



UNAPPROVED MINUTES – SEVENTH MEETING
BOARD OF HEALTH
PUBLIC HEALTH SUDBURY & DISTRICTS
BOARDROOM, SECOND FLOOR
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024 – 1:30 P.M.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Ryan Anderson
Robert Barclay
Michel Brabant
Renée Carrier

Guy Despatie
Pauline Fortin
René Lapierre
Abdullah Masood

Ken Noland
Mike Parent
Natalie Tessier

BOARD MEMBERS REGRET

Mark Signoretti

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Kathy Dokis
Stacey Gilbeau
M. Mustafa Hirji

Stacey Laforest
Rachel Quesnel
France Quirion

Renée St Onge

R. LAPIERRE PRESIDING

1. CALL TO ORDER AND TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

3. REVIEW OF AGENDA/DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The agenda package was pre-circulated. There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

4. DELEGATION/PRESENTATION

i) Introduction to the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa)

– Loretta Ryan, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Local Public Health Agencies

L. Ryan was introduced and welcomed to present to the Board of Health to provide an overview of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, commonly known as alPHa. Established in 1986, alPHa is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership and a

voice to Ontario's boards of health and their local public health agencies. alPHa represents Ontario's 34 boards of health, medical officers and associate medical officers of health, and senior public health managers in each of the public health disciplines

There are 21 members on the alPHa Board of Directors that includes representatives from the Boards of Health Section, the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health (COMOH) Section, and from each of the seven affiliate organizations such as the Association of Ontario Public Health Business Administrators and Health Promotion Ontario. R. Lapierre is a Board of Health Section Chair and representative from the North East region on the alPHa Board of Directors and alPHa Executive Committee.

alPHa 2024–2027 strategic plan priorities were highlighted:

- Be the unified voice and a trusted advisor on public health
- Advance the work of local public health through strategic partnership and collaborations
- Support the sustainability of Ontario's local public health system
- Deliver member services to local public health leaders

alPHa's recent contributions towards the Ministry's Strengthening of Public Health included providing support to members through the voluntary merger process, and providing key input on the review of the Ontario Public Health Standards and the funding review of local public health agencies.

Board members were encouraged to read the alPHa InfoBreak newsletters, as well as become familiar with alPHa resolutions, infographic and resources, including the Board of Health orientation manual, governance toolkit.

alPHa hosts a number of events and offers various educational opportunities, including Board of Health governance and social determinants of health training. Board members were reminded of the upcoming virtual alPHa fall symposium November 6 to 8.

Questions and comments were entertained and L. Ryan was thanked for her presentation.

i) Comprehensive Health Promotion in Action: From Prevention to Policy

- Laura Cousineau, Health Promoter, Health Promotion and Vaccine Preventable Diseases Division

M. Mustafa Hirji introduced L. Cousineau to present on what comprehensive health promotion is and how it informs the work at Public Health Sudbury & Districts.

Health promotion initiatives focus on moving the work upstream to address systems level issues and addressing the conditions that impact our health, where we live, learn, work and

play. L. Cousineau noted that this work is done by focusing efforts on creating supportive environments and building healthy public policy. PHSD's health promotion work

- focuses on the population health level, not just with individuals
- follows the principles of the Ottawa Charter focusing on moving our work upstream
- is informed by evidence and best practices
- aims to reduce health disparities by embodying health equity
- values partnerships, recognizing that collaboration is key
- is cost effective

Public Health funding represented 1.2% of the Ministry of Health's spending for 2019-2020 and only a small fraction of that was dedicated to health promotion initiatives. Studies have shown that health promotion responses that address chronic disease, social determinants of health, and other modifiable risk factors are cost-effective with 4:1 return on investment from local level health promotion interventions.

The work to reduce tobacco and nicotine within our catchment area was cited as an example of comprehensive health promotion. In collaboration with health protection efforts, partnership with the municipalities, government and other stakeholders, a comprehensive health promotion response was initiated in 2001 and continues to this day. This response included, health public policy, building supportive environments, and strengthening community action. The work resulted in a dramatic reduction in smoking rates in our service area with crude local smoking rate among adults aged 20+ being 15.8% in 2019–2020 as compared to 31.0% in 2001. Most of the tobacco/nicotine programming is currently done in coordination with the North East Tobacco Control Area Network (TCAN) of which Public Health Sudbury & Districts is the coordinating health unit for the North East.

In conclusion, it was noted that effective health promotion takes time through upstream work that addresses systems level issues. That means addressing the conditions that impact our health, where we live, learn, work and play. This is done by focusing efforts primarily on creating supportive environments and building healthy public policy, and less on individual education or skill-building.

Comments and questions were entertained, and Laura was thanked for her presentation.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

- i) Minutes of Previous Meeting**
 - a. Sixth Board of Health Meeting – September 19, 2024
- ii) Business Arising from Minutes**
- iii) Report of Standing Committees**
 - a. None
- iv) Report of the Medical Officer of Health / Chief Executive Officer**

- a. MOH/CEO Report, October 2024
- v) **Correspondence**
 - a. Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA)'s Virtual Fall Symposium and Section Meetings, November 6 to 8, 2024
 - Poster and Draft Program for Symposium and Section Meetings
 - Draft Agenda for the ALPHA Board of Health Section Meeting
 - Call for short public health videos
 - b. Support for Bills S-233 and C-233 “An Act to develop a national framework for a guaranteed livable basic income”
 - Letter from Peterborough Public Health Board of Health Chair to the Prime Minister of Canada, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Minister of Health, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, House Leader of the Official Opposition, House Leader of the Block Québécois, House Leader of the New Democratic Party and Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, dated October 2, 2024
 - c. Perspectives from Northern Ontario for the Public Health Funding Review
 - Letter from Northwestern Health Unit Board of Health Chair to the Chief Medical Officer of Health and Assistant Deputy Minister, dated September 27, 2024
 - d. Recommendations for Government Regulation of Nicotine Pouches
 - e. Motion from The Corporation of the Municipality of St. Charles dated August 14, 2024

Dr. Hirji flagged ALPHA's virtual Fall Symposium agenda which had been mentioned in L. Ryan's presentation, and that Board members interested in attending should contact R. Quesnel, Board Secretary.

In response to an inquiry, additional information was provided regarding recruitment challenges mentioned in the MOH/CEO report.

57-24 APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

MOVED BY MASOOD – PARENT: THAT the Board of Health approve the consent agenda as distributed.

CARRIED

6. NEW BUSINESS

- i) **Artificial Intelligence and new technologies at Public Health Sudbury & Districts**
 - Briefing Note from the Acting Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. M. Mustafa Hirji to the Board of Health dated October 10, 2024

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a topic of interest for many sectors, including public health. As advancements continue, Public Health Sudbury & Districts has begun exploring the potential integration of AI and new technologies into public health work as it seeks to

continue to provide effective programs and services and to remain current with technology in the digital era.

Results of the AI workshop hosted by AI for Public Health (AI4PH) in October 2023 were published