

Health Neighbourhoods FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions about Health Neighbourhoods in Durham Region December 2017

How do I navigate the Health Neighbourhoods website?

The Health Neighbourhoods website has four parts: 1) Reports, 2) Indicator Summaries, 3) Neighbourhood Profiles, and 4) The Map Viewer.

The Reports section provides various reports, including the *Overview Report* and *Building on Health in Priority Neighbourhoods*.

The Indicator Summaries section lists all indicators, organized by the categories of demographic, early child development, and health. Clicking on an indicator name opens up a PDF with a map that shows how that indicator varies by Neighbourhood in Durham Region, tables that provide rates and counts, and a notes page with definitions, data sources, and background information about that indicator.

The Neighbourhood Profiles section lists all 50 Health Neighbourhoods, organized by the 8 municipalities. Clicking on a Neighbourhood name opens up a PDF that provides basic information about the Neighbourhood, a table listing the indicators and comparison of the area with Durham Region, and a descriptive map of the Neighbourhood showing major roads and features such as schools. We also have Profiles for municipalities and for Durham Region, which we compare with Ontario.

The Map Viewer opens at the “points of interest” tab which allows the user to zoom in to Neighbourhoods and view features such as parks, child care centres, senior’s residences, transit routes, etc. Clicking on a specific point of interest opens a pop-up box with more information. The Map Viewer also allows users to see maps of all the indicators, organized on the three tabs of demographics, early child development, and health. Clicking on an indicator in the Map Viewer shows the map. Users can access the indicator summary on the left side panel. Clicking on a Neighbourhood opens a pop-up box that provides the rate for that Neighbourhood, the municipality and Durham Region. Users can also access the Neighbourhood or municipality profile from the pop-up box.

How did you create the Health Neighbourhood boundaries?

The Health Department created the Neighbourhood boundaries so that each Neighbourhood had a large enough population size to accurately present health information. On average, there were 12,000 people in each Neighbourhood in 2011, although the population varied from 8,300 in Rural Uxbridge to 17,800 in Lakeview, Oshawa. The Health Neighbourhoods are typically larger than what most would think of as a “neighbourhood” but this was necessary for reporting health statistics. The Neighbourhoods are groupings of adjacent Statistics Canada Dissemination Areas (DAs). DAs cover all areas of Canada and have populations of approximately 400 to 700 persons per DA, or even larger in areas of high population growth. We grouped Durham Region DAs within the eight municipalities into Neighbourhoods based on population size and demographic characteristics such as income. Boundaries followed physical barriers such as highways, major roads, railway lines, and rivers and creeks.

What indicators were added in December 2017 as part of Release 3?

The seven new indicators were:

1. Rate of police-reported domestic incidents (2011-2015)
2. Rate of police-reported domestic incidents with children present (2011-2015)
3. School-required immunizations, age 7-8 (2016/17)
4. School-required immunizations, age 16-17 (2016/17)
5. Immunization rates for hepatitis B in Grade 7 students (2016/17)
6. Immunization rates for meningococcal disease in Grade 7 students (2016/17)
7. Immunization rates for HPV in Grade 7 students (2016/17)

As well, we updated the following indicators:

1. EDI – Senior kindergarten (SK) children vulnerable in physical health and well-being (2012 and 2015)
2. EDI – SK children vulnerable in social competence (2012 and 2015)
3. EDI – SK children vulnerable in emotional maturity (2012 and 2015)
4. EDI – SK children vulnerable in language and cognitive development (2012 and 2015)
5. EDI – SK children vulnerable in communication skills and general knowledge (2012 and 2015)
6. EDI – SK children vulnerable in vulnerable in one or more domains (2012 and 2015)
7. Well-baby visit rate (2010/12 and 2013/15)
8. Preterm birth rate in singletons (2010-12 and 2013-15)
9. Small-for-gestational age (SGA) rate (2010-12 and 2013-15)
10. Large-for-gestational age (SGA) rate (2010-12 and 2013-15)
11. Dental decay (2013/14 & 2014/15) and (2015/16 & 2016/17)

What indicators were added in February 2016 as part of Release 2?

The 20 new indicators added in February 2016 were:

1. Seniors living alone
2. Female lone-parent families
3. Aboriginal population
4. Movers in the past year
5. Households that rent
6. Households with shelter costs 30%+ of income
7. Households with unsuitable housing
8. Households with major dwelling repairs needed
9. Self-rated mental health
10. Asthma prevalence in children
11. Births to young mothers, ages 23 or younger
12. Births to older mothers, ages 35+
13. Breast cancer screening (mammography)
14. Cervical cancer screening (Pap tests)
15. Overdue for colorectal cancer screening
16. Diabetes prevalence
17. Lung disease (COPD) prevalence
18. Population with a primary care physician
19. Residence ambulance calls
20. Residence ambulance calls in seniors

How do I cite Health Neighbourhoods information?

Durham Region Health Department, Health Neighbourhoods. December 2017. Available at: durham.ca/neighbourhoods.

