



TO: Chair and Members of the Finance & Facilities Committee

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2016 December 01

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## RENEWAL OF FOODNET CANADA MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

### **Recommendation**

*It is recommended that the Finance & Facilities Committee receive and make a recommendation to the Board of Health to approve the Board Chair to sign the FoodNet Canada Memorandum of Agreement (2017-2020), as appended to Report No. 047-16FFC.*

### **Key Points**

- Since 2014, the Middlesex-London Health Unit has successfully participated in the Public Health Agency of Canada's FoodNet Canada program as the sentinel site in Ontario. This partnership has been mutually beneficial for the Health Unit, provincial public health stakeholders, and the Public Health Agency of Canada.
- Renewal of the FoodNet Canada Memorandum of Agreement is sought for another three-year term (2017 to 2020), with associated federal funding in the amount of \$508,792 over three years.

### **Background**

FoodNet Canada (FNC) is an enhanced integrated surveillance program for food- and water-borne illnesses that is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). In 2014, the MLHU signed a three-year Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with PHAC to participate in the FNC program as the Ontario sentinel site.

MLHU is responsible for carrying out two of the four components of the FNC program: enhanced follow-up of human cases of food- and water-borne illnesses reported among Middlesex-London residents, and purchasing retail food items of interest to be sent to a laboratory so they can be tested for infectious pathogens that can cause illnesses. Funding provided by PHAC to MLHU includes a 1.0 FTE Site Coordinator, and a 0.2 FTE Public Health Inspector (PHI) to conduct weekly sampling in grocery stores across the Middlesex-London region. Funding is also provided for office expenses, administration, and staff training.

Participation in FNC to date is felt to be a great success, and one that is mutually beneficial for the MLHU, provincial public health partners, and PHAC. Some of the benefits to MLHU have included:

- Recognition of MLHU as a provincial leader in infectious disease surveillance;
- Closer working relationships with key partners participating on the FNC Ontario sentinel site steering committee, including Public Health Ontario, public health laboratories, and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs;
- Collaboration with an expanded network of provincial and federal public health partners, and food and water safety experts;
- Enhancing knowledge and practice through access to evidence-based research and knowledge exchange activities.

## Memorandum of Agreement

To continue the successful partnership that has been established, renewal of the MOA for another three-year term is sought to replace the 2014-2017 MOA that expires on March 31, 2017. [Appendix A](#) of this report provides the 2017-2020 MOA; the full budget is outlined in [Appendix B](#). Table 1 below provides a summary of the budget for each of the three years.

**Table 1 – Summary of FoodNet Canada Ontario Sentinel Site Budget, 2017-2020**

Description	Fiscal Year*		
	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
<b><i>Site Coordination</i></b>			
Wages & Benefits	\$ 120,200	\$ 123,806	\$ 127,520
Office Expenses	4,000	4,000	4,000
Administrative Expenses	3,000	3,000	3,000
Training	2,500	2,500	2,500
<b>Total Site Coordination</b>	<b>\$ 129,700</b>	<b>\$ 133,306</b>	<b>\$ 137,020</b>
<b><i>Retail Sampling</i></b>			
Wages & Benefits	\$ 17,233	\$ 17,750	\$ 18,283
Retail sample purchases**	10,000	10,000	10,000
Travel**	7,500	7,500	7,500
<b>Total Retail Sampling</b>	<b>\$ 34,733</b>	<b>\$ 35,250</b>	<b>\$ 35,783</b>
<b>Total FoodNet Canada budget</b>	<b>\$ 164,433</b>	<b>\$ 168,556</b>	<b>\$ 172,803</b>

\* FoodNet Canada operates on a fiscal year running from April 1 to March 31 of the subsequent calendar year.

\*\* Public Health Agency of Canada is invoiced for the actual costs incurred.

FNC Ontario sentinel site program and the associated funding are not included in the Infectious Disease Control Planning & Budget Template. Therefore, it is recommended that the Finance & Facilities Committee make a recommendation to the Board of Health to have the Board Chair sign the Memorandum of Agreement to maintain the operating budget accordingly.

This report was prepared by Amy Pavletic, FoodNet Canada Ontario Site Coordinator, Tristan Squire-Smith, Manager Infectious Disease Control team, and Alison Locker, Acting Manager Program Planning and Evaluation team.



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