



Community and Health Services Department  
Office of the Commissioner

## Memorandum

TO: Members of Committee of the Whole

FROM: Adelina Urbanski  
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

DATE: November 5, 2015

RE: **York Region Health and Wellbeing – January to June 2015**

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I am pleased to provide *York Region Health and Wellbeing – January to June 2015*, intended to provide an overview of the changes taking place in the Region.

In the first half of 2015, York Region continued to experience steady population growth and employment. However, growth and increasing housing prices continue to present unique considerations for the Region and its residents, particularly in relation to rising debt loads and a greater demand for rental housing and social supports. Similarly, the demand for programs that serve older adults and children continues to increase. These trends present unique opportunities for innovative service delivery, especially with regards to preventative solutions.

We will continue to monitor these trends and their impacts on Community and Health Services programs and services and provide Council with an update on the full 2015 calendar year in spring 2016.

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Adelina Urbanski  
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

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Attachment (1)

#6332237

## York Region Health and Wellbeing – Mid-Year 2015

The Community and Health Services (CHS) Department provides programs and services for York Region residents to address their needs at every stage of life. This report builds on the 2014 Health and Wellbeing Year End Review, summarizing key trends where mid-year reporting data is available and presenting new annual data, where applicable, to help identify factors influencing service delivery in the Region.

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### Immigration and births continue to drive the Region's population growth

Between December 2014 and June 2015, York Region's population increased by approximately one per cent (11,426 residents) to an estimated 1,156,186. During this time, all York Region municipalities experienced an increase with the greatest occurring in Markham (4,844), Vaughan (2,890) and Richmond Hill (1,960). The increase to these municipalities is consistent with an immigration trend identified in landing data from 2003 to 2012, which reveals these municipalities as the top destinations for new permanent residents<sup>1</sup> intending to land in York Region.

Immigration demographics are changing in York Region, which receives approximately 10,000 new immigrants a year. For example, based on the same landing data as above, 7% of new permanent residents intending to settle in York Region in 2008 were aged 65 and older. By 2012, this increased to 12%. In comparison, from 2008 to 2012, new permanent residents 65 and older increased from 3% to 4% of all new permanent residents arriving in Canada, and from 4% to 7% intending to settle in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).<sup>1</sup> In 2012, the proportion of new permanent residents landing in York Region who spoke neither English nor French was 38 per cent, 13 per cent higher than Canada and nine per cent higher than the GTA.

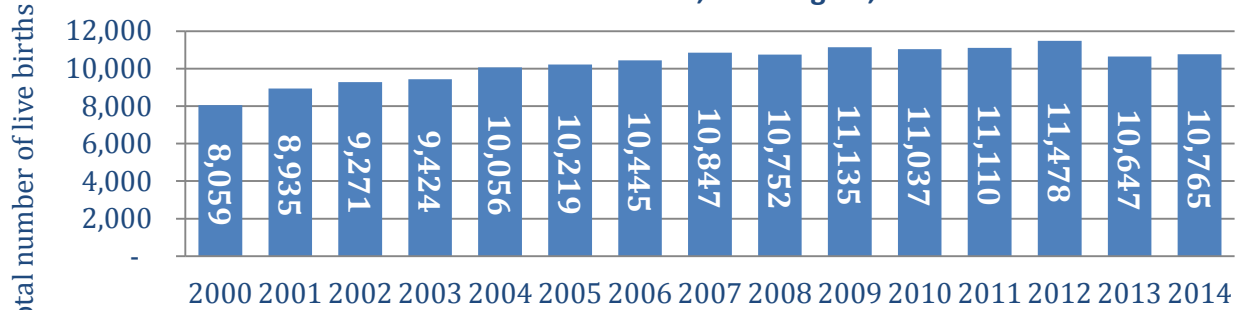
In addition, live births are also a similar contributor to York Region's population, with at least 10,000 live births per year since 2004 and more than 50,000 babies in the last 5 years (see Chart 1).

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<sup>1</sup> The term permanent resident includes family class immigrants, economic immigrants, refugees and other immigrants who do not qualify in any of the other three categories.