Specific indicators or products such as **Reports, Indicator Summaries** and **Neighbourhood Profiles** may be included in the citation.

For example:

Durham Region Health Department, Obesity Indicator Summary. Health Neighbourhoods. December 2017.

Durham Region Health Department, Building on Health in Priority Neighbourhoods. December 2015.

Where did the data come from?

Health Neighbourhoods uses a variety of data sources that are available to the Durham Region Health Department. More information is in “The Guide to Health Neighbourhoods”.

The data sources are:

1. 2011 (and 2006) Census, Statistics Canada
2. The 2011 National Household Survey, Statistics Canada
3. Early Development Instrument (EDI), Durham Region Children’s Services Division
4. Kindergarten Parent Survey (KPS), Durham Region Children’s Services Division
5. Integrated Services for Children Information System (ISCIS)
6. Infant Feeding Surveillance System (IFSS), Durham Region Health Department
7. Oral health screening, Durham Region Health Department
8. Mortality, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
9. In-patient hospitalizations, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
10. National Ambulatory Care Reporting System (NACRS), Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
11. Ontario Medical Services, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
12. Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS), Durham Region Health Department and Institute for Social Research at York University
13. Integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS), Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
14. Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (ICES) data: the Asthma Database; Ontario Diabetes Database (ODD); Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Database; Ontario Breast Cancer Screening Program; Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP); Ontario Cancer Registry; Discharge Abstract Database; Primary Care Physician Data from the Client Agency Enrollment Program (CAPE) and OHIP; and the Registered Persons Database (RPDB).
15. Digital Health Immunization Repository, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
16. Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey, Durham Region Police Service

How did you choose the indicators?

The Health Department chose indicators that reflect overall population health status and also relate to requirements within the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS). The OPHS establish the minimum requirements for fundamental public health programs and services that are delivered by all boards of health in Ontario. The indicators come from credible, robust data sources. Indicator definitions follow standardized methods, such as the Core Indicators described by the Association of Public Health Epidemiologists in Ontario. Specific information about the data sources and indicators is available in “The Guide to Health Neighbourhoods”.

Where did the “Points of Interest” on the Map Viewer come from?

The Map Viewer identifies “points of interest” (POI) such as schools, recreational facilities, healthcare facilities, trails, and much more. The Map Viewer and maps were created by GIS Services in the Region of Durham. All of the community points of interest are updated at least annually from a variety of municipal and Regional sources. The roads and boundaries are part of a base map that the Region uses in its GIS applications. Clicking on a POI icon will open a pop-up window with more information.

Child Care

- The child care layer contains all licensed child care facilities operating in the Region of Durham. Licensed childcare programs provide early learning and care for children from birth to age 12. Durham Region Children’s Services Division updates this information quarterly.

Early Years Centres

- The Early Years Centres layer contains all main hubs, outreach and satellite programs in Durham Region that are part of the Ontario Early Years Centres. The Ontario Early Years Centres are places where parents, caregivers, and their children from birth to age six can take part in activities together. The information is updated annually.

Community Facilities, Healthcare, Hospital, Recreation Facility, Place of Worship, Library, Mental Health Services, Transportation, Transit Routes, Bus Boarding Points

- Community Facilities contain community centres and community halls.
- Recreation Facilities contain community centres and parks, arenas, pools and athletic centres.
- Healthcare contains medical centres, health clinics, and urgent care centres.
- Hospitals include Lakeridge Health locations, and Rouge Valley Health System locations.
- Mental health services include crisis services and supports, mental health support services, and counselling services. Public health nurses created the list and update it annually. They listed only those services that have physical locations accessible to clients; help lines were not included.
- Transportation includes GO Stations, bus terminals, and the Oshawa airport.
- Transit Routes show Durham Region Transit (DRT) bus routes.
- Bus Boarding Points include bus stops and bus shelters that are part of Durham Region Transit. You will need to zoom in to see this information. Accessible boarding points are in green and those that are not accessible or partially accessible are in orange. This information is also indicated in the pop-up window if you click on a specific bus stop or shelter.

Government Offices

- Government offices are municipal, regional, provincial and federal offices that provide community services. They include Service Ontario, Service Canada, and Regional offices for Social Services, Health, Headquarters, etc. This data is updated on an hoc basis or at least annually.

Schools

- The schools layer is updated annually and as needed through information received from all school boards in Durham Region. This layer includes elementary and secondary schools, as well as private and post-secondary institutions updated on an as-needed basis.

Social and Affordable Housing

- The social and affordable housing layer is updated annually and as needed by the Region of Durham. Social housing includes the Durham Regional Local Housing Corporation (DRLHC) and non-profit housing providers funded by the Region of Durham, as well as a number of federally funded co-operative non-profit providers. The DRLHC offers only rent-geared-to-income (RGI) units. Most other social housing providers have a mix of RGI and market rate units. Affordable housing is private rental housing that offers rent at 80% of the average market rent in Durham. Some social and affordable housing is targeted to certain groups of people like seniors or people that are homeless or hard-to-house.

