

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Dr. Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health; Emily Williams, CEO (Interim)

DATE: 2021 April 15

---

## SUMMARY INFORMATION REPORT FOR APRIL

### **Recommendation**

*It is recommended that the Board of Health receive Report No. 20-21 re: Summary Information Report for April for information.*

### **Key Points**

- Considering the importance of early years and the increased challenges children and families have faced through the pandemic, the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services (MCCSS) has requested all health units restore Healthy Babies Healthy Children service delivery in accordance with transfer payment agreements and other program requirements; MLHU is well-positioned to adhere to this direction.
- MLHU staff contributed to the Southwest Rethink Your Drinking Working Group submission that was sent to The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO), attached as [Appendix A](#). The Rethink your Drinking Working Group objected to the 61 liquor sales license applications made to the AGCO by 7-Eleven Canada, Inc.

### **Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Service Delivery (Healthy Start)**

The Best Beginnings Team provides high-risk home visiting services to pregnant women and families with children from birth until transition to school who are at risk for less-than-optimal growth and development. Since the beginning of the pandemic, MLHU has prioritized the Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) program and the Nurse-Family Partnership program, and the teams have made innovative adjustments to safely and effectively deliver service in the current context. Staff connect with clients through virtual or phone visits, and continue to offer home visits when indicated.

While still ensuring the highest priority, there are two aspects of the HBHC protocol that MLHU has not adhered to over the last year:

- 1) The team has continued to use adjusted program eligibility criteria, and;
- 2) Family Home Visitors have been primarily redeployed to the COVID-19 program.

In mid-March 2021, MCCSS sent a memo indicating that health units are to restore HBHC service delivery for the 2021-22 fiscal year in accordance with transfer payment agreements and other program requirements in place. The memo further clarified that any questions pertaining to COVID-19 expenditures incurred at the local level should continue to be directed to the Ministry of Health. A 2021-22 Financial Forecast and Service Delivery Plan must be submitted by April 14, 2021.

MLHU is well-positioned to adhere to this direction from MCCSS and will continue to provide service and support to eligible families using the innovative approaches and expectations employed throughout the pandemic. It is expected that a phased approach will be taken to repatriate Family Home Visitors to the HBHC program over 2021.

**Formal Objection to 7-Eleven Liquor Licenses (Healthy Living)**

On March 11, 2021, The Rethink your Drinking Working Group (SWRYD) submitted a formal objection to the 61 liquor sales license applications made to the AGCO by 7-Eleven Canada, Inc. The Middlesex-London Health Unit is a member of the SWRYD working group, and as such contributed to the development of the submission. The SWRYD working group is comprised of seven health units in Southwestern Ontario and aims to prevent and reduce harms related to alcohol use in the region.

According to the AGCO website, 7-Eleven Canada, Inc. filed for 61 liquor sales licenses in Ontario, three of which are for stores located in the City of London. If permitted, 7-Eleven stores would have a dedicated space where alcohol could be consumed inside the store and take out of alcohol would not be permitted.

As outlined in the objection submitted to the AGCO, there are numerous negative health, economic and social costs associated with increased alcohol consumption. Expanding availability of alcohol into 7-Eleven stores will not only increase access but will also further normalize a product that has significant public health risks associated with its use.

This report was prepared by the Healthy Start and Healthy Living divisions.



Christopher Mackie, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health



Emily Williams, BScN, RN, MBA  
Chief Executive Officer (Interim)