



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Dr. Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health /CEO

DATE: 2018 March 15

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## RECONCILIATION PLAN FOR BOARD OF HEALTH

### **Recommendation**

*It is recommended that Report No. 015-18 re: “Reconciliation Plan for Board of Health” be received for information.*

### **Key Points**

- The recently revised Ontario Public Health Standards (2018) include a new Health Equity Standard, which contains specific information, goals, and requirements related to Indigenous communities and organizations.
- Building strong relationships and meaningfully engaging with Indigenous communities and organizations requires significant self-reflection and a willingness to change perspectives, actions, and approaches.
- Using information gathered from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s “Calls to Action” document, best practices, and wise practices, and through involvement of and consultation with Indigenous partners, MLHU will develop an organizational reconciliation plan.

### **Background**

The recently revised Ontario Public Health Standards (2018) include a new Health Equity Standard, which contains specific information, goals, and requirements related to Indigenous communities and organizations. The Standard points out the diversity of Indigenous populations in Ontario, with various First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities located across the province, including many different First Nation governments, each with its own history, culture, organizational approach, and jurisdictional realities to be considered. The Standard also emphasizes that “relationships between boards of health and Indigenous communities and organizations need to come from a place of trust, mutual respect, understanding, and reciprocity,” and clarifies that “First Nations in Ontario believe that Canada, in its fiduciary capacity and as a Treaty partner, also has an obligation to continue to contribute to the improvement of health care and health outcomes for these communities” (p. 21).

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) also highlights that reconciliation is an “ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships.” The 94 calls to action contained in the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s “Calls to Action”](#) publication include specific actions related to health care, as well as to other sectors with which public health collaborates. It is critical that the Health Unit identify how it may implement the relevant actions effectively and authentically.

As part of the implementation of its 2015–20 strategic priorities, MLHU has developed and is implementing a staff capacity-building plan focused on health equity; Indigenous Public Health Practice is a domain that has been prioritized within this plan for 2017–20.

## Organizational Reconciliation Plan

Building strong relationships and meaningfully engaging with Indigenous communities and organizations requires significant self-reflection and a willingness to change perspectives, actions, and approaches. An organizational plan for reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples would support MLHU in meeting the outcomes and fulfilling the requirements outlined in the Health Equity Standard, and would enable MLHU to realize the related goals of:

- Providing a supportive environment for reflection, increased knowledge, and skill-building by staff
- Demonstrating MLHU's commitment to addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, particularly those related to health
- Serving to disrupt ongoing colonial practices related to health present within the organization
- Enhancing organizational capacity to address racially based health inequities
- Enhancing MLHU's ability to build relationships and meaningful engagement with Indigenous-led organizations and First Nations

## Next Steps

Using information gathered from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's "Calls to Action," best practices, and wise practices, and through involvement of and consultation with Indigenous partners, MLHU will develop an organizational reconciliation plan. This plan, with recommendations, will be brought to the Board of Health for consideration and approval by June 2018. It is anticipated that the reconciliation plan will have implications for all employees and Board members, and will result in positive outcomes within the organization, for Indigenous populations, and for the community at large.

This report was prepared by the Health Equity Core Team, Office of the Chief Nursing Officer.



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