

# Information Report

**Title:** Strategic Initiatives Final  
Summary Report - 2023

**Report Number:** Strategic Initiatives-2024-03

**Director:** Chief Administrative Officer

**Manager:** Strategic Initiatives

**Meeting Date:**

Wednesday, January 24, 2024

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## Executive Summary:

This report provides a summary for 2023 for the Strategic Initiatives Department.

## Physician recruitment and retention

### Current Status

- Ten physicians currently make up the Kincardine Family Health Organization (KFHO, also known as the Kincardine Physicians Group), with 14,500 attached patients.
- Estimates show another possible 3,000 unattached people without a family doctor in our area. Plus, future growth in population.
- 15 physicians at minimum are needed now to serve our growing population, work ER and provide hospital inpatient coverage.
- With four new physicians planning to start work in 2024, one physician transitioning to full time emergency room, one physician leaving in June, and one possible retirement, Kincardine will have an estimated 11 physicians working as family physicians by the end of 2024.
- We see a need for four or more family physicians to support our current community needs.

### Recruitment Events

- Attended the following recruitment events:
  - The Family Medicine Residents of Western Retreat (Jan - Grand Bend)
  - Rural Ontario Medical Retreat (Feb - Collingwood)
  - The Society of Rural Physicians Annual Rural and Remote Medicine Conference (April -Niagara Falls)
  - Grey Bruce Rural Medicine Retreat (Aug – Kincardine)
  - McMaster’s Family Medicine Recruitment Event (Sept – Kitchener)

- RCGP Royal College of General Practitioners Conference (Oct – Scotland)
- Caspr's Canadian Society of Physician Recruitment Repatriation Expo (Oct – Dublin).

### Regional recruitment work

There have also been many regional recruitment efforts made this year. Including:

- The Grey Bruce Rural Medicine Retreat: hosted in Kincardine, with communities in Grey and Bruce working together to bring physicians to our community.
- Saugeen Shores: engaged in ongoing talks of a potential new health care partnership between communities. Collaborated on creating a Gap analysis of health care in both communities. Shared an expo booth and worked together to attract physicians to our areas at The Society of Rural Physicians Annual Rural and Remote Medicine Conference.
- The Grey Bruce Primary Care Recruitment Taskforce: participated on the taskforce to work on ideas for a regional recruitment proposal. This group included representation from a hired consulting team, community recruiters, Bruce County, Grey County and the Ministry of Health.
- Work done with the task force led to work with the Grey-Bruce Ontario Health Team (OHT) to discuss what support they could give to physician recruitment for communities in Grey and Bruce. OHTs are newly formed regional groups of allied organizations working together to improve health care, funded by the province.
- SOPRA Southern Ontario Physician Recruitment Association: Kincardine was invited to join this group of 17 physician recruiters representing individual areas but working together to leverage international reach. Through attendance at international expos, all community contacts are listed on marketing material. All individual community leads are shared, allowing for a reach that one community alone would not have capacity for. The success of this group has been recognized, as both Northern Ontario and Western Ontario groups are looking to replicate the format.

These recruitment events showcased our community, produced many excellent leads, and collected hundreds of contacts.

### Locum recruitment

- As both recruitment and retention efforts, there have been 20 locum doctors recruited to work at the medical clinic, for a total of 36 weeks in 2023. These locums provided coverage for physicians to work in the hospital, ER shifts or vacation coverage.

### Marketing

- Work continued to build a competitive marketing strategy to attract doctors, including social media ad campaigns, in person recruitment events, banners, advertisements Society of Rural Physicians of Canada, presence in ROMP (Rural Ontario Medical Program), video production (which was developed by Bruce Power) <https://f.io/0ThQ3zDE>, promotion of Job postings with Health Force Ontario, webpage for Physician Recruitment on the municipal site.

### Job postings

- Physician postings have been placed on multiple platforms including The Society of Rural Physicians website and newsletter, Health Force Ontario site, Family Physician Job Opportunities FB page, Municipal website, social media, and Family Health Team pages.

### Onboarding support for new physicians

- Work continues to onboard newly signed physicians. This is a crucial part of the process, ensuring that everything is seamlessly ready for the physician.
- This work includes planning events to meet the team, ensuring clinic space is ready and equipped as advertised, Ministry paperwork, accommodations acquired, staff hired, information on the rostering process, spousal employment, school tours, day care placements and other needs as they arise.

