

# Program/Service Information Report

## Clinical Services Annual Review

January 2025-December 2025

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**To:** Board of Health

**Meeting Date:** February 4, 2026

**Report No.:** **BH.01.FEB0426.C03**

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### Key Points

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- Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) rate for Hepatitis C (Hep C) remained relatively unchanged in 2025 and continues to be well below the provincial rate.
- WDGPH had the following changes in reportable diseases in 2025:
  - decrease in the number of cases of Gonorrhea (GC)
  - decrease in all types of Syphilis cases in 2025.
  - 60% decrease in Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) cases in 2025
  - no Monkeypox (Mpox) cases in 2025
- WDGPH attained 100% compliance to treatment for all active Tuberculosis (TB) cases in 2025.
- In 2025 GAK platform allowed WDGPH to increase its asymptomatic screening by 57%

### Program Requirements

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#### Compliance with OPHS and Accountability Indicators:

In compliance

Not in compliance. If not in compliance, provide additional information about the variance and how it will be addressed.

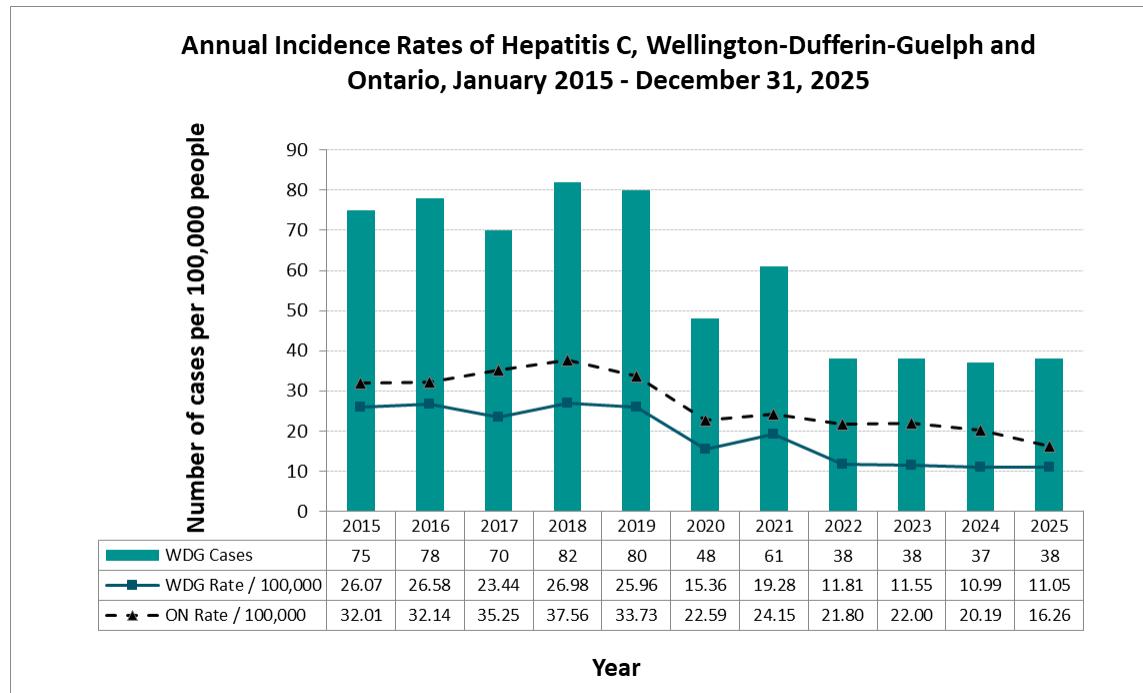
## Highlights

### Incidence Hepatitis C (Hep C)

Hep C is a blood borne infectious disease which causes inflammation of the liver.<sup>1</sup> Hep C is reported to all public health units in Ontario to ensure appropriate management and to prevent escalation of disease.

Annual number of cases:

- WDG total number of cases (2024): 37
- WDG total number of cases (2025): 38



The total number of cases of Hep C in the Wellington, Dufferin, Guelph (WDG) region increased slightly in 2025 to 38 but continued to be well below the provincial rate. Because WDGPH sees many clients who are at high risk to contact Hep C, screening for Hep C continues to be a routine part of testing for most individuals attending WDGPH sexual health clinics.

