



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: June 12, 2014

RE: **York Region Health and Wellbeing – Year End Review 2013**

I am pleased to provide *York Region Health and Wellbeing – Year End Review 2013*, which summarizes the key population, economic and social trends observed in York Region in 2013 and their impacts on Community and Health Services programs and services.

As we have seen in the past, York Region's population continues to grow and its demographic makeup is becoming more diverse. Positive trends were observed in the Region's employment sector for 2013, yet many residents continued to struggle with living on low incomes, making ends meet, and housing affordability. These factors contributed to increased demands for several of the programs and services provided by Community and Health Services.

These trends and issues are being monitored and considered in 2014 as we develop the Department's strategic direction for the coming years, and we will continue to keep Council informed on these issues and the recommended strategies to plan for and respond to residents' short and long-term needs.

Adelina Urbanski
Commissioner of Community and Health Services

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Attachment

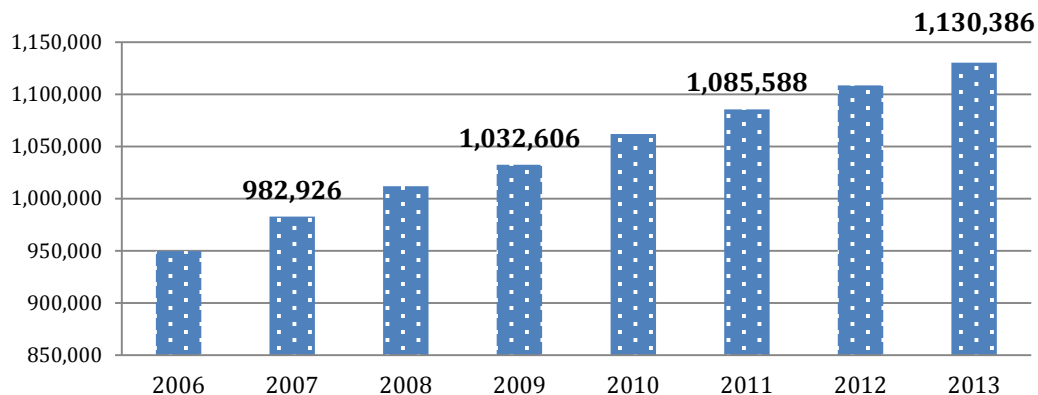
York Region Health and Wellbeing – Year End Review 2013

The Community and Health Services (CHS) Department provides a wide range of programs and services to support the health and wellbeing of York Region residents. This report summarizes the key population, economic and social trends observed in 2013 and their impacts on CHS programs and services.

York Region’s population continued to grow in 2013.

York Region’s population continued to grow in 2013, but at a slower rate than previous years. By December 2013, the Region’s population was estimated to be 1,130,386, which was an increase of two percent (21,817 residents) from 2012 (see Chart 1).

Chart 1: York Region Annual Population Growth, 2006 -2013



Source: York Region Office of the CAO, Long Range Planning Branch

In the past decade, immigration has been an important contributor to York Region’s population growth. In 2013, approximately 10,000 new immigrants settled in the Region. In addition, almost 11,000 babies were born in York Region in 2013. Although York Region has experienced population growth across all age groups in recent years, the older age groups have experienced the greatest growth, increasing by 32 percent since 2006.

The Cities of Markham and Vaughan experienced the highest population growth

While all nine local municipalities in York Region grew in 2013, the southern municipalities continued to be the main drivers of population growth, with the largest population growth occurring in Markham (9,086

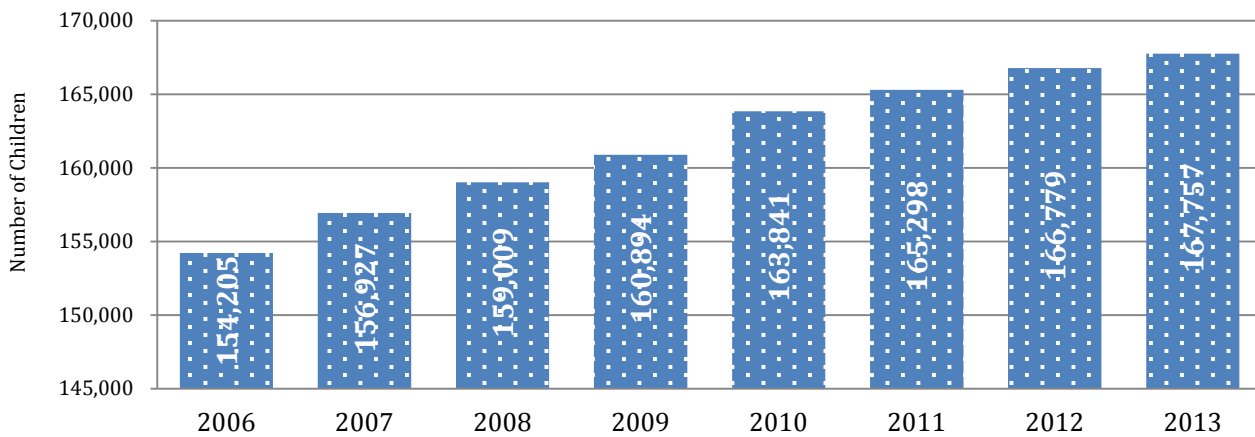


more residents) and Vaughan (3,788 more residents). King and Whitchurch-Stouffville had the highest growth rates in York Region in 2013 at 7.3 and 3.1 percent respectively.

The child population continues to grow, constituting a larger portion of the Region's population than it does in the rest of Ontario

Between 2012 and 2013, York Region's population of children 12 years and under continued to grow. By July 2013, the total number of children 0 to 12 years old in York Region was estimated to be 167,757 (see Chart 2). Children 12 years and under accounted for 15.2 percent of the total population in York Region, compared to 13.9 percent across the rest of Ontario.

