



# BOARD REPORT

Friday November 20, 2009



Medical Officer of Health

## REPORT TO THE BOARD

Friday November 20, 2009

### H1N1 status in Grey Bruce

The goal of the Grey Bruce Health Unit Pandemic Contingency Plan is to reduce sickness and death and to reduce societal disruption among the people of Grey and Bruce counties.

The GBHU pandemic contingency plan is divided into three periods:

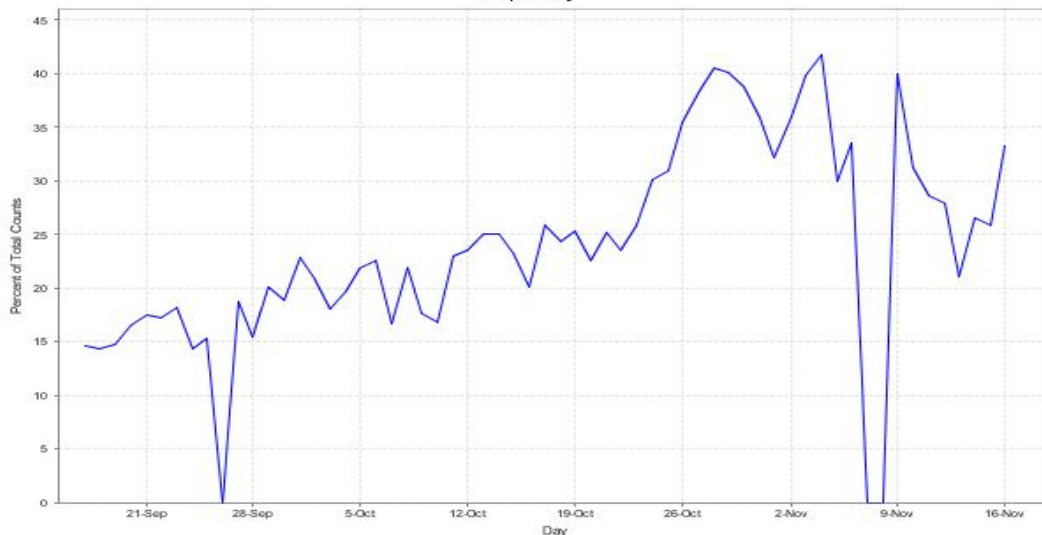
- Pandemic preparedness period – green
- Pandemic response period
  - yellow, new pandemic strain identified, local impact minimal state of heightened readiness
  - red, new virus strain detected locally with significant impact locally, high level of response required
- Post-pandemic recovery period

