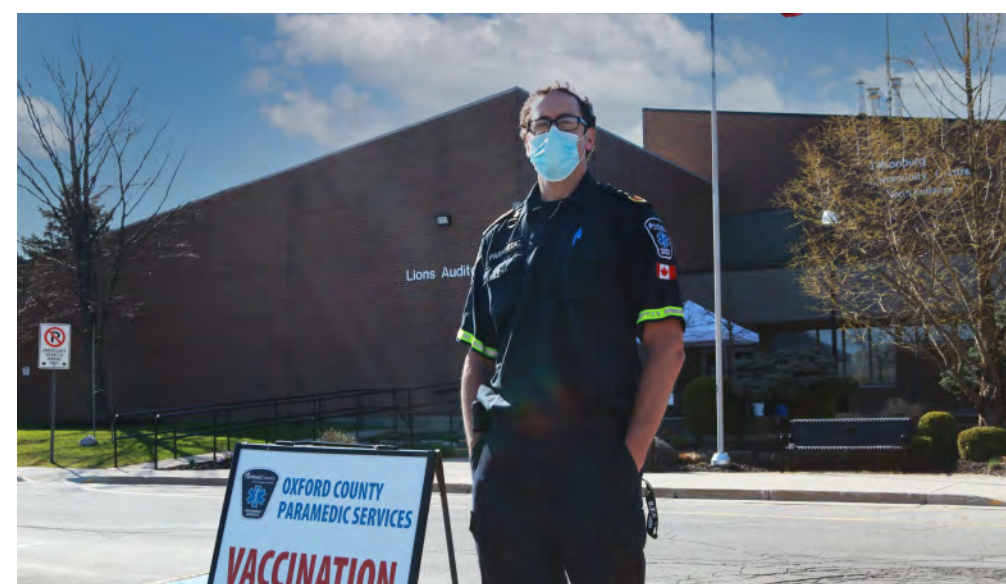

Annual Report
2021



OUR VISION

Healthy people in vibrant communities.

OUR MISSION

Leading the way in protecting and promoting the health of all people in our communities, resulting in better health.

OUR VALUES

- ✓ Evidence
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Quality
- ✓ Equity
- ✓ Forward-thinking



Community leadership.

The Southwestern Public Health Board of Health is comprised of municipal appointees and provincially appointed Order in Council positions.

The Board is accountable to the Ontario Ministry of Health and the communities of Oxford County, Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas to ensure we deliver quality, responsive programs, and services under the Ontario Public Health Standards as regulated by the Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act.



Lori Baldwin-Sands



Grant Jones



Tom Marks



Larry Martin
Board Chair



David Mayberry



Stephen Molnar



Joe Preston
Vice Chair



Lee Rowden
Order in Council



Ted Comiskey



David Warden
Order in Council



Cynthia St. John
Chief Executive
Officer



Dr. Joyce Lock
Medical Officer
of Health



Pictured left: Board Chair, Larry Martin, and CEO, Cynthia St. John, at the official opening of the Woodstock Mass Immunization Clinic.

I thank Cynthia St. John, our CEO, and Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health, for their perseverance, responsiveness, and professionalism during what certainly was the challenge of a lifetime.

To the 211,000 residents served by Southwestern Public Health, I know that COVID-19 has challenged all of us in every way over the past two years. Know that your local public health professionals are here for you – ready to support our community’s recovery from these extraordinary times.

Sincerely,

Larry Martin,
Chair

Success made possible through partnership.

Message from the Board of Health

There is no better window into the importance of local public health than chairing a Board of Health during a pandemic.

For the duration of 2021, Southwestern Public Health supported the broader health care system, local businesses, municipalities, education partners, and thousands of individuals and families. Our staff provided education, infection prevention and control guidance, policy support, and hundreds of thousands of vaccination appointments.

With their unique knowledge of local communities and the rural landscape, our staff very effectively connected with formal and informal community leadership, business owners, and a wide variety of health and social service providers about COVID-19 related restrictions, testing, and vaccination. This work would not have been possible without the relationships that had been built over years of service to Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas.

As a Board, the emphasis of our work remained on Board governance matters centred on our COVID-19 pandemic response and recruiting a new Medical Officer of Health in anticipation of Dr. Joyce Lock’s retirement in March 2022.

2021 illuminated extraordinary leadership from the Southwestern Public Health team as a collective. I know my fellow Board of Health members and I felt great confidence in the organization’s ability to lead and respond as required during very difficult circumstances.

