

Title: **Q1-2023 Programs and Services Under the Ontario Public Health Standards**
To: Board of Health
From: Dr. Natalie Bocking
Date: May 18, 2023
In Camera? Yes No

Overview

- Section 5 of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* (HPPA) specifies that boards of health must superintend, provide, or ensure the provision of public health programs and services in specified areas. [The Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability \(Standards\)](#) outline the minimum requirements that boards of health must meet for mandatory health programs and services.
- This briefing note provides a summary of key program achievements for the first quarter of 2023 (January 1 to March 31) to inform the Board about activities of the organization, monitor progress of activities, and ensure that the program requirements under the Ontario Public Health Standards are met.

Recommendations to Board

THAT the Board of Health receive the Q1-2023 summary for information.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- Initiated *Smoke Free Ontario Act* (SFOA) Enforcement campaign that was later adopted by other health units and featured in an interview on Global TV.
- Two virtual forums were held to gather input to inform the development of a Mental Health Promotion Framework. The intent of the Framework is to incorporate data and evidence-informed public health approaches to guide the work of the Health Unit in supporting and promoting mental health across the life course. External participation was sought to provide organizations an opportunity to share their role and strategic priorities relative to mental health promotion so that the health unit can identify appropriate community-based and whole-population initiatives that support and complement work that is already underway.
- The Built Environment Team and partners reviewed five subdivision plans and provided comment re: active transportation routes and accessibility to parks. One commercial site plan was reviewed and comments were provided re: pedestrian safety and the need for a grocery store to ensure access to healthy foods for neighboring subdivisions.
- School health initiatives, events, and presentations included the initiation of the PALS program in several schools (supplemental peer-tutoring program), Brain Day, stress, sexual health, nutrition, and oral health.
- Launched a newsletter that provides timely updates on public health related news and clinical and practise relevant information for health care providers that work in Northumberland County, Haliburton County, and the City of Kawartha Lakes. Updates during the first quarter included a syphilis alert, pertussis activity in the HKPR area, information about legionella culture testing, chickenpox exposure, Mpox, and changes in Lyme disease testing.
- Provided information about the following on social media platforms: Perinatal Mental Health, Harm Reduction, Tobacco Enforcement, Quit Vaping Campaign, Spring Covid Campaign, TB, Oral Care for Older Adults, Respiratory Etiquette, the Nutritious Food Basket Report, and Well Water Samples.

Achievements in the first quarter, “by the numbers”:

- 208 Healthy Babies Healthy Children home visits
- 42 infant feeding appointments
- 97 healthy families information and support line calls
- 50 postpartum clients received phone calls

- 2022 children screened for oral health issues
- 127 Ontario Senior Dental Care Program consultations
- 134 school consults provided support for identifying public health priorities at schools
- 531 doses of vaccine administered at clinics (non-COVID)
- 1500 doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered through clinics
- 13,168 doses of publicly funded vaccines distributed to health care sector partners
- 9 adverse storage conditions in vaccine refrigerators were responded to after-hours
- 206 infectious diseases of public health significance followed up on
- 58 outbreaks responded to (37 after-hours)
- 88 animal exposure investigations
- 134 clients seen at 29 sexual health clinics (201 appointments were available)
- 598 Naloxone kits distributed to community partners
- 483 food safety premise inspections and 48 re-inspections
- 80 other premise inspections (e.g., childcare facilities, personal service settings, group homes, etc.)
- 21 health hazard complaints investigated
- 292 tobacco product and vapour display and promotion inspections and 160 test shopper inspections conducted; (170 warnings and 31 tickets issued)

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS:

Of the 154 mandatory requirements, for the first quarter of 2023:

- 129 were met
- 21 were partly met
- 1 was not met
- 3 were not applicable

Requirements that were “partly met”:

- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic response, epidemiology resources were diverted away from surveillance and population health assessment of chronic diseases (including risk and protective factors), healthy growth and development, school-age health, injuries, climate

change, and broader health inequities. The epidemiology team is currently working to address the backlog of surveillance and analysis products required to inform program planning.

- Comprehensive health promotion work for the prevention of chronic diseases and injuries and the promotion of the healthy built environment was completely offline for 2 years due to pandemic response. The teams are re-establishing this program area and developing a current needs assessment and situational analysis to inform work going forward.
- Although work resumed on the assessment and enforcement of the *Immunization of School Pupils Act* (ISPA), this work has not yet resumed for child care settings.
- Health promotion work related to improving public knowledge and confidence in immunization programs, unrelated to COVID-19 vaccine, is still largely offline as resources have been dedicated towards catching up on ISPA enforcement.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic response, routine review of policies and procedures was taken offline (note that policies and procedures that required immediate review due to certain circumstances were reviewed and updated as necessary). A catch-up schedule is in development to ensure that all policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic provincial and local knowledge exchange forums were taken offline (unless COVID-19 related). These forums have begun to restart and HKPR teams are participating in those activities relevant to their work.
- A fulsome human resources strategy has not been developed. The People Strategy incorporates many aspects of the requirements related to human resources and is moving forward with the development and implementation of key initiatives such as leadership development and assessment of composition, size, and competencies of the workforce.

Requirements that were “not met”:

- Vision screening in schools remains offline as resumption of oral health screening has been prioritized.

Three requirements were “not applicable” for the following reasons:

- There is no fluoridated drinking water within the HKPR District Health Unit area.
- There are no Consumption and Treatment Service sites located within the HKPR District Health Unit area.
- The Health Unit did not have any compliance or performance issues for which it was required to submit action plans to the Ministry of Health.