



MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

REPORT NO. 130-12

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Bryna Warshawsky, Acting Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2012 October 18

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE HEALTH UNIT'S BUDGET

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health endorse the dissemination of a series of Questions and Answers explaining the Health Unit's budget and related organizational matters, and that the initial communication be sent by the Board Chair on behalf of the Board of Health.

Background

The Health Unit's budget has garnered increasing media attention over the past two years. It is difficult for the public to understand the complexities of the Health Unit's budget in the limited space or time provided by media reports. The media reports have therefore resulted in confusion and uncertainty on the part of staff members, community partners and the public. These reports have the potential to have a negative effect on staff morale, as well as the Health Unit's reputation in the community and province. This is very unfortunate as staff take pride in the Health Unit's reputation, and the work they do in serving the public. In addition, the impact on staff morale and community partners' perception could negatively impact the effectiveness of staff's delivery of programs and services and work with their partners.

Steps have been taken to assist staff members in understanding the Health Unit's budget through the provision of written information and a "lunch and learn" presentation, which was held on October 1st. The information was well received and served to clarify the issues for staff, however, ongoing media reports continue to have a negative impact on staff morale.

Recommendation

It is recommended that a series of Questions and Answers regarding the Health Unit's budget and related financial and organizational matters be disseminated to assist community partners and the general public in understanding these issues. This information would be disseminated through the use of email distribution lists that the Health Unit has compiled, as well as by posting the information on the Health Unit's web site. The Health Unit's Twitter followers would also be advised of the web site posting.

It is recommended that the initial communication be sent by the Board Chair on behalf of the Board of Health. Subsequent updates would be sent by staff as needed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryna Warshawsky'.

Bryna Warshawsky, MDCM, CCFP, FRCPC
Acting Medical Officer of Health