Southwestern Public Health financial picture, year ending December 31, 2021

Revenue

City of St. Thomas	\$731,307.00
Clinics	\$20,728.00
County of Elgin	\$941,063.00
County of Oxford	\$2,083,797.00
Interest	\$25,878.00
Other fees and recoveries	\$80,111.00
Province of Ontario	\$17,007,766.00
Public Health Agency of Canada	\$45,987.00
Student Nutrition	\$239,956.00

Total Revenue \$21,176,593.00



Expense

Cost-shared general programs and services	\$9,331,835.00
COVID-19	\$7,311,765.00
100% Ministry funded programs	\$844,181.00
Other programs and expenses	\$3,531,737.00

Total Expenses \$21,019,518.00



The School Nutrition and Learning Program is a funded partner of United Way Oxford.

2021 Audited Financial Statements

A shifting landscape, adaptable professionals, & a community that rallied.

Message from the CEO

We are living in remarkable times. While there was no less emphasis on COVID-19 in 2021 than there was in 2020, we did begin the new year with optimism due to the arrival of the COVID-19 vaccines. The international scientific community, supported by governments and private business, worked at an extraordinary pace to bring a safe and effective vaccine to the world.

While the evolution of the virus and its tendency to mutate meant that even individuals who were fully vaccinated could acquire COVID-19, the vaccines resulted in a significant reduction in serious illness, hospitalization, and death. The efficacy of the vaccination campaign was a welcome relief for community members and health care professionals alike as it allowed some return to normalcy while reducing the pressure on our health care system.

Our vaccination campaign, supported by the work of volunteers, hundreds of additional temporary staff, and external partners started with visits to the vulnerable residents of local congregate living homes. It evolved into the launch of Mass Immunization Clinics in Tillsonburg, Woodstock, and St. Thomas where hundreds upon hundreds of people were vaccinated per site, per day.

Absolutely none of this would have been possible without the dedicated and skilled professionals employed by this organization. The landscape in which the staff worked shifted regularly and required constant evaluation and adaptation. Their unwavering commitment to health protection and health promotion was evident every step of the way.

The pandemic highlighted both areas of strength within our health system response, and elements within our community that require transformation. Public health is grateful for the tremendous support of municipalities, community organizations, businesses, and our health system partners. Your obvious commitment to working in partnership with us allowed a timely and efficient response to a significant public health emergency.

Simultaneous to that incredible support, we observed how poverty, homelessness, computer access and digital literacy, and our rural geography created barriers to health and well-being. We must rally in new ways to protect our most vulnerable community members in preparation for future emergency situations. And we must remember that public health's best work is when we work for health equity for all.



Pictured above: Jaime Fletcher, Manager, Vaccine Operations and Chief Nursing Officer; Mary Van Den Neucker, Program Manager, Healthy Growth and Development; Cynthia St. John, CEO; Megan Cornwell, Communications Manager at the celebration of 200,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered.

This Annual Report is focused on our vaccination campaign – the largest in the history of Canadian public health and some of the most remarkable work I have seen over the course of my career.

I know that when we meet again at the end of 2022, we will reflect on everything we learned over the course of the pandemic. We will share our new understanding of the unintended consequences of the public health measures necessary to control the

virus and the pausing of our much-needed public health services along the way. I remain hopeful that next year's report will showcase some of the other important work that we have done and continue to do to contribute to our vision of healthy people in vibrant communities.