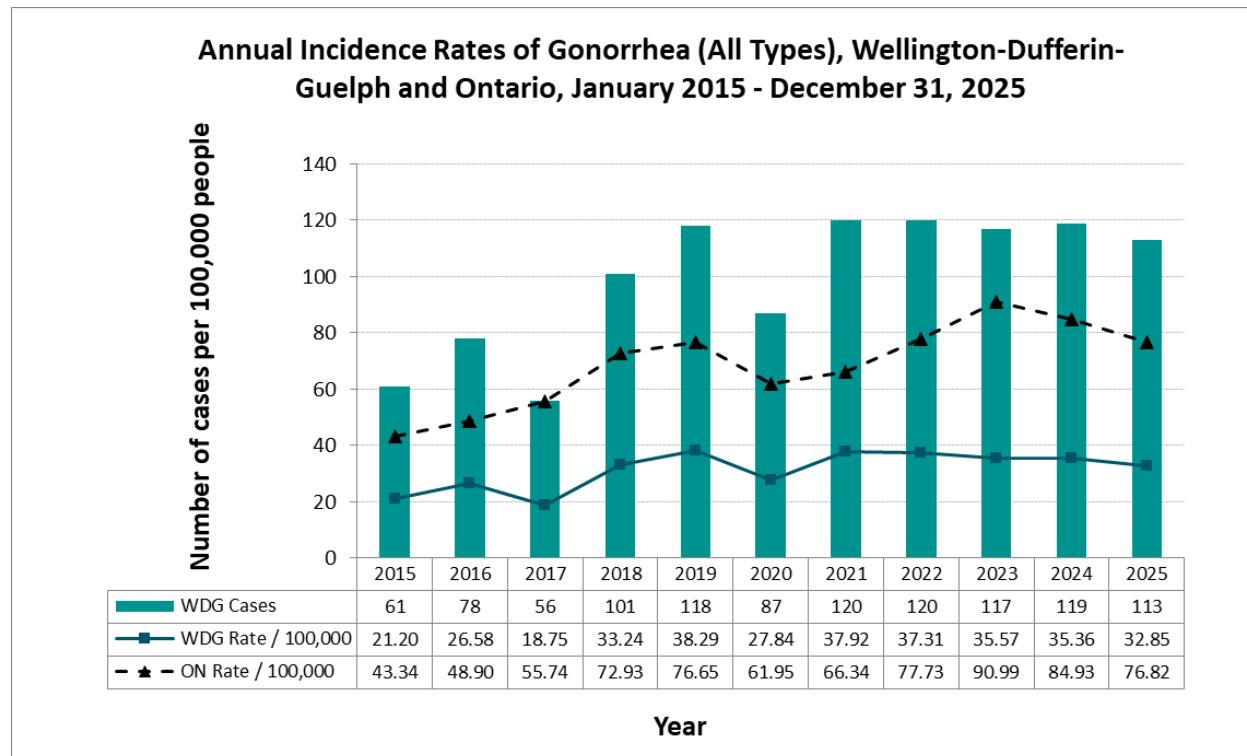
WDGPH continues to actively participate in the WDG regions' annual Hepatitis Awareness Day events, along with other key community partners across the WDG region. Attendance at these events is critical in promoting awareness of risk, prevention, treatment and for the reduction of stigma towards all types of Hepatitis. WDGPH distributes harm reduction supplies throughout the WDG region. Providing clean harm reduction supplies to clients who use substances is critical for keeping the rates of blood borne illnesses low.

### Incidence of Gonorrhea (GC)

Gonorrhea is an infection caused by the bacterium *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*.<sup>2</sup> This bacterium is spread through vaginal, anal or oral sex.<sup>2</sup> Infected females are often asymptomatic, whereas infected males often experience painful urination or discharge from the penis.<sup>2</sup> GC can progress to pelvic infection or cause infertility.<sup>2</sup> It is mandatory to report GC to public health to ensure appropriate follow up and management of GC and to prevent escalation of disease.

Annual number of cases:

- WDG total number of cases (2024): 119
- WDG total number of cases (2025): 113



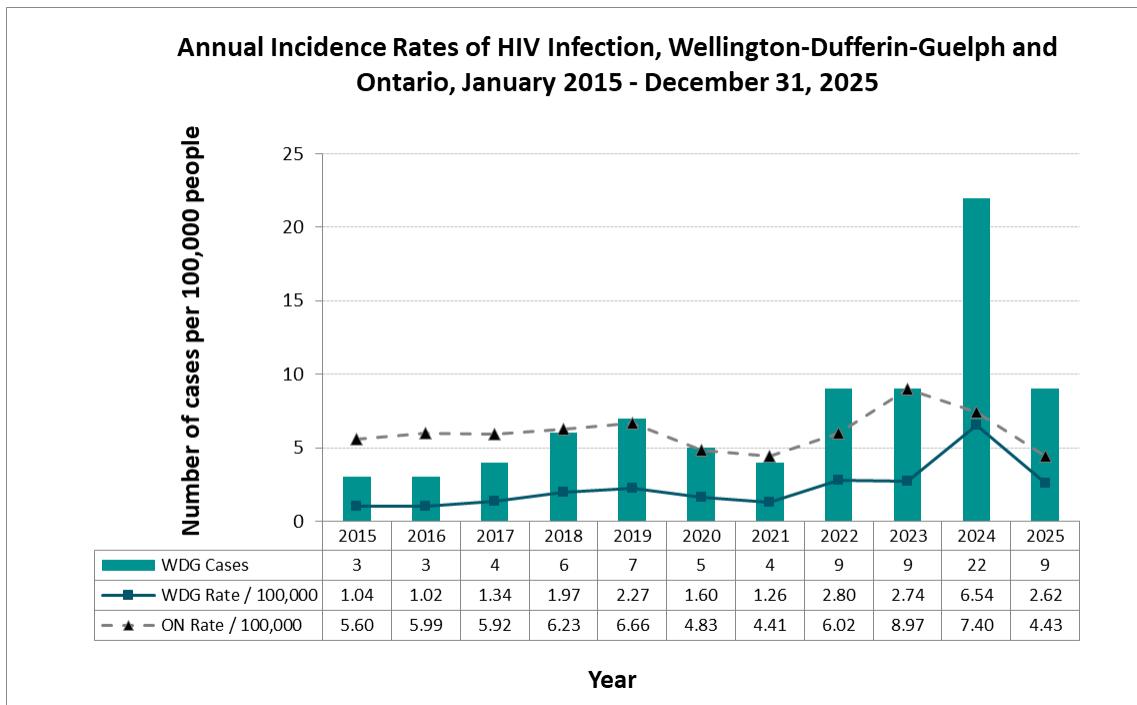
The total number of GC cases in WDG decreased slightly during 2025 and cases in the WDG region remained well below the provincial average through the year. WDGPH sexual health clinics provide prompt access to sexual health services, including screening for GC, to individuals throughout the region.

### Incidence of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

HIV is a blood borne and sexually transmitted viral infection that attacks the immune system and without treatment can lead to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS).<sup>3</sup> At present, there is no cure for HIV but there is very effective treatment.<sup>3</sup> Positive HIV tests require mandatory reporting in the province of Ontario.

Annual number of cases:

- WDG total number of cases (2024): 22
- WDG total number of cases (2025): 9



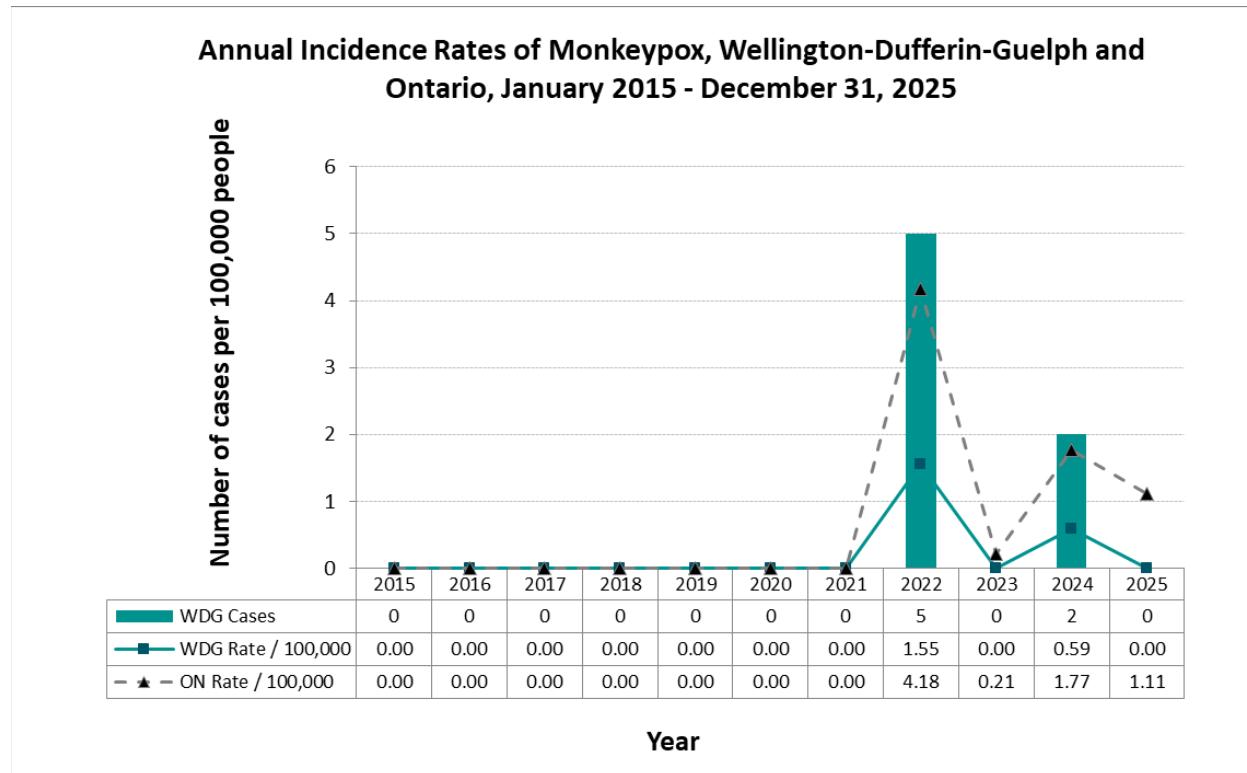
In 2025 the total number of HIV cases decreased by 60% in the WDG region. Uncomplicated access to harm reduction supplies, like condoms and clean needles and syringes, is critical to preventing the spread of HIV in our region.