Chart 2: Child Population Growth (0-12 yrs old), York Region, 2006-2013



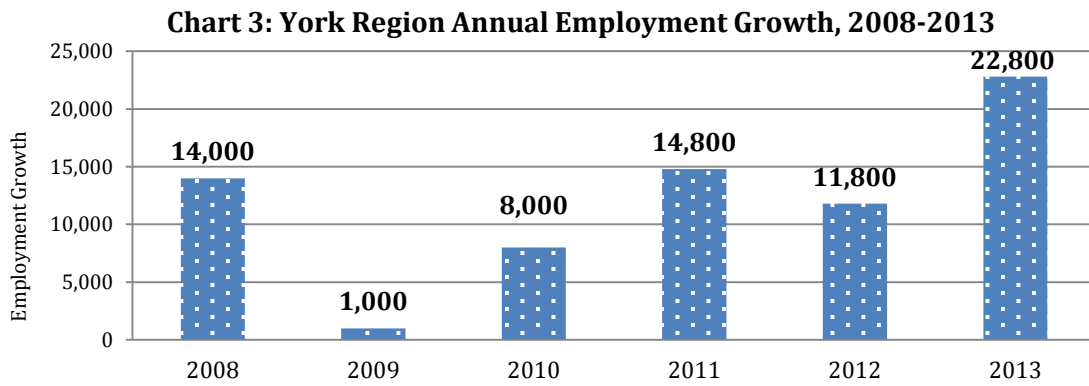
Source: Statistics Canada, Estimates of Population by Age and Sex, CANSIM Table 051-0062

The Region's employment trends remained positive in 2013

In 2013, York Region's employment growth increased above its prerecession level

In 2013, employment growth in York Region outpaced national and provincial growth, and was comparable to employment growth in the GTA. According to the *York Region Employment Survey*, there were approximately 547,480 jobs in York Region in 2013, which was an increase of 22,800 jobs (4.3 percent) from the previous year (see Chart 3).

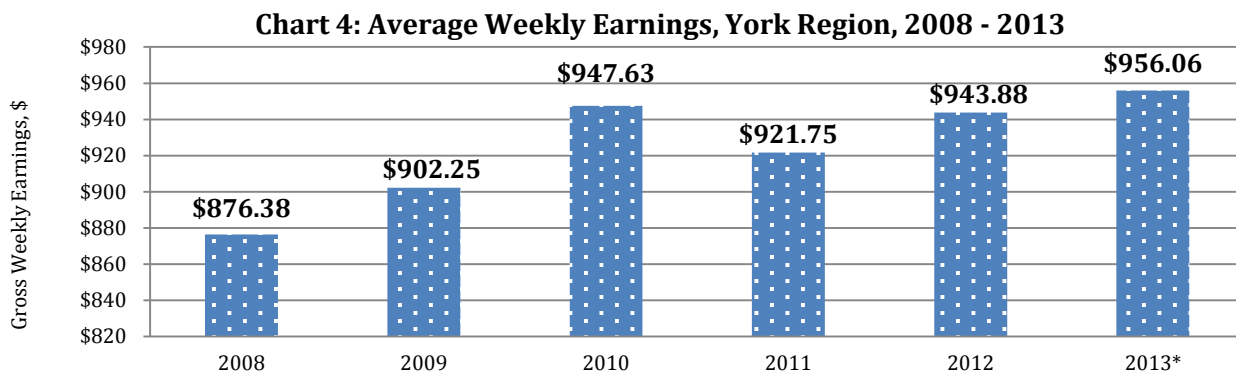




Source: York Region Office of the CAO, Long Range Planning Branch

Average weekly earnings in York Region continued to be above the provincial level in 2013

Wage gains continued to increase in York Region in 2013, with average weekly earnings of approximately \$956 (based on the assumption that individuals work 37.5 hours per week). Average weekly earnings have risen by 9.1 percent since the economic downturn in 2008 (see Chart 4), slightly outpacing inflation of 8.3 percent. Year-over-year average weekly earnings in York Region were above the provincial average.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Estimates, and York Region Community and Health Services Department

Note: Based on the assumption that individuals work 37.5 hours per week.

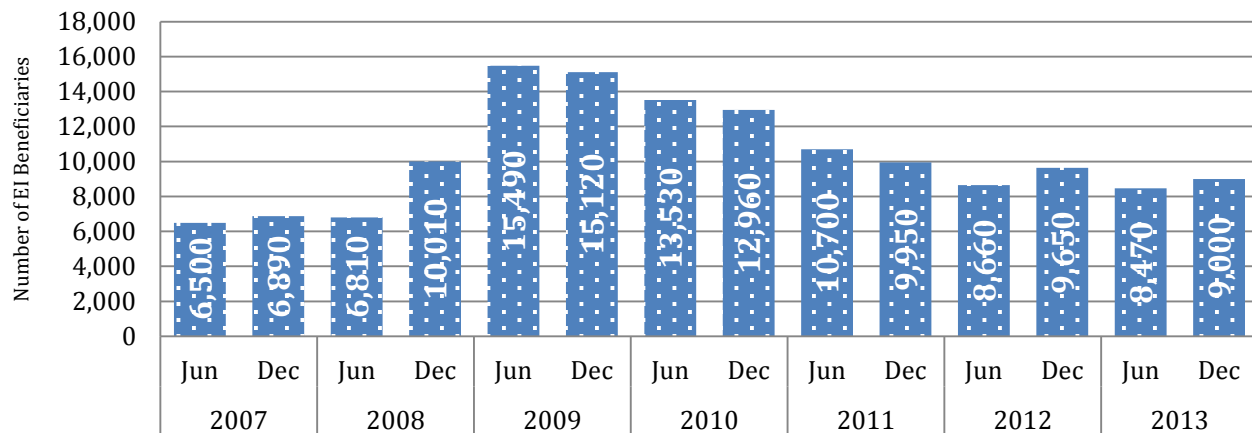
* Estimated based on Ontario average hourly earning trends.

The number of Employment Insurance beneficiaries declined from 2012 to 2013

Following a significant decline in the number of regular Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiaries over the first six months of 2013, the number increased slightly by year-end. By December 2013, there were 9000 people receiving regular EI benefits in York Region, which was a seven percent decrease from December 2012 (see Chart 5). This decline brings the number of beneficiaries to a level approaching that observed before the start of the economic downturn in 2008.



