Disclosure of inspection results are coming to child care settings

To support enhanced transparency, the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care is now requiring the results of routine and complaint-based public health inspections be posted online. Accordingly, the Region of Durham has passed a by-law that now requires the online disclosure of all child care settings inspections.

To fulfill this mandate, the Durham Region Health Department has revised the online disclosure portal where child care settings and food safety inspection results can be found. Please note that the child care kitchen food safety inspections previously under the DineSafe Durham Disclosure system will be moved to the new system and the colour coded inspection summary signs will no longer be issued. Although the online disclosure of child care settings inspection results is new, the actual inspections will not change and will continue to include the same safety and infection prevention and control requirements.

The by-law also requires child care centre operators to keep a copy of the most recent child care settings inspection report onsite for viewing by the public.

When you receive this newsletter in the mail, you will find the new notice of inspection sign included (see sample below). If you are a licensed child care program, please replace your current DineSafe Durham sign (green, yellow, or red) with the new notice of inspection sign. Please ensure the notice is posted in a conspicuous location within the centre.

This new disclosure initiative will be ready in November. When ready, we will let all child care programs know by email notification. For questions please email us at EHL@durham.ca or call the Environmental Help Line at 1-888-777-9613.
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Why is oral health important?

Good oral health is important for children as they grow. Healthy teeth are not only important for a child’s self-esteem and sense of well-being, they are also necessary to help develop good speech, healthy eating habits and social skills. Cavities are the most common, chronic disease of early childhood. Cavities and gum disease can be painful and can lead to serious infections, which may affect the growth of adult teeth. Pain can result in loss of sleep, difficulty eating and can affect a child’s ability to learn and attend school. Prevent oral health problems before they start!

Have you heard about the Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) program?

The following programs are available to help:

Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO Core)

Healthy Smiles Ontario is a government-funded dental program that provides free preventive, routine, and emergency dental services for children and youth up to 17 years of age, from low-income households.

There is an application process that involves completing and mailing a form. Application forms are available online at Ontario.ca/healthysmiles or at the Durham Region Health Department, Oral Health Division. The Oral Health Division will help navigate clients through this process. Having dental insurance does not exclude families from using HSO. Recipients of HSO can access dental care at the Durham Region Health Department, Oral Health Clinic or at a private practice.

HSO Emergency and Essential Services Stream (HSO EESS)

If a family does not qualify for the HSO Core stream but has a child with a dental problem, they can receive assistance for one year through HSO EESS. For a child to qualify; they must be identified with a clinical need by an oral health professional, and the parent or guardian must declare financial hardship.

HSO Preventive Services Only (HSO PSO)

Children identified by Public Health staff as needing preventive care, and who do not have other dental problems, are eligible to receive free preventive services. These services include cleanings, pit and fissure sealants and fluoride treatments at the Durham Region Health Department, Oral Health Clinic.

If you have a family that does not have a dentist, or requires more information, contact the Durham Region Health Department Oral Health Division at 905-723-1365 ext. 4567 or durham.ca/oralhealth for more information.
Attention all child care centres located within 10-kilometres of either the Pickering or Darlington Nuclear Generating Stations.

The supply of potassium iodide (KI) tablets currently available in most child care centres will be expiring in April 2019, so plans are well underway to have them replaced. Since the spring edition of the Wee Care Newsletter, the Durham Region Health Department has worked collaboratively with child care centres located within 10-kilometres of either nuclear station to determine quantities of new KI tablets to ensure all centers have an adequate supply before the current stock expires.

The new tablets are expected to arrive at the Health Department by the end of 2018 at which time, arrangements will be made for distribution to you centre(s).

Arrangements will also be made to collect the expired KI tablets following the distribution of new tablets.

