



THE TARTAN

CIPHI NS/PEI Branch Newsletter
December 2019

MESSAGE FROM CO-EDITORS



Happy December NS/PEI Branch! As 2019 concludes, we are excited to welcome you back to The Tartan. We are hoping to revitalize the formatting and content of the newsletter and e-publish it twice a year.

Our approach to the newsletter is to provide interesting articles related to public health in its broadest sense. We hope that our membership as well as the larger audience of public health students, other CIPHI Branches and our fellow public health practitioners in NS and PEI find the content diverse, thought-provoking and relevant to the ever-evolving field that is public health.

Our plan is to have a couple of regular news columns, including a focus on climate change and its impact on public health, as well as a “Meet a Public Health Influencer” section. The newsletter will also include some fun facts, professional development opportunities, and short branch updates and reminders.

We are both eager to take on the role of co-editors and welcome any suggestions for newsletter content. Please reach out if you have ideas for article topics, are interested in submitting an article for future newsletters or would like to nominate a public health influencer.

We hope that you enjoy this edition of The Tartan and that you have a great holiday season!

Colleen Ryan & Karen Wong-Petrie

What's in this issue...

Presidents Message
Public Health Interventions with Vaping
Mass Gatherings and Public Health
Risk Reduction in Services That Break Skin
Rotavirus
One Health – One Welfare – One World

...and our new regular columns:
Meet a Public Health Influencer
Climate Change and Public Health

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Welcome to the revitalized version of the Nova Scotia/Prince Edward Island's branch letter, The Tartan! I trust everyone is having a wonderful December and are finalizing preparations for the upcoming Holiday Season. As you take time to reflect over the past year, I hope you are proud of your contribution to Public Health in Nova Scotia and PEI. I would like to provide a few highlights of Branch activities from the past few months.

The CIPHI National Educational Conference was held this year in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia Sept 8-11. This year's National AEC theme emphasized "Exploring the Edge" showcased how we are steering new and existing environmental public health issues. The AEC was a huge success; even in light of a hurricane! Losing power just hours before a national conference proved PHIs are quite resilient.

A number of local events took place across the Branch to celebrate Environmental Public Health Week the week of September 23rd – 27th, 2019, which included the Proclamation by the Premier of Nova Scotia. Gatherings were held in Sydney, Bedford, and in Charlottetown, PEI. Should you have ideas for social functions for each region of the Branch please forward to the Branch Councilor in your area. I hope all EPHPs had an opportunity to celebrate Environmental Public Health Week if only by taking a moment to reflect on how truly important our work is to the well-being of Canadians everywhere.



A special thank you to all members of CIPHI for your loyal support and the contributions of time and expertise that you commit to your professional organization.

On behalf of the Branch Executive, myself and my family, I wish everyone a safe and happy Holiday Season!

Vanessa Nickelo
NS/PEI Branch President



This is a reminder that you have until Jan 31st, 2020 to enter your Professional Development Hours (PDHs) on the CIPHI [Members Service Centre \(MSC\)](#). After Jan 31st, 2020 you will not be able to input PDHs for the 2019 year.

For more PDH information, please refer to the [Professional Development Model](#) or the [PDH Entry Tool](#).

If you have any questions, you may reach the Council of Professional Experience at cope@ciphi.ca.

Sincerely,
Council of Professional Experience (CoPE)

Vaping and Nova Scotia Public Health Interventions

By Michele Banfield

Senior Policy Analyst

NS Department of Health and Wellness

Vaping devices were developed in their current form in the early 2000s and have gained substantial market penetration globally since then. A single nicotine pod in a modern e-cigarette can contain the same amount of nicotine as a whole package of cigarettes. Certain vaping products can also be used to deliver other drugs like cannabis.

A Canadian study determined that for youth aged 16 to 19, vaping rates increased by 74% in one year (2017 to 2018)

Canadian youth, even those who have never smoked tobacco, are vaping in alarming numbers. Social media marketing, enticing flavours, and high levels of nicotine have contributed to the growth of a product that is highly attractive to youth. Over the last 30 years, Canada has been successful in reducing youth smoking rates and preventing young people from initiating smoking behaviour. However, this progress is threatened by the trend in youth vaping and the growth of a new generation of youth addicted to nicotine. Some recent Canadian research has found an increase in youth vaping between 2017 and 2018, as well as an increase in youth smoking. An increase in youth smoking rates has not been seen for many decades in Canada.