Chart 5: Employment Insurance Beneficiaries in York Region, 2007 - 2013

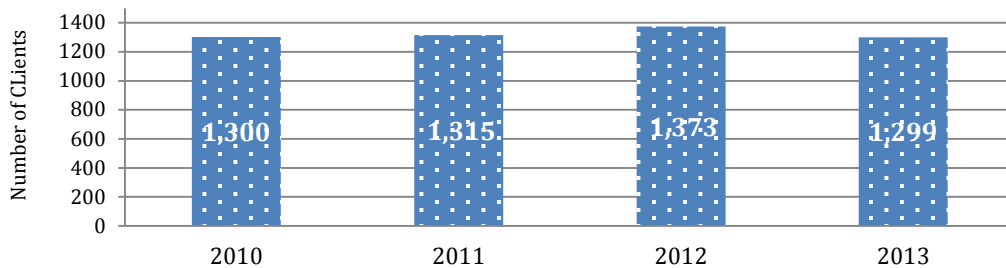


Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 276-0032

Ontario Works clients continue to exit social assistance for employment

Approximately 1,320 Ontario Works (OW) clients (on average) have left social assistance for employment each year since 2010. Many of these clients benefitted from OW Employment Services in accessing employment related supports. In 2013, 1,299 OW participants left social assistance for employment-related reasons and no longer required financial assistance (see Chart 6).

Chart 6: OW Clients Exiting Social Assistance for Employment



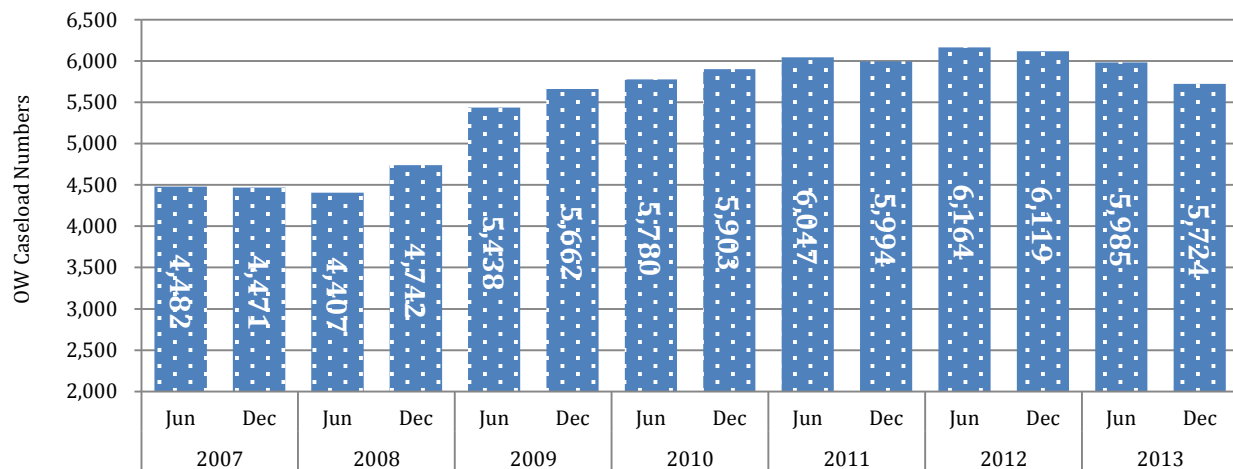
Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Social Services Branch, SDMT 2013

At the end of 2013, the OW caseload was down 6.5 percent from the end of 2012

York Region's OW caseload increased from 4,471 cases in December 2007 to a peak of 6,164 cases in June 2012. Since then, the numbers have slowly edged down, reaching 5,724 cases by December 2013. This was a decrease of 395 cases or 6.5 percent from December 2012 (see Chart 7).



Chart 7: Ontario Works Caseload, 2007 - 2013



Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Social Services Branch, Benefit Unit Summary Report for SDMT

Despite positive employment trends, many York Region residents struggle to make ends meet

The number of York Region residents living in low-income families has grown

The number of York Region residents living on low income¹ has grown. By 2011, the total low income population in York Region was estimated to be 151,510. This represents an increase of 21,600 residents and a growth rate of 16.6 percent since 2006. This long-term increase in low-income residents has been and continues to be one of the key drivers for our Department's services, especially given the cost of housing.

Housing affordability remains a struggle for many residents

Housing affordability continued to be a key issue in York Region in 2013, with many residents spending more than 30 percent of their household budget on housing costs.

The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has set an "affordability threshold" of 30 percent, recommending that people spend no more than 30 percent of their household income on housing.

York Region has the highest proportion of homeowners in Ontario who spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing

¹ The Low Income Status identifies low income individuals and families according to the low income measure (LIM). The LIM is one-half of the adjusted median family income after tax, where "adjusted" indicates a consideration of family size.



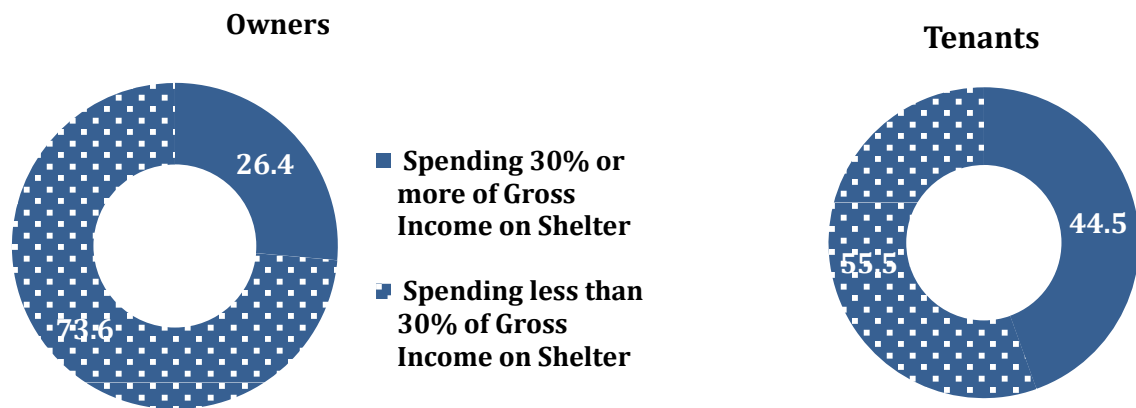
In York Region, 26.4 percent of homeowners spend 30 percent or more of their household income on housing, exceeding CMHC’s affordability threshold. This is the highest proportion in Ontario and the fifth highest in Canada (see Chart 8), and it could grow if mortgage interest rates rise. Low mortgage rates have helped make homes affordable for some people in recent years, but if rates were to increase by two percent, the monthly cost of an affordable home in York Region would rise by 17 percent. This could lead to more York Region households spending 30 percent or more of their household income on housing.

