

## Communications Report 2018

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**To:** Chair and Members of the Board of Health

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**Medical Officer of Health & CEO**

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## Recommendations

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It is recommended that the Board of Health:

1. Receive this report for information.

## Key Points

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- This report is a summary of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) key Communications activities in 2018. The full [Annual Report for Communications](#) is available on the website.
  - Communications saw unprecedented media coverage during the Incident Management System (IMS) response to influenza (February 2018) where Dr. Mercer, the Medical Officer of Health and CEO (MOH) was interviewed by the Globe and Mail, CTV, CBC and Global News. WDGPH's website had 4,500 visits a day, three times the norm, and hundreds of thousands of views, likes and shares on social media.

- A new and innovative approach to Communications campaigns was developed in concert with the Healthy Communities and Public Policy team that used video and digital advertising to get messages out around alcohol use, cannabis use and opioid use to wider audiences. These campaigns generated hundreds of thousands of media impressions (potential views) and thousands of engagements on social media.
- Throughout the year, WDGPH engaged local, regional and national media. A total of 56 interviews and 18 media releases resulted in 172 stories about WDGPH where the MOH was quoted almost 70 times, leading to 10.4 million media impressions.
- On social media, WDGPH launched a successful Instagram account; Facebook followers grew by 121 percent; Twitter followers grew by 10 percent; and LinkedIn followers grew by 32 percent. Almost 1,800 curated posts were created across our social media platforms resulting in over 12,000 individuals engaging with WDGPH messages (liking and sharing our posts).

## Discussion

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Some of the key Communications initiatives of public importance and impact in 2018 are summarized below.

### Influenza Response

In February 2018, Communications supported the Flu IMS event after two children from the same Guelph-area school died from the flu.

WDGPH received significant media coverage as measured by 16 million media impressions. Coverage included an interview with WDGPH's MOH for The Globe and Mail and reporting on CTV, CBC and Global television.

The week of coverage culminated in a Facebook Live event where the MOH and Dr. Tenenbaum answered questions live from the public over Facebook. This event reached 3,700 unique viewers (those who stayed for over 10 seconds) and over 80 questions were received during the 30-minute session.

Throughout the weeklong IMS event, WDGPH received 304 messages through Facebook; had 200 individuals sign up to follow us on Facebook and the WDGPH website received 4,500 visits per day (three times the norm).

## **Local Response to Opioid Crisis**

Communications worked with Health Analytics to design an alert to be distributed directly to community partners. In 2018, the alert was deployed three times reaching nearly 25,000 people through our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

## ***Last Call: Alcohol Stories Campaign***

Communications helped create, edit and share 10 videos about the impact of alcohol in the community. The campaign had reached over 300,000 online impressions (views), over 1,000 social media engagements (likes, clicks, shares) and 2,400 website views. In a follow-up survey, more than 50 percent of those who said they saw the campaign said it increased their knowledge and 60 percent said they took some action after seeing it. This innovative campaign set a new standard for success within WDGPH.

## ***Talking About Weed Cannabis Awareness Campaign***

Communications and the Healthy Communities and Public Policy program (HCPP) collaborated on the creation of seven videos with input from youth focus groups and community partners.

The campaign resulted in 17 dedicated stories through traditional media (newspaper, radio, broadcast), generating 869,166 media impressions. There were also 3,328 website page views over the course of the three-month campaign.

## **Media Coverage of WDGPH**

There were 172 stories about WDGPH and 50 mentions of WDGPH in other stories resulting in 10.4 million estimated print impressions (up from 6.5 million in 2017) and 3.5 million estimated digital impressions (website/app; up from 2 million in 2017). There were 56 interviews and 71 quotes used from 18 media releases. WDGPH's MOH was quoted 64 times from news releases and twice from Board of Health meetings. She did 7 in-person interviews during the week long IMS Flu event.

