

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie Medical Officer of Health / CEO

DATE: 2019 November 21

SUMMARY INFORMATION REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2019

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 071-19 re: “Summary Information Report for November 2019” be received for information.

Key Points

- The Collective Kitchen program offers a food literacy program in a safe environment for youth transitioning to independent living.
- To promote [Canada’s new Food Guide](#), Health Unit registered dietitians, in collaboration with the Online Communications Coordinator, implemented a cost-effective social media campaign during Nutrition Month in March.
- The Ontario government is seeking input on how to modernize the *Film Classification Act, 2005*. Health Unit and Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network (SWTCAN) staff have prepared input (attached as Appendices C and D), outlining the need for a ratings system that addresses tobacco use and vaping depictions in movies.
- Effective January 1, 2020, promotion of vapour products in retail stores will be limited to inside specialty vape stores and cannabis retail stores in Ontario.

Collective Kitchen – Cooking Toward Independence

The Collective Kitchen program is a collaborative effort between Children’s Aid Society London and Middlesex (CAS) and MLHU. Staff from both agencies provide their expertise in youth behaviour and food literacy, offering an interactive, hands-on cooking opportunity for youth. Supported financially by the Children’s Aid Foundation of Canada, the program provides youth aged 16-21 with the food literacy tools needed to transition successfully to independent living. The program plan (attached as [Appendix A](#)) outlines the intended learning objectives, which follow the Locally Driven Collaborative Project (LDCP) [Framework for Healthy Eating](#). Over the course of twenty-two sessions (three hours per week, twice per month from October 2018 to June 2019), participating youth engage in hands-on cooking activities with the overall goal of improving their food literacy, including:

- Increased food and nutrition knowledge;
- Improved food preparation skills;
- Increased self-efficacy and confidence in food preparation;
- Improved dietary behaviour that contributes to health and well-being; and
- Enhanced knowledge about food systems and the influence of socio-cultural influences upon eating practices.

Youth from the Collective Kitchen have prepared nutritious, hot meals for their peers enrolled in CAS night school, facilitating a positive learning environment while providing an opportunity for “leftovers” to be shared and taken home by all youth in attendance. Based on evaluation results to date, most participants enjoy the

programming and indicate that they are learning a variety of different food literacy skills that they can incorporate into independent daily living. The program has secured funding from the Children's Aid Foundation of Canada through to the end of 2020.

Canada's New Food Guide Promotion

In January 2019, Health Canada released its new [Canada's Food Guide](#) with guidance about what to eat (e.g., vegetables and fruit, whole grains, protein foods) and how to eat (e.g., cooking more often and eating meals with others). The Health Unit's Nutrition Practice Group (NPG), comprised of the Health Unit's registered dietitians and their managers, have promoted the new Food Guide resources and key messages to Health Unit staff and community partners through various strategies including: webinars for staff; community presentations; development of materials connected to school curricula; updating of MLHU's healthy eating materials; a social media contest during March Nutrition Month; and production of a [video](#).

Health Unit Registered Dietitians, in collaboration with the Online Communications Coordinator, coordinated a social media campaign in March 2019, via Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, with favourable results:

- 953 Instant Pot® contest entries via sharing, retweeting, or tagging friends to celebrate Nutrition Month;
- 40 post replies sharing favourite recipes from Canada's Food Guide online resources;
- Facebook: 6 posts with a total of 65,275 impressions and 3,592 engagements, including 667 shares for the Instant Pot® contest and 36 post replies for the Harvest Bucks contest;
- Twitter: 12 tweets with a total of 34,102 impressions and 976 engagements, including 211 retweets for the first contest and 4 post replies for the second contest; and
- Instagram: 6 posts with a total of 4,814 impressions and 353 engagements, including 75 friends tagged in the comments for the first contest and 0 post replies for the second contest.

Engagements include reactions, comments, shares, clicks, and retweets as appropriate to each social media platform. The social media content was produced internally and engagement was generated organically, without any paid content. The campaign was cost-effective and successfully engaged many community members. A detailed Social Media Report, including posts and pictures, is attached as [Appendix B](#). Ongoing promotion of Food Guide resources will occur as part of the Healthy Eating program.

Modernization of the *Film Classification Act, 2005*

Significant changes in digital technologies have influenced the movie industry and altered how film content and film rating information is accessed. The Ontario government is currently [reviewing the *Film Classification Act, 2005*](#) to find ways to modernize the legal requirements to better reflect today's film market while continuing to ensure that film rating information is available to the public. Content of movies impacts health behaviours; evidence collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and the U.S. Surgeon General demonstrates conclusively that there is a causal relationship between exposure to onscreen smoking and youth smoking initiation. Not only does exposure to onscreen tobacco imagery increase smoking initiation and progression to regular smoking among youth, it also undermines tobacco prevention efforts by normalizing tobacco use (see [Report Nos. 036-11](#) and [122-12](#)). Staff from the SWTCAN and the Health Unit have prepared submissions (attached as [Appendices C](#) and [D](#)) outlining the need for a ratings system that specifically addresses tobacco use and vaping depictions in movies.

Ontario Government Strengthens Rules to Limit Vapour Product Advertising

On October 25, 2019, the Ontario government [announced](#) that, effective January 1, 2020, promotion of vapour products in retail stores will be limited to the interiors of specialty vape stores and cannabis retail stores. Both categories of store are open only to persons aged 19 or older, which will help to prevent youth from being exposed to pervasive vapour product advertisements in convenience stores, gas stations, grocery stores, and stores specializing in sales of drug-related paraphernalia. The amendment to [Regulation 268/18](#) under the [Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017](#) was made following consultations with stakeholders, including health

stakeholders, experts, and families concerned about growing rates of vapour product use by young people. The Health Unit's enforcement officers will monitor how local retailers respond to these changes in legislation and will conduct inspections to ensure that vapour product promotions are removed from retail. The Ministry intends to continue to engage in consultations to identify further actions that may be taken to address the rapid increase in youth vaping. As outlined in [Report No. 059-19](#), policy measures at the federal level are also required, including eliminating the availability of youth-friendly e-substance flavours, stricter nicotine concentration guidelines, product packaging and health warning regulations, enforcement of online sales, and stricter prohibitions on advertising of vapour products via broadcast and digital media.



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