Housing Assistance

- The housing assistance layer identifies emergency shelters and housing outreach services that are updated on an as-needed basis. Emergency shelters provide temporary shelter for individuals and families who have lost their housing and have no other place to stay. Housing outreach services assist households with maintaining their current tenancies and people who are currently homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to secure permanent housing.

Regional Trails, Parkland and Conservation Areas

- The Regional trails, and Parkland and conservation areas layers contain information on Regional trails from the Durham Region Trails brochure.

Why won't the map legend and title print properly from the Indicator Summary?

Occasionally some users will have problems printing the PDF maps. Try this – from the Print Dialogue box, under Advanced Options, check the box “print as image”.

I have technical issues with the Map Viewer – it takes a long time to load, or I can't see the legend colours on the maps.

If you are using Internet Explorer 8.0, try using a more recent version of Internet Explorer, or using a different browser such as Google Chrome or Firefox.

What is the “best” Neighbourhood?

Each Neighbourhood is a diverse mix of people, housing, and physical characteristics. Determining the “best” Neighbourhood is like trying to identify the “best” flavour of ice-cream – it all depends on who you ask. Each Neighbourhood is unique with its own personality.

Within that context, some Neighbourhoods have more positive health indicators than others. There are only two Neighbourhoods with all 87 indicators significantly better than or similar to Durham Region – Manning and Williamsburg, both of which are in Whitby. Neighbourhoods with lower incomes tend to have poorer health. However, there are many complex factors that influence health and well-being beyond income. The question should not be “What is the best Neighbourhood?” but “How can we make this Neighbourhood better?”

What are the Priority Neighbourhoods and how were they determined?

In the report “Building on Health in Priority Neighbourhoods”, the Health Department identified seven Priority Neighbourhoods as communities that require focus to build on health and well-being. The Priority Neighbourhoods are: 1) Downtown Ajax – Ajax, 2) Downtown Whitby – Whitby, 3) Lakeview – Oshawa, 4) Gibb West – Oshawa, 5) Downtown Oshawa – Oshawa, 6) Central Park – Oshawa, 7) Beatrice North – Oshawa.

These Neighbourhoods have the lowest income levels (based on median after-tax household income) and the highest rate of low income in children less than 6 years of age. Income is an important determinant of health. The Neighbourhoods also rank poorly in terms of overall low income rate, low education levels, and unemployment compared to the other 43 Neighbourhoods in Durham Region. Finally, the Priority Neighbourhoods have many health challenges as shown by their rates and ranking on a variety of indicators. Although the seven Neighbourhoods have some high needs in terms of health, they also have many strengths and community assets on which to build. Identifying these communities is important if we are to spark dialogue and take action. Strengthening and building partnerships, and working collaboratively with people in these communities could be the driving force for change.

What is the Health Department doing about Priority Neighbourhoods?

The Health Department works with many community partners to promote and protect health throughout Durham Region. We provide a variety of programs and services across all 50 Health Neighbourhoods with some services more heavily concentrated in areas with specific health needs, such as the Priority Neighbourhoods. Because of the report on Priority Neighbourhoods, the Health Department is engaging with the people who live and work in these communities to obtain their input on how best to improve health and well-being. As well, we are strengthening and building inter-sectoral partnerships to create innovative solutions that will ultimately benefit not just those living in Priority Neighbourhoods but all Durham Region residents.

What is the Health Department doing to create healthier Neighbourhoods?

The Health Department uses Neighbourhoods information to improve programs and services for the residents of Durham Region. For example, smoking cessation programs may be focused in areas with higher smoking rates. Maps on breastfeeding duration can help us to better understand what is needed to support breastfeeding in our communities. Public health nurses work with physicians and midwives to improve birth outcomes for babies and focus in areas where they can make the greatest impact. The information is also valuable to the many community partners that work with the Health Department, including school boards, municipalities, health care providers, health and family service agencies, social planning councils, and other Regional Departments such as Social Services.

Information about Neighbourhoods helps us to understand patterns of health in our communities. The Neighbourhoods information can be used to:

- Target programs and initiatives to areas of Durham Region that really need them
- Mitigate the impact of low income in our communities
- Inform planning, research, and capacity building to improve health
- Provide rationale and statistics to support funding proposals
- Form a basis for communications to Durham Region residents
- Inspire dialogue about how health varies across Neighbourhoods

Everyone can use the information to work towards creating healthier Neighbourhoods in Durham Region.

When will you update the Neighbourhoods information?

Updates depend on when new data become available and the time required for analysis and creating new summaries and profiles. In cases where we combined three or five years to present information at the Neighbourhood level, we cannot update the information for a number of years. This is also the case for indicators using the Census since Statistics Canada only conducts the census every five years. We will update Health Neighbourhoods with 2016 Census data in 2018. We update some data, such as from the Early Development Instrument, more regularly because it becomes available more frequently.