



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Bryna Warshawsky, Acting Medical Officer of Health

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INTERSECTORAL ACTION FOR IMMIGRANT POPULATION: LONDON & MIDDLESEX LOCAL IMMIGRATION PARTNERSHIP

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 126-12 re “Intersectoral Action for Immigrant Population: London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership” be received for information.

Background

The City of London continues to become increasingly diverse and multicultural. The attraction of immigrants to London is important for the ongoing development of the city. Though Middlesex County has had some increase in immigration, it has not been to the same extent as the City of London. The 2006 Census indicates that immigrants account for 22% of the city’s population. The most frequent countries of origin for new immigrants are Colombia, China, India, South Korea, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the Philippines. Additionally, London has a large refugee population, including recent arrivals from the Bhutanese and Iraqi communities.

The definitions and categories of immigrant status have important distinctions in terms of accessing many governmental services related to settlement. Public health programs generally are more universally-based, so such distinctions have less importance in terms of services. For the purposes of this report, “immigrant” is used broadly to encompass all newcomers regardless of their migration status (e.g. refugee claimant, government assisted refugee, economic immigrant).

The Impact of Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in which people conduct their lives on a daily basis. Health and well-being are largely influenced by factors beyond “health care” and include access to employment, quality education, food, and housing. Marginalization of immigrants begins soon after their arrival due to lack of or under employment, housing and income insecurity, and barriers to health and other services. The resulting social and economic exclusion has a major negative impact on the health of immigrants.

Promising practices in public health have been identified to address the health inequities that affect marginalized populations. One of these practices is intersectoral action which requires strong relationships between public health and partners in other sectors in order to implement strategies to reduce such inequities.

Involvement with the London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (LMLIP) is a venue for intersectoral action to address social determinants of health within the local immigrant population.

London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership

The London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnership (LMLIP) is a community collaborative initiative designed to strengthen the role of the local community serving and integrating immigrants. It is structured with a Central Council and six sub-councils (Health and Well-being, Settlement, Employment, Education, Inclusion and Civic Engagement, and Justice and Protection Services). A strategic plan to guide the work of the partnership was published in June 2010.

Health Unit staff have participated in sub-councils and resulting task groups since the LMLIP's inception in 2009. Currently, there is Health Unit representation on the Health and Well-being sub-council and the Inclusion and Civic Engagement sub-council. Additionally, one of the Social Determinants of Health Public Health Nurses from the Health Unit is the chair of the Education sub-council, a member of the Central Council, and provides leadership to several related task groups. This role includes supporting efforts to reduce health inequities at the community and system level. The significant investment of time in this partnership contributes to the community support for immigrants and helps to reduce the inequities that they face on a daily basis.

The attached Community Achievement Report ([Appendix A](#)) outlines the work of the London & Middlesex Local Immigration Partnerships (LMLIP) from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012. Some highlights include:

- “Welcoming All Voices” workshop and resource materials for knowledge and skill development for parent leaders in schools to welcome newcomer parents;
- “Seeds of Change” project to increase immigrant awareness and knowledge about addiction and mental health;
- Development of a family settlement collaborative to address emerging needs of immigrant families with children and youth.

Summary

During the upcoming year, the London & Middlesex Immigration Partnership will continue to address the community immigrant strategic plan that was developed in June 2010. Health Unit staff will continue to actively contribute to this work as one venue to address social determinants of health and reduce health inequities.

This report was prepared by Ms. Muriel Abbott, Public Health Nurse, and Ms. Nancy Summers, Manager, Best Beginnings Program Team.



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<p>This report addresses the following requirement(s) of the Ontario Public Health Standards: Foundational Standard: Requirements # 3 and #4 Strategic Area of Focus: Improved health outcomes in the area of reducing health inequities</p>