### Partners

- Continue relationship building and communication with Kincardine Physicians, Locum Physicians, Municipal Staff, Municipal Council, Bruce Power (spousal employment), The Society of United Professionals (Locum houses), Hospital staff, Family Health Team, regional recruiters, medical school representatives, medical school students, and resident physicians to maintain constructive relationships.

### Retention support

- Retention work is ongoing, and a very important part of the physician recruitment and retention program. The commitment to providing a turnkey clinic is a critical piece to recruiting and retaining physicians for our community.

### Hawthorne Community Clinic

- The municipally owned medical clinic continues to be maintained and improved by the Municipality, which is foundational for both recruitment and retention of physicians.

### Locum Houses

- Housing was provided for locums, medical residents and their families through the generous support of The Society of United Professionals, who have purchased two homes in Kincardine in 2014 and have leased them to the Municipality of Kincardine at no cost for 10 years. There is work currently happening on a lease renewal.

### ER Program

- The ER program has allowed for the use of a \$500/shift stipend to be paid to locums or physicians completing third year of residency to work shifts in the Kincardine ER. This year it helped staff 20 very difficult to fill shifts, often holiday Mondays in summer and over holiday times. It has been successful in helping keep the ER open. If the ER was closed patients would be directed to the nearest open hospital ER.

### Nurse Practitioner (NP) support

- The Family Health Team same day clinic with 2 Nurse Practitioners and support staff at the medical clinic has helped divert Emergency Room visits and supports patients access to primary care. It is full daily. The municipality continues to provide 60% funding of one full time NP.

### Education Programs

- There were 16 physicians who completed their mandatory 2-month rural rotation in Kincardine this year. Each physician had a local proctor and completed two months of primary care, hospital inpatient care and emergency room work.
- We also hosted 7 medical school students, an international med school student, a nurse practitioner apprentice and a nursing co-op student.
- Education programs showcase our clinic and community. Discussions of a Kincardine Residency program and what that would look like are underway.

### **Communications**

2023 was a busy year for communications providing organization-wide support.

#### 2023 Statistics

By year's end, the following was reported:

- 911 communications forms submitted by the organization requesting a variety of support needs from social media content to media releases, updates to the website, and marketing support.
- 76 e-newsletters were sent to inboxes including 3 economic development, 9 Municipal Connects, and 64 Downtown Dig newsletters.
- Our corporate Facebook account reached nearly 300,000 accounts, a 43.8% increase from 2022, while Instagram increased its reach by 4.5%.
- Our Kincardine Tourism Facebook account reached just over 110,000 accounts, a 67.4% increase from 2022 while the Instagram account reached 13.6% more.
- Produced and distributed 72 media releases.

#### Marketing and promotions

Communications also provided support for the organization through the creation of marketing collateral for events, campaigns, and programs; internal documents and templates; copywriting and editing for various messaging needs. Some examples of this work include:

- Creation of the Signature Events brochure.
- Worked collaboratively with the Kincardine Independent on content development and creation for their Visitor's Guide.
- Records and Information Management Quick Reference Guide design.
- Cruise Day marketing assets for both print and digital needs.
- Legacy of Hope marketing materials and event support.
- Tiverton Winterfest marketing and promotional support.
- Piping in the Park, Phantom Piper, and Gathering of the Bands promotional assets.
- Downtown Dig logo, signage, print materials, web graphics, and more as required throughout the project.

- Organized radio advertising throughout the year with a large summer campaign covering events and initiatives with the key focus on driving people towards Lakeside Downtown Kincardine. This ran from May through to September, across stations from Bayshore Broadcasting, Blackburn Media, and Shoreline Classics.
- Santa Days and Hometown Christmas promotions including in-person event support.
- IDEA celebration content for social media.
- Community service programs marketing support and roll-out on social media including Sponsored Skates and Swims, Fall Recreation Expo, Summer Sing-A-Long.
- Social media campaigns for initiatives like Local Government Week, Small Business Week, What to Know when it comes to Snow, Fall Yard Waste, and Employment Opportunities.
- Engagement marketing and content development support for initiatives like Kincardine Waterfront Master Plan, Pipe Up, Kincardine! Parks and Waterfront Strategic Plan, Grozelle Park, Community Improvement Program, and the Job Fair & Expo.

