

Lessons Learned from Year 1 of the HPV Program in Ontario

Forum on Immunizing in Schools
June 6, 2008

Bryna Warshawsky, MDCM, CCFP, FRCPC
Associate Medical Officer of Health

Middlesex-London Health Unit

519-663-5317 ext. 2427; bryna.warshawsky@mlhu.on.ca

Outline

- Introduction to Ontario and Middlesex-London
- The 2007-2008 Experience
- The 2008-2009 Plan
- Lessons Learned

Introduction to Ontario

Introduction to Ontario

- 12.8 million people
- 84,000 girls in Grade 8
- 35 Public Health Units
- Size 80,000 to 2.5 million

Introduction to Ontario

- Central support – Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
- No provincial agency although Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Agency being planned post SARS

Introduction to Ontario

- Immunization of School Pupils Act
 - Measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria and polio
 - Exemptions for philosophical reasons
- Hepatitis B and meningococcal vaccines offered to Grade 7

Introduction to Middlesex-London

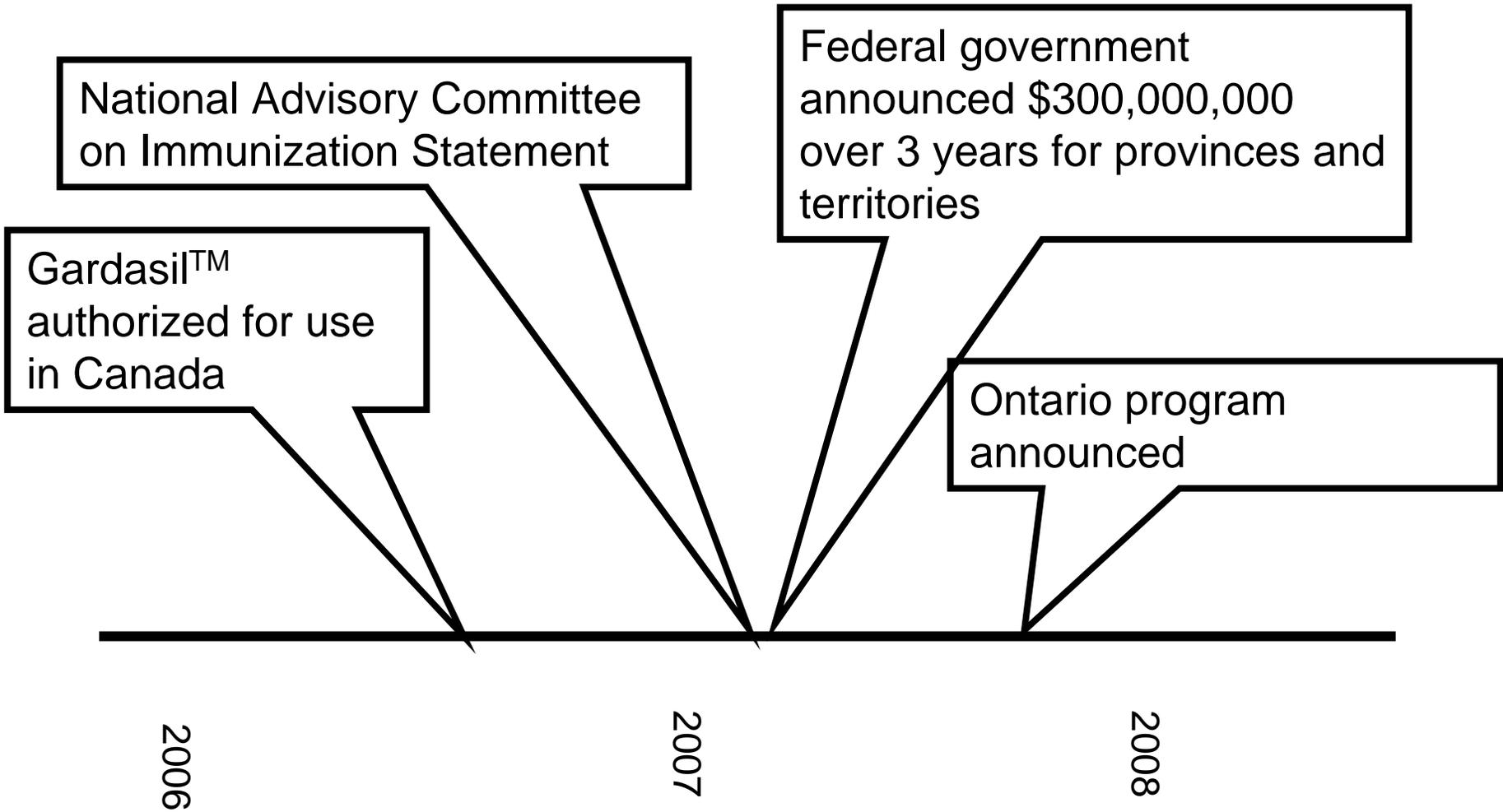
- Southwest Ontario
- Two hours from Toronto
- Population:
 - 350,000 in London
 - 70,000 in surrounding rural area