York Region has the highest proportion of tenant households in the Greater Toronto Area who spend 30 percent or more of their income on rent

York Region has the highest proportion of tenant households in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) who exceed the affordability threshold in what they spend on rent. Approximately 44.5 percent of tenant households spend 30 percent or more of their gross income on shelter costs (see Chart 8).

By 2013, the average monthly rent for all unit types in York Region rose to \$1,106 from \$1,067 in 2012, an increase of almost four percent. Despite the modest growth of median wages for York Region residents, incomes for people receiving social assistance (OW and the Ontario Disability Support Program) have not kept pace with costs of renting in York Region, leaving them further behind in the rental market.

Chart 8: Housing Costs as percent of Gross Income in York Region



Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 NHS

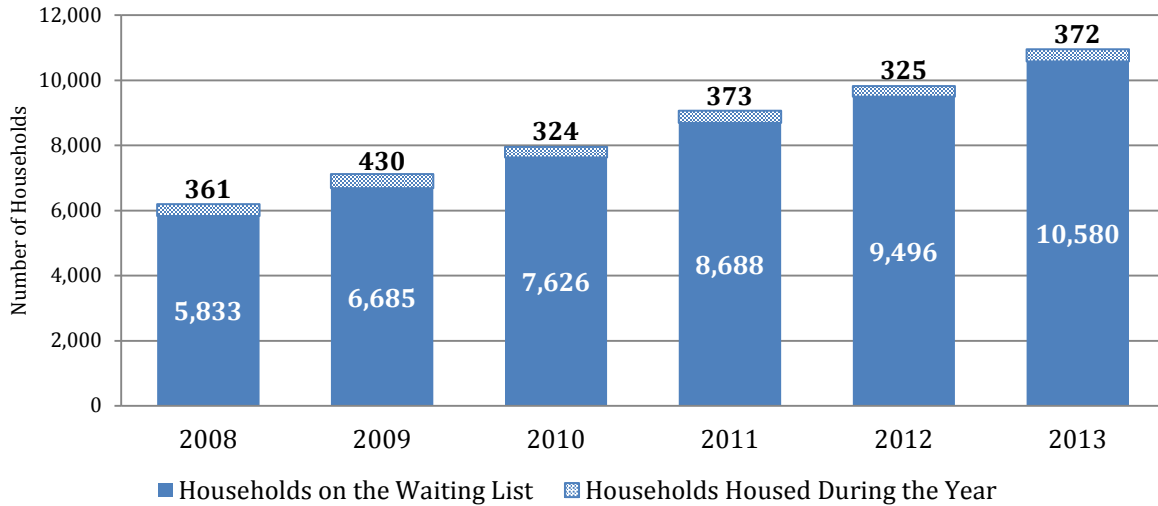
York Region has the lowest vacancy rate in the GTA, at 1.6 percent

York Region continues to experience pressure on the local rental market with extremely low vacancy rates and fewer housing starts intended for the rental market. In 2013, only 16 out of a total 7,501 housing starts were intended for the rental market (Housing Now, January 2014, CMHC).



In 2013, 10,580 households were on the wait list for York Region social housing units, and 372 households were housed (see Chart 9).

Chart 9: Social Housing Wait List Growth and Households Housed, 2008-2013



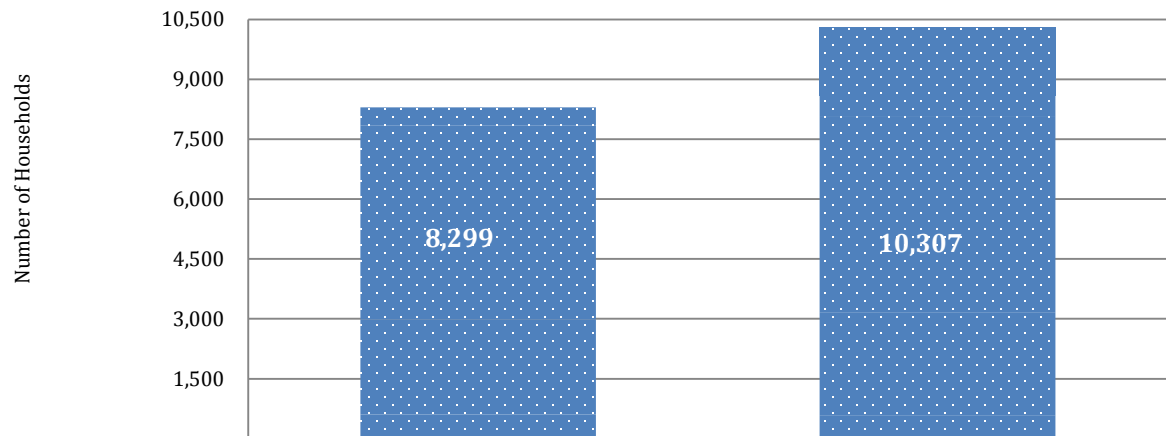
Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Housing and Long-Term Care Branch

York Region’s housing stability programs are experiencing increased demand

York Region’s CHS Department delivers a range of prevention programs and services for individuals and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, including: the Rent-Geared-to-Income Assistance for Market Rent Households, Eviction Prevention Assistance, Shelter Rent Assistance, Homelessness Prevention and Housing Stability Programs. Each of these programs experienced increased demand in 2013 compared to 2012. In 2013, the Region subsidized 10,307 at-risk households through these programs (see Chart 10).