Addiction to nicotine among youth is a significant concern. Lifelong addiction to substances often begins with early onset use. In a recent survey of youth in Nova Scotia, 95% of those who vape stated that they prefer flavoured e-juice, and 49% said they'd quit vaping if flavours were banned.

Nova Scotia was the first province in Canada to ban sales of e-cigarettes to youth in 2015. Taking effect on April 1st, 2020, the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness will ban the sale of flavoured e-cigarettes and e-juice. Plain and tobacco flavoured vaping products will still be available for adult consumers. Additional legislative measures to address youth vaping will be introduced in spring 2020.



Did you know?

Vaping products have many names, such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, vapes, mods, tanks, and e-hookahs

Reminder

Your CIPHI Membership expires
December 31, 2019. Don't forget to
renew your membership!

Visit <http://www.ciphi.ca/pdf/apply-en.pdf> for the form, or go to the [MSC](#) and renew from the member portal!

A Perspective of Mass Gatherings and Public Health – Cavendish Beach Music Festival

By Karen Edgar, Brittany Young, and Donnie Vigneau
Environmental Health Officers
PEI Health and Wellness

Since 2009, PEI based business Whitecap Entertainment has been the producer and host of the Cavendish Beach Music Festival, Atlantic Canada's largest outdoor concert. This annual event has seen crowds of up to 26,000 people each day over the course of the three-day event.

An event of this magnitude requires considerable planning. Senior level meetings, beginning seven months before the event, are held with the event promoter, Tourism PEI, RCMP, Cavendish Resort Municipality, Island EMS, PEI Liquor Control Commission, Fire Marshall's Office, Waste Disposal Services, Environmental Health and many others leading up to the event. There are approximately 20 food vendors each year. Each vendor must meet environmental health requirements which includes: a menu (with no raw meat products), a floor plan, proof of food safety training and any other information required by Environmental Health Officers (EHOs). The Environmental Health *Guidelines for Food Service at Special Events* are sent out to each food vendor in advance.

The Environmental Health office works closely with the event producer to ensure water samples are submitted and adequate numbers of washrooms and handwashing facilities are provided. The producer also provides our office with a detailed site plan that indicates the locations of all facilities.

On the day prior to the event, EHOs completed the "opening" inspections for each food vendor. If the inspection was satisfactory, their food license was issued. An inspection of the grounds was also completed to ensure there were appropriate numbers of facilities present, and the UV light for the private water system was operational.

Every day of the event, EHOs completed inspections of each food vendor and collected a food sample of a different menu item. Overall, compliance was fairly high with the food vendors as many were repeat vendors who were familiar with the Environmental Health requirements.

Meet a Public Health Influencer

Hey, it's Sean O'Toole! I have been in the profession for 20 years. I got into Public Health because I wanted to give back, help and share knowledge. I enjoy food science and the food safety aspects of the profession and am also a foodie.

*Name: Sean O'Toole
Position: Public Health Officer
Organization: Nova Scotia
Environment*



Recently I have been encountering fermented foods at my local farmers market, as are other Public Health Officers, and I don't quite understand these foods and the food science behind their safety. As with anything in public health, I have started to learn and understand the science around fermented foods like kombucha, kimchi, and other lacto-fermented veggies.

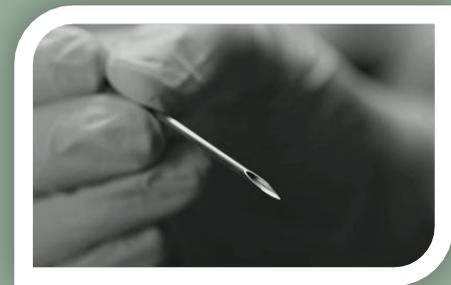
I will continue to educate myself of those topics as well as coworkers and gain an understanding so that I can better assist operators and understand some of the immediate risks that require mitigation. Those entering the profession need to be prepared to educate yourself constantly with new trends in public health that you didn't learn in school. Follow your dreams!