## Incidence of Mpox

Mpox is a viral infection which is often, but not exclusively, transmitted by sexual contact.<sup>4</sup> Mpox usually presents with a painful rash 7 to 10 days after being exposed.<sup>4</sup> Other symptoms include fever, headache and fatigue.<sup>4</sup> The treatment for Mpox is typically symptom management.<sup>4</sup> Mpox is a vaccine preventable disease and immunization is offered at WDGPH for high-risk individuals.

Annual number of cases:

- WDG total number of cases (2024): 2
- WDG total number of cases (2025): 0



The WDG region had no cases of Mpox in 2025. There was an outbreak of Mpox in 2022 and WDGPH provided 403 immunizations to high-risk individuals. This may have contributed to the persistent decrease in Mpox in our region.

## Incidence of Syphilis

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infectious disease that is mandated to be reported to public health units to ensure appropriate follow up and management and to prevent escalation of disease. Syphilis rates across Ontario rose consistently from 2015 to 2022. However, since 2022 there has been a steady decline in the number of infectious and latent cases of syphilis in Ontario.

Syphilis is categorized three ways for this report:

**Infectious Syphilis:** a syphilis infection in the early stage. Infected individuals can spread the disease to other individuals.<sup>5</sup>

**Non-Infectious or Latent Syphilis:** an individual who is still infected with syphilis but cannot spread the disease to another individual. In this stage the disease can impact other systems of the body.<sup>5</sup>

**Congenital Syphilis:** a disease that occurs when a mother with syphilis passes the infection on to her baby during pregnancy.

Gay and bisexual men and men who have sex with men continue to be at highest risk of syphilis infections, although, there has been an increase in syphilis infections in heterosexual women leading to an increase in congenital syphilis investigations and cases.<sup>5</sup> Multiple factors are contributing to this increase and include the following:

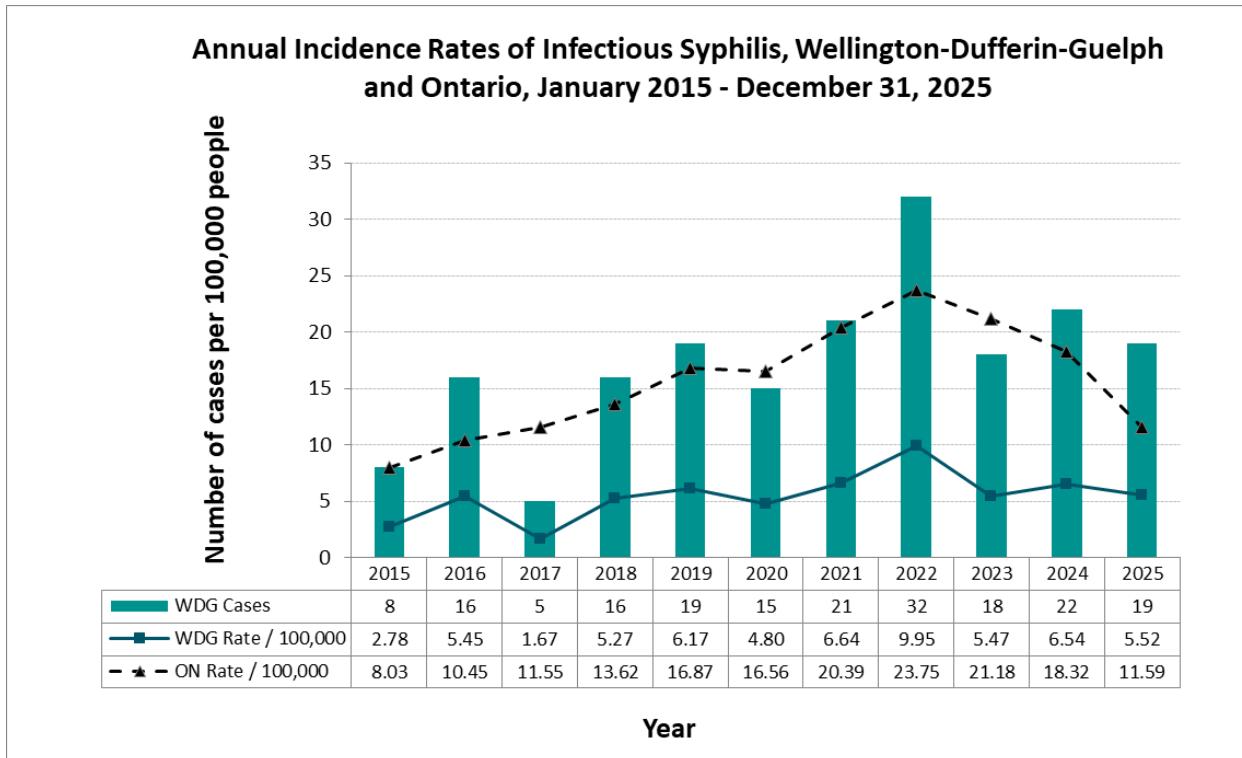
- health-care disparity among some populations,
- introduction of highly effective HIV treatment as well as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV prevention which potentially results in a decrease in condom use,
- easier access to sex via online dating portals, and,
- rising rates of use of drugs while having sex.<sup>5</sup>

