



**Lakelands**  
**Public Health**

Aanikegamaa Mino Bimaadiziwin



*Herb Lake, Dorset, Ontario*

# 2025 Annual Report

*Serving the residents of Alderville, Curve Lake, and Hiawatha First Nations, the Counties of Haliburton, Northumberland and Peterborough, and the Cities of Kawartha Lakes and Peterborough.*

# Land Acknowledgment

Lakelands Public Health recognizes the many harms done to Indigenous Peoples and our collective responsibility to right those wrongs. As an organization that is rooted in a colonial system, we are committed to change, to building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities and in improving our understanding of local Indigenous Peoples as we celebrate their cultures and traditions, serve their communities, and responsibly honour all our relations.

Lakelands Public Health is situated on the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations. This includes the territories of Treaty 20 and the Williams Treaties. We respectfully acknowledge that these Nations are the stewards and caretakers of these lands and waters for all time and that they continue to maintain this responsibility to ensure their health and integrity for generations to come.



***Aanikegamaa Mino Bimaadiziwin.***

"There is a chain of lakes here, and good health is happening here."

Artist: Clarity Smoke

This piece resembles "indinawemaaganidag" – the acknowledgment of our interconnection to all relations including the beings of past, present, and future. Bears are protectors within community and are the knowledge keepers of medicine, showing us what berries, bark, and plants we can use to heal ourselves and our communities. The bears are mixed into the sky, land, and water, representing the ties we have to all of creation, treating each being with the reciprocity they have given us. The balance between mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health is reflected through the four directions shown on the border.



*Photo by Karen Pettinella  
Herb Lake, Dorset Ontario*

## Executive Summary

The year 2025 marked a significant milestone for Lakelands Public Health as the organization officially began operations following the merger of the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit and Peterborough Public Health on January 1, 2025. This foundational year focused on bringing together people, programs, systems, and services to build a strong, unified public health organization dedicated to improving and protecting the health of communities across the region.



*Our Board of Health celebrating the launch of our new name and brand identity.*

A key milestone during the year was the public launch of the Lakelands Public Health name and brand identity. The introduction of the new brand reflected the organization's commitment to creating a unified presence across the region while reinforcing its vision, values, and dedication to community-centered public health services.

Throughout the year, staff across all divisions demonstrated resilience, collaboration, and innovation while maintaining essential public health services and responding to emerging community needs. Key efforts included harmonizing policies and procedures, strengthening internal operations, advancing digital modernization, and fostering a shared organizational culture rooted in service excellence, equity, and community partnership. The organization continued to deliver a broad range of programs and services supporting population health and well-being.

Community partnerships remained central to the organization's success. Collaboration with municipalities, healthcare providers, schools, Indigenous communities, social service agencies, and community organizations strengthened local responses to complex health challenges and advanced shared priorities across the region.

As Lakelands Public Health looks ahead, the organization remains focused on continuous improvement, innovation, and delivering impactful public health services that improve the health and well-being of all residents across the region. The progress made throughout 2025 reflects the dedication of staff, leadership, partners, and communities working together to build a stronger and healthier future.

# Message from the Medical Officer of Health and CEO

Mergers — and change of any kind — are never easy, but they are sometimes necessary.

Since the merger that officially created Lakelands Public Health on January 1, 2025, our first year has gone better than I could have expected for several reasons.

First, we have had a Board of Health that has come together in an empowering and collaborative way. Led by Chair Ron Black and Vice Chair Cecil Ryall, the Board has taken a “Lakelands first” approach that has helped unite and strengthen our newly expanded geography and the communities we serve.

Second, we have received tremendous support from the Provincial Government. In addition to investing more than \$20 million to support the merger, address program capacity challenges, and make long-overdue upgrades to buildings and IT infrastructure, the Province has also provided strong support for planning and coordination alongside the three other public health units undergoing mergers at the same time.

Third — and most importantly — our staff have fully embraced the opportunity to build Lakelands Public Health for the generations to come. For many years, staff often said, “let’s just get on with the merger already,” as discussions between the former Boards of Health had been ongoing for more than 50 years without moving forward. Our staff recognize the benefits of becoming a larger organization, including greater cross-coverage, increased specialization, and enhanced opportunities to better serve our communities. Throughout this transition, they have remained deeply committed to maintaining continuity of service while also helping integrate the former health units and identify new and better ways to support residents across the Lakelands region.