**Chart 1: Total Number of Live Births, York Region, 2000-2014**

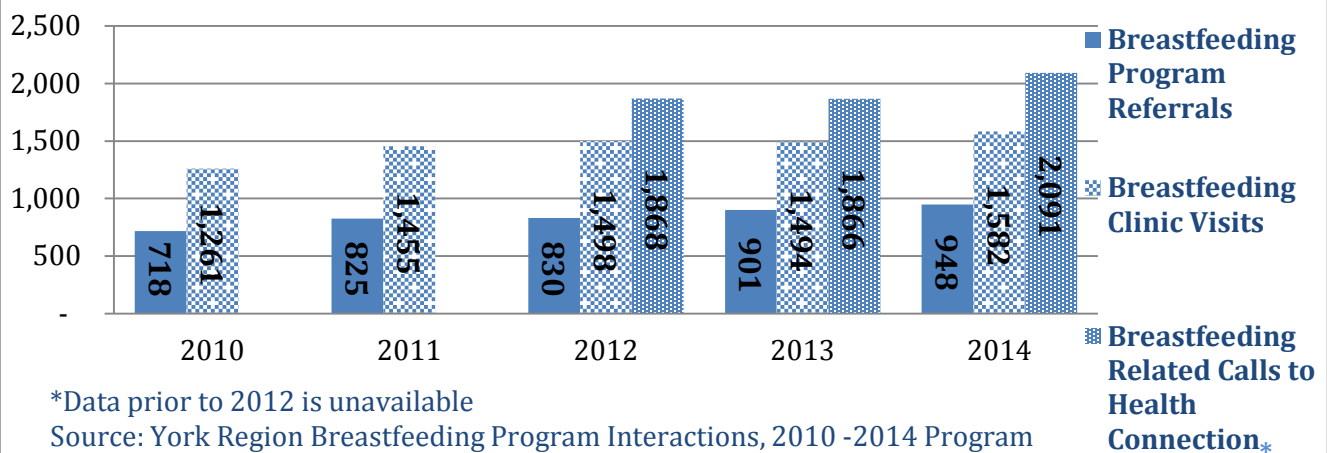


Source: Inpatient Discharge 2000-2014 (Fiscal Year), Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC), IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Date Extracted: 2015-06-17 and Population Estimates 2000-2014, MOHLTC IntelliHEALTH Ontario, Date Extracted 2015-06-17

### The requests for the Region’s breastfeeding supports are steadily increasing

York Region Public Health is committed to protecting, supporting and promoting breastfeeding. As the public’s awareness of the importance of breastfeeding to the health of children, mothers and families grows, it is likely that the demand for breastfeeding support will continue to increase. Between 2010 and 2014 the number of referrals to York Region Public Health’s breastfeeding program increased by 32 per cent, up from 718 in 2010 to 948 in 2014. During the same time period the number of breastfeeding clinic visits has increased by 25 per cent, from 1,261 in 2010 to 1,582 in 2014. There was also a 12 per cent increase in breastfeeding-related calls to Health Connection, from 1,868 in 2012 to 2,091 in 2014 (see Chart 2). Moreover, approximately 50 per cent of all calls to Health Connection from the community are related to breastfeeding.

**Chart 2: Demand for Breastfeeding Services, 2010 to 2014**



\*Data prior to 2012 is unavailable

Source: York Region Breastfeeding Program Interactions, 2010 -2014 Program Level Data



## **A growing population and economy continue to drive house prices up**

In 2014, York Region's employment growth outpaced national and provincial estimates with an increase of 2.4 per cent (13,300 jobs) from the previous year and the number of people receiving regular Employment Insurance Benefits has remained fairly stable since 2012 (between 7,000 to 10,000 beneficiaries).