WDGPH will be undertaking a point of care (POC) testing pilot in 2026 in an attempt to identify syphilis earlier among high-risk marginalised populations in the city of Guelph.

## Syphilis (Infectious):

Annual number of cases:

- WDG total number of cases (2024): 22
- WDG total number of cases (2025): 19

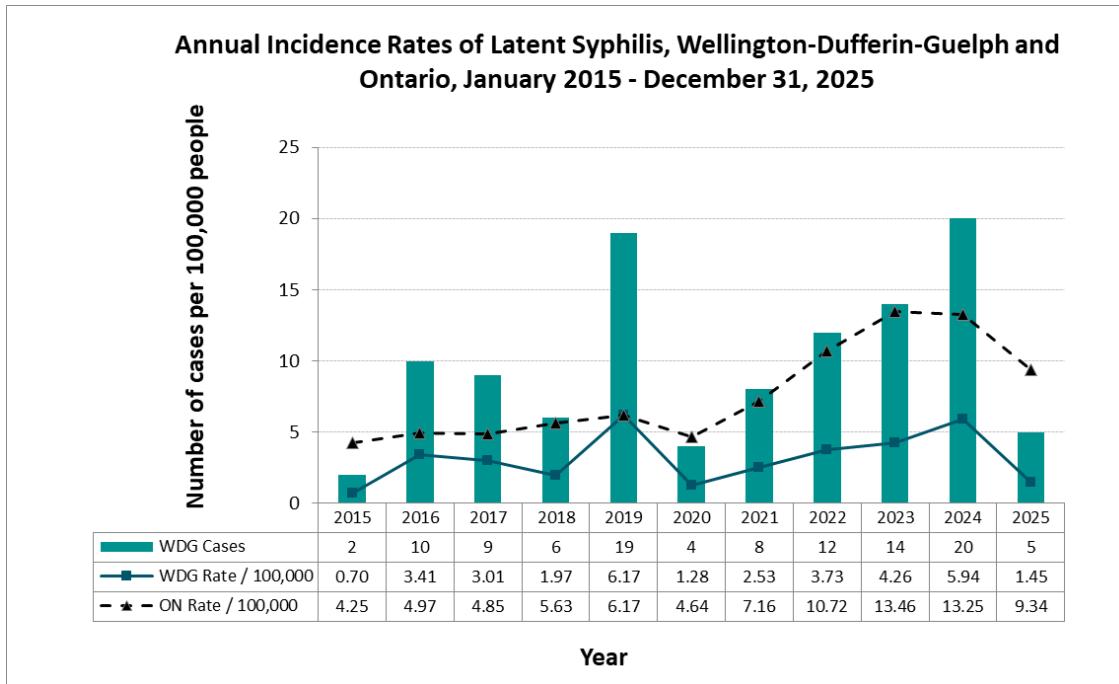


The total number of cases of infectious Syphilis in the WDG region decreased slightly in 2025 and continues to remain well below the provincial rate. WDGPH sexual health clinics continue to promote screening for Syphilis for all at risk clients

## Syphilis (Non-Infectious/Latent)

Annual number of cases:

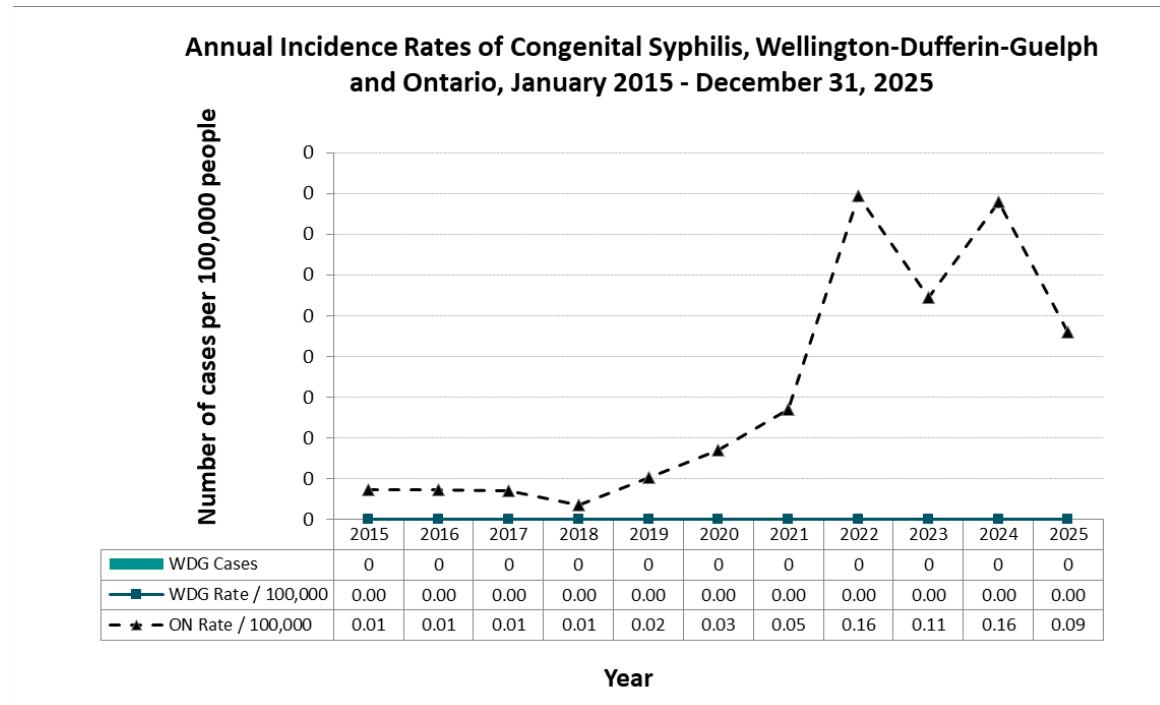
- WDG total number of cases (2024): 20
- WDG total number of cases (2025): 5



The total number of non-infectious syphilis cases in the WDGPH region decreased by 75% in 2025. WDGPH sexual health clinics promote screening for Syphilis for all at risk clients

## Syphilis (Congenital)

The provincial case rate for congenital syphilis was 2 in 2025. There was one investigation for congenital syphilis in the WDG region in 2025 but no confirmed cases. There have been no lab-confirmed cases of congenital syphilis in the WDG region for over 10 years.



## Tuberculosis (TB)

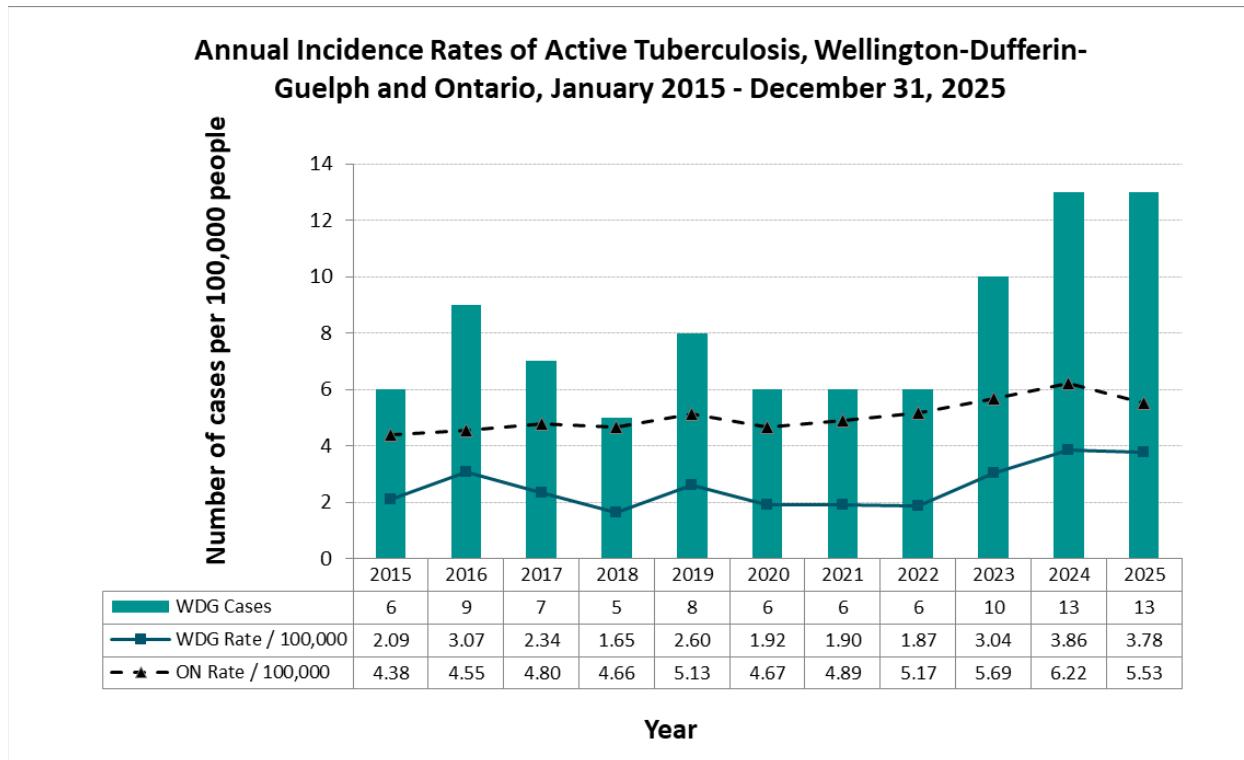
TB is an infectious disease that is required by law to be reported to public health units to ensure appropriate follow up and management and to prevent escalation of disease.<sup>6</sup> TB is caused by a type of bacteria called a bacillus.<sup>6</sup> TB bacilli can infect any part of the body but is most commonly found in the respiratory system.<sup>6</sup>