Chart 10: Number of Households that Received Housing Assistance



	2012	2013
■ Housing Stability Program*		1,715
■ Homelessness Prevention Program+Rent Bank	448	531
■ Rent Subsidy	4,860	4,908
■ Emergency Shelters	2,386	2,559
■ Domiciliary Hostels	605	594

* **Note:** The Housing Stability Program was introduced in 2013.

Source: Community and Health Services Department, Social Services Branch

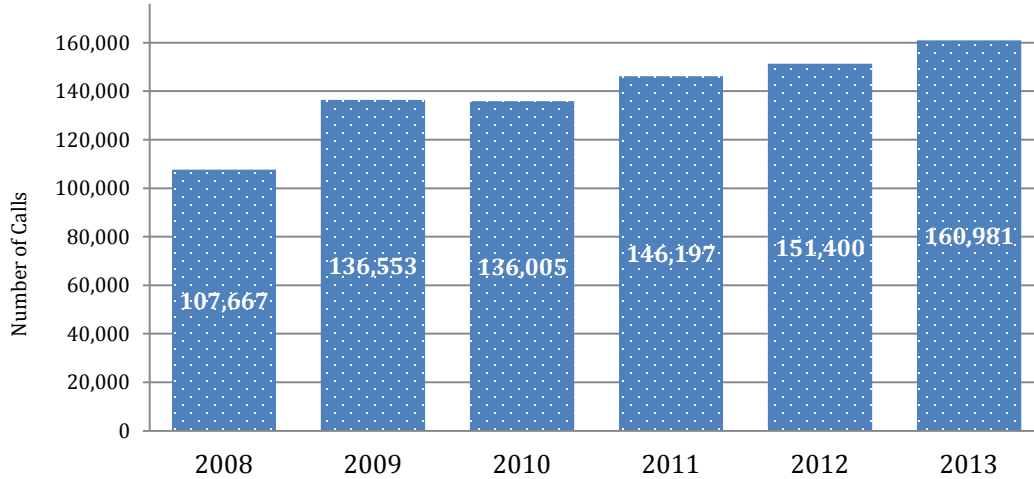
The Region’s changing demographics are impacting demand for Community and Health Services programs and services

In 2013, the Department’s Contact Centre received its highest number of calls ever

The CHS Contact Centre handles public inquiries for many of the Department’s services and provides callers with integrated information, referral, screening, and application services. The Contact Centre’s annual call volume has increased from 107,667 in 2008 to 160,981 in 2013, the highest number of calls received since its formation. This increase can be attributed to population growth and growing awareness of CHS programs and services (see Chart 11).



Chart 11: Contact Centre Call Volume, 2008-2013



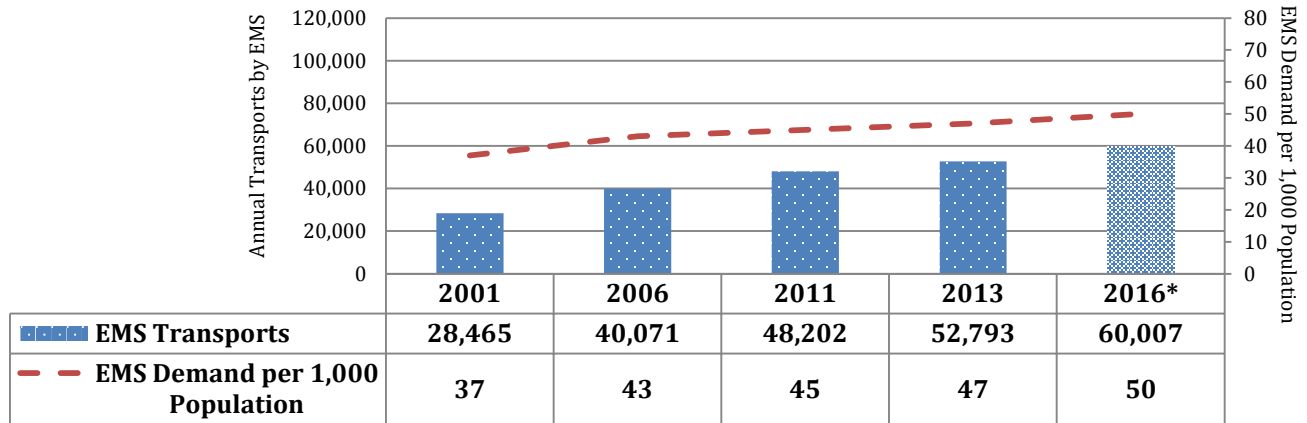
Source: York Region Community and Health Services Contact Centre, MCIS Usage Tracker

As the Region’s population grows, the demand for Emergency Medical Services is increasing

York Region Emergency Medical Services (EMS) provides emergency and non-emergency ambulance services for York Region residents, transporting about five percent of the Region’s population annually. As the Region’s population increases, so does the number of transports provided by York Region EMS.

In 2013, York Region EMS transported 52,793 people. The demand for emergency medical services is expected to increase by 48 percent from 2011 to 2021 (see Chart 12).

