



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Bryna Warshawsky, Acting Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2012 December 13

---

## BOARD OF HEALTH DRAFT CODE OF CONDUCT

### ***Recommendation***

*It is recommended that Report No. 141-12 re “Board of Health Draft Code of Conduct” be reviewed and discussed by the Board of Health and feedback provided.*

### **Key Points**

- While the Health Unit has a general Code of Conduct, it does not address the specific governance issues and challenges encountered by Board of Health members.
- A draft of a Board of Health Code of Conduct is being presented for the Board’s review.

### **Rationale for a Board of Health Code of Conduct**

The Middlesex-London Health Unit has had a Corporate Code of Conduct since 2007([Appendix A](#)). In 2011, compliance with the Code of Conduct became a requirement for all Boards of Health (Organizational Standard 6.14) as part of the Public Health Accountability Agreement. However, while the current Corporate Code was approved by the Board of Health and addresses general conduct expectations for Board members, staff, students and volunteers, it does not address the specific governance issues and challenges encountered by Board of Health members.

The draft Board of Health Code of Conduct ([Appendix B](#)) provides:

- a) A concise guide to the expected conduct of Board of Health members,
- b) An explanation of the governance issues and challenges encountered by Board members with respect to the Code of Conduct, and
- c) Mechanisms for addressing compliance issues related to the Code of Conduct.

### **Creation and Content**

The draft Board of Health Code of Conduct was developed following a scan of similar Codes from municipal councils and Boards of Health across Ontario. The content was then refined to focus on governance issues that are considered in the literature to be most relevant to Boards of Health. The draft was reviewed by Mr. David Woodward, the Health Unit’s solicitor.

The draft Code is separated into four sections: background information, a summary of expected conduct, explanatory information, and mechanisms for addressing compliance with the Code. The draft code addresses 11 governance-related issues as follows:

- 1) Acting in the best interests of the Board of Health and Health Unit
- 2) Public meetings and confidential information
- 3) Real and perceived conflicts of interest
- 4) Serving on other boards / councils
- 5) Conduct at meetings
- 6) Media interactions and public discussions
- 7) Interactions with staff members
- 8) Election campaigns
- 9) Post Board of Health membership
- 10) Legal advice
- 11) Compliance

### **Review and Next Steps**

Board of Health members are asked to review and provide feedback on the draft Board of Health Code of Conduct. As the Code is designed to serve Board members and support effective governance, Board member feedback is vital in ensuring that the Code is as useful as possible. Feedback will be incorporated into the draft, and a revised Code of Conduct will be brought back for further review and/or final approval.

This report was prepared by Mr. Ross Graham, Manager, Special Projects.



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