The abovementioned positive job creation combined with York Region's growing economy, overall low interest rates and proximity to the City of Toronto are some of the factors contributing to the increased demand on the Region's residential real estate market. As of June 2015, in York Region:

- The year-to-date residential real estate sales (including all dwelling types) were up 17 per cent over the first half of 2014
- The value of residential sales were up \$2 billion to \$8.1 billion compared to the first half of 2014
- The average price of a new single family detached home was \$947,707, up 12 per cent from the same period of 2014
- The year-to-date average resale price for 2015 home sales of all structure types was \$766,866, an increase of 14 per cent over the same period in 2014 and 22 percent higher than the average price for the rest of the GTA (\$566,726). This is largely because detached homes accounted for a greater share of overall sales compared to the rest of the GTA

## **Rising home prices are contributing to high levels of household debt in York Region**

Rising debt loads have put many York Region households in a financially vulnerable position and if high debt load is compounded with other economic setbacks such as the loss of employment or an interest rate increase, home ownership may be at risk. For example, mortgage debt accounts for about 77 per cent of all York Region's household debt and in the first half of 2015, the average household in York Region had \$362,357 in mortgage debt. Consumer debt, which includes credit cards, car loans, other personal loans and lines of credit, reached \$59,138 per household in 2015.

## **The waitlist for the Region's social housing continues to grow**

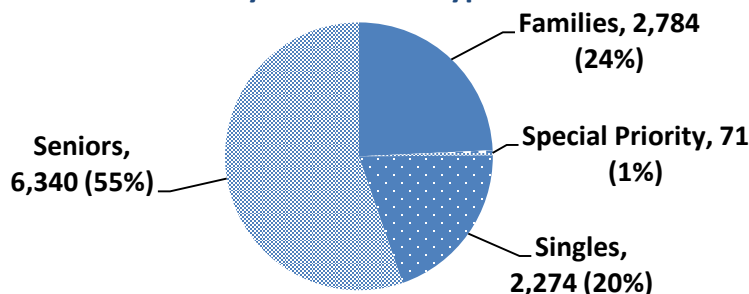
Rental housing in York Region continues to be in demand. Low vacancy rates (1.5 per cent average apartment vacancy rate in 2014), high rents (\$1,127 average rent for all unit types in 2014), and few new rental units being built are exacerbating this situation. The low supply of affordable rental units and rising rental costs continue to contribute to rising demand for the Region's social housing units. As of June 2015, there were 11,669 households on the waitlist, an increase of 213 households since December 2014.

Seniors are the largest group waiting for social housing, making up about 55 per cent of households on the waitlist, followed by families at 24 per cent and singles at 20 per cent, following by Special



Priority (applicants attempting to permanently separate from someone abusive) at one per cent (see Chart 3). Of the applicants on the waitlist, almost half (46 per cent) need one-bedroom units and about one-third (36 per cent) are waiting for two-bedroom units.

**Chart 3: Applicants on the Social Housing Waiting List by Household Type**



Source: York Region, Community and Health Services Department, Housing Services Branch Centralized Waiting List records

## **Demand for CHS social supports continues to increase**

The Child Care Fee Subsidy provides financial assistance to help lower income residents pay for child care costs so they can participate in employment, training and developmental opportunities. Priority is given to:

- Families who may be experiencing exceptional circumstances
- Families with a net income of \$ 36,000 or less

In June 2015, the monthly average number of children who received the subsidy was 6,500, up 648 from December 2014. While the number of children waiting for subsidized child care was 1,666, a reduction of 585 from December 2014<sup>2</sup> (see Chart 4), there continues to be reduced wait times for priority families.