Taking Steps to Reduce Risk for Services Intentionally Breaking Skin

By Carrie Fraser, Program Officer, NS Environment
and Tanya O'Brien, Environmental Health Officer, PEI Health and Wellness

Tattooing, piercing, and microblading have become mainstream in NS and PEI. These types of services intentionally break the skin and so they carry an inherent risk of transmitting bloodborne pathogens as well as posing chemical and physical hazards. Consultation with the industry in both provinces shows a need for up-to-date and consistent application of infection prevention strategies. Both provinces have worked closely with the personal service national working group to develop programs that are consistent with those across Canada.

As of February 1, 2019 body art facilities in NS offering services like tattooing, piercing, branding and microblading, in exchange for compensation, are required to have a permit and must meet the requirements of the Safe Body Art Act (SBA), and pursuant regulations and standards. Since February, Public Health Officers in NS have worked closely with industry to help them come into compliance. As of November 2019, NS Environment has issued 113 permanent SBA permits, 1 mobile permit and 67 temporary permits.



In PEI, permits are not currently required, but a certificate of inspection is provided to satisfactory facilities. Facilities are expected to meet the requirements in the PEI Personal Services Guidelines, which were implemented in March 2019, and enforcement is completed under the *Public Health Act*. There are currently 17 facilities routinely inspected. Environmental Health Officers have completed 35 inspections for 2019.

General compliance has been high which is assumed to be a result of the education and consultation-based approach taken when creating and implementing the Guidelines.

Both NS and PEI exempt ear lobe piercing performed with a handheld piercing device using pre-sterilized cartridges. Complaints from this practice and remaining personal services will continue to be investigated under the NS Health Protection Act or the PEI Guidelines when approved.

SHARE THE VISION
TRANSFORM TOMORROW

2020 CIPHI INSPIRE • EMPOWER • ENGAGE

save the date Oct. 4-7, 2020
Ajax Convention Centre, Ajax, Ont.

Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors
89th National Annual Educational Conference

2020 CIPHI NATIONAL ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE
Hosted by the Durham Region Health Department

The Durham Region Health Department will be hosting the 2020 CIPHI National Annual Educational Conference collaboratively with CIPHI Ontario. The conference will be held in Ajax, Ontario from October 4 - 7, 2020. The theme, **"Share the Vision, Transform Tomorrow"** will provide public health professionals from across Canada the opportunity to connect and share ideas that will help shape the future of public health.

We are excited to announce our keynote speakers! Be prepared to be **Inspired** by Lieutenant-General (ret), The Honourable Roméo Dallaire, an advocate for human rights, author, government and UN advisor, and former Canadian Senator. You will be **Empowered** by Dr. Nicole Blackman, a Nursing Manager who brings Indigenous teachings to public health and the community at large. Lastly, you will be **Engaged** by Steve Patterson. Steve is best known as the host of CBC's "The Debaters" and HGTV's "I Wrecked My House", and he will teach us to bring humour everywhere, from the workplace to our homes.

Early bird registration begins on May 1, 2020, but for those who would like to catch a CIPHI membership instead of the worm, stay tuned for a special holiday announcement coming soon. For information and updates about the conference visit our website www.CIPHIDurham2020.ca and follow us on Twitter @ciphi_national or Instagram [ciphi.ontario](https://www.instagram.com/ciphi.ontario) and use #CIPHIDurham2020 and #ShareTheVision2020. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the 2020 CIPHI National Annual Educational Conference.

ciphi #ShareTheVision2020 #CIPHIDurham2020
Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors

DURHAM REGION
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Rotavirus Vaccine Becomes Routine in Nova Scotia

By Teri Cole, RN

Consultant, Communicable Disease Prevention and Control

Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health

NS Department of Health and Wellness

Rotavirus vaccine has been added to the Nova Scotia publicly funded childhood immunization program. All children born as of November 1, 2019 will be eligible to receive the oral vaccine as part of the publicly funded immunization program. The vaccine is a three-dose series given at 2, 4, and 6 months of age.

What does that mean for you?

If you have a child that is born on or after November 1, 2019, your child will be eligible to receive the vaccine with their usual childhood immunizations. As an inspector, you may see less diarrheal illness in childcare and daycare settings.

Rotavirus disease is a common cause of gastroenteritis in children and is caused by RNA viruses belonging to the family *Reoviridae*. Almost all children are infected by 5 years of age. Rotavirus disease is characterized by vomiting, watery diarrhea, and fever. Symptoms can persist for up to 7 days. The disease is often most severe in children aged 3 months to 24 months.