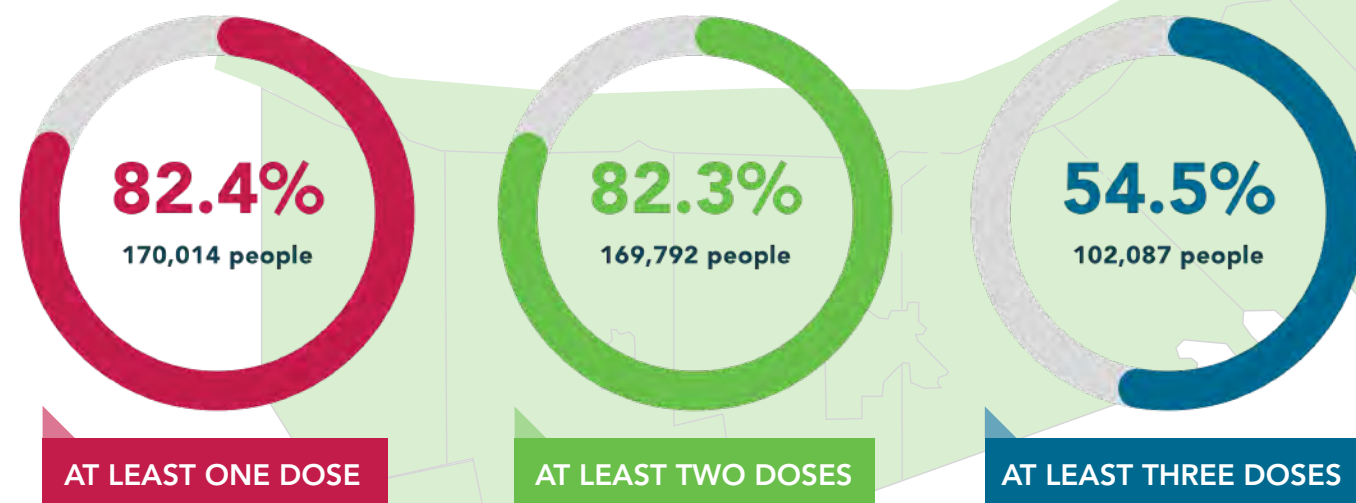
With gratitude,

Cynthia St. John,
CEO

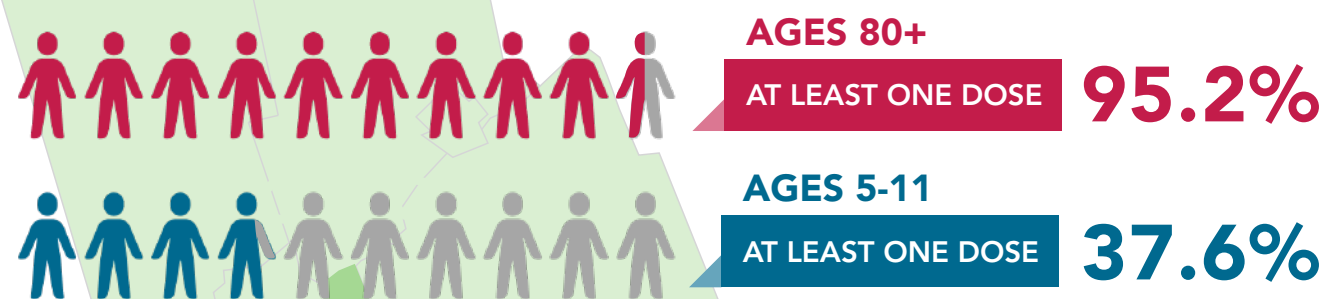
SWPH led a successful vaccination campaign

While some health care professionals and residents of Long-Term Care Homes within the Southwestern Public Health region had access to COVID-19 vaccines in December 2020, Southwestern Public Health's vaccination campaign began in January 2021. All data reflects the period of January 1 – December 31, 2021.

We vaccinated most of our eligible residents



Vaccination coverage was higher in older people



DID YOU KNOW?

