

# Statement from the Medical Officer of Health Regarding WiFi Safety May 3, 2011

Recently there have been concerns raised about possible adverse health effects from radiofrequency energy emitted from wireless communication systems (Wi-Fi), particularly with regard to school children. Many parents and guardians are trying to educate themselves about this issue and it can be difficult to get a clear answer. This can be very unsettling when it involves something as dear to us as the health and safety of our children.

While those who claim Wi-Fi is dangerous say evidence about its safety is inconclusive, it is important to understand that inconsistency and, in some cases, conflict between the results of individual scientific studies often happens in health research. However, good public health decisions can still be made. That is why public health officials such as Health Canada and the Ontario Agency for Health Promotion and Protection take into account *the entire body* of scientific research when considering the potential health effects of a certain issue instead of selecting specific studies to support a particular opinion.

Research on potential health effects from Wi-Fi exposure is an active field of investigation. For this reason, up-to-date reviews of scientific research which follow a weight of evidence approach are far more useful for informing debate and sound policymaking than reliance on individual studies.

I want to reassure parents and guardians that the use of Wi-Fi does not pose a public health risk. The weight of evidence abundantly shows that as long as exposure to radiofrequency energy emitted from Wi-Fi equipment in schools is below the safety limits established by Health Canada, there is no convincing scientific proof that this equipment is dangerous to school children. In fact, there is profuse research concluding that Wi-Fi exposure is not only well within recommended limits, but is only a small fraction (less than 1%) of what is received during typical use of cellphones.

I encourage those interested in the health effects of Wi-Fi to seek out resources that consider the full scope of credible research into this area. Many of these can be found on the Health Unit's website at [www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca).

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