### Photobank

- Worked with photographers for 3 photoshoots, a creative agency for the filming and production of the Phantom Piper video and created a contact list for future photography and videography needs.
- Worked with drone photographers for the Downtown Dig and to photograph municipal facilities.
- Arranged a photoshoot to build on economic development related photography assets.

### Website Refresh

- Communications has also embarked on the website refresh project for both the Municipality of Kincardine and the Tourism websites. Consultations with staff and the public were completed through surveys and workshops.
- Audits were also completed for several components of the existing sites including website forms, content, links, and systems that integrate within our website.
- For the Tourism site we have secured new tourism domains, all which will point to the primary [www.kincardinewelcomes.ca](http://www.kincardinewelcomes.ca)
- Preliminary training sessions were held for content leads, with future sessions planned for 2024. We are currently creating a governance guide and maintenance plan that will help to ensure a smooth transition and ongoing support.
- The website construction is well underway with construction of the new sites and we look forward to launching within the first quarter of 2024.

### Emergency and Operational Support

- Provided support to operations with regularity to communicate closures and construction projects.
- Support for Significant Weather Events and specifically through the 2023 holiday storm to ensure communications about operations, facilities, and safety were delivered across multiple platforms and in a timely fashion.
- Participated in annual emergency management training and exercise with Manager of Strategic Initiatives in the role of Emergency Information Officer (EIO) and Communications Coordinator as Alternate EIO.

## **Economic Development**

### Downtown Dig

- Provided ongoing communications and coordination for the [Downtown Dig](#) Kincardine, including weekly e-newsletter updates on the project, weekly radio interviews, signage, attending weekly construction meetings and updates to businesses and property owners. Helped plan and support the Hometown Christmas and grand Reopening of Queen Street event.

### Business attraction and supports

- Continue to lead and support work for investment attraction and business supports for the municipality, with a primary focus on working with current property owners on future development plans and attracting business and investment in the various business parks, highway commercial areas and downtown vacancies.
- Created a new Invest in the Municipality of Kincardine package to assist with investment and business attraction to the area. The draft will be shared with Council in 2024.
- Conducted 45 meetings in 2023 with businesses, investors or real estate agents that are considering purchasing property for future development, starting a new business, or expanding an existing business in the Municipality of Kincardine.
- Council and the economic development coordinator presented 25 business certificates in 2023 – recognizing and celebrating new businesses, new ownership and significant business expansions or anniversaries. If you know a business celebrating a significant milestone in 2024, please encourage them to reach out to Cherie Leslie or submit a request online at [www.kincardine.ca/EcDev-Recognition](http://www.kincardine.ca/EcDev-Recognition)
- Hosted a very successful Job Fair and Career Expo on March 2, 2023, with plans to make this an annual event. Advertising will begin shortly for this year's event being held on Wednesday, March 6, 2024 in partnership with the Kincardine and District Chamber of Commerce and County of Bruce.
- Provided secretary support for the monthly BIA Board meetings and attended the quarterly meetings with Kincardine and District Chamber of Commerce.

### Nuclear Sector

- Held quarterly meetings with Bruce Power and regular meetings with nuclear suppliers, as well as attendance at industry events to understand needs in the area and how the municipality/region can better support the nuclear industry. Attended the opening ceremonies and facility tours for the OPG, Laurentis and Energy Partners new facility as well as the new NII Advanced Technology Training Centre.
- Participated in meetings to learn more about the Bruce C potential expansion.
- Attended the Southern Ontario Isotope Coalition meeting in Kincardine and began to explore opportunities for our municipality's involvement.

### Development

- Participate in and occasionally initiate pre-consultation meetings with investors/developers that have development proposals, alongside colleagues from the infrastructure & development team, Bruce County Planning and BM Ross. Pre-consultation meetings are typically arranged prior to a formal planning application being submitted.

- Coordinate monthly meetings with the internal development team to help advance significant development projects and obtain staff alignment on requirements. Work includes preparing agendas, identifying issues or opportunities, to ensure staff are informed on next steps.

### Housing Action Plan

- Continue to advance the work on the Housing Action Plan, attending the Bruce County Housing and Homelessness Plan session, participating in meetings with some developers and local organizations exploring affordable or supportive housing development.
- Provided input on the new draft Comprehensive Zoning By-law, with the lens of making it a housing friendly and business friendly document.