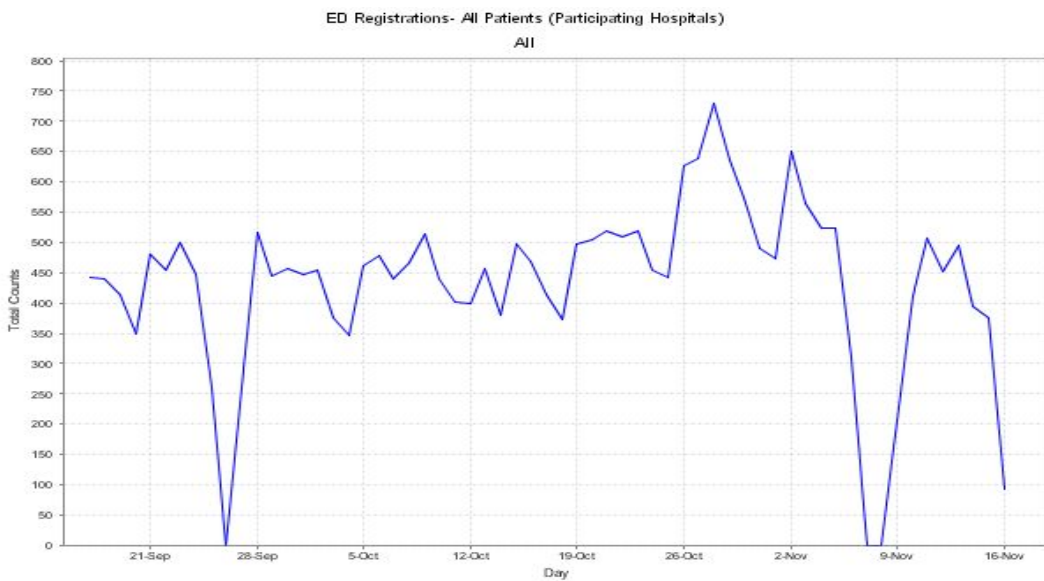
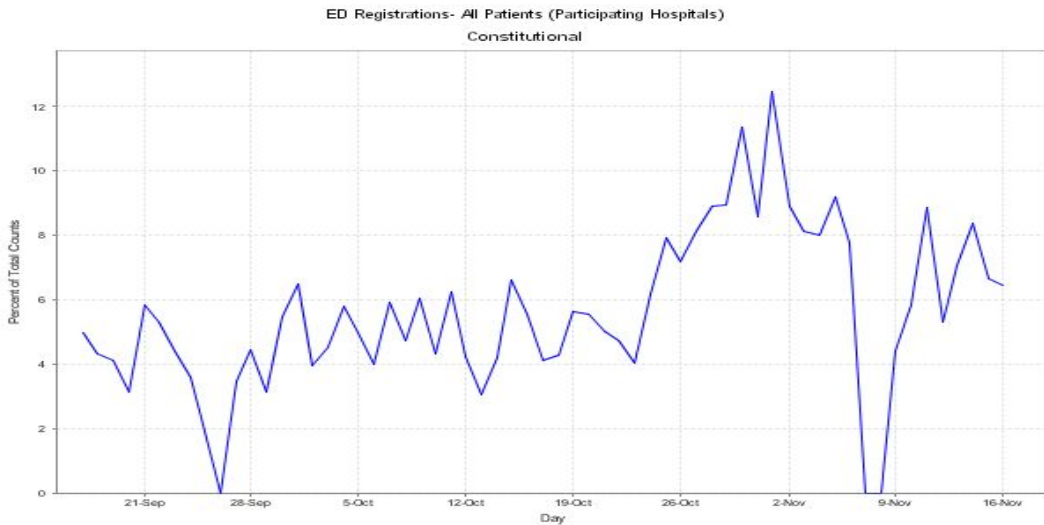
During each of the periods, subcommittees focus on six activities:

- Surveillance
- Antiviral and Vaccine
- Communications
- Human Resources
- Emergency management
- Critical services

### **Surveillance : the ECADS system for Grey Bruce**

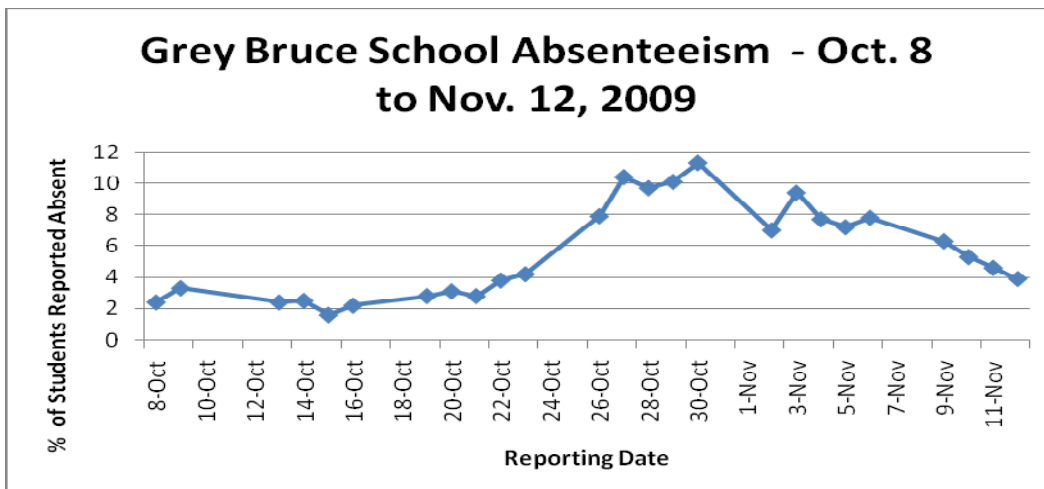
ED Registrations- All Patients (Participating Hospitals)  
Respiratory