97.4% OF ALL RESIDENTS AGED 5+ IN EAST ZORRA TAVISTOCK HAD AT LEAST ONE DOSE OF A COVID-19 VACCINE BY DECEMBER 31, 2021

Together with our partners we administered nearly 437,000 doses

SOUTHWESTERN PUBLIC HEALTH CLINICS

349,043 DOSES

**At 57 different locations*

SWPH PHARMACIES

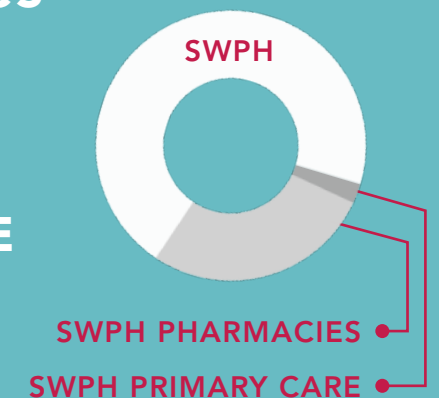
79,445 DOSES

**At 45 participating pharmacies*

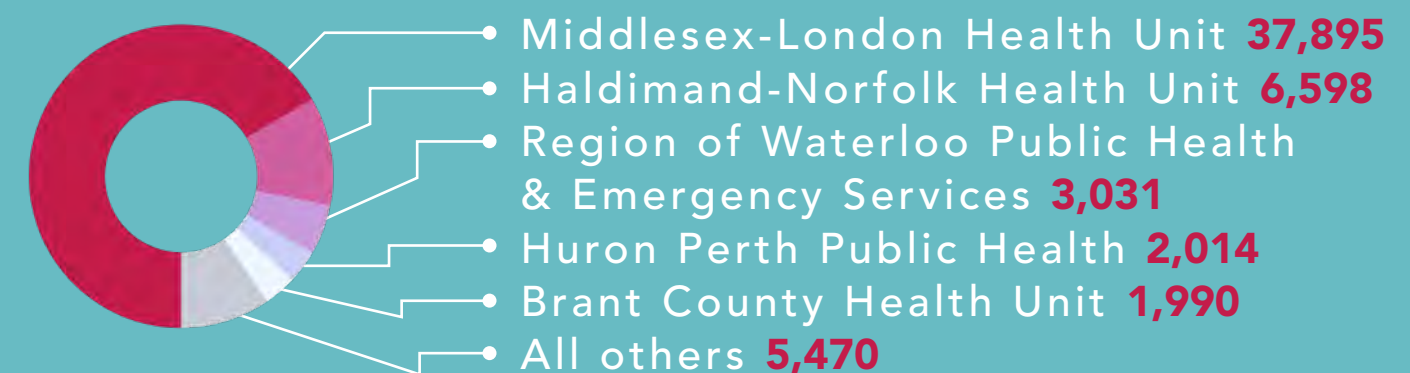
SWPH PRIMARY CARE

6,761 DOSES

**At 19 participating practices*



57,000 non residents were among those that we vaccinated



29,800 CALLS TO THE COVID-19 RESPONSE CENTRE AND VACCINE BOOKING LINE IN 2021



1,216,909 VISITS TO THE COVID-19 WEBSITE CONTENT IN 2021



The complexity of mass immunization.

Local public health has a long history of vaccinating children and adults. From routine childhood vaccinations for illnesses such as measles, mumps, and rubella, to prophylactic vaccination against rabies, to speciality clinics for seasonal influenza, vaccination has been a core function for decades.

The COVID-19 vaccines layered many complexities onto our previous experiences. Due to international demand, vaccines were initially in short supply. This meant that provincially, difficult decisions about who would be vaccinated first needed to be made. It also meant that our work often had to start and stop depending on available supply.

As a region, we determined that mass immunization clinics were the most efficient means of vaccinating thousands of people in a short period of time. Each clinic required dozens of staff each day to handle everything from the technology needed for the electronic documentation system, to parking control, to the administration of the vaccines themselves. The hiring of hundreds of vaccinators and nonclinical staff happened within the context of enormous pressure on health human resources and a nursing shortage. The clinics themselves needed to be set up for efficiency of service and be aligned with infection prevention and control measures to lower the risk of transmission within the clinics themselves.



Of course – not everyone could be served at one of these large-scale clinics. Vaccine was also shipped to hospitals, long-term care homes, retirement homes and primary care practices and administered at more than fifty locations in the community – from beaches to fall fairs to libraries! 4198 individuals who were homebound, residing in group homes and seniors apartments and experienced barriers to attending clinics were vaccinated in their own homes and dozens of individuals with mobility challenges were vaccinated in their cars in the clinic parking lots.

Before we could administer more than 349,000 doses, our vaccine logistics team had to receive more than 100 specialized vaccine shipments. The handling of this vaccine was technically complex and

//

My parents (dad is 92, mom is 87) had their first vaccines today at Goff Hall in Woodstock. I accompanied them at different times this afternoon and was very impressed with the welcoming, helpful and professionalism of all staff we came into contact with. The entire process was seamless and even when we had to wait our turn a bit, we were treated with the utmost respect and dignity. My parents were extremely impressed with the entire process and will certainly become your biggest cheerleaders.

required storage at ultra low temperatures (Pfizer -70 degrees or below, and Moderna at -20 degrees or below) in specialty freezers. Vaccine had to be thawed, and, in the case of Pfizer, reconstituted (mixed with saline) at the time of vaccination. Vaccine must be used within 30 days of thawing and a vial of Moderna must be used within 6 hours of puncture. Staff paid careful attention to lot numbers and expiry dates. The goal was to waste no doses of this valuable supply!

And in addition to all these logistical complexities, was the documentation. First, second, third and subsequent booster doses, five different vaccines, multiple dosages, tens of thousands of clients, printed vaccination receipts, and the inventory was all to be managed in COVAXOn, the first provincial vaccination database. This database was used by all health care providers administering

COVID-19 vaccine and allowed the Ministry of Health centralized access to vaccine stock and rates of administration.

Thank you to the hundreds of temporary and permanent staff, volunteers, and community partners who quickly learned new skills and put forward the best of their education, knowledge, and experience to create a friendly, efficient, and safe experience for more than 200,000 community members. Vaccination was key to moving us to a different stage of the pandemic – one in which the risks were much lower for our most vulnerable community members.

Susan MacIsaac,
Director, Vaccine Operations

Jaime Fletcher,
Manager, Vaccine Operations
and Chief Nursing Officer

As of December 31, 2021

- 209 clinics in St. Thomas (1672 hours of service)
- 208 clinics in Woodstock (1664 hours of service)
- 67 clinics in Tillsonburg (670 hours of service)





FOR PROTECTING THE COMMUNITY
YOU *Love!*

Southwestern Public Health expresses its heartfelt condolences to the loved ones of the individuals who lost their lives to COVID-19 in 2021.



St. Thomas Site
1230 Talbot St.
St. Thomas, ON
N5P 1G9

Woodstock Site
410 Buller St.
Woodstock, ON
N4S 4N2

1-800-922-0096
swpublichealth.ca