The most common mode of transmission for rotavirus is through fecal-oral spread, either from person to person or contact with contaminated environmental surfaces. The incubation period is 24 to 72 hours and the shedding rate is the highest during the diarrheal stage of the disease.

The rotavirus vaccine efficacy against rotavirus diarrhea of any severity is 74% to 87% and efficacy against severe diarrhea due to rotavirus is 85% to 98%.

Public Health Inspectors can play a significant role in incorporating the promotion of rotavirus vaccine into any educational work that you do. Immunizations are one of the most significant public health achievements and you can play a role in promoting this key public health measure.

Also, be sure to check your own immunizations to ensure that you are up to date. As an adult, there are vaccines that you should receive. Check out the [Nova Scotia Routine Immunization Schedules for Children, Youth and Adults](#) for more information on vaccines that are important to everyone.

One Health – One Welfare – One World

By Dr. Andrew Morrison

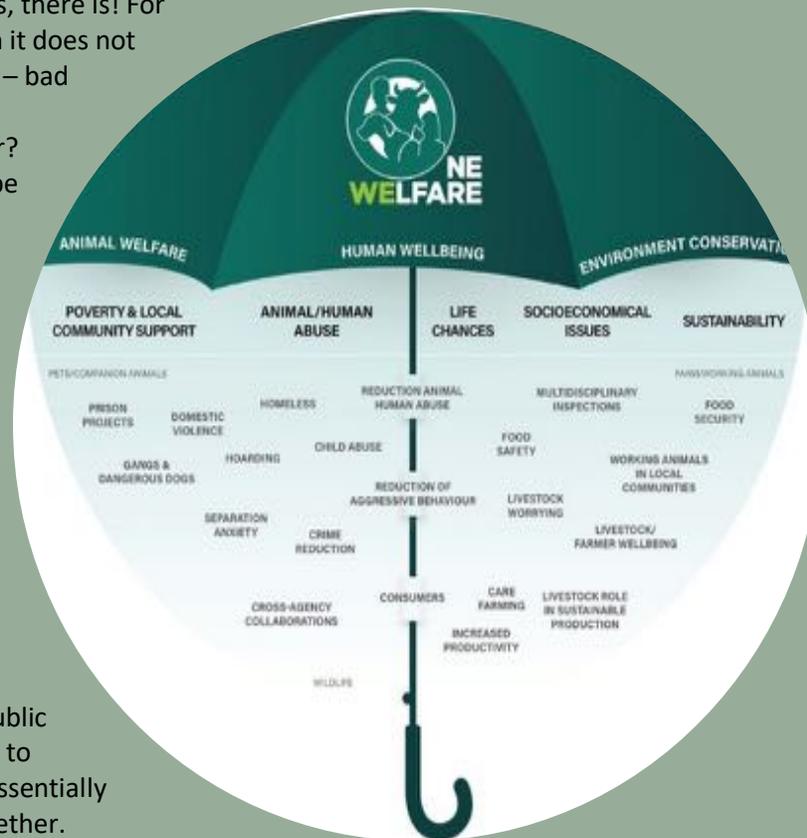
Farm Animal Welfare Program Vet

NS Environment

One Health is a well-established concept bringing together the disciplines of human, animal and environmental health under a common umbrella where they can support each other and move forward together. It acknowledges there is much to be gained from collaboration. It has spun-off ideas such as collaborative oncology where advances in cancer treatments are becoming faster and cheaper by human and animal health practitioners working together on the same problem.

Newer to the conversation is *One Welfare* - bringing together the disciplines of human, animal and environmental welfare under a common umbrella. There has been much work done (and more to do) to link domestic violence to animal abuse as well as the importance of human-animal bonds. Pathogens often do not respect species boundaries. Is there a role for Public Health in *One Welfare*? Yes, there is! For example, drinking water is a critical resource, when it does not meet health standards it can be a *One Health* issue – bad water can be a problem for the humans and animals that rely on it. But what if there is no water? That's not just a human problem, but animals can be suffering as well. For a public health practitioner who has the authority to issue a boil water advisory, there can be animals that rely on that source as well as humans. Maybe the reason the water is not potable is because of runoff from agricultural land; an animal-related impact. Perhaps that blue-green algae bloom might put the health of pets and agricultural animals at greater risk, more than that of humans in some instances.