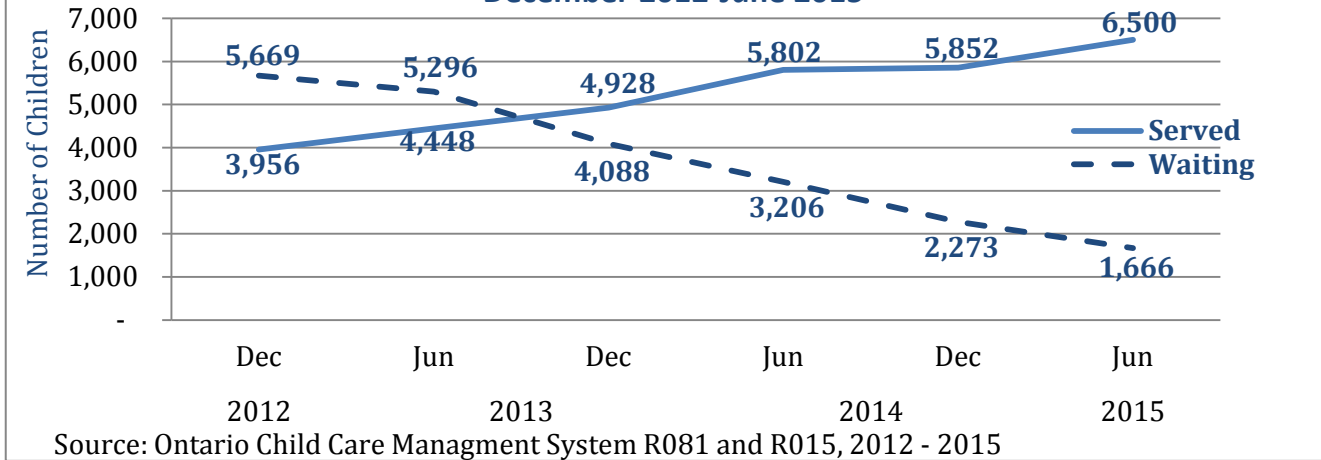
The continued decline in the number of children waiting for subsidized care is primarily due to an increase in provincial funding. Almost 37 per cent of children waiting for subsidized child care in 2015 live in Markham, followed by Vaughan (24 per cent) and Richmond Hill (18 per cent).

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<sup>2</sup> Note: The child care waitlist reported in the York Region Health and Wellbeing – Year End Review 2014 was cited at 2,251 in error. The correct figure was 2,273.



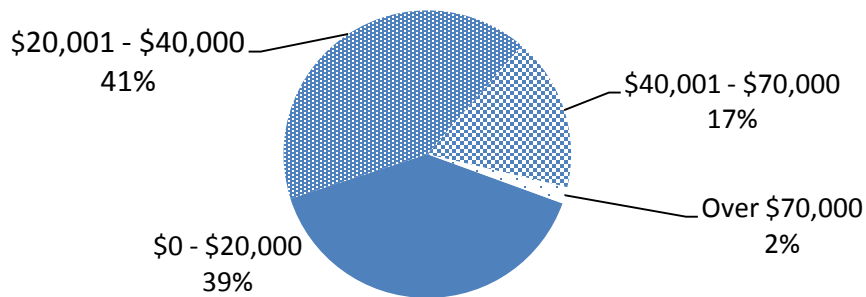
**Chart 4: Child Care Fee Subsidy: Served vs Waitlist, December 2012-June 2015**



**Eighty per cent of families receiving child care fee subsidies make \$40,000 or less**

As of June 2015, 39 per cent of families who received child care fee subsidies had annual incomes of \$20,000 or less, and another 41 per cent had incomes between \$20,000 and \$40,000 per year (see Chart 5). Additionally, 53 per cent of families are single-parent families, 47 per cent are two-parent families and 88 per cent of families are working or enrolled in education.

**Chart 5: Income Distribution of Families on the Child Care Fee Subsidy Caseload, 2015**



Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Social Services Branch, 2015

