

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Dr. Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2017 December 14

SUMMARY INFORMATION REPORT – DECEMBER 2017

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 061-17 re: “Summary Information Report for December 2017” be received for information.

Key Points

- The Chief Public Health Officer’s Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2017, titled “Designing Healthy Living,” describes how built environments impact opportunities for healthy living and issues a call to action. The report, combined with the revised Ontario Public Health Standards, reinforces and will provide guidance for MLHU’s future work in built environment and healthy community design.
- The Health Unit sent a letter to the City of London to offer assistance in working with the province to establish the cannabis retail outlet site location, and with plans to host a municipal knowledge exchange day to support collective preparation for a legalized cannabis market.
- The Health Unit will continue to work on strategies to improve oral health outcomes for children and to promote the School-Based Dental Screening and Fluoride Varnish programs.
- The Health Unit received a product advisory from Health Canada for ‘Alesse’ Oral Contraceptive pills, a product which is distributed by the Sexual Health Clinic. Staff notified each of the 174 clients who received this product and have since removed remaining stock from distribution.

Background

The Chief Public Health Officer’s Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2017: “Designing Healthy Living”

The [Chief Public Health Officer’s Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2017, titled “Designing Healthy Living,”](#) was released on October 26, 2017. The report describes principles, examples and evidence regarding how built environments may support physical activity, healthy eating, mental wellness, social connectedness and, ultimately, the health of communities. Areas where more data, evidence and research are needed are also identified. Other built environment aspects that impact health—including air pollution, safety, housing, heat, ultraviolet exposure, climate change and natural disasters—are also considered. The report is a call to action for various sectors, including municipal, provincial and federal governments, community planners, entrepreneurs and public health, to work collaboratively to include health as a key consideration in community planning and infrastructure initiatives. MLHU has been engaged in built environment work for several years, providing input and involvement for initiatives that support healthy built and natural environments in the City of London and Middlesex County. Furthermore, MLHU provides [information](#) to the public to increase awareness and understanding of how the physical environment in which we live, work, study, and play influences our health. The newly released “Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability” provides further direction for public health staff regarding policy, programs and services that support healthy communities, including built and natural environments.

The Legalization of Cannabis and Recommendations on Outlet Site Locations in London

The City of London was identified in the Ministry of Finance's November 3, 2017 announcement as one of an initial fourteen Ontario municipalities scheduled for a stand-alone cannabis store that would be operational in time for the federal cannabis legalization date of July 2018. To provide a public health perspective, the Middlesex-London Health Unit sent a letter to the City of London, based on the recommendations of the [Federal Task Force on Cannabis Legalization and Regulation](#), to offer best-practice evidence from the literature about tobacco control and alcohol availability to help inform discussions between the City of London, the Ministry of Finance and the LCBO on cannabis outlet site location. Evidence relating to alcohol and tobacco suggests that greater product availability, increased outlet density and the placement of retail outlets within close proximity to vulnerable populations increases the use of these products and associated harms. While there is less evidence to draw upon for cannabis, program staff believe that the same precautionary approach should apply. In addition, to facilitate dialogue and provide an opportunity for collective local preparation for the legalization of cannabis, the Health Unit has reached out to our municipal partners to plan a cannabis knowledge exchange day early in 2018. Invitations will be extended to municipal staff and elected officials from across Middlesex County and the City of London, local police services, the Board of Health, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario to participate in this forum to discuss and share concerns, and to identify what kinds of supports are needed for the transition to a legalized cannabis market. An invitation will also be extended to the Cannabis Secretariat at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, so that our discussions and efforts to identify potential local implications will be supported with the most up-to-date information available.

Middlesex-London 2016–17 School-Based Dental Screening Results

During the 2016–17 school year, the Health Unit screened 15,735 students (80%) in 131 elementary schools through the School-Based Dental Screening Program. For 2,740 students (14%), parents did not consent to screening. In addition, 1,094 students (6%) were absent on the day(s) that screening was happening at their schools. The percentage of excluded and absent students is similar to the previous year's percentage. The percentages of Junior Kindergarten, Senior Kindergarten and Grade 2 students screened who were caries-free (i.e., have never had cavities or the removal or filling of a tooth because of tooth decay) were 77%, 68% and 57%, respectively. These percentages are similar to the previous year: 76%, 68% and 57%, respectively. Only 7% of Grade 2 students screened had two or more teeth with tooth decay. Of students screened, 1,751 (11.1%) were found to have urgent dental needs, making them clinically eligible to receive Healthy Smiles Ontario Essential and Emergency Care funding for their dental care—an amount more than double that of the previous school year. Healthy Smiles Ontario's eligibility criteria changed in 2016, with more students now qualifying for the program. The Health Unit continues to work on strategies to improve oral health outcomes among children in the community, and to increase awareness of the School-Based Dental Screening and Fluoride Varnish programs. The full Oral Health Report can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Health Canada Product Advisory for 'Alesse' Oral Contraceptive Pills

On Monday, December 4, 2017, MLHU received a product advisory from Health Canada for 'Alesse' Oral Contraceptive pills, a product which is distributed by the Sexual Health Clinic. Some pills within lot A3183 had been found to be either broken or of reduced size, potentially affecting the dose of hormone administered. These irregularities would be obvious upon opening of the package. Staff in the Sexual Health Clinic immediately notified each of the 174 clients who received this product and have offered to replace them with product from an unaffected lot. A total of 619 packages were sold between November 2 and December 1, 2017. None of the clients reported finding any irregularities with their pills. The MLHU has removed the remaining 411 packages of that stock from distribution and will seek replacement from the distributor. Information regarding the product advisory has also been placed on the MLHU website, along with Twitter and Facebook messaging. Further information can be found on the Health Canada webpage: <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2017/65306a-eng.php>



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