TB is categorized in 2 ways for this report

**Infectious or Active TB:** a TB infection that is active and can be spread from the infected individual to other individuals.<sup>6</sup>

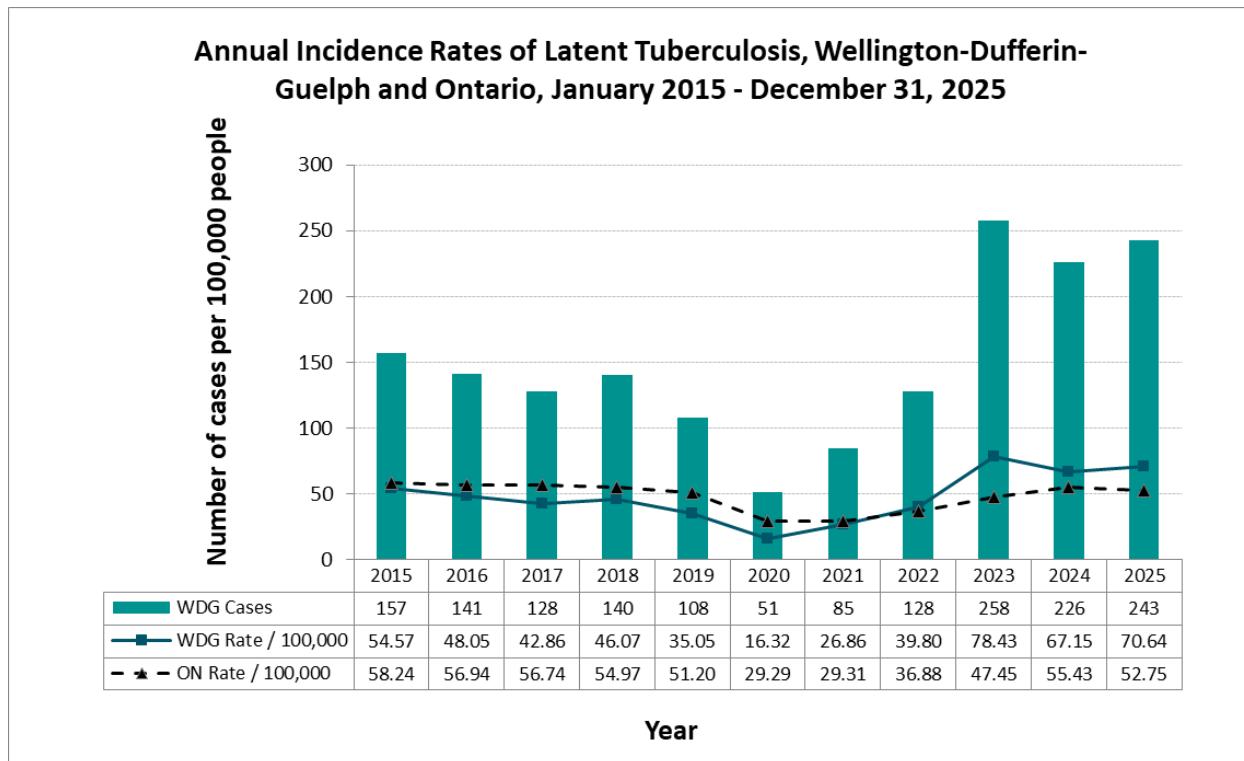
**Non-Infectious or Latent TB:** an individual who has been exposed to the TB bacillus but cannot spread the disease to others. WDGPH is responsible for monitoring the percentage of active TB infections that completed treatment.<sup>6</sup>