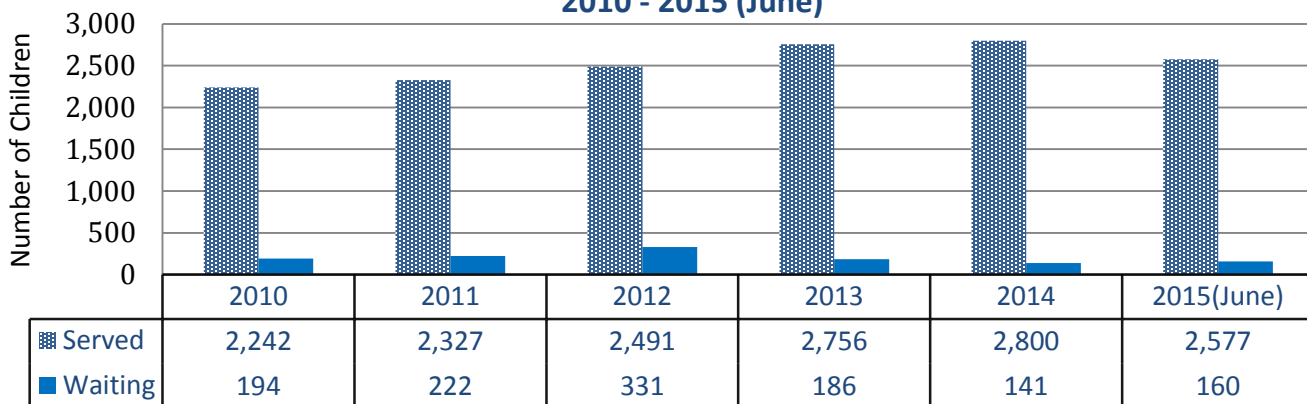
**Early Intervention Services helped 2,577 children from January to June 2015**

Early Intervention Services continue to be in strong demand, delivering programs such as home visits, and clinical assessments at child care centres to support children with special needs and their families. Between 2010 and 2014, the number of children enrolled in Early Intervention Services increased approximately 25 per cent due in part to increased provincial funding. Referrals also increased by 11 per cent due to greater public awareness, increased physician screening and



increases in specific diagnoses. It is expected that demand will continue to increase as changes to provincial requirements will expand service from children 0 to 6 years old to children 0 to 12 years old. As of June 2015, York Region provided Early Intervention Services to 2,577 children 0 to 6 with special needs and their families, with 160 children on the wait list (see Chart 6).

**Chart 6 : Early Intervention Services: Served vs Waitlist  
2010 - 2015 (June)**



Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Mission EIS

## CHS programs and services for older adults are experiencing the impacts of a growing seniors population

The demand for paramedic services is expected to increase by 48 per cent by 2021, driven by the Region's rapid population growth, especially among seniors. Patients with chronic diseases and frequent callers account for a significant share of paramedic response volume.

To reduce costs and pressure on paramedic services, the Region has implemented the Expanding Paramedicine in the Community (EPIC) program. As of June 2015, 270 patients were enrolled in the program, which is intended to improve the quality of life and health of seniors, reduce the number of Paramedic responses to seniors, mitigate the impact on response times and better meet the needs of frequent callers with three 'high use' chronic conditions: diabetes (74 percent), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (16 percent) and congestive heart failure (10 percent).

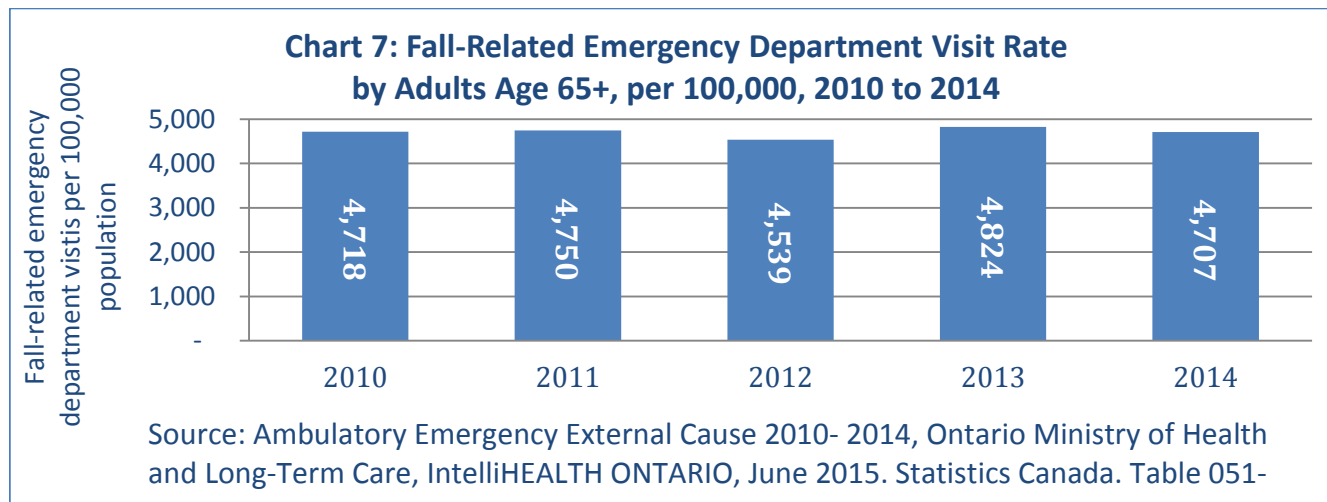
## York Region Public Health's Falls Prevention Program helps prevent injuries and emergency department visits with older adults