In the highly unlikely event of a nuclear accident, one of the risks is the release of radioactive iodine to the environment. Radioactive iodine has the potential to cause thyroid cancer later in life if absorbed by the thyroid gland. Potassium iodide (KI) is a salt of stable iodine and is considered an early protective measure when taken at the right time and at the right dose. The function of KI tablets is to fill the thyroid gland with stable iodine to help prevent or reduce the absorption of radioactive iodine by the thyroid.

KI tablets are only to be taken when directed to do so from Ontario’s Chief Medical Officer of Health and will be communicated through media/internet, TV, radio outlets and other available channels.

Child care centres located outside the 10-kilometres radius of either the Pickering or Darlington Nuclear Generating Stations can order KI tablets if they wish to keep a supply on-site. These centres will be required to maintain written policies and procedures for the distribution, storage and maintenance of KI tablets. If you are not sure if your child care requires a supply, or you want to order KI tablets, please contact pamela.khan@durham.ca or 905-723-3818 ext. 4649.

For additional information about KI, please contact the Environmental Help Line at 905-723-3818 or 1-888-777-9613, or visit durham.ca/KI.
As outbreak season is approaching, child care programs should take the time to review the Child Care Centre Pre-Outbreak Checklist and the Outbreak Control chapter in the Wee Care Manual. You may also contact your Communicable Disease Public Health Inspectors Carol Latendresse (ext. 4648), Jena Garratt Lam (ext. 4672), or Linda Clark (ext. 4650) for outbreak related issues.

For an electronic copy of the checklist visit https://bit.ly/2E01Kbf or contact the Environmental Help Line at EHL@durham.ca or call 1-888-777-9613.

durham.ca/childcare
Pneumococcal Immunization to Protect Children in Child Care

This past year, the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) for the Durham Region Health Department added the pneumococcal conjugate 13 vaccine to the list of vaccines recommended for children in child care. This vaccine has been part of the Publicly Funded Routine Immunization Schedules for Ontario since 2012. It was added to the recommended immunizations for children because the majority of bacterial infections in young children are caused by the Streptococcus pneumoniae bacteria, which this vaccine protects against. These bacteria can cause a range of illnesses from ear and sinus infections to very serious illnesses such as pneumonia, meningitis and bloodstream infections.

Children can spread these bacteria easily in child care settings through close contact, coughing, and sneezing. Effective cleaning and disinfection can help limit the spread of this bacteria between children and staff. Additionally, immunization following the Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario with the pneumococcal conjugate 13 vaccine will help protect children.

In Ontario, the pneumococcal conjugate 13 vaccine is routinely given at the ages of 2 months, 4 months and 12 months. When children enroll into your centre, look at their pneumococcal vaccine history to determine if the child has had this vaccination at the recommended age(s). Some children may have had their third dose prior to 12 months age. A dose after 12 months age is needed, regardless of the quantity of doses previously received.

Sometimes, a vaccine such as pneumococcal conjugate 13 is given early due to reasons such as travel or outbreak of the disease. Immunizations that are given earlier than recommended are additions to a child’s immunization history and do not replace routine immunizations given following the Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario. It is safe to repeat an immunization when a dose is given earlier than recommended (whether it is intentional or not).

There are a few vaccines that need to be given after age one to ensure children have optimal protection, these include:

- pneumococcal disease
- varicella
- measles, mumps, rubella
- meningococcal disease

Each child care centre has a nurse assigned to support child care licensees/operators and parents/guardians to maintain the immunization status of children. Please contact the nurse assigned to your centre with any questions or for support maintaining immunization for children in your centre.

For more information please call the Durham Health Connection Line at 905-666-6241 or 1-800-841-2729.
Food Handler Training
As of July 1, 2018, the Ontario Food Premises Regulation 562 has been revoked and has been replaced with the new Ontario Food Premises Regulation 493. Food handler certification is one critical addition to this regulation. Section 32 of Ontario Regulation 493 states: “Every operator of a food service premise shall ensure that there is at least one food handler or supervisor on the premise who has completed food handler training during every hour in which the premise is operating.”

