

A MESSAGE FROM THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

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Do you know someone with diabetes? Unfortunately, almost everyone who reads this report will answer yes to that question. Diabetes is common; worse, rates are steadily increasing. In 2005, one in ten adults in the Region of Peel had been diagnosed with diabetes; by 2025, that number is likely to be one in six. We are particularly concerned in Peel because many of the growing number of new Canadians have a greater susceptibility to diabetes. Our population is also aging and, as the prevalence of diabetes increases steeply with age, this will increase the numbers of people affected.

Diabetes is a disease with serious consequences. It is a leading cause of vision loss, kidney failure, limb amputations and cardiovascular disease. Providing health care to those affected will present a significant challenge to our healthcare system.

Many Canadians live in low-density, car-dependent suburbs with poor provisions for active transportation and public transit. This is an increasing concern for public health departments because of the growing body of research linking the built environment, physical activity, overweight and obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Understanding and dealing with chronic disease through collaboration with our partners in planning and engineering is the new frontier for Public Health. This report not only helps us understand how our communities influence our health but will inform us in improving the overall health of future generations.

This report, prepared with the help of leading researchers in the field, tells us much about diabetes in Peel. Most of all, it shows us the importance of how we live and where we live in determining our chances of enjoying a long, healthy life.

Please contact us if you need more information, or if you wish to comment on the report or its implications.

