

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health / CEO

DATE: 2019 January 24

UPDATE ON TRANSFER OF LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR tykeTALK, INFANT HEARING, AND BLIND/LOW VISION EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health receive Report No. 006-19 re: “Update on Transfer of Lead Agency Responsibilities for tykeTALK, Infant Hearing, and Blind/Low Vision Early Intervention Programs” for information.

Key Points

- While the plan for the Thames Valley Children’s Centre to fully transition into the Lead Agency role by September 2019 remains in place, changes to Infant Hearing screening will occur in March 2019.
- Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) screening will continue to be provided by MLHU Public Health Nurses; however, hearing screening will be provided through a contract with an existing service provider agency.

Background

In April 2018, the Board of Health approved MLHU to move forward with discussions to transition Lead Agency responsibilities for early intervention programs to the Thames Valley Children’s Centre (TVCC). The transfer of the Lead Agency role has been approved by the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services. It was agreed that full transition of the Lead Agency role will take place in September 2019. All existing service provider contracts will be taken over by TVCC. In the interim, a manager position was added to MLHU’s existing service provider contract with TVCC to oversee daily program operations and manage the transition. Communication regarding the upcoming changes between TVCC, MLHU, contracted service providers, community partners, and the public took place during the summer of 2018.

Update

Two full-time Public Health Nurses currently provide combined Infant Hearing and Healthy Babies Healthy Children screening services at the London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC). After further discussion, it has been determined that changes to screening will occur earlier than originally planned. As of March 2019, Infant Hearing Program (IHP) screening at LHSC will be provided Monday to Friday by an existing service provider agency contracted with MLHU. Babies born on the weekend will be referred to local community IHP clinics for hearing screening. HBHC screening will be provided Monday to Saturday by two 0.6 FTE Public Health Nurses. It is anticipated that this HBHC screening model will be more effective than the current model, in which full-time PHNs provide service Monday to Friday and two additional part-time (approximately 0.3 FTE) PHNs provide services on weekends and holiday Mondays.

Conclusion

Plans to transition the tykeTALK, Infant Hearing, and Blind/Low Vision early intervention programs’ Lead Agency role to TVCC are well underway. Staff will keep the Board of Health apprised of any significant changes as they arise. Throughout the transition, access to tykeTALK, IHP, and BLV services will be

seamless for families. That the separation of HBHC and IHP screenings is occurring earlier than originally planned is not expected to have any negative implications for screening services provided to families giving birth at LHSC. TVCC remains a committed and proactive partner in transition planning.

This report was prepared by the Screening Assessment Intervention Team ([Appendix A](#)), and Healthy Start Division.



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