It is both an honour and a privilege to serve our communities during this important period of change, especially at a time when public health needs have never been greater. I am incredibly fortunate to work alongside such a dedicated and talented team at Lakelands Public Health — a team that is ready and committed to serving our communities now and into the future.



Thomas Piggott

**Dr. Thomas Piggott**, MD, PhD, CCFP, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

## Message from the Board of Health Chairperson

This past year has been one of meaningful progress and steady momentum for Lakelands Public Health. Following the legal merger on January 1, 2025, which brought together the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit and Peterborough Public Health, our focus has been on the important work of harmonization—aligning systems, programs, and people to create a unified and effective organization. As part of this foundational work, we also successfully launched our new brand and name and have been actively embedding it within the community. This milestone has helped strengthen our shared identity and improve clarity and recognition across the region.

While this kind of transformation is complex, it is also an opportunity. Throughout the year, we have advanced the integration of our programs and services, ensuring greater consistency and equity across the communities we serve. I want to recognize the dedication of our staff who have approached this work with professionalism, flexibility, and a shared commitment to excellence. Their efforts are the foundation of our success.

We also saw significant organizational evolution with the restructuring of our Senior Leadership Team and the establishment of a new Board of Health. These changes position us well for the future, strengthening governance and leadership as we continue to grow as one organization. Together, these efforts are contributing to a stronger, more connected public health unit. We are already seeing the benefits—more coordinated services, improved collaboration, and enhanced capacity to respond to emerging health needs. Most importantly, we are delivering real value to our communities and to the broader health system.

On behalf of the Board of Health, I extend my sincere thanks to our staff, partners, and communities for their ongoing support and engagement. We are building something meaningful together, and I am confident in the path ahead.



*Ron Black*

**Ron Black**, Deputy Mayor of Selwyn Township  
Board of Health Chair

# Lakelands Public Health Board of Health



The Board of Health oversees Lakelands Public Health to ensure that staff deliver programs and services in accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards, which are set by the Ontario Ministry of Health. The Medical Officer of Health, acting on behalf of the Board of Health, administers public health programs and services in alignment with the health unit's mission, vision and values.

The Board of Health plays a vital role in protecting and promoting the health and well-being of communities across the region. Through strong governance, strategic leadership, and oversight, the board helps ensure public health programs and services are responsive, evidence-informed, and aligned with provincial standards and community needs. Their commitment and guidance support the organization's ability to build healthier communities, respond to emerging health issues, and advance public health priorities with accountability and transparency.

