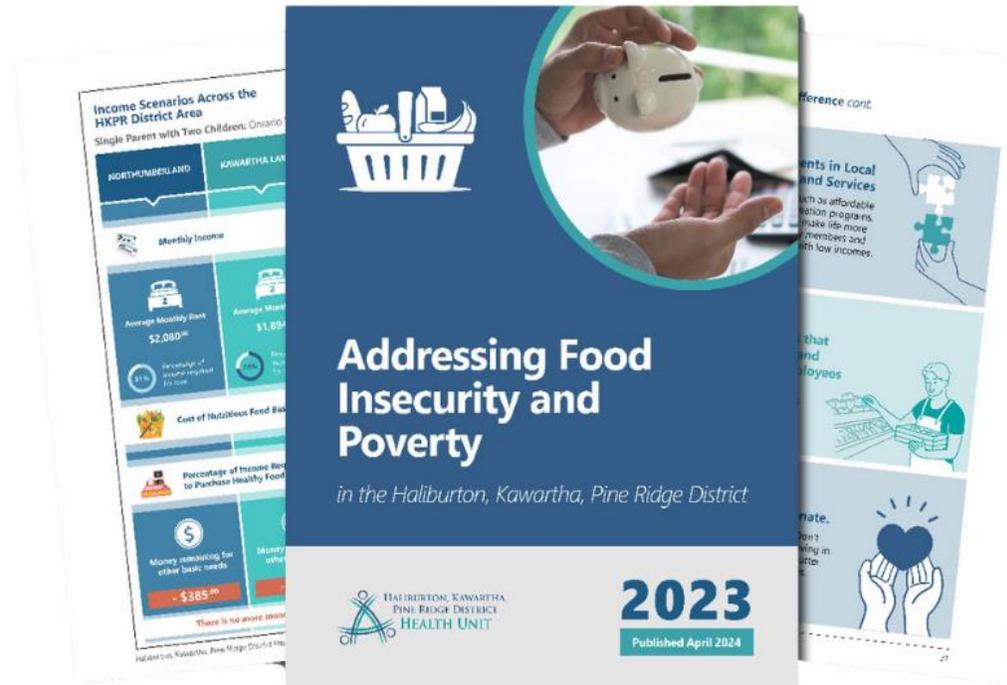
# Outline

- Launch of Nutritious Food Basket report
- Update on enforcement of *Immunization of School Pupils Act* (ISPA)
- Summer preparations

# Nutritious Food Basket Report

## Key Messages:

- Food insecurity is defined as not having enough money to buy food.
- Living in a food insecure household increases people's risk of mental health diagnoses (e.g. depression, social anxiety), infections and chronic diseases (e.g. diabetes, heart disease).
- Families living on low income (e.g. on social assistance, minimum wage) have little money left over, if any, to pay for other basic expenses.
- Food charities, such as food banks, offer only temporary solutions to food insecurity.
- We need income-based strategies that are long-term and that focus on poverty reduction (e.g. adequate incomes to ensure a minimum standard of living, improving employment standards, increasing social assistance rates, and providing a basic income guarantee).



# Report on Addressing Food Insecurity and Poverty, 2023

## • What's new in 2023:

- Used a different survey to estimate food insecurity rates in HKPR region.
  - But even still, two-year rates of food insecurity in the HKPR District area have not changed significantly. Food insecurity was 16.2%\* (CI 7.9-24.5) for 2019-2020 and 16.7%\* (CI 6.0-27.4) for 2021-2022.
- Added a few more income scenarios (single parent with two children on minimum wage, married couple on Ontario Works, single pregnant on Ontario Disability Support Program) to show the impact of income on household food insecurity and to illustrate examples of situations where Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) may arise.
- Rental costs and cost of the nutritious food basket have gone up, but people's incomes have not kept pace with general rising prices of goods and services.
- Slight increase in Ontario Disability Support Program, but still not enough to meet basic needs.

# ISPA Update

## Elementary Students (except grade 3):

- 3596 letters sent to families with students with missing records under ISPA on March 4
- 2162 students outstanding as of April 15
- 1776 outstanding as of April 29
- 663 outstanding as of May 14 – suspended from school

# Summer preparations

- Inspections of seasonal premises
- Vector-borne disease surveillance (e.g. ticks, mosquitos)
- Emergency preparedness (e.g. extreme heat events, air quality events, power outages, etc.)



*‘Healthy People, Healthy Communities.’*

Reach Out to Us

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