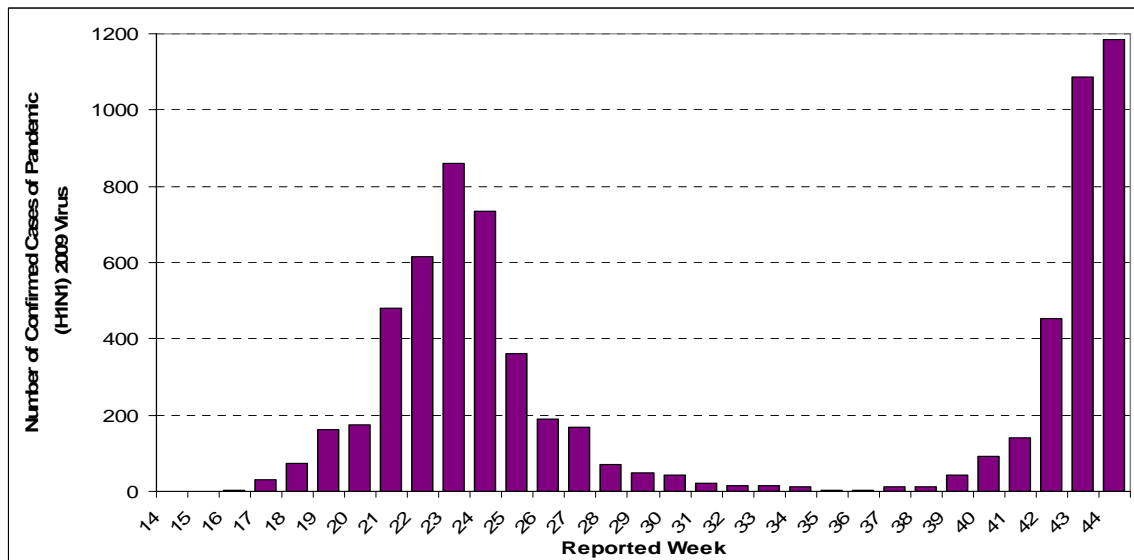
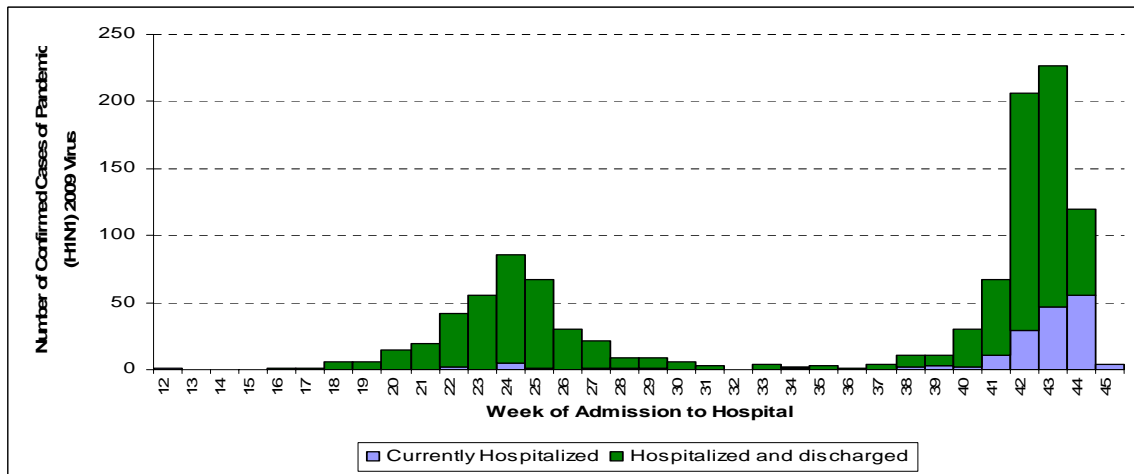
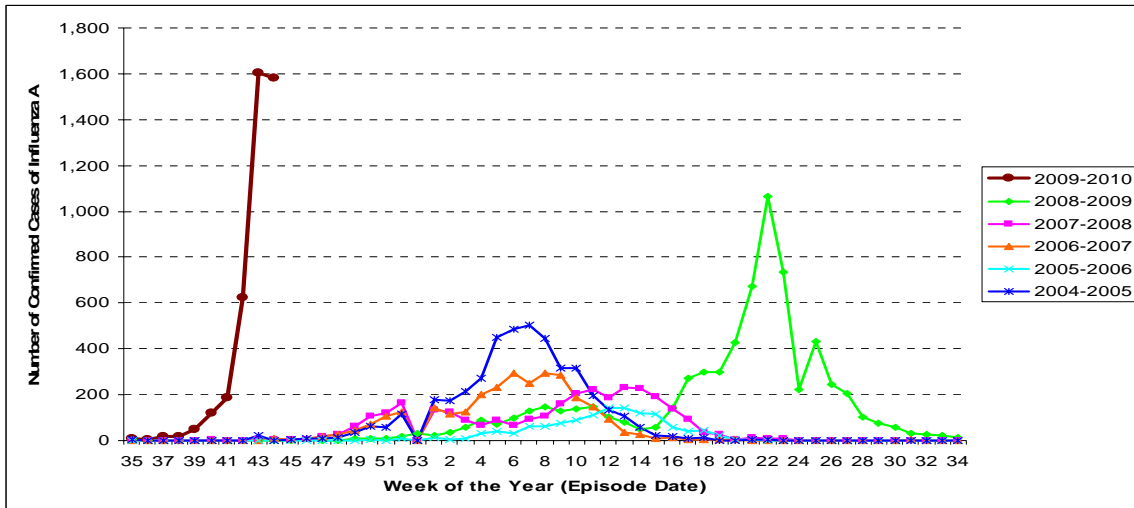