Chart 12: Number of Residents Transported by York Region EMS, 2001 - 2016



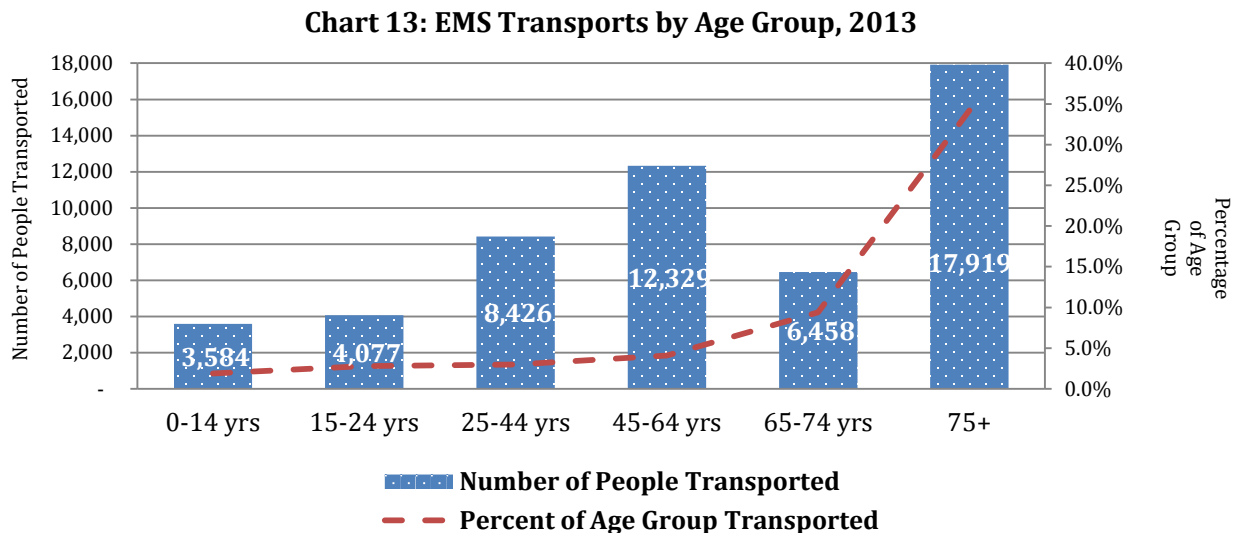
* Note: Predicted figure for Year 2016

Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Emergency Medical Services Branch



The growing number of older residents is contributing to the increased demand for EMS

Older adults account for a large proportion of York Region EMS responses and use EMS at a disproportionately high rate. According to Chart 13 below, around 34 percent (17,919) of all York Region residents 75 years of age and older were transported by York Region EMS in 2013. For younger age groups these percentages are smaller. As the older adult population grows, a corresponding increase is expected in the use of the EMS by the older age groups.



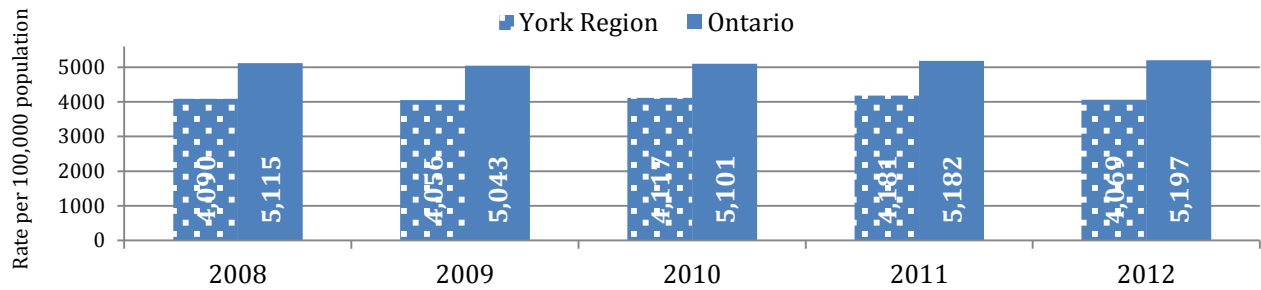
Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Emergency Medical Services Branch

There is an increasing need for programs for seniors, such as the falls prevention programs

Among older adults, falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries. York Region offers Public Health programs and services to reduce the frequency, severity, and risk factors associated with falling. The rate of fall-related emergency room visits for York Region residents 65 years of age and older has remained fairly steady from 2008 to 2012, when it was 4,069 per 100,000 adults; this rate has been consistently lower than the rate for other Ontarians of the same age (see Chart 14).



Chart 14: Rate of Fall Related Emergency Visits in Adults (65+ years)



Source: Ambulatory Emergency External Cause [2008-2012], Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO.
 Note: Statistics for 2013 were not available.

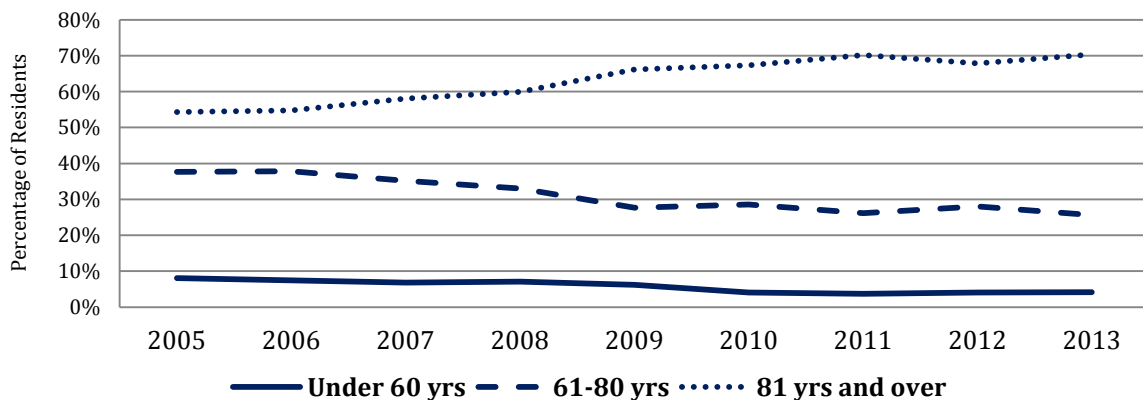
As the population ages, the need for Long Term Care services is growing

The rapid growth of the seniors’ population is expected to increase the demand for seniors’ services, including long-term care services. York Region CHS operates two long-term care homes: Newmarket Health Centre and Maple Health Centre. In 2013, over 200 older adults lived in the two homes.

The Region’s Long Term Care Homes have increasing numbers of residents aged 80 and over

The age make-up of the residents in both the Newmarket and Maple Health Centres has changed substantially between 2005 and 2013. Since 2005, both Health Centres have experienced an increase of 27 percent in the number of clients aged 81 and over, a 33 percent decline in the number of residents between 61 and 80 years of age, and a 50 percent decline in the number of residents less than 60 years of age (see Chart 15).