As falls are the leading cause of both fatal and non-fatal injuries among older adults, York Region Public Health offers healthy aging workshops and resources to help seniors avoid fall-related injuries. This is intended to reduce the frequency, severity, and risk factors associated with falling, keep seniors healthy and reduce health care costs. Between 2010 and 2014, the overall rates of fall-related



emergency department visits among seniors remained relatively steady, from 4,718 visits per 100,000 population in 2010 to 4,707 per 100,000 in 2014 (see Chart 7), despite a growing senior population.

Over the next 16 years, the population of seniors will increase across the region and by 2031, one-in-five York Region residents will be 65 or older, which could result in an increased need for this program to help prevent falls among our senior population.



### **Adult Day Programs enable seniors to stay in their own homes longer**

These comprehensive programs offer supervised person-centered programming that help clients to maintain their maximum level of functioning, prevent premature and inappropriate institutionalization and provide respite for caregivers.

In the first half of 2015, 160 individuals were supported by the CHS Adult Day Programs. Of these, 127 were seniors 65 years of age or older, all of whom had multiple complex health needs (Cognitively Impaired, Advanced Cognitively Impaired, Acquired Brain Injury, and Aphasia and Communication Disorders) and were unable to participate in existing social/recreational community programs due to their personal care and assistance needs.

The demand for Adult Day Programs is growing, with 54 adults across York Region on the waitlist to participate in the programs as of June 2015. Of these, 76 per cent were seniors aged 65 and over, 57 per cent were female and 78 per cent reported a language other than English as their primary language though most also speak English.

### **The Region's Long Term Care Homes are in high demand and supporting residents with increasingly complex needs**

York Region operates two Long Term Care Homes: the Newmarket Health Centre and the Maple Health Centre, which provide nursing and personal care to individuals who are no longer able to live

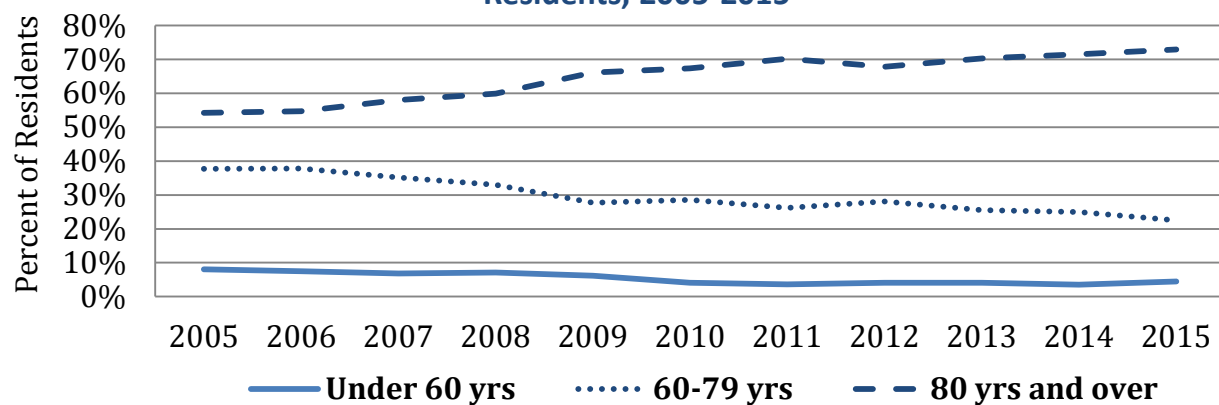




independently. As of July 2015, the Region’s homes provided accommodations to 232 residents, and there were 812 individuals awaiting placement in long-term care facilities operated by York Region.