The peak days occurred in the last week of October and the trend indicates generally decreasing numbers since the last of October.

### The SATS System for School Absenteeism



# Province of ON



## Vaccine Update

### H1N1 Health Unit Daily Immunization update

**As of: end-of-day Monday November 16 2009**

Number of vaccines administered through PHU mass immunization clinics (cumulative)	Number of doses provided to hospitals (cumulative)	Number of doses provided to community physicians (cumulative) (i.e. CHC, FHT, Family Physicians)	Number of doses to <u>other</u> Vaccine Delivery Agents (cumulative)	Number of doses on-hand in PHU	Number of community physicians currently acting as H1N1 vaccine delivery agents	Projection of when health unit clinics may be out of vaccine (date)
5,114	2,500	25,580	4,200	1,210	83	Shipment today

From October 6, 2009 – November 16, 2009 we have administered 1945 doses of the seasonal influenza vaccine, 5063 H1N1, 51 Panvax

## Communications Update

Media Overview for H1N1 from October 1 to November 17

- We issued 15 media releases
- We received 56 media inquiries
- We recorded 215 radio, TV & newspaper articles/letters/editorials in local media, not including weeklies that don't have websites.
- We received 130 public inquiries through our website 'contact us' page

Hazel Lynn

# PROGRAM REPORT

## NOVEMBER 2009



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WEBSITE: [www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca](http://www.publichealthgreybruce.on.ca)

Program Report is issued on a monthly basis to inform our board and community partners of our activities.

*The highlighted programs are featured in this issue...*

### DIRECTOR, HEALTH PROMOTION: Maureen Handley

**Lynda Bumstead**

Chronic Disease Prevention

Early Detection of Cancer

**Sarah Ellis**

Healthy Babies

Healthy Children

**Carrie Griffith**

Reproductive Health

Child Health

Oral Health Services

**Denna Leach**

Sexual Health

Injury Prevention

Substance Misuse Prevention

**Linda Davies**

Tobacco Projects

Tobacco Control Act

Tobacco By-law Enforcement

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Building Healthy Communities .....	Page 4

### DIRECTOR, HEALTH PROTECTION: Chris Munn

**Karen Sweiger**

Vaccine Preventable Diseases

Rabies Control

**Andrew Barton**

Food Safety

Health Hazard Investigation

Emergency Planning

**Lou D'Alessandro**

Safe Water

Environment

**Susan Shular**

Control of Infectious Diseases

Pandemic Planning

Vector Borne Diseases

Tuberculosis Control

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## FOOD SAFETY

The Food Safety program at the Grey Bruce Health Unit offers a broad range of services covering many aspects of food safety from regulatory, to education, to enforcement.

Informal education takes place during most inspections. This can be something as simple as an inspector giving advice on correct hand washing procedures, or as in-depth as discussions on food production process Critical Control Points. More formally, the health unit teaches and proctors people who wish to become Certified Food Handlers. In 2009, we continue to see a trend towards increasing use of the on-line *In Good Hands* training. In October, we ran Food Certification courses in Owen Sound and Walkerton.

Inspections continue year round, although it is particularly busy in those areas with summer seasonal businesses. Winter, and the opening of the ski resorts, generate some addition inspections. For the vast majority, an inspection is an opportunity to provide some education and advice. Occasionally, minor infractions are noted. There are times though when one or more re-inspections are required to ensure that more numerous or more serious infractions are corrected.

Even after re-inspections and repeated warnings, there are times when an operator will not achieve the minimum required legal standard. In these rare cases the inspector may issue a ticket. In the last quarter we have issued six tickets, which have included a restaurant, a café and a local operator at a special event. This is a little more than normal but does not appear to reflect a worsening trend.

