

For Information

DATE: August 11, 2011

REPORT TITLE: **HEALTH IN PEEL: DETERMINANTS AND DISPARITIES 2011**FROM: Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health Services
David L. Mowat, MBChB, MPH, FRCPC, Medical Officer of Health**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an overview of the report "Health in Peel: Determinants and Disparities 2011."

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Key findings included in this report are:
 - The health of individuals varies according to a variety of factors and influences such as genetics; social and economic factors; the physical and social environment; and individual behaviour. These factors are referred to as the "determinants of health".
 - The relationship between a health outcome or behaviour and the determinants of health is complex.
 - Good health is not evenly distributed throughout the population: some have less opportunity to enjoy good health than others. These disparities in health are often related to the determinants of health.
 - Specific determinants which can be demonstrated for Peel include income, education, ethnicity, immigrant status, marital status, sense of belonging, stress and employment status.

DISCUSSION**1. Background**

The report, Health in Peel: Determinants and Disparities is intended both to provide information on the concept of the determinants of health and their importance, and to show examples using data from the Region of Peel. These examples show how determinants are related to health outcomes, and how the determinants are distributed across the population.

The determinants of health are the "causes of the causes" of disease. They may be observed to exert their influence through biological (e.g. high blood pressure, blood cholesterol) or behavioural (e.g. smoking, physical activity, diet) risk factors, or directly.

The determinants of health have a great impact, for example, non-immigrant males in the poorest fifth of the population live 9.8 years shorter than those in the wealthiest fifth. Such differences cannot be overcome by the efforts of our healthcare system to cure disease.

August 11, 2011

HEALTH IN PEEL: DETERMINANTS AND DISPARITIES 2011

2. Findings

The report provides information on:

- The relationship between determinants of health and health outcomes,
- The distribution of some of the determinants of health within the Region,
- The relationships amongst the determinants, and
- Preliminary information on a "marginalization index."

Examples of findings include:

- Household incomes in Peel are higher than in Ontario, but this is due to larger household size; individual incomes are no higher, and the prevalence of low income for families is higher than Ontario,
- Divorced and widowed people report lower self-rated health,
- Fewer seniors in Peel live alone than in Ontario; some parts of the Region have many multi-family households,
- Peel residents are relatively well educated,
- Those with higher educational attainment tend to have more healthy habits, including being physically active, not smoking, and being less likely to be overweight,
- Peel residents have longer commutes than the Ontario average,
- Males are four times as likely to binge drink as females,
- Nine per cent of these with a completed university education were smokers, compared to 23 per cent of those without a completed secondary school education. Immigrants from Asia are less likely to smoke,
- High income males are more likely to be overweight than middle-income males; this is not true for females. The risk of overweight also varied by ethnicity, and
- Women who were inactive or moderately active were twice as likely to be overweight or obese compared to women who were physically active.

3. Implications

The large differences in risk factors and in health outcomes between identifiable groups in Peel's population are unacceptable. Only by understanding the relationships between social and economic factors and health status will it be possible to take action to reduce disparities in health. Such an understanding, and its application to the protection and promotion of the health of the public, is central to the Region's public health mandate.

August 11, 2011

HEALTH IN PEEL: DETERMINANTS AND DISPARITIES 2011

CONCLUSION

The report demonstrates how the determinants of health relate to health outcomes and how they are distributed within our society.

Peel Public Health will incorporate these findings into decisions about programs and policies, and will continue to analyze and monitor the determinants of health in Peel.




Janette Smith
Commissioner of Health Services



David L. Mowat, MBChB, MPH, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

Approved for Submission:



per _____
D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

For further information regarding this report, please contact David Mowat at extension 2566 or via email at david.mowat@peelregion.ca

c. Legislative Services