# Members of the Board of Health



**Deputy Mayor Ron Black, Chair**  
County of Peterborough



**Councillor Cecil Ryall, Vice Chair**  
Haliburton County



**Mayor Olena Hankivsky**  
Northumberland County



**Paul Johnston**  
Provincial Appointee



**Councillor Dan Joyce**  
City of Kawartha Lakes



**Councillor Nodin Knott**  
Curve Lake First Nation



**Councillor Joy Lachica**  
City of Peterborough



**Mayor John Logel**  
Northumberland County



**Dr. Ramesh Makhija**  
Provincial Appointee



**David Marshall**  
Provincial Appointee



**Dan Moloney**  
Provincial Appointee



**Councillor Tracy Richardson**  
City of Kawartha Lakes



**Councillor Keith Riel**  
City of Peterborough



**Warden Bonnie Clark**  
County of Peterborough

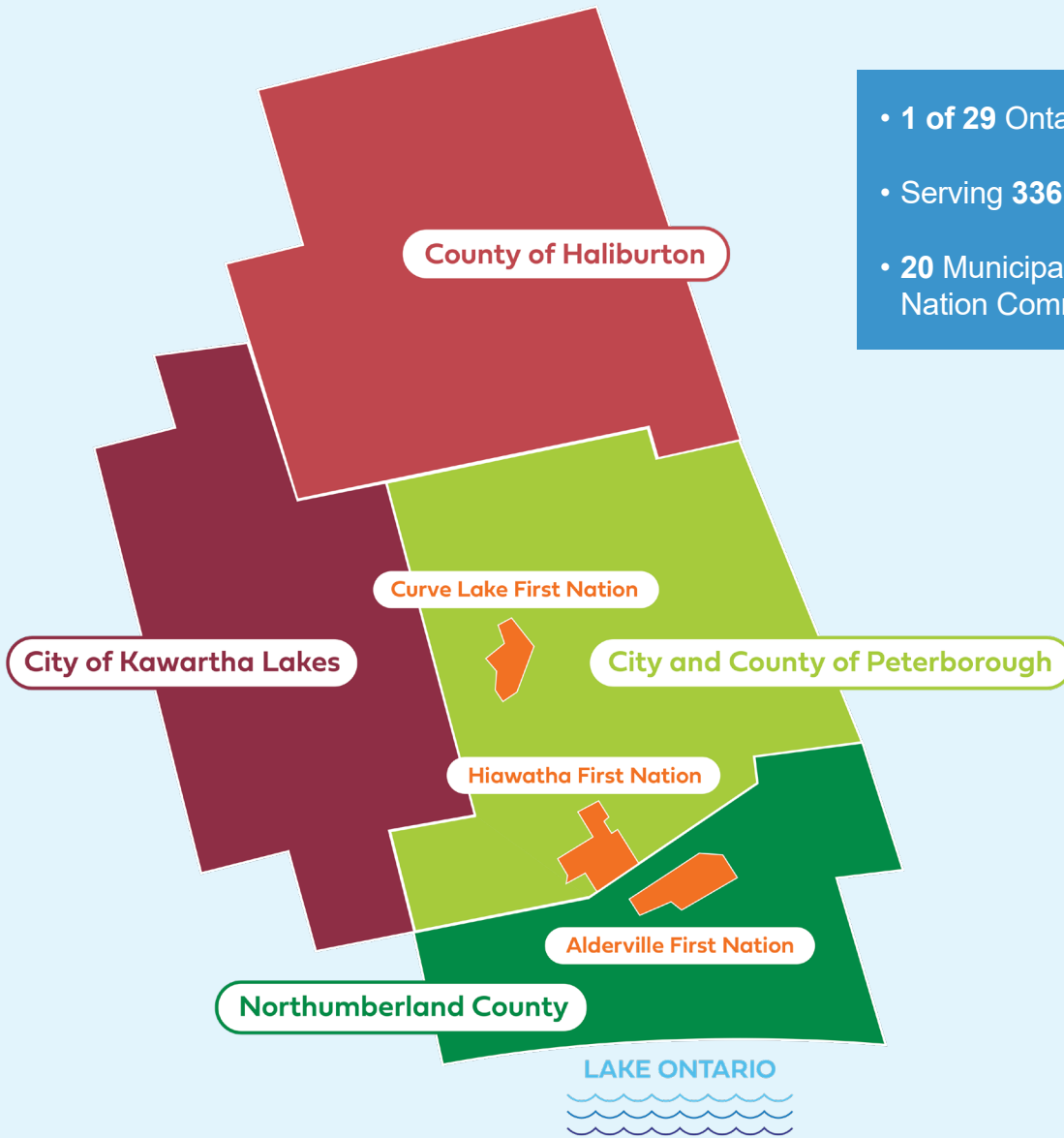


**Dr. Hans Stelzer**  
Provincial Appointee



**Councillor Kathryn Wilson**  
Hiawatha First Nation

# About Lakelands Public Health



- 1 of 29 Ontario Public Health Units
- Serving 336,865 People
- 20 Municipalities and Three First Nation Communities

The work of the Lakelands Public Health is outlined in the Ontario Public Health Standards, as set by the Ministry of Health. This work can be divided into three primary categories: health protection, health promotion, and central support services. Health protection includes infectious disease prevention and control, inspections services, clinical services, health hazards, and emergency services. Health promotion includes healthy schools, nutrition, substance use and prevention, child health, healthy environments, and mental health. Centralized services work to support all other programming, including Indigenous health, communications, IT, planning and epidemiology.

# Strategic Priorities

In 2025, Lakelands Public Health made significant progress in advancing organizational performance and strengthening the foundation of the newly merged public health unit. Through the development of strong leadership structures grounded in competency and expertise, the organization successfully unified teams, streamlined decision-making processes, and fostered a collaborative culture across all service areas. Key achievements included the establishment of integrated leadership and governance frameworks, alignment of operational priorities, and enhanced workforce planning to support long-term sustainability.

