

## Middlesex-London Board of Health External Landscape Review – November 2023

The purpose of this briefing note is to inform MLHU Board of Health members about what is happening in the world of public health and impacts to the work of the MLHU and Board. This includes governance and legislative changes, news from other local public units, external reports on important public health matters, learning opportunities, and MLHU events. **Please note that items listed on this correspondence are to inform Board members and are not necessarily an endorsement.**

### Local Public Health News

**youth  
wellness  
hubs**  
ONTARIO

**carrefours  
bien-être  
pour les jeunes**  
DE L'ONTARIO

#### New Youth Mental Health Hub Introduced in London-Middlesex

On October 27, the Ministry of Health announced that there would be a new youth mental health hub in London. This is one of the eight new hubs the government is adding to the 14 already created since 2020, bringing the total to 22 across the province.

This new hub (located at 332 Richmond Street, London), co-designed with local youth, family and stakeholders, will help fill the gap in youth addictions services in the region and provide children and youth aged 12 to 25 a safe, welcoming space to access the mental health and addictions services they need at the right time and right place.

To learn more, visit [Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario's website](#).

#### Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Middlesex-London Health Unit is engaged in the Whole of Community Response – Health and Homelessness work within the community, and supports resources being provided in the community for mental health services. On October 5, the City of London Council [approved hub locations within the community](#) and more discussion on activities within the hubs continues with partner organizations.

#### Two largest health units in Kawarthas region considering a voluntary merger

On November 2, the Boards of Health for the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPR District Health Unit) and Peterborough Public Health (PPH) announced that they are moving forward with a process to explore the impacts of a voluntary merger in the communities they serve. The provincial pre-assessment process is anticipated to take place over several months, with a decision to follow early in 2024. At the end of the pre-assessment, the PPH and HKPR District Health Unit Boards of Health will decide whether to proceed with a voluntary merger.

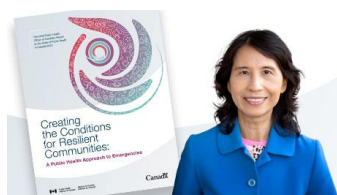


To learn more, visit the [Peterborough Public Health](#) and [Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge Health Unit](#) websites.

#### Impact to MLHU Board of Health

On August 22, 2023, the Ontario Ministry of Health (through Minister Sylvia Jones) announced their plan to invest in a stronger public health sector. One of the avenues was to provide financial incentives to public health units wishing to begin a voluntary merger process. Boards of Health will need to determine if a merger with another health unit is beneficial to serving the community further. As of this date, 2 health units (Porcupine and Timiskaming) have announced a merger for January 1, 2024.

### National, Provincial and Local Public Health Advocacy



#### Chief Public Health Officer of Canada's Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2023

On October 26, the Chief Public Health Officer (Dr. Theresa Tam) released her annual report on the State of Public Health titled "Creating the Conditions for Resilient Communities: A Public Health Approach to Emergencies".

Each year, the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada (CPHO) writes a report on the state of public health in Canada. These reports are intended to highlight important public health issues, spark discussion, and support action to improve population health and the conditions of health. This year's annual report explores the inequitable health impacts of emergencies. It highlights opportunities for public health to contribute to emergency management through the essential public health functions, particularly health promotion approaches that can support equity and resilience.

To read the full report and learn more, visit the [Canada's Chief Public Health Officer's website](#).

#### Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Middlesex-London Board of Health conducts their work with an underlying focus on health equity. Emergency Management policies at the federal, provincial, and local level should have integrated health equity policies in order to ensure all members of the community are supported during a time of crisis.

#### 2023 Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review

On November 2, the provincial 2023 Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review was released. There is no direct mention in the report of public health, but there are several points that may nonetheless be of interest for further examination as they relate to public health programs and services.



- Coordinated Vaping Product Taxation Agreement with the federal government.
- Legislated increase to minimum wage (from \$15.50 to \$16.55).
- Additional investments in health human resources.
- Expansion of breast cancer screening to those 40-49 of age.
- Improving access to medical services for youth, including mental health.

To read the full report and learn more, visit the [Ontario Ministry of Health's website](#).

#### Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review had no mention of public health but noted activities of importance that a public health unit is required to oversee. It is important that Boards of Health continue to share the urgency of prioritizing public health when reviewing economic impacts, as health equity and healthy economy are linked.

#### MLHU News



#### XBB COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccine Available to the General Population Starting Monday, October 30

[www.healthunit.com](http://www.healthunit.com)

In Middlesex-London, the XBB COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines were made available to anyone in the community over 6 months old who wants to get a vaccine.

Where and how to book an appointment:

1. **Pharmacies:** Please contact the pharmacy directly to confirm about vaccine availability and to book an appointment. For a list of participating pharmacies, visit: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/vaccine-locations>
2. **Healthcare Provider:** Check with your Healthcare Provider about vaccine availability and book directly with their office.
3. **MLHU's Western Fair vaccination clinic:** Appointments are highly recommended and can be booked online at [www.covidvaccinelm.ca](http://www.covidvaccinelm.ca) or over the phone by calling 226-289-3560, Monday to Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The clinic hours of operation are Tuesday to Saturday, between 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., closed Sunday and Monday. If appointments are not available online, please check back regularly as appointment availability changes frequently. Please note that the influenza vaccine is not guaranteed to be available at the MLHU's Western Fair vaccination clinic.

Please visit the Health Unit's webpages on [COVID-19](#) and [influenza](#) to learn more.

#### Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Board of Health under Governance Policy G-500 – Respiratory Season Protection are required to attest to being vaccinated for COVID-19 and influenza or choosing to decline. Both vaccines are now readily available for members of the Board and community to receive.