### Community Improvement Plan

- Together with Bruce County Economic Development staff, prepared and presented the draft Community Improvement Plan (CIP) to Council in November 2023. The draft CIP was submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for review and staff plan to bring it forward for a Public Meeting and council adoption on Wednesday, February 14, 2024.
- As part of the CIP development and Spruce the Bruce Community Onboarding process, an initial meeting with Tiverton and Area businesses was held on December 5, 2023 to discuss community branding and façade guidelines. More opportunities for future input will be held in 2024 with the first happening on Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup>. At this event Pl.ural Consulting will provide the draft community branding and façade guidelines and gather additional input.

## **Tourism**

Staff have been working on a variety of activities this year including the move of the Welcome Centre to downtown Kincardine.

### Welcome Centre

- The Welcome Centre office on Highway 21 was packed up and items moved to the new location at the Kincardine Centre for the Arts on Queen Street on Queen Street and saw an increase in visitors from 2022.
- The Welcome Centre operated from Tuesday to Saturday, 9am to 5pm.

### Signature Events

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- The Welcome Centre operated from Tuesday to Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. from May through to Labour Day weekend in September.

## Signature Events

Worked with volunteers and the special events review committee to ensure signature events were successfully relocated in the 2023 season due to the Downtown Dig happening.

Highlights include:

- 2023 Canada Day Celebrations took place both in Tiverton and in Kincardine this year. The Canada Day Parade was implemented in partnership with the Tiverton Ag society in Tiverton. Family entertainment and activities were held at MacPherson and Dunsmoor Parks. The day ended with a fireworks show over Lake Huron in Kincardine.
- A flag raising ceremony was held at the bottom of Harbour Street, followed by the unveiling of the plaque commemorating Eldon Humphreys on the Huron Terrace bridge overlooking the Kincardine Lighthouse.
- Kincardine Pipe Band Parade re-branded the Pipe Band Parades to “Piping in the Park” for the 2023 season as they offered a stationary performance in Victoria Park and on Durham Market Street North. It was held every Saturday from June 24<sup>th</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Cruise Nights shifted to Cruise Day for the 2023 season. It was held at the Municipality of Kincardine Airport and was a very successful event with over 300 cars and motorcycles displayed for the public to see.
- The Municipality of Kincardine and Kincardine Scottish Pipe Band held the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Gathering of the Bands on Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023. This event honoured the community's Scottish heritage, bringing together multiple pipe bands, activities and food in Victoria Park. There was no parade for this event due to construction.
- The Phantom Piper played every evening during July and August (except for Saturdays). To promote the Phantom Piper a [video](#) was created in collaboration with [JOI Creative](#).
- Marine Heritage Day was held on August 26<sup>th</sup> and included tours of the Kincardine Lighthouse, the Walker House Museum, kids’ craft table and scavenger hunt, as well as beach safety information displays.
- Held and supported Santa visits downtown.
- Created a float and participated in the Kincardine Santa Claus Parade.

## Market in the Park

- Successfully implemented the 2023 Market in the Park in two new locations, 1. Connaught Park and 2. Tiverton Sport Centre. Both locations received many positive comments about the ability to park and the changed venue. On average there were 50 vendors that participated in each market. Plans are underway for the 2024 market.

## Marketing

For the 2023 season researched popular tourism magazines for different demographics.

- Developed targeted marketing to attract specific readership.
- Worked with the Independent Newspaper to develop the Visitor’s Guide.
- Held successful radio campaigns to highlight signature events.



- Developed campaign to encourage special event participants to visit downtown Kincardine before and after the events.
- Have been working with the Letter M Marketing Company to develop a marketing strategy for 2024. To develop an impactful strategy consultations with businesses, special event organizers, accommodation and tourism sector were conducted.

### Seasonal lights

- Coordinated the installation of seasonal lights and banners in downtown Kincardine, Tiverton and Underwood.
- Coordinated the installation of lights in Victoria Park and St. Andrews Park.
- Many thanks to Community Services and Infrastructure and Development for their support to install the lights.
- Began research on future seasonal light replacements.