## EARLY LEARNING AND PUBLIC HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS

In June 2009, Charles Pascal released his report *With our Best Future in Mind* on implementing early learning in Ontario. The report notes “more than one in four children who enter Grade 1 is significantly behind their peers.” (Pascal 2009). Many children never close that gap, face continual challenges in school and will fail to graduate. This has significant impact on the future workforce, social services and society in general. Pascal states, “Establishing a strong foundation in the early years, and building on it, is the single-most powerful key to Ontario’s social and economic future.” The report outlines four key recommendations:

1. Full-day learning for 4 and 5 year-olds
2. Before and after-school and summer programs for school-age children
3. Quality programs for younger children
4. Enhanced parental leave

Recommending quality programs for younger children suggests consolidating existing child and family programs into a network of Best Start Child and Family Centers, located in schools. These Centers would offer pregnancy and parenting programs, playgroups for younger children, links to community services and early identification and intervention for children with special needs. These Centers are an opportunity for public health to provide, in partnership with schools and municipalities, client services including: prenatal classes, high-risk home visiting supports, nutrition advice and links to services for children with speech and language delays. This type of one-stop shopping within the school setting would promote community development and offer public health services to the priority populations where they live, work and play.

The province is currently reviewing the recommendations contained within the Pascal report and next steps for implementation are expected. Locally, school boards, public health and municipalities are meeting to discuss the impact of the recommendations and planning preliminary roll out.

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## BAN ON HAND-HELD DEVICES WHILE DRIVING

Ontario’s ban on hand-held devices while driving took effect on October 26, 2009. This new law makes it illegal for drivers to talk, text, type, dial and email using hand-held cell phones and other hand-held communication and entertainment devices.

This legislation is particularly significant locally, given motor vehicle collisions (MVC) are the leading cause of death for youth aged 15-19 years of age in Grey Bruce.

Over the past two years, public health and our community partners have undertaken advocacy and local community education strategies to make our roads safer, including efforts to address the issue of distracted drivers. Evidence shows “distractions like cell phones, text messaging, adjusting music, eating, and other passengers can lead to a dangerous situation” (*Mayhew et. Al., June 2006.*)

In February of 2009, the Motor Vehicle Crash Prevention Committee of Grey Bruce wrote a letter to the province’s Standing Committee on General Government providing opinions on two pieces of legislation before the House; Bill 118 – *Countering Distracted Driving and Promoting Green Transportation Act 2008*; and Bill 126 – *Road Safety Act 2008*. One of our committee members addressed the standing committee providing a Grey Bruce voice and highlighting our MVC rates, particularly with young drivers. Additionally, the Board of Health supported a resolution that was subsequently circulated other health units regarding the proposed legislation on the use of cell phones while driving.

Advocating to influence public policy and law is a significant public health approach to improve the health and well-being of community residents. It is our hope this new law will decrease significantly the rates of motor vehicle crashes in Grey Bruce and Ontario.

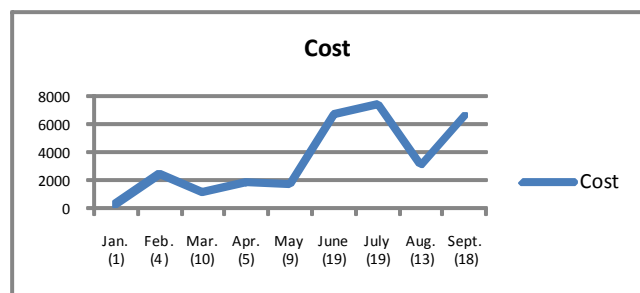
## CINOT EXPANSION: USE OF SERVICES

Research continues to link poor oral health with an individual's overall health and well-being. As part of the government's overall Poverty Reduction plan, beginning January 2009, the Ministry of Health Promotion expanded the Children In Need of Treatment (CINOT) program to include children 13-17 years old.

The graph shows the costs associated with this expansion for 2009. The x-axis of the graph notes the monthly breakdown of the number of children accessing the service. Costs may not always be proportionate to the number of children as some clients may be having multiple treatments.

It is important to note that June, July and September saw increased numbers of children treated and resulting increased costs. Screening was initiated in May and June, by appointment, or through drop in at the secondary schools. Follow up for those students continued in July. In September and with the return to school, the program use increased accordingly.

The Grey Bruce Health Unit recently received almost \$19,000 towards promotion of the CINOT expansion. A plan has been put into place to reach both youth and their parents. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care also announced a second phase of funding that may be available to health units upon successful submission of a business plan to expand dental services for low income families.