What does this mean for you? More and more interdisciplinary approaches to Health and Welfare are needed to effectively do our jobs. Whether it is reporting an issue to an animal, environment, or public health inspector or creating interdisciplinary teams to address issues in the field or at the policy level, it essentially comes down to this: *One World*, we are all in it together.



Interested in learning more?
<https://www.onewelfareworld.org/>
<https://www.who.int/features/qa/one-health/en/>
<https://www.cpha.ca/one-world-one-health>

Having trouble completing your PDHs for the year? Here are some tips for completing your PDHs:

- Did you complete a performance management assessment with your manager this year? Did you know that you can enter up to 5 reflective practice PDHs for this or complete the self-assessment available in the MSC.
- Listen to some upcoming or previously recorded webinars. Some helpful websites include:
 - NCEH webinar series: <http://www.nceh.ca/content/nceh-environmental-health-seminar-series>
 - AFDO webinar series: <http://www.afdo.org/retail-webinars>
 - CDC training: <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/activities/training.htm>
- Interested in a topic in public health? Do some self-directed studying and read some peer reviewed journals on that subject to earn some PDHs!

Check out <http://www.cphi.ca/pdf/pdh-entry-tool.pdf> for a helpful PHD entry tool!

Climate Change and Public Health

The Changing Marine Environment and Impacts on Bivalves

By Cheryl Cameron, Food Safety Program Manager and Karen Wong-Petrie, Director of Environmental Health and Food Safety
Nova Scotia Environment

Climate change impacts food safety. An example of this has been seen recently in marine waters around the Maritimes where bivalve molluscs such as oysters, mussels, and clams are farmed or harvested. Although some ecosystem-altering projections of warming waters are anticipated globally, Nova Scotia is already facing more than both the average sea level and temperature rise of water over the last few years. As oceans warm, there is growing concern that bacterial contaminants and algal biotoxins will pose an increased health threat to consumers of bivalves.

For shellfish biotoxins, they are the result of toxin-producing organisms associated with certain marine algal blooms. Changes in climate are expected to create an environment well suited to species of algae that produce groupings of toxins which cause Paralytic SP (saxitoxins), Amnesic SP (domoic acid), and Diarrhetic SP (okadaic acids). Typical food prep like steaming, grilling, or boiling, will not prevent illness since many of these toxins are heat stable. All these toxins have caused illnesses in Nova Scotia to-date and are reportable illnesses under the *NS Health Protection Act*. There is also an unfortunate “double-whammy” affect suggested by some researchers; that harmful algal blooms can contribute to a rise in pH. What genus of pathogens prefers this alkaline pH?

Enter the Vibrios. Halophilic bacteria like *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (Vp) and other *Vibrio* species are a growing concern. Although Vp levels in water and in bivalve flesh are typically detected in the summer, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) reported violative levels of Vp off the shores of Nova Scotia well into October over the last two years. The viable Vp season is extending into the autumn months, where some marine waters exceed temperatures of 15°C for five months of the year.

Regulatory mitigations at CFIA-inspected plants prevent *Vibrio spp.*, biotoxins, and other pathogens from entering the food stream. Such interventions include testing of water columns and bivalve flesh, a documented cold chain from harvest to sale, and depuration in some cases.

In Nova Scotia, it is still an accepted practice for licensed harvesters and aquaculturists to sell bivalves directly to retail establishments. In preparation for the 2020 season, work is underway to explore regulatory and policy tools that could be used to ensure bivalves from Nova Scotian waters meet food safety standards in this changing environment.

Clams are the largest wild bivalve fishery in Nova Scotia, with 4.2 million lbs. harvested in 2018

Know a Public Health Influencer? Have a great idea for a newsletter article? Contact your Tartan co-editors and it could be included in an upcoming edition of the newsletter!

Colleen Ryan – colleen.ryan@novascotia.ca
Karen Wong-Petrie – karen.wong-petrie@novascotia.ca

Amnesic Shellfish Poisoning was first recognized in 1987, in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The outbreak was linked to mussels, resulting in 150 reported cases, 19 hospitalizations, and 4 deaths.