Introduction to Middlesex-London

- Grade 8 girls - 2,671
- Schools with grade 8 - 129
 - Public - 86
 - Catholic - 28
 - Private - 11
 - French - 4

The 2007-2008 Experience

Time Lines



Ontario's HPV program expert-approved: premier

Last Updated: Thursday, August 2, 2007 | 2:07 PM ET

[CBC News](#)

The government of Ontario has announced that it will offer free HPV vaccines to girls in Grade 8, beginning this fall.

Premier Dalton McGuinty made the announcement Thursday morning at Women's College Hospital in Toronto.

Ontario Program

- Young women in grade 8 get it at no cost
- Only in grade 8
- \$8.50 per dose

August, 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

:

September, 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Middlesex-London Program

- Offer it at the same visit as Grade 7 hepatitis B and meningococcal in the fall and spring
- Keep the already established schedule but add extra nurses
- Add an extra visit to school in November

Middlesex-London Program

- Meeting with school boards
- Packages went home with young women in Grade 8
 - Letter to parent
 - General information on HPV and vaccine
 - Information on the school-based vaccination program (myths)
 - Information on consent process
 - Consent form

Middlesex-London Program

- Package sent to physicians
- Information posted on our web site
- Media releases and interviews

Middlesex-London Program

- Recruitment
- Scheduling
- Supplies
- Logistics
- Medical directives
- Staff education

Approach to “Sex Issue”

- Opportunity to talk to your children
- Part of a comprehensive approach to sexual health
 - Abstinence
 - Condom use
 - Birth control
 - Regular Pap smears
 - Open, honest communications

Uptake Very Bad

- 53% uptake in Ontario (range 39 - 65%)
- Worse in Catholic schools than Public schools
- Student uninformed
- Other students mean

Why Was it So Bad? Ontario

- MacLean's article
- Canadian Medical Association Journal article
- Provincial election
- Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops'

Our girls are not guinea pigs

Is an upcoming mass inoculation of a generation unnecessary and potentially dangerous?

CATHY GULLI | August 27, 2007 |

MacLean's Magazine

The morning after Emily Cunningham got a shot of Gardasil, the new vaccine that protects against four strains of the human papilloma virus (HPV) that can cause cervical cancer and genital warts, she woke up with a headache, and neck and back pain. By 9 p.m. that evening in April, she had a fever so high "you could feel the heat rising from her a foot away," according to her mother, Laurie. She was delirious during the night, and the following day couldn't walk without assistance. Bedridden for nearly a week, the 18-year-old from Wyoming missed school, and took Tylenol every four hours. "If Emily had been the only one to get sick we would have said she must have had something else [like the flu]," explained Laurie, "but we know of three other students to have reactions, that is why we are concerned."

Early release, published at www.cmaj.ca on August 1, 2007. Subject to revision.

COMMENTARY

Research

Human papillomavirus, vaccines and women's health: questions and cautions

Abby Lippman PhD, Ryan Melnychuk PhD, Carolyn Shimmin BJ, Madeline Boscoe RN DU

Early release, published at www.cmaj.ca on Aug. 1, 2007. Subject to revision.

Ads for HPV vaccine yanked

Auditor decides they contravene rules about government advertising in an election campaign

Sep 18, 2007 04:30 AM

Kerry Gillespie

Queen's Park Bureau

Provincial radio and print ads about a vaccine program to protect girls from cervical cancer have been pulled until after the Oct. 10 election.

Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops'

September 13, 2007

First, infection with HPV or other sexually transmitted diseases can occur only through sexual activity, which carries with it profound risks to a young person's spiritual, emotional, moral, and physical health....