**How does this affect you as an owner/operator of a child care centre?**

If your centre prepares or serves food, at least one staff who is a certified food handler must be present during operating hours. The food handler’s certificate must be approved by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and a copy of the certificate must be available for viewing by a public health inspector. Food handlers must re-certify every 5 years by challenging the exam or taking the food handlers course again. For further information on food handler training and the different options, please visit our [Food Safety Training page](http://durham.ca/childcare).
Are you ready for flu season?

The flu is a serious and contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza (flu) virus. Do you know how to prevent the spread of the flu at your child care centre? Take this quick quiz to find out!

1. **How does the flu spread?**
   a. Talking, coughing and sneezing
   b. Eating under cooked meat
   c. Touching surfaces that have been in contact with flu virus
   d. A and C

2. **What are some ways to prevent the flu?**
   a. Getting your flu vaccine
   b. Staying home when you are sick
   c. Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and shared items such as toys, countertops and door knobs
   d. Coughing and sneezing into a tissue or your sleeve
   e. Cleaning your hands often with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
   f. All of the above

3. **True or false? Children are at a greater risk for flu related complications**

4. **Why is it important for child care operators and staff to get the flu shot?**
   a. They work closely with children who are at greater risk for flu related complications
   b. It helps prevent the spread of the flu virus
   c. To reduce illness, doctor visits and missed days at work
   d. All of the above

5. **Where can you get the flu shot?**
   a. Pharmacy
   b. Doctors office/ walk in clinic
   c. Movie theatre
   d. A and B

For more information on the flu, visit durham.ca/flu or call the Durham Health Connection line at 905-666-6241 or 1-800-841-2729

Answers:

1. D
2. F
3. True. Children, especially those under 2 are at greater risk for flu related complications like ear infection, pneumonia, and even death.
4. D
5. True. Children, especially those under 2 are at greater risk for flu related complications like ear infection, pneumonia, and even death.
Tips for storing expressed milk

Breastmilk has a wealth of benefits for mother and baby. Besides being the best food for infants, it has a wealth of antibodies that protect a child’s health long after the feed. While nursing gives a chance for mother and child to bond, expressed milk is a great alternative. Expressed milk has all the nutritional advantages that come with nursing, and allows others to bond with baby, too.

Expressed milk is safe for 4 – 6 days in a refrigerator, stored at the back (and away from the door). Expressed milk is safe in a freezer for 6 months (although up to 12 is acceptable). If adding fresh milk to stored frozen milk, cool the fresh milk first in the fridge, and then add it to the frozen milk.

To use frozen milk, thaw milk overnight in a refrigerator for best results. Warming milk to thaw it may result in some nutrients being lost. Thawed milk should be used up within 24 hours. After feeding the child expressed milk, throw out any leftovers within 2 hours and wash any used containers with hot, soapy water. For more information, contact the Environmental Help Line at EHL@Durham.ca or call 1-888-777-9613.
Tracking a child’s growth and development

As children grow older they continue to learn new things. For example, by 18 months most children can say 20 or more words clearly; this is called a “developmental milestone”.

One simple way to check that a child is meeting their developmental milestones is to use a series of age specific checklists called the Looksee Checklist, formerly referred to as the Nipissing District Developmental Screen (NDDS).

These easy-to-use checklists are available online for free to all Ontario residents. If a parent/caregiver registers their child at lookseechecklist.com, they will be provided with:

- the Looksee Checklist for their child’s current age
- activities to encourage their child’s development
- email reminders of when to complete the next Looksee Checklist

The Looksee Checklist asks questions that can be answered with a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’. When responding ‘yes’, it indicates that a child is meeting that developmental milestone. Whereas, responses of ‘no’ indicates that the child may need extra help.

The Looksee Checklists are available in 10 different languages including English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Russian, Farsi, German and Italian. The Looksee Checklists monitors children from 1 month to 6 years of age.