Lakelands Public Health also focused on sustaining sufficient competencies and capacities for specialized positions by identifying critical skill needs, supporting professional development opportunities, and strengthening recruitment and retention efforts. These accomplishments have positioned the organization to deliver consistent, high-quality public health programs and services while building a resilient and future-focused workforce for the communities it serves. Here is an overview of some of those accomplishments:



## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Health equity is embedded in all programs and services at Lakelands Public Health, in both large and small-scale initiatives. For instance, our Sexual Health Clinics utilize gender-inclusive language to provide safe, respectful care for all. On a larger scale, the Lakelands Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction (SUPHR) Team weaves health equity into all programming, working closely with community partners to ensure that programming is attuned to the needs of individuals and agencies in the region. A great example would be when the SUPHR team supported local agencies in offering harm reduction supplies, and basic wound care to clients who may not otherwise have access to primary care.



*Temporary clinic set up in Peterborough for Sandy Lake First Nation evacuees*

In June through August, the Lakelands Public Health Team supported evacuees from Sandy Lake First Nation, as wildfires were impacting their community. Public health nurses from Lakelands were on-site to support a clinic providing wound and general nursing care for evacuees. Further, the immunization team offered a vaccine clinic to all evacuees, providing accessible care and prevention for individuals. Our team also ensured that evacuees had access to harm reduction supplies and naloxone, including providing training to staff at the residences where evacuees were staying.

## Reconciliation, Decolonization, and Indigenization

First Nations are generally responsible for their own public health services, however under the Health Protection and Promotion Act section 50, First Nations may choose to opt-in to program and service delivery by the local public health unit. Continuing legacy work, Lakelands Public Health is proud to hold Section 50 Agreements with both Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations. As such, Lakelands Public Health provides services and programming within two First Nations within the region. Lakelands is currently in the process of building and strengthening relationships with Alderville First Nation, towards an agreement of their choice that is the best fit for their community. These partnerships will enable Lakelands Public Health to continue providing programming and services that are tailored to the First Nations.

This work is further supported by Lakelands's Indigenous Health Team and Indigenous Health Advisory Circle. The Indigenous Health Advisory Circle (IHAC) is a sub-committee of the Board of Health, working to strengthen the Board's relationships with Indigenous Peoples and its work on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.

## 2025 At a Glance



**147,278**

Vaccines Distributed to Health Care Professionals



**117**  
Animal Bite Investigations



**2,658**

Dental Appointments Completed



**149**

Public Beaches Monitored



**669**

High-Risk Premise Inspections



**2,936**

Naloxone Kits Distributed



**8,466**

Students Received Dental Screening



**443**

Families Supported by Home Visiting Programs



**133**

Boil Water Orders and Advisories Issued



**224**

Outbreaks Managed



**10,498**

Students Immunized



**100**

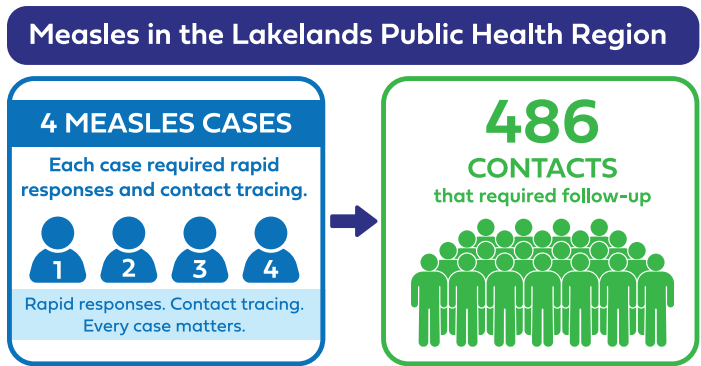
Animals Tested for Rabies

# Divisional Public Health Highlights

## Health Protection

Lakelands Public Health’s Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Hub Team is a novel approach to building IPAC capacity and creating networks of support within local congregate living settings. Comprised of two public health nurses and two public health inspectors, the team works to support IPAC education and initiatives in congregate living settings (CLSs). Throughout 2025, the team partnered with 90 CLSs, including retirement and long-term care homes to provide staff and resident education on topics such as: environmental cleaning, hand hygiene, personal protective equipment, point of care risk assessment, surveillance and *Pseudomonas*. Further, the team collaborated with community partners to provide information sessions on engaging staff, improving vaccine uptake, and outbreak debriefing to support IPAC processes within CLSs. Seven virtual *Community of Practice* sessions were hosted to foster relationships between homes in the region and provide opportunity to learn collaboratively.