Second, there is no consensus among those involved in public health in Canada that HPV vaccination is the most prudent strategy in terms of allocating health care resources to address the goal of preventing deaths resulting from cervical cancer. Further research is required. The Bishops of Ontario encourage parents to learn the medical facts concerning this vaccination. Although the HPV vaccination program properly leaves the choice of participation to parents, the Bishops of Ontario regret its introduction without further opportunity for thorough study of all of the effects of this program. The best interests of children demands that parents and guardians be fully informed before granting consent.

Halton trustees vote to bar HPV vaccine from schools

The Canadian Press

June 4, 2008

Burlington, Ont. -- Public health nurses will not be welcome at Halton Catholic schools this fall to administer a vaccine to fight a virus contracted through sexual activity.

Trustees voted last night to not provide space in its elementary schools for the delivery of the HPV vaccination to girls in Grade 8.

Halton trustees also voted to have the board increase its efforts to impress students that abstinence before marriage was an important feature of the Catholic faith.

Why Did We Do So Bad? Middlesex-London

- Prominent local physician
- Vocal Catholic church
- Did not take an aggressive approach

**Vaccine ignites an ethical minefield
Gardasil is being offered to Grade 8 girls to fight
a sexually-transmitted virus linked to cancer.**

By [JOHN MINER](#), SUN MEDIA, LONDON FREE PRESS

August 27, 2007

"Parents will have to decide in the fog of a raging debate between medical authorities over the safety and effectiveness of the anti-cancer vaccine. 'I would resist my daughter being vaccinated,' said Jeff Nisker, a professor of obstetrics-gynecology and oncology at the University of Western Ontario and co-ordinator of health ethics at the Schulich School of Medicine."

Vocal Catholic Church

- Many churches had a Sunday sermon about not getting the HPV vaccine

Thursday October 11, 2007

Medical Officer of Health addresses myths and unbalanced media coverage on HPV vaccine

Kingston—Dr. Ian Gemmill, Medical Officer of Health for Kingston, Frontenac, and Lennox & Addington, addressed reporters at a press conference today to clarify some myths and baseless rumours reported in the media on the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine. Since the provincial government announced a plan earlier this year to provide the HPV vaccine to all grade 8 girls in Ontario, free of charge, certain media reports have published unbalanced coverage on the safety of the vaccine. The press conference and a letter to all parents of grade 8 girls in the KFL&A area were meant to provide accurate information to help parents make an informed decision to protect their daughters.

The 2008-2009 Plan

Multi-Service Planning Group

- Vaccine Preventable Disease
- Sexual Health Promotion
- Cancer Prevention
- Medical support
- Communications

Target Audiences

- Students and parents
- Teachers
- Health care providers
- General public

Student and Parents

- Simplify materials
- Spruce up materials
- Translate to French
- Vet through school boards
- Use material from Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologist

Students and Parents

- Mailing in the spring to grade 7 (next year's grade 8 girls)
- Mailing in the fall to grade 8 girls and boys with information to help parents talk to their children
- Information sessions for parents and students

Information Sessions

- For parents and students in grade 8 and anyone else who is interested
- 7 sessions in City and County
- 1 hour in the fall before clinics start
- Short presentation and questions and answers
- In libraries and some schools
- Promote through letters, posters, media, web site, physicians

Teachers

- Invitation to public sessions
- Information packages
- Video
- Offer of presentation by Public Health Nurses

Health Care Providers

- Educational sessions by several credible sources
- Updated information packages will be sent
- What to do with those who are opposed?

General Public

- Advertise the information sessions
- Information on the web site
- Media releases and interviews
- Consider target populations: universities, colleges, cancer groups, women's groups

Unvaccinated from 2007-2008

- Not given a fair opportunity to make an informed decision
- No provincial commitment to allow them to get the vaccine in 2008-2009

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- A very difficult disease and vaccine to explain
- The sex part complicates the issue
- Opposition from several angles

Lessons Learned

- Have consistent, provincial standardized material for
 - Students, parents, teachers, health care providers, the general public
- Develop material professionally
- Field test material
- Translate material
- Do a lot of promotion

Lessons Learned

- Offer HPV vaccine with other vaccines
- Establish a group of credible provincial and local experts for public speaking
- Use stories and local statistics
- Judge your community

Lessons Learned

- Give publicly-funded vaccine only to those who are eligible
- Have a “once eligible, always eligible” policy

**Thank-You For the
Opportunity**

Best of Luck !!!