## **Social Media**

To address the changing environment and consumer preference for visual media through images and video, Communications reached local audiences through WDGPH Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn and Google Business accounts,

*Engagement* refers to a user interacting with our content. Engagements include: replies, retweets/shares, comments and likes. It does not include clicks.

<b>Channel</b>	<b>Fans/Followers</b> (change from 2017)	<b>Number of posts</b> (change from 2017)	<b>Organic (unpaid) impressions</b> (change from 2017)	<b>Engagements</b> (change from 2017)
<b>Facebook</b>	1,209 (+121%)	753 (+29%)	413,725 (+5%)	5,066 (+52%)
<b>Twitter</b>	3,799 (+10%)	884 (+13%)	616,747 (+45%)	5,509 (+40%)
<b>LinkedIn</b>	767 (+32%)	22 (+29%)	14,208 (+17%)	551 (+164%)
<b>Instagram</b>	656 (n/a)	91 (n/a)	20,898 (n/a)	1,252 (n/a)

### Agency Website

In 2018, the main Agency website averaged 10,407 users per month, or a total of 124,890 yearly users, representing a year-over-year increase of about 35.5 percent. During the February flu event, website traffic peaked at about 4,500 visits per day, or about three times the regular number of visitors. Over the course of the year, about 7.5 percent of the yearly website traffic (or about 9,300 visits) can be attributed to the flu event.

### Interactive Reports Website

The Interactive Reports website was created and launched by the Health Analytics team on June 25, 2018. From launch to the end of the year, there were 9,153 page views.

### WeeTalk.net Website

The WeeTalk.net Speech and Language website received 13,357 page views in 2018.

### Check Before You Choose Website

Due to a problem with Google Analytics integration, statistics were not collected for this site in 2018.

### Stay Well WDG Blog

Blogging enables WDGPH to share stories. Blog entries are posted weekly on the website and sent by email to 669 subscribers. The average time on the page, for blogs, is 2 minutes 19 seconds, with many entries over 4 minutes—much higher than the average web page view time of 1 minute 20 seconds.

## Library

The librarian assists public health professionals find, organize and use information to support evidence-based research, programs and services.

In 2018, the librarian sourced 651 journal articles for staff (203 from other libraries), created a topic-specific Physician Advisories library for internal use and provided literature searches and support for the Community Health, Health Protection and Family Health divisions.

## Conclusion

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Communications led, facilitated and supported a wide variety of campaigns in 2018 that incorporated novel techniques and strategies and saw unprecedented reach in the community. The team also played an instrumental role in WDGPH's emergency response.

In 2019, Communications will continue to make strategic use of different communications modalities to reach target audiences—whether the general public (or special groups), the media, community partners or other stakeholders—to ensure messages continue to be heard and have impact.

## WDGPH Strategic Direction(s)

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- ☒ **Health Equity:** We will provide programs and services that integrate health equity principles to reduce or eliminate health differences between population groups.
- ☒ **Organizational Capacity:** We will improve our capacity to effectively deliver public health programs and services.
- ☒ **Service Centred Approach:** We are committed to providing excellent service to anyone interacting with WDG Public Health.
- ☒ **Building Healthy Communities:** We will work with communities to support the health and well-being of everyone.

## Health Equity

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Communications ensures information is available to the public and priority populations in accessible, meaningful and relevant ways. This means tailoring messages for various audiences and sharing information across various channels, including traditional media, digital media and in person. For critical health messages or crisis communications, it is crucial that multiple opportunities to receive messaging are available to everyone in the community.

Communications is committed to meeting each client's unique needs. In each interaction with WDGPH, every client can expect to be treated with respect, dignity and courtesy.

## References

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Ontario. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability. [Internet] 2018 [cited 2019 Mar. 11]. Available from: [http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph\\_standards/docs/protocols\\_guidelines/Ontario\\_Public\\_Health\\_Standards\\_2018\\_en.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph_standards/docs/protocols_guidelines/Ontario_Public_Health_Standards_2018_en.pdf)

## Appendices

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None.