Since 2005, the Centres have seen an increase of 34 per cent in the number of residents aged 80 years and over and a decline in the share of residents younger than 80 years of age (see Chart 8). In July 2015, 73 per cent of the residents living in the Newmarket and Maple Health Centres were 80 years of age or older. These residents have increasingly complex physical, emotional and social needs. The top three primary medical diagnoses of residents in the first half of 2015 were: dementia, Alzheimer’s disease and benign hypertension. The complexity of these needs require significantly more time, resources and staff training to address.

**Chart 8: Age Groups of Newmarket and Maple Health Centres Residents, 2005-2015**



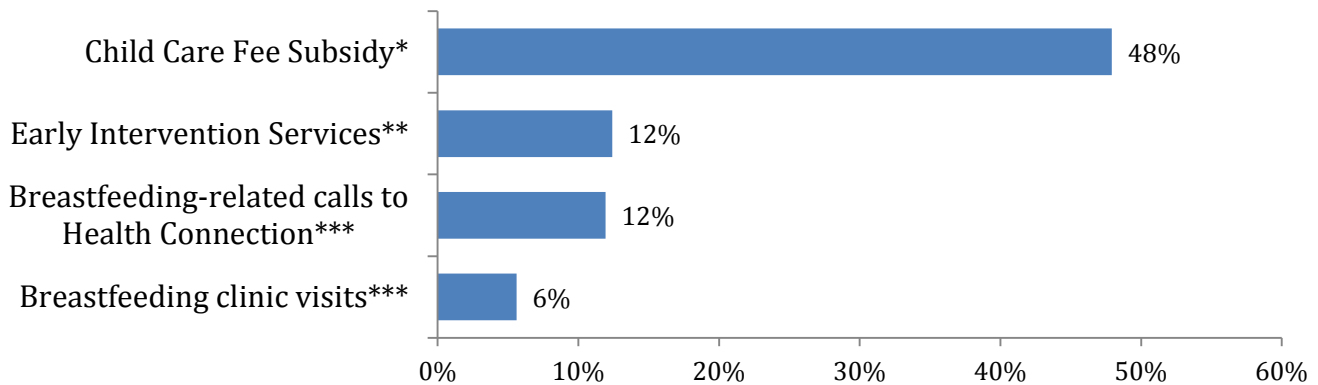
Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Housing and Long-Term Care Branch, 2005-2015

## Conclusion

York Region communities are benefiting from the growth and diversity that accompanies increasing immigration and births, a strong economy, strong job creation performance and a robust housing market. Overall as shown in this report, Community and Health Services has increased the level of service provided by several programs in recent years, thanks in large part to continued support from Regional Council and increased provincial funding (see Chart 9).



**Chart 9: Per Cent Increase in Residents Served by Select York Region Programs, 2012 to 2014**



\*Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Mission EIS Database, 2010 -2014

\*\*Source: Ontario Child Care Management System R081 and R015, 2012 - 2014

\*\*\*Source: York Region Breastfeeding Program Interactions, 2010 -2014 Program Level Data

However, there are still significant pockets of vulnerability that require attention, including, as is normal in any growing municipality, our expanding low and moderate income population, which sometimes struggle to make ends meet. This trend is reflected in the demand for programs that provide financial assistance for housing supports, child care fee subsidies and supports to seniors.

The Community and Health Services Department will continue to monitor the Region's socio-demographic and economic trends, their impacts on its programs and services and work to provide services in innovative and effective ways to ensure the broadest reach.

