

## MIDDLESEX-LONDON BOARD OF HEALTH

### REPORT NO. 26-24

**TO:** Chair and Members of the Board of Health  
**FROM:** Emily Williams, Chief Executive Officer  
Dr. Alexander Summers, Medical Officer of Health  
**DATE:** 2024 April 18

---

## 2023 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

### Recommendation

*It is recommended that the Board of Health receive Report No. 26-24 re: “2023 Occupational Health and Safety Report” for information.*

---

### Report Highlights

- The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) annual report summarizes the health, safety and wellness accomplishments, challenges, incidents and activities of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) and Be Well Committee from the previous calendar year ([Appendix A](#)).
- In 2023, OHS completed 16 ergonomic reviews (19% of employee incident reports) following employee questions and/or concerns about their workstation.
- 85 employee incident reports were submitted in 2023, a 21% reporting rate amongst the total number of employees.
- Key OHS accomplishments include improved safety and security measures in the Citi Plaza Office location, including the needle syringe program area and policy review of 63% of the current OHS policy section.

### Background

Occupational health and safety are an integral aspect of any successful organization. Ensuring that all workplace parties are aware of their roles and responsibilities under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) is at the foundation of any health and safety program. This is further codified in the organizational requirements within the legislative Public Health Accountability Framework, in which the “board of health shall comply with all legal and statutory requirements”.

As part of the Occupational Health and Safety Program, the Occupational Health and Safety team submits an annual report ([Appendix A](#)) summarizing health, safety and wellness initiatives, employee-reported incidents, and the activities of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety

Committee (JOHSC) and the Be Well Committee. This annual report is shared with staff at all levels of the organization.

### **Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness Program Summary**

From policy review to the introduction of a new virtual wellness program, 2023 was a year focused on new initiatives, education, and continuous quality improvement.

Two new policies were released to staff and the incident reporting policy underwent a large revision, including the development of a new report form and new incident reporting and investigation resources. Following two incidents and associated staff concerns, OHS, program teams and Operations worked to implement security and safety enhancements, including the installation of a new panic button, a remote lock on the front public access doors at Citi Plaza and various furniture (locker, cabinets) in the Needle Syringe Program to support staff safety and address employee concerns.

Near miss reporting continued to make up 15% of all employee incident reports. Near miss reporting is encouraged and allows for a proactive approach for addressing and anticipating health and safety concerns and/or hazards. Appendix A provides a summary of employee reported injuries and incidents in 2023.

OHS continued to offer training to employees, including first aid, basic lifesaving CPR, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) and verbal and nonviolent crisis intervention training. The focus on continuous quality improvement will continue as work progresses in to 2024.

### **Next Steps**

The Occupational Health and Safety program at the MLHU and the work of the JOHSC and Be Well Committee continue to make improvements for the health, safety, and wellness of all employees through awareness campaigns, ongoing education opportunities, and ensuring legislative compliance. Continued focus on policy development, employee education, infection prevention and control, workplace violence prevention and employee wellbeing are anticipated over the course of 2024.

This report was written by the Human Resources Team, Corporate Services Division.



**Emily Williams, BScN, RN, MBA, CHE**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Alexander Summers, MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC**  
Medical Officer of Health

**This report refers to the following principle(s) set out in Policy G-490, Appendix A:**

- The *Occupational Health and Safety Act and the applicable regulations*.
- The following goal or direction from the [Middlesex-London Health Unit's Provisional Plan](#):
  - 3.1 Develop and implement strategies to support staff mental health and wellbeing, including addressing systemic factors contributing to burn out.
  - 3.2 Develop and implement comprehensive training, learning and development, and professional development opportunities for staff and leaders

**This topic has been reviewed to be in alignment with goals under the Middlesex-London Health Unit's [Anti-Black Racism Plan](#) and [Taking Action for Reconciliation](#), specifically recommendations related to processes to engage and include diverse voices from the MLHU community in shared decision-making and in the planning, implementation and evaluation of safety, health and wellness programs and collaboration with the Health Equity and Indigenous Reconciliation Team (HEART) to collaborate on communications and key messaging.**