

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

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

DATE: 16 March 2017

SUMMARY INFORMATION REPORT FOR MARCH 2017

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 014-17 re: Summary Information Report for March 2017 be received for information.

Key Points

- The Middlesex-London Health Unit has participated in HealthForceOntario's Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative (NGGI) since 2007 and hired eighteen nurses through this program. Although MLHU's experience with the NGGI has been very positive, the organization will no longer be participating in this program after April 2017 due to program requirement changes communicated by the Ministry.
- The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario will be conducting a survey of all public health units and will also be conducting on-site audit work at selected health units. MLHU staff will keep the Board up to date as the process unfolds.
- The Health Unit will continue to work on strategies to improve oral health outcomes for children and to increase participation in the school-based dental screening program.

HEALTHFORCEONTARIO'S NURSING GRADUATE GUARANTEE INITIATIVE (NGGI)

The Middlesex-London Health Unit has participated in HealthForceOntario's Nursing Graduate Guarantee Initiative (NGGI) since 2007. The NGGI is a comprehensive strategy designed by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to build capacity within the healthcare system for nursing workforce planning and management. The program provides funding to healthcare organizations to create "bridge positions" for new nurse graduates for a twenty-six-week period. Under the former conditions of the agreement, Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) paid an additional six weeks of salary for each nurse graduate hired through the NGGI (if MLHU was unable to offer immediate full-time employment). Nurse graduates hired by MLHU through the program were designated with temporary job status for the twenty-six weeks. Each were assigned nurse mentors, and participated in monthly orientation sessions with the Community Health Nursing Specialist to bridge public health theory and practice.

Since 2007, MLHU has placed thirty-six graduate nurses through the NGGI. Evaluation results were positive from both the new nurse and the nurse mentor perspectives. Fifty percent (eighteen) of those graduate nurses placed successfully obtained permanent full-time or part-time/job-share public health nurse positions with MLHU, ninety percent of whom remain on staff. Overall, the NGGI was highly effective in building resource capacity through fostering interest in public health nursing and contributing to a multi-generational nursing workforce. In November 2016, MLHU was advised of changes to the NGGI, commencing April 2017. Employers are now required to transition nurse graduates to permanent full-time employment within one year, or Ministry funding will be recovered. Unfortunately, as a result of the new program conditions, MLHU will no longer be in a position to participate in the NGGI, due to significant financial burden on the organization.

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM AUDIT BY THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF ONTARIO

On March 2, 2017, Health Units received notification from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) that the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario (OAGO) had identified the Public Health Program as a candidate for a value-for-money audit.¹ Value-for-money audits assess whether money was spent with due regard for economy and efficiency, and whether appropriate procedures were in place to measure and report on the effectiveness of government programs. Each year, the OAGO audits selected ministry or agency programs and activities, with the major ones generally audited every five to seven years. The results of these value-for-money audits are published in the Auditor General's Annual Report, and usually receive a great deal of attention from both media and public (see footnote 1, below).

The MOHLTC advised that the OAGO will conduct on-site audit work at a few public health units; however, the MOHLTC had not been informed which public health units will be contacted at this stage. The Health Unit should expect to be contacted as early as March 6, 2017. In addition, the OAGO is also planning to conduct a survey of some of the personnel at all public health units, and have requested contact information for all Board of Health members and senior Health Unit employees. The requested information was forwarded to the MOHLTC on March 6, 2017. Staff will endeavour to keep the Board informed about this process as more details become available.

MIDDLESEX-LONDON 2015–16 SCHOOL-BASED DENTAL SCREENING RESULTS

During the 2015–16 school year, the Health Unit screened 16,231 students (81%) in 131 elementary schools through the School-Based Dental Screening Program. The volume of students excluded from participating by their parents was higher than the previous year's percentage by 18%, but the volume of absent students was unchanged at 6%. The volume of students screened in Junior Kindergarten who were caries-free (i.e., have not had cavities or the removal or filling of a tooth because of tooth decay) was 76%. The volume of caries-free students in Grade 2 was 57%. Seven hundred and fifty-five students (5%) were found to have urgent dental needs, which made them clinically eligible to receive dental care through the Healthy Smiles Ontario Essential and Emergency Services Stream (HSO-EESS; formerly Children in Need of Treatment, or CINOT) funding. The Health Unit continues to work on strategies to improve oral health outcomes among children in the community, and to increase participation in the School-Based Dental Screening Program.

Please see the full report in [Appendix A](#).



Dr. Gayane Hovhannisyan, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Acting Medical Officer of Health



Laura Di Cesare, CHRE
Acting Chief Executive Officer

¹ "Value-for-money Audits of Selected Government Activities,"
<http://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/aboutus/whatwedo.html> (last modified November 15, 2016).

