

Middlesex-London Board of Health External Landscape Review – June and July 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



New permanent Niagara Region Medical Officer of Health appointed

After an extensive recruitment process, Niagara Regional Council, as Niagara's Board of Health, is pleased to share the appointment of **Dr. Azim Kasmani** as permanent Medical Officer of Health and Commissioner of

Public Health and Emergency Services for Niagara Region. Dr. Kasmani began his new role as Medical Officer of Health on May 28.

To view the full media release, [please visit Niagara Region's website.](#)

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Board supports collaboration and connection with other public health units in the province and encourages MLHU's Medical Officer of Health to work with other Medical Officers of Health as necessary for advocacy and idea sharing.

New Associate Medical Officer of Health, City of Hamilton

Dr. Brendan Lew is the incoming Associate Medical Officer of Health for the City of Hamilton. Dr. Lew's first day with the City will be July 1, 2023. Dr. Lew received his Medical Degree in 2018 from McMaster University, as well as his Master of Public Health in 2022. He completed his residency training at McMaster University and was certified by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons as a Public Health and Preventive Medicine specialist in June 2023.



Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Board supports collaboration and connection with other public health units in the province and encourages MLHU's Medical Officer of Health to work with other Associate/Medical Officers of Health as necessary for advocacy and idea sharing.

National, Provincial and Local Public Health Advocacy

Ontario Investing in Provincewide Homelessness Prevention



On May 25, 2023, the Ontario government is investing nearly \$770,000 to help the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness (CAEH) work with communities to connect people experiencing or at risk of homelessness with the local services and supports they need.

The CAEH will use the funding to provide ongoing support to Ontario's 47 service managers – who deliver support services and homelessness prevention programs in local communities – so they can maintain and improve local by-name lists. The by-name lists help service managers understand the extent of homelessness in their communities and improve access to resources as soon as they are available. This includes housing assistance, such as supportive housing or rent supplements, and services like Ontario Works or health care.

To view the full media release, [please visit the Ontario \(Municipal Affairs and Housing\) Newsroom online.](#)

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Middlesex-London Health Unit has been partnering with the City of London and other community agencies to support integrated housing and care hubs in Middlesex and London. With more financial support, housing hubs can see more resources to expend necessary services.

Mental Health Services and Programs with, and for, Black Communities




On June 5, 2023, Public Health Ontario released a report (rapid review) on Mental Health Services and Programs with, and for, Black Communities in Ontario. The aim was to review documentation on mental health services for Black communities and summarize their structures, service type, practices, and any available evaluation.

This rapid review addresses the following: what are the characteristics of current mental health services and programs focused on Black communities and what are reported impacts of those services and programs?

To view the full report, [visit Public Health Ontario's website](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Board of Health supports activities and work under the Health Unit's [Provisional Strategic Plan](#) and the [Anti-Black Racism Plan](#). The Provisional Strategic Plan under the sections Client and Community Confidence, and Organizational Excellence outline strategic ways the organization can include equity subject matter. The ABRP has identified 45 recommendations, which are focused on addressing and eliminating anti-Black racism from public health programs and services in London and Middlesex County.



Canada to become first country in the world to require health warnings on individual cigarettes

On May 31, 2023 during World No Tobacco Day, the Honourable Carolyn Bennett, Minister for Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, announced that Canada will soon require that health warnings be printed directly on individual cigarettes – becoming the first country in the world to take this approach.

The new Tobacco Products Appearance, Packaging and Labelling Regulations will be part of the Government of Canada's continued efforts to help adults who smoke to quit, to protect youth and non-tobacco users from nicotine addiction, and to further reduce the appeal of tobacco. In addition, the regulations will support Canada's Tobacco Strategy and its target of reaching less than 5% tobacco use by 2035.

These regulations will come into force on August 1, 2023 and will be implemented through a phased approach that will see most measures on the Canadian market within the year.