- The WDGPH TB program had 100% compliance for treatment of active infections in 2025.
- WDGPH had 6 active infections of TB that started treatment in 2024 and completed treatment in 2025.
- WDGPH had 4 active infections in 2025 that started treatment and completed treatment in 2025.
- WDGPH currently has 11 active infections that started treatment in 2025 who will complete their treatment in 2026.



WDGPH also manages latent TB infections (LTBI) throughout the WDGPH region. Not all LTBI require treatment. WDGPH focuses on treating LTBI in those clients who are at highest risk.

- The WDGPH TB program had 74% compliance for LTBI in 2025.
- In 2025 WDGPH started 86 LTBI clients on treatment and 64 of them completed treatment.
- WDGPH had 15 LTBI clients that started treatment in 2024 and completed treatment in 2025
- WDGPH had 28 LTBI clients in 2025 that started treatment and completed treatment in 2025.
- WDGPH currently has 21 LTBI clients that started treatment in 2025 who will complete their treatment in 2026.



## GetAKit (GAK)

WDGPH continues to have a successful partnership with the GAK program. GAK offers free and accessible HIV and STI testing services to residents across the WDGPH region.<sup>7</sup> This initiative, developed in collaboration with Ottawa Public Health, University of Ottawa and the Ontario HIV Treatment Network increases access to STI testing for all, including high-risk populations.<sup>7</sup>

GAK provides the following:

- Laboratory-based testing for STI, including HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and hepatitis C, with requisitions supported by a physician, for clients over the age of 17.
- At-home HIV self-testing kits for clients over the age of 18.
- Results are usually available between 3-7 days and clients are notified by email or text.
- Clients can view their results online
- Clients with positive results are contacted immediately to discuss treatment, follow up testing and other support services
- Clients are also given recommendations for preventive services like vaccinations, HIV prevention strategies, and contraception.<sup>7</sup>

The platform operates through a clinician-developed algorithm that recommends appropriate tests and preventive services based on a clients' self-assessment and public health guidelines.<sup>7</sup>

By removing barriers that can be present in traditional healthcare settings, GAK empowers individuals to take control of their sexual health, promoting timely testing, diagnosis, treatment and prevention.<sup>7</sup>

In 2025, WDGPH through the GAK platform, provided testing to 338 unique clients. WDGPH sexual health clinics saw a total of 597 clients in 2025. By providing our clients with access to GAK, WDGPH was able to increase access to asymptomatic STI testing by 57%.

#### **Type and Number of Testing Conducted by GAK**

<b>Gonorrhea/Chlamydia</b>	321
<b>Syphilis</b>	279
<b>Hep C</b>	57
<b>HIV Serology</b>	258
<b>HIV Self Test</b>	27

The Clinical Services program continues to promote accessible, cost effective and client focused programming for all residents in the WDG region.

## References

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2. Public Health Ontario. Gonorrhea Information Page [Internet]. Toronto: Government of Ontario; [cited 17 February 2022]. Available from: <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectiousdiseases/sexually-transmitted-infections/gonorrhea>
3. Government of Canada. HIV and AIDS: For health professionals. [Internet] Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/hiv-aids/health-professionals.html>
4. Government of Canada. Mpox: Symptoms, testing, care and treatment. [Internet] Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/mpox/symptoms-management.html>
5. Saeed, H. (2024, February 25). FAQ: Why are syphilis cases on the rise in Canada? The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/faq-why-are-syphilis-cases-on-the-rise-in-canada-223716>
6. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. (2024). *Trends in Tuberculosis*. [https://wdgpublichealth.ca/sites/default/files/bh.01.mar0525.r05\\_-\\_tuberculosis.pdf](https://wdgpublichealth.ca/sites/default/files/bh.01.mar0525.r05_-_tuberculosis.pdf)
7. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. (2024). *Reducing Barriers, Increasing Access: Preliminary Outcomes of the GetaKit Program*. [https://wdgpublichealth.ca/sites/default/files/bh.01.sep0325.r25\\_-\\_getakit.pdf](https://wdgpublichealth.ca/sites/default/files/bh.01.sep0325.r25_-_getakit.pdf)

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**Prepared By:** Camille Loucks, RN, Manager, Clinical Services

**Approved By:** Rita Isley, RN, MPA, Vice President Community Health

**Submitted By:** Dr. Nicola J. Mercer, MD, MBA, MPH, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health & CEO

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