

## New Public Health building officially opened on Broadway

Last Wednesday, Public Health celebrated the opening of its new facility in downtown Orangeville, for the Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health units.

The new facility, which is located at 180 Broadway, was designed specifically with the needs of Orangeville and Dufferin residents in mind.

"We've always had facilities in Orangeville, and we have always had a presence here," said Chuck Ferguson, Manager of Corporate Communications at WDGPH. "The building we were in on didn't suit our services because we couldn't run all of our programs out of it."

The building was also rented, which meant that WDGPH couldn't make changes to it to increase their capabilities of running programs or to address accessibility issues for clients.

"This new facility has modern clinics and adequate teaching spaces to handle the diverse work of public health for generations to come," explained Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO. "The building is also accessible for persons with disabilities and families with young children and strollers."

The plans to provide new buildings both in Orangeville as well as Guelph have been in the works for around 7 years. The process included looking at all areas within the municipality to figure out what would be the most accessible to clients.

"It was more cost effective for us to build because we're building a public health facility, not just an office building," said Mr. Ferguson. "We have clinic areas, dental clinics, negative pressure rooms, and backup generators. It's a specialized facility, not just a place to move from one office building to another."

The negative pressure rooms were included to provide Public Health with the ability to do emergency vaccinations and provide testing and treatment for infectious like tuberculosis or other airborne infections.

He added that unfortunately, Public Health is often the invisible partner in the healthcare system, which is why a centralized location is so important.

"We all know our hospitals and doctors offices, but we don't all know about what Public Health does," he said.

"Public Health is an essential part of the local healthcare system, and this is going to give us a public space and a face on the Public Health options available for the public."

Dr. Mercer echoed those thoughts, explaining that the role Public Health plays in communities is an integral part of healthcare.

"Public Health has an essential role in the local healthcare system promoting health, preventing disease and injury, and responding to health emergencies in the community," said Dr. Mercer.

Along with providing the previously listed medical services, the new facility also provides space for teaching, classrooms for programs on breastfeeding and working with new moms, kitchens for teaching about food safety and food handling and more.

"It's definitely a more functional building that will be able to provide more services," said Mr. Ferguson.

"It's a modern, state of the art Public Health facility that is designed to serve Dufferin County for generations to come. Public Health has always been present in the community and will continue to have a critical role in the community."

?This new facility just ensures that we're able to get the services that are necessary to the public.?

For more information about clinics, programs, and services, visit [www.wdgpulichealth.ca](http://www.wdgpulichealth.ca) or call 1-800-265-7293.