Child care centres can use the checklists as a reference tool to support healthy child development, as well as encourage parents/caregivers to:

- access the Looksee Checklist online to monitor their child’s development
- regularly talk to their primary health care provider about their child’s growth and development

For more information on healthy child development visit durham.ca/ChildDevelopment or call Durham Health Connection Line at 905-666-6241 or 1-800-841-2729.
The child care centre absenteeism program was developed to monitor absenteeism in the child care population in Durham Region. Child absenteeism due to illness, along with illness surveillance from other types of institutions is a useful indicator of current illness levels in the community during cold and flu season. This year, there are 16 child care centres participating in the program. This data collected from these centres contributes to the health department’s Influenza Bulletin https://bit.ly/2AgP3RF which is posted on our web page on a weekly basis. The graph shown below compares child absenteeism rates in Durham Region from the last 2017/18 season to the previous 2016/17 season. By recording and analyzing this data we are able to see how illness levels change throughout the year. How does your centre’s illness levels compare? By recording and graphing illness levels in your centre, you can establish a clear baseline level that can be used to help determine if a suspected outbreak is occurring. Timely and efficient illness surveillance system is the cornerstone of outbreak control in providing valuable data about the incidence and impact on the children. Child care centre staff should be observing the health of each child on a daily basis to monitor for changes in a child’s behaviour as an indicator of possible illness and for signs such as fever, cough, diarrhea and/or vomiting. Any increased levels of illness above the norm must be reported immediately to the health department. Outbreak prevention in child care centres requires a coordinated approach by everyone involved. In an effort to promote wellness, prevent outbreaks, and reduce the impact of illness in child care centres, the Durham Region Health Department strongly encourages infection control measures such as proper hand hygiene, thorough cleaning and disinfection practices, exclusion of ill children/staff, and influenza immunization.

We would like to thank the participating child care centres for your continued support and cooperation.

If you are interested in participating in the Durham Region Health Department Sentinel Child Care Centre Reporting Program, or for further details regarding the program, please email jeffrey.cheung@durham.ca or call 905-723-3818 ext. 4668.
Health Protection Division updates

We would like to welcome Rachael McArthur who has joined the inspection team. Rachael will be replacing Jena Garratt Lam as the area inspector for parts of Pickering and Ajax. Jena is now part of the Communicable Diseases team and is only a phone call away if you need advice on outbreak management. We wish Rachael and Jena all the best in their new roles.

Amanda Gutkowski welcomed a healthy baby boy into the world in April 2018. She is currently on maternity leave and Agnes Kim has taken over her duties while she tends to her little one. Congratulations Amanda!

Shiraz Bhanji is in the final stages of completing his Master’s degree in Public Health while working full time and fulfilling his family commitments. Not an easy feat! Great work Shiraz!

In June we said good-bye to our former director Ken Gorman. We wish him all the best in his retirement and thank him for his 40 plus years of dedicated service in public health.

Lastly, we welcome our new director, Lisa Fortuna. Lisa has a wealth of knowledge and experience in infectious diseases prevention and control and will be an valuable asset to our team.

The WEE CARE Newsletter is published and distributed by Durham Region Health Department, Health Protection Division, and is distributed to licensed child care centres in Durham Region.

Questions, comments and article submissions can be forwarded to:
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REMINDER!
Update your contact information

From time-to-time, there may be an urgent message that Durham Region Health Department will have to send to all child care centres. A current contact list will help us disseminate the information to you more efficiently.

If your centre has had any changes to your child care centre contacts, such as managers, supervisors, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, please forward the new information to mandi.theberge@durham.ca to update the list.

We would like to remind all child care centre owners, supervisors and staff that we welcome any suggestions that you may have for future article topics or ideas and any comments you have to improve the newsletter!

We welcome your ideas and suggestions!

Please submit comments by email to jeffrey.cheung@durham.ca