In 2025, Canada lost its measles elimination status with several outbreaks, including several in Ontario. The Lakelands Public Health region had four cases of measles, each requiring rapid responses and contact tracing. Investigations revealed 486 contacts that required follow-up. Our Infectious Disease team worked under a surge response plan, including support from Public Health Inspectors on the Environmental Health Team and Public Health Nurses from the Sexual Health and Immunization Teams. The response team completed accurate and timely case and contact tracing, including from exposures at a workplace, public buses, a local hospital, and a school. The comprehensive responses included arranging post-exposure prophylaxis at locations most convenient for those exposed, including routine clinics, the local hospital, and at the school.



# Divisional Public Health Highlights

## Health Promotion

Lakelands Public Health is working with local partners to implement *Planet Youth Nogojiwanong*, brought to you by the Peterborough Youth Substance Use Prevention (PYSUP) Initiative. The project uses the Icelandic Prevention Model to prevent youth substance use and strengthen community resilience. In 2025, PYSUP received \$720,570 of funding from Public Health Agency of Canada, building off the \$125,000 received in 2024. Using this funding, three consultants were hired to support the project:

- **Mshkiki Gitigaan Kwe** has helped to shape the project from an Indigenous lens and has offered Two-Eyed Seeing programming.
- **Lee Higginson** was hired as an arts-based engagement consultant and has supported engagement with low barrier art activities.
- **Kat Tepylo Murphy** has led communications activities as well as initiated a PYSUP Instagram account.

In 2025, PYSUP's focus was on building strong relationships at two secondary schools and six feeder elementary/intermediate schools in Peterborough, to prepare for the school-based surveys coming in 2026. The team led and supported six engagement events at Kenner Collegiate and ten events at Holy Cross Secondary School, interacting with hundred of students. The team also set up engagement tables at both school and community events (e.g., Fun Fairs, Parent Council meetings, Pride Festival, Health Fairs and began offering in-class programming at Holy Cross).



# 2025 Financial Summary

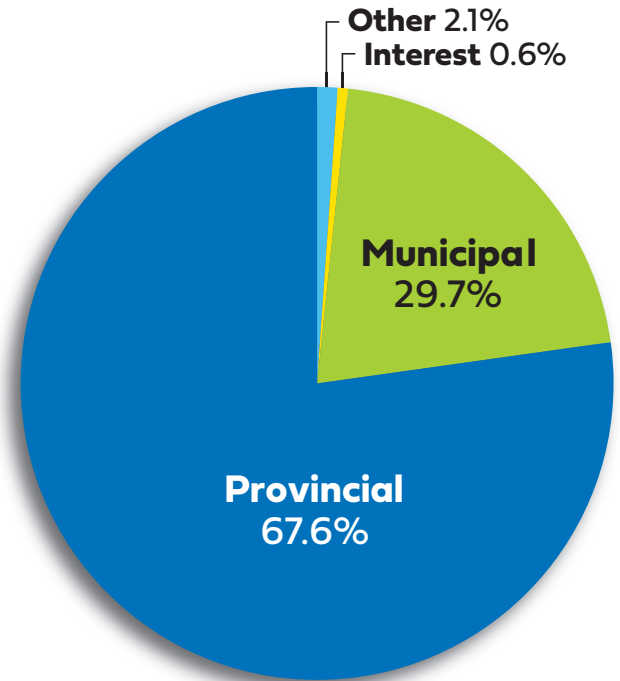
Lakelands Public Health Financial Statement for the year ending December 31, 2025.

Cost-Shared Revenue	Amount
Provincial	\$21,463,900
Municipal	\$9,445,802
Interest	\$179,329
Other	\$668,305
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$31,757,336</b>

Cost-Shared Operating Results	Amount
Cost-Shared Core Programs	\$31,757,336

Additional Programs	Amount
Healthy Babies Healthy Children	\$2,049,593
Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program	\$1,743,722
IPAC Hub Infection Prevention & Control	\$620,359
Merger: Strengthening Public Health	\$8,558,051
Infant Child Development	\$253,283
Miscellaneous Programs	\$375,250

**Total Expenditures** **\$45,357,594**





# Lakelands Public Health

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*Coverpage photo by Karen Pettinella*

*Photo by Sarah Gill  
Eels Creek, North Kawartha, Ontario*