

TO: Chair and Members of the Governance Committee

FROM: Dr. Gayane Hovhannisyan, Acting Medical Officer of Health  
Laura Di Cesare, Acting Chief Executive Officer

DATE: 2017 March 16

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## ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH STANDARDS MODERNIZATION

### ***Recommendation***

*It is recommended that the Board of Health:*

- 1) Receive Report No. 011-17 for information;*
- 2) Direct Health Unit Staff to prepare a written submission in response to the consultation document for Board of Health approval; and*
- 3) Nominate a Board Member to attend the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Standards Consultations on March 24, 2017, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.*

### **Key Points**

- The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's (MOHLTC) Patients First strategy includes Public Health Transformation and the modernization of the Ontario Public Health Standards as one of its major components.
- The Standards for Public Health Programs and Services consultation document was released to health units in February to provide an opportunity for review and feedback.
- Staff members have been reviewing the proposed modernized standards and will attend a further MOHLTC consultation session on March 24 in an effort to prepare a response. This response will be brought to the Board of Health for approval at the April 20 meeting.

### **Background**

In February 2015, the Ontario government released "Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care," which outlines policy directions for the health system. These strategies include stronger links between public health and other health sectors and agencies, such as LHINs. The Patients First strategy focuses on the structural changes necessary to achieve an improved, integrated and efficient health system in Ontario—a system oriented toward being more person-centred. Within this strategy, Public Health Transformation is one of five listed goals.

### **Standards for Public Health Programs and Services**

One part of this Public Health Transformation is the modernization of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS), which establish the minimum requirements for fundamental public health programs and services to be delivered by Ontario's thirty-six boards of health. These requirements include assessment and surveillance, health promotion and policy development, disease and injury prevention, and health protection.

On February 17, 2017, the MOHLTC released a consultation document regarding the updated standards, titled "Standards for Public Health Programs and Services" ([Appendix A](#)), and asked that health units provide feedback on issues relating to implementation and clarification of the draft standards.

## Association of Local Public Health Agencies – Winter Symposium

At the alPHa Winter Symposium held at the end of February, the MOHLTC provided a technical briefing regarding the Standards for Public Health Programs and Services. alPHa enlisted Dr. Brent Moloughney, a Public Health Consultant, to assist with a preliminary assessment of the revised standards and their potential impacts on public health units.

### MOHLTC Consultation

Following the release of the consultation document, Middlesex-London Health Unit staff members have been reviewing the Standards for Public Health Programs and Services to assess:

- New program/service requirements
- Opportunities for greater discretion or program changes
- Areas with reduced expectations
- Areas with enhanced expectations
- Other risks or feedback important for MOHLTC consideration

This input from each team is being collated and will be used at the MOHLTC consultation session to be held in St. Thomas on March 24. Each board of health in Southwestern Ontario is invited to send their Senior Leadership Team and a board representative.

### Next Steps

Feedback from staff and additional information from the consultation will be used to formulate a response from the Middlesex-London Health Unit. This response will be brought to the Board of Health for approval at its April 20 meeting, and then forwarded to the MOHLTC for the April 21 deadline.

This report was prepared by the Strategic Projects Team, Corporate Services Division.



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