Chart 15: Age Trends for Residents of Newmarket and Maple Health Centres, 2005-2013



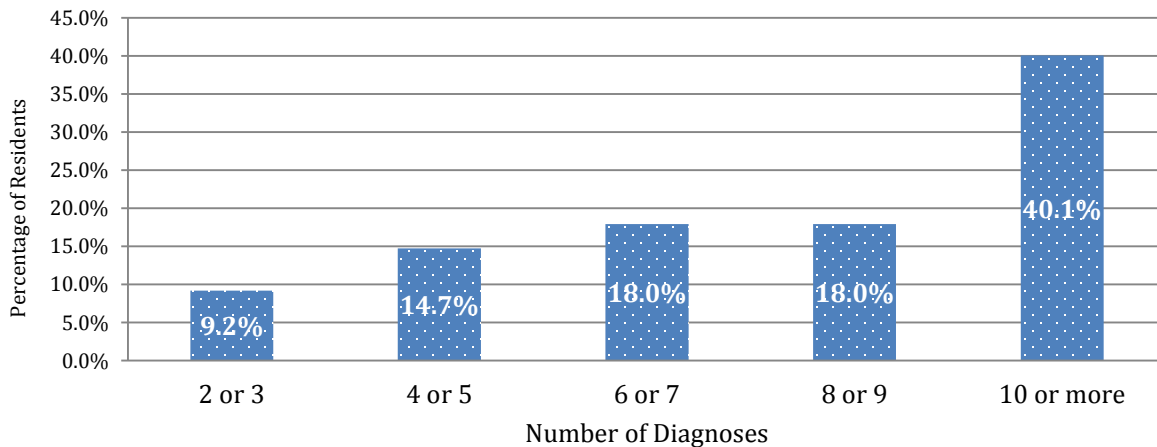
Source: York Region Community and Health Services Department, Housing and Long-Term Care Branch



York Region's Long Term Care residents have increasingly complex needs

The majority of Newmarket and Maple Health Centre residents have increasingly complex physical, emotional and social needs that require significantly more time and resources to address. For example, residents with four or more reported diagnoses accounted for 91 percent of the total number of residents at the long term care homes. Forty percent of residents had ten or more diagnoses (see Chart 16). The top three primary medical diagnoses of Newmarket and Maple Health Centre residents in 2013 were: dementia, Alzheimer's disease and benign hypertension.

Chart 16: Long-Term Care Residents Presenting with Multiple Diagnoses, 2013



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

The continued growth of York Region's child population reinforces the need for children's programs

The need for subsidized child care continues to grow

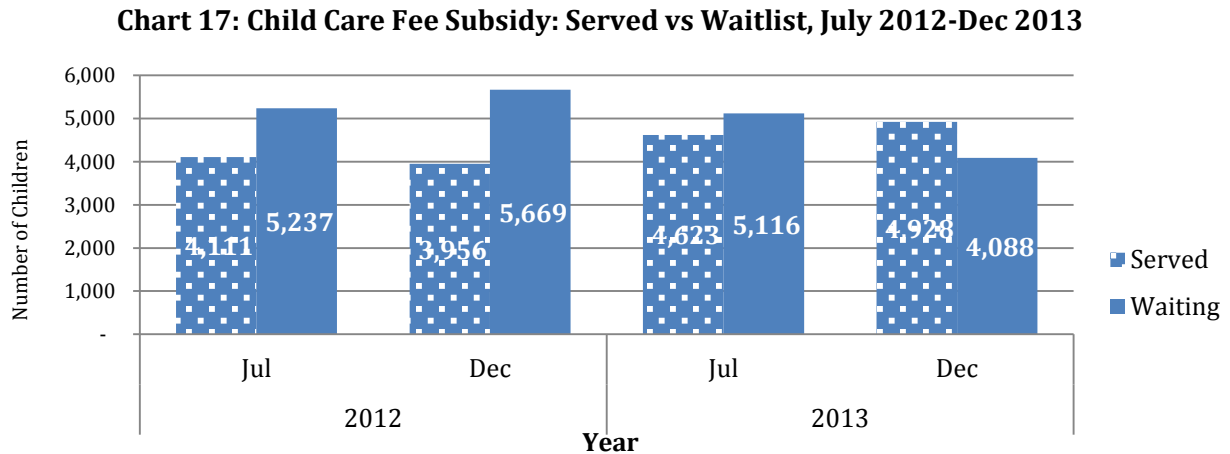
A number of demographic, economic and social trends have contributed to a steady increase in demand for children services in York Region. Currently, there are almost 35,000 licensed child care spaces in operation in the Region.

Child care plays an important role in the ability of low and moderate income residents to find and keep jobs. The increasing number of York Region families living on low income has contributed to an increased demand for subsidized child care in York Region.



In 2013, York Region reduced the waitlist for subsidized child care

Historically, waitlist growth for child care fee subsidy in York Region has been 1.8 percent monthly, on average. In 2013, the Region was able to reduce the gap between service levels and waitlist levels for subsidized child care, primarily due to new provincial funding. In December 2013, the monthly average number of children who received a child care fee subsidy was 4,928, up from 3,956 children in December 2012. Similarly, by the end of 2013, there were 4,088 children on the waitlist, down 28 percent from 5,669 children in December 2012 (see Chart 17).