To view the full media release, [please visit the Government of Canada Newsroom online](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

On September 15, 2022, the Middlesex-London Board of Health received [Report 51-22: Feedback on Proposed Tobacco Product Labelling Requirements Under the Tobacco and Vaping Products Act](#). This report advised the Board on a [submission](#) that was sent to Health Canada to provide feedback and recommendations on labeling requirements for tobacco and vaping products. The feedback was collated by Health Canada and final guidelines (supported by the Health Unit) were released.

2023 aPHa Annual General Meeting & Conference

From June 12-14, 2023, representation from public health units and Boards of Health met in Toronto for the Association of Local Public Health Agencies' Annual General Meeting in Conference. MLHU was represented by Chair Newton-Reid, Vice-Chair Steele, Chief Executive Officer, Emily Williams and Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Alex Summers.



Topic areas included:

- Constitutional Amendment on Voting Delegates Allocation
- Toward a Renewed Smoking and Nicotine Strategy in Ontario
- Improving Indoor Air Quality to Prevent Infections and Promote Respiratory Health
- Ending Underhousing and Homelessness in Ontario
- Monitoring Food Affordability in Ontario and Inadequacy of Social Assistance Rates
- Advocating for a National School Food Program in Canada

To review resolutions supported, [please visit aPHa's website](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

Delegates at the 2023 aPHa Annual General Meeting and Conference (including those from MLHU) supported resolutions which coincide with the Ontario Public Health Standards and program obligations under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*.

Strong Mayor Powers Expanded to Mayors in 26 Municipalities



On June 16, 2023, the Ontario Government announced that strong mayor powers would be expanded to 26 municipalities, which includes the City of London effective July 1, 2023. [Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, 2022](#) provide specific powers and duties to the Mayor and include:

- The Mayor can establish, dissolve, appoint members and assign functions;
- The Mayor can propose housing-related bylaws and pass them with support of one-third of councillors, override council approval of by-laws;
- Administration powers such as appointing a Chief Administrative Officer, hire or dismiss certain heads of the organizational structure, determining organization structure and direct staff;
- For the municipal budget:
 - o The Mayor may present a proposed City budget no later than February 1.
 - o City Council has 30 days to amend the proposed budget after the Mayor presents it or may choose to shorten this period.
 - o The Mayor may veto Council amendments up to 10 days after Council adopts the amendment or may choose to shorten this period.
 - o If the Mayor does not exercise his veto the amended budget is deemed adopted. Council may override the Mayor's veto with a 2/3 vote up to 15 days later in which case the amended budget is deemed adopted.
 - o If Council does not exercise an override of the Mayor's veto the proposed budget is deemed adopted.

To view the full media release, [please visit the Ontario \(Municipal Affairs and Housing\) Newsroom online](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

As one of the municipal partners (City of London) now has designated "strong mayor powers", decisions that our municipal partners make can impact Board of Health decisions (especially with budgetary matters). It is important for the Board of Health to be aware of these legislative impacts as a local governing board.

MLHU News

Photo taken by Middlesex-London Health Unit Communications

Middlesex-London Health Unit opens new dental office in Strathroy

On June 26, 2023, the Middlesex-London Health Unit with support from the Ministry of Health held their grand opening event to celebrate the opening of the Strathroy Dental Clinic. The Middlesex-London Health Unit opened its new dental services office in Strathroy this morning, significantly increasing the agency's capacity to deliver routine dental services to low-income seniors and children under the age of 17 who come from low-income families. The Health Unit currently offers these services through the dental clinic at its Citi Plaza offices in downtown London; however, demand has surpassed expectations, resulting in several months of delay between when a patient books their appointment and when they are seen by a dentist.

Located in The Shops on Sydenham, the new dental services office was made possible through a \$1.05 million capital-funding grant from the Ontario Ministry of Health. Construction of the new space was completed by CCS Contractors, which won the contract after a competitive bid process.

To see the full media release and learn more about the dental clinic, [visit our website](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Board has been receiving updates for over 1 year on the funding received by the Health Unit for the Seniors' Dental Clinic. The Board acknowledges that services for low cost dental services is necessary to create healthy communities, especially in the rural areas of the Health Unit's jurisdiction.