

MIDDLESEX-LONDON BOARD OF HEALTH

REPORT NO. 13-24

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health
FROM: Emily Williams, Chief Executive Officer
Dr. Alexander Summers, Medical Officer of Health
DATE: 2024 February 15

**MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT LABOUR RELATIONS IMPACTS
OF 2024 BUDGET**

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health receive Report No. 13-24 re: "2024 Middlesex-London Health Unit Labour Relations Impacts of Budget" for information.

Report Highlights

- The MLHU was facing a significant budget shortfall in 2024 and organizational restructuring was required.
- The changes to staff positions are outlined in this report, and employee layoffs were mitigated by offering incentivized retirements, reduction of vacant positions, and extending employment by transferring staff to contract/temporary roles.

Background

As noted in [Report No. 54-23](#), the Middlesex-London Health Unit was facing significant budget pressures in 2024 and needed to undergo strategic prioritization of work and organizational restructuring as a result. The restructuring included both investments and disinvestments of positions at MLHU. Components of the organizational restructuring directly influenced the labour relations strategy for the health unit, particularly with the merging of several teams. The majority of impacts were related to Registered Nurse (RN) positions, which required integrating seniority lists of merging teams to determine which individuals would be impacted. Respective Collective Agreement language was followed for unionized employees.

Labour Relations Impacts

CUPE (Canadian Union of Public Employees) Staff: The two Registered Dietitian positions that were disinvested were vacant. The full-time Health Promoter position that was disinvested resulted in internal bumping into another CUPE position and some domino bumping impacts, but no further job loss. The disinvestment of the part-time Health Promoter position resulted in a lay-off.

ONA (Ontario Nurses Association) Staff: The net disinvestment of 13 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) RN positions has resulted in minimal job loss due to mitigation strategies such as offering Voluntary Retirement Incentives, reducing already vacant positions, extending employment by transferring staff to temporary roles, and deferring layoffs for staff who are on leave. The Human Resources (HR) team conducted three rounds of layoff/displacement meetings in alignment with the ONA CA, with impacted nurses from November 2023 to January 2024. This resulted in significant movement across the organization, with approximately 17 nurses displacing onto a new team effective January 1, 2024.

Following the third round of layoff meetings in January, only 2 nurses had been laid off from the organization, with one of them being recalled back to work within 2 weeks. With a nurse currently on layoff, any nurse vacancies are subject to recall and will not be posted until there are no nurses on the recall list.

As a result of temporary leaves within the organization, there are an additional 7 nurses who have been notified of their displacement and deferred layoff from the organization at a later date in 2024 or 2025. The timing of these deferred layoffs is dependent on nurses returning from leaves of absence. Any permanent or temporary vacancies would have an impact on whether or not the deferred layoffs move forward.

Non-Union Staff: Given that non-union positions do not have displacement or recall rights, the disinvestments of a Director and 3 Manager positions resulted in the job loss of one Director and two Managers, as there was a Manager vacancy available.

Change Management

The HR team engaged an external consultant to work with newly merged teams to assist them with transitioning through the changes and shifting focus to the new future state. This was well-received by both staff and leaders that participated.

Next Steps

The Human Resources team worked collaboratively with union partners in dealing with these labour relations matters. Employee feedback through the union was that the transparent, responsive process and kindness demonstrated in labour relations meetings, helped them to feel supported in a challenging situation. Human Resources continues to meet with ONA weekly to discuss labour relations matters and ensure timely updates and advance notice of upcoming layoffs to continue to work collaboratively in supporting impacted employees through this process.

This report was written by the Associate Director, Human Resources and Labour Relations.



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Chief Executive Officer



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Medical Officer of Health

This report refers to the following principle(s) set out in Policy G-490, Appendix A:

- The fiduciary requirements as outlined in the [Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability](#).

This topic has been reviewed to be in alignment with goals under the Middlesex-London Health Unit's [Anti-Black Racism Plan](#) and [Taking Action for Reconciliation](#), specifically recommendation #43 (Governance and Leadership, Anti-Black Racism Plan).