Source: Waitlist: Ontario Child Care Management System Report, R015

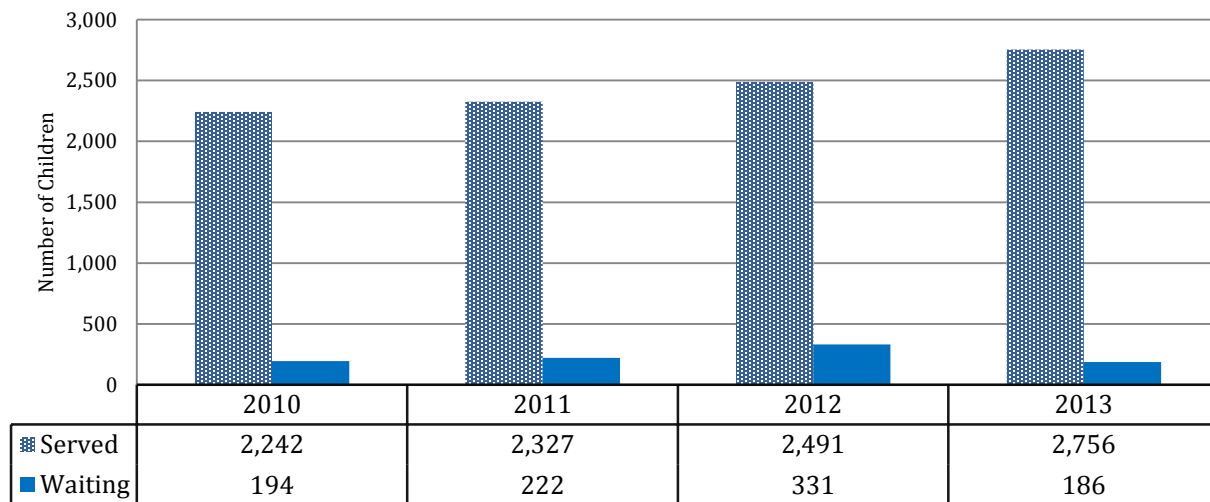
Early Intervention Services served more children in 2013, but there is still a waitlist

Early Intervention Services (EIS) delivers programs to support children with special needs and their families. These early identification and intervention programs are offered free of charge for children from birth to school entry age who have special needs or who are at risk due to developmental delays, disabilities, an established diagnosis or biological factors such as prematurity.

The number of children receiving EIS increased from 2,491 in December 2012 to 2,756 by December 2013. During the same period, the number of children on the waitlist decreased from 331 to 186, due to province-wide emphasis on and funding for early diagnosis and intervention services (see Chart 18).



Chart 18: Early Intervention Services: Served vs Waitlist, 2010 - 2013



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

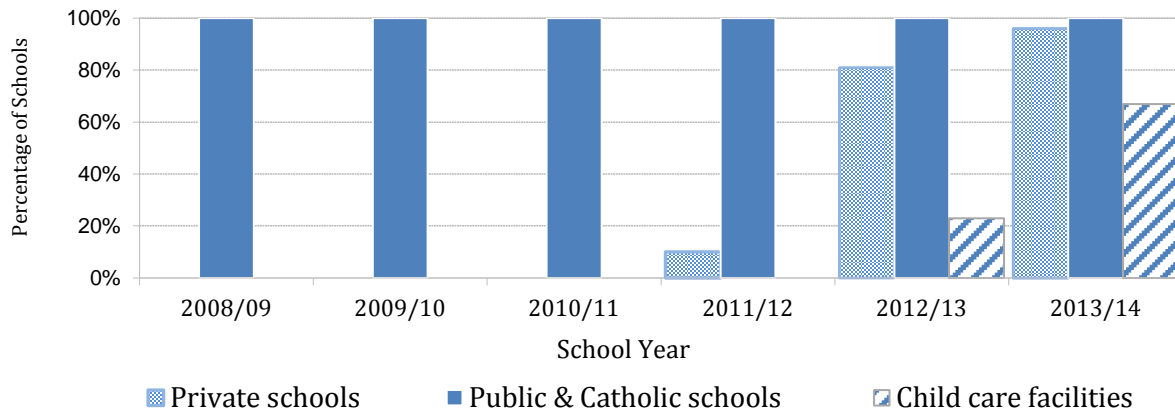
The Region’s immunization review services for children have been increased to help ensure protection from infectious diseases

Children in Ontario are required to have up-to-date immunization records to prevent disease from occurring and to protect the health of the population. Public Health supports this by reviewing the immunization records of children in schools and child care facilities throughout the school year to ensure children are up-to-date with their immunizations. Parents are requested to provide any missing information and/or take their child(ren) to receive required immunizations.

The Public Health Branch has increased its immunization review services on many different fronts. Immunization record review has been expanded to include private schools and child care facilities, in addition to public and Catholic schools (see Chart 19). Additionally, the Branch is increasing access to immunization services by offering parents the option to submit their child’s immunization information online instead of providing a hard copy, and by augmenting the number of community clinics where students may receive immunization.



Chart 19: Percentage of York Region schools and child care facilities in which immunization records reviewed



Source: York Region Community and Health Services, Infectious Diseases Control Division, Immunization Program Statistics.
 NB: For the 2013/14 school year, the immunization review process in private schools occurred between January and June 2014.

Conclusion

York Region has continued to grow and become more diverse in 2013. The Region’s two main drivers of population growth were immigration and babies born, and this growth is adding to the overall numbers of residents who are accessing CHS programs. The impacts of the increased growth and diversity were evident across all programs, but particularly in programs that support seniors (e.g., LTC) and children (e.g., Early Intervention Services).

Along with population growth, the Region also experienced employment growth in 2013, with increases seen in the number of jobs and average weekly earnings. Yet despite this growth, many York Region residents still struggle to make ends meet. Housing affordability remains a key issue and the number of residents living on low income in York Region continued to grow in 2013. The impacts of these trends were increased demands on CHS programs that provide financial supports (e.g., child care fee subsidies) and housing assistance.

These trends and issues are being monitored and carefully considered in 2014 as we develop the Department’s strategic direction for the coming years. The Department’s role to provide a range of both universal and income related supports means that we must expand and find new ways to maintain service levels to keep up with growth, to fulfill our obligations as a service manager, and to meet the varied needs of our residents. CHS must be prepared to continue to offer services to support residents of all ages and in all stages of their lives, in all geographical locations of the Region, while being aware of the increasing diversity and complexity of our clients. We continue to look for opportunities to build on our successes in meeting the needs of our residents through innovative service delivery and collaboration with internal and external partners to leverage our resources.

We will continue to keep Council informed of the trends seen with our residents and communities, the impacts on CHS programs and services, and the recommended strategies to plan for and respond to residents’ short and long-term needs.