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## BODY ART: GET REAL WITH THE RISKS!

In response to the increasing popularity of body art, such as piercings and tattoos, the Communicable Diseases Team initiated the development of an educational DVD *Body Art: Get Real with the Risks!* The video was produced with high school drama students and shot in local schools and body art studios in Grey Bruce. It shows real examples of equipment, studios and required documentation. Audiences learn about the serious infections transmitted by improper techniques and poorly maintained equipment. The key message is that it is important to know, as much as possible, about the studio and artist providing the service and anyone thinking about this procedure needs to understand and consider the risks of body piercing and tattooing before making an informed decision. The video provides questions to ask of the artist, what to look for in a studio and what service/information to expect such as after-care instructions.

This resource has been used successfully as a presentation tool with students and is available as a resource for teachers, parents and the general public. It will be available for viewing on both the Grey Bruce Health Unit and our TargetYouth website.

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## CURRENT ISSUES IN TOBACCO CONTROL

Tobacco control was supported by three significant developments in September.

The Ontario government filed a \$50 billion lawsuit against a group of tobacco companies seeking damages for past and on-going health care costs linked to tobacco-related illness. This represents the health care costs borne by Ontario taxpayers since 1955. Tobacco-related health care costs currently total more than \$1.6 billion per year in Ontario.

Federal legislation under Bill C-32 received Royal Assent. Also known as *Cracking Down on Tobacco Marketing Aimed at Youth Act*, this legislation is designed to strengthen the existing advertising ban on tobacco and to stop the proliferation of flavoured tobacco products.

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Implementation dates are as follows:

- all tobacco advertising in newspapers and magazines are banned, effective immediately
- on April 6, 2010, all flavoured cigarettes, cigarillos and blunt wraps will be banned at the manufacturer/import level
- on July 5, 2010, all flavoured cigarettes, cigarillos and blunt wraps will be banned at retail.

A private members bill from MPP Toby Barrett (Haldimand-Norfolk) was defeated in the Ontario legislature after second reading. Bill 199 proposed reducing provincial tobacco taxes by one third in order to combat the proliferation of contraband tobacco. Tax reductions are widely condemned by health advocates. The research clearly shows price increases to be the most effective tobacco control intervention available, particularly among younger people who are more price sensitive than adults.

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### **SWIPE FOR YOUR SHOT**

The community influenza immunization clinics look different this year as attendees are asked for their driver's licence and health cards instead of providing registration information on a written form. Clinic Event Management Systems (CEMS) is a portable computerized, client registration system funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). The information swiped from the health card and drivers licence provides inventory control as well as tracking of the clients' influenza immunization history. CEMS allows for a rapid compilation of demographic and/or statistical reports as the MOHLTC requires frequent, current statistical reports on numbers, ages and risk groups on those receiving the influenza vaccine.

Thirty out of the 36 health units in Ontario are using CEMS this fall. Grey Bruce Health Unit had six staff members attend a "train the trainer" workshop at Niagara Region Health Unit on September 21. Using that training, specialists from Information Systems (IT) and Vaccine Preventable Disease (VPD) program trained all nurses and many other staff on the use of CEMS. These training sessions were prepared and presented to staff within a very tight time-line to be ready for the first seasonal influenza clinic on October 15.

For those 65 years of age and older, Grey Bruce Health Unit offered five seasonal influenza vaccination clinics in October as well as by appointment at our clinics in Owen Sound, Walkerton and Port Elgin. Clinics offering H1N1 vaccine, to the designated priority group, began October 29.

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### **BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

The Grey Bruce Health Unit, in partnership with the Canadian Cancer Society, City of Owen Sound and both local school boards, hosted a *Healthy Communities* workshop looking at how the natural and built environment affects health. Sixty people attended including: mayors; municipal CAOs; municipal planners and staff; county planners; representatives from the school boards and school community councils; media; and public health staff. Eleven municipalities were represented.

Presenters provided current research regarding the impact on health through greening, naturalization and ecological restoration. Municipalities were given resources to assist in the design of space suited for learning, physical activity and social interaction. As well, design techniques were identified that reduce the opportunity for crime.

Successful initiatives were showcased from the City of Owen Sound, Town of the Blue Mountains, Town of Hanover and Notre Dame School.

As a result of the workshop, several municipalities came forward to support planning a second *Healthy Communities* forum for next spring.

***Working with you to Protect and Promote Health and Prevent Disease***