

## Whooping cough outbreak over for Bancroft area

By Sarah Sobanski

The incubation period for Pertussis (Whooping Cough) has passed.

After hosting a series of immunization clinics across the community, Hastings Prince Edward Public Health (HPEPH) has announced that the incubation period for residents to show symptoms of pertussis ended June 8. The outbreak is now considered over.

"The incubation is the time between when someone would start to show symptoms, that was the period after the last case," said HPEPH Dr. Richard Schabas. "[June 8] was when we felt hopeful that we had seen the last of this."

Nine cases of the disease were identified in the community over the last few months. It was identified in Bird's Creek Public School, North Hastings High School (NHHS) and Hastings Centennial Manor.

The outbreak was more prevalent in the northern reaches of Ontario, especially in Thunder Bay area. Schabas noted that the bug for the disease is around, and can pop up once in a while.

Schabas suggested that the disease is more common in the cooler months because it is a respiratory illness.

HPEPH scheduled seven additional immunization clinics at NHHS and other North Hastings schools in response to the outbreak. It also held a clinic at the Bancroft public health office.

HPEPH asked that adults remember to keep their immunizations up to date.

"We protect young children with the vaccine, unfortunately the vaccine doesn't last forever, so if students don't get their booster dose, they're still going to be susceptible," said Schabas.