### **Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access**

The IDEA Action Plan has four 4 areas of focus. Progress is noted under each of the focus areas:

#### **1. Awareness: Build awareness and understanding to address inclusion, diversity, equity and access**

- Promoted dates of significance to acknowledge, create awareness and celebrate the diversity of our community through social media and other communication methods.
- Participated in “Lots of socks” for Autism Awareness Day
- Sponsored and participated in the Kincardine and Area Chamber of Commerce senior forum.
- Hosted a Rainbow Pride workshop
- Supported and participated in the Pride celebration on June 24<sup>th</sup>
- Creation of two crosswalk paintings supporting and celebrating inclusion. Artist Jeffrey (Red) George (Ma-Mi-No-ga-boo) created an Indigenous ground mural representing the seven grandfather teachings. The second crosswalk is the Pride flag.
- Hosted information table at the crosswalk painting to show support and create awareness on the journey to reconciliation.
- Learning Circle with Trish Meekins at The Walker House Museum.
- Supported the Hindu Culture Open House on August 12, 2023.
- Worked with community partners to host the 2023 Welcome event on September 12, during Welcoming Week. Welcoming Week is celebrated in communities to encourage connection and support relationships with newcomers. Newcomer to Canada, Grey, Bruce, or the Municipality of Kincardine were invited to learn about services in the community and to meet new people.
- Formed a planning group to plan activities that focus on Black Excellence and awareness raising. The outcome of this planning was the creation and implementation of the Afro Caribbean Awards for youth which was held on October 21, 2023. 25 youth were recognized at this event for their leadership and contributions to the community.

- Participated in flag raising for Pride, Transgender Day of Remembrance and National Day of Reconciliation.

## **2. Service: Facilitate social inclusion, access and participation in programs, services and the built environment**

- Continued support for the “Ring my Bell” campaign for local businesses to enable customers with mobility challenges enter their facilities.
- Created resources to support staff to develop accessible documents and power points.
- Created an Equity lens to provide concrete suggestions to improve IDEA.
- Participated in the Grey-Bruce Immigration Partnership.

## **3. Engagement: Listen to the voices of people experiencing inequities.**

- Research on an engagement framework has been initiated.

## **4. Reconciliation: Work towards actions to address truth, healing and reconciliation.**

- The Municipality of Kincardine and The Walker House partnered to host three ground-breaking exhibits from the **Legacy of Hope** to create awareness on the residential school system, promote healing and encourage acts of reconciliation. Three exhibits were on display from June 9, 2023, to September 2, 2023. Over 1000 people viewed the exhibits free of charge over the summer. A series of children’s crafts were implemented at both the Walker house and the Welcome Centre to support learning and encourage participation.
- Created Land Acknowledgement banners to display at public events.
- Conducted training sessions on the History of the land from a First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspective.
- Created National Indigenous History Month resources.
- Provided posters, resources, and materials for the public to pick up during the week leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
- Conducted a learning circle on September 13<sup>th</sup> with Elder Shirley John and Diane Giroux, Giiwe Coordinator at [M'Wikwedong Indigenous Friendship Center](#) in Owen Sound, to provide suggestions that build pathways to reconciliation within organizations.
- Hosted information tables to promote, provide resources and create awareness about the National Day for reconciliation.
- Organized a group of volunteers from OPG to refresh the two crosswalk paintings that support and celebrate inclusion:
  - The Indigenous ground mural created by Artist Jeffrey (Red) George called the “Seven generations”.
  - The Pride flag.

## **Strategic Planning**

- Progress on the Integrated Strategy was gathered from across the organization and published in the annual [progress report](#).
- A framework was created for the development of a new Strategic Plan which was reviewed by the new Council Ad Hoc Committee. The terms of reference for this group were also approved.

- Staff consultations have taken place to promote the values as well as gather input on how to support a culture of values within the workplace. An action plan was developed to support the recognition and promotion of the values.
- RAVE Review kits to recognize staff living the values were created and distributed in program areas.

**Other activities of note this year:**

- In early 2023 Strategic Initiatives worked with special event organizers to find locations outside of the construction zone to ensure that the events still happen this past summer.
  - Special event applications received to date were coordinated through the SI department until June 1, 2023, and this responsibility has now been passed to Community Services.
  - Hired two students for Tourism.
  - Tourism staff vacancy since September 2023.
  - Moved the Strategic Initiatives Department offices.
  - Hosted quarterly BIA, Chamber and Municipality of Kincardine staff alignment meetings.
  - Participated in the Community Safety and Wellbeing Planning Committee.
  - Participated in the Emergency Exercises.
  - Obtained data from RT07 on tourism patterns.
  - Coordinated the installation of the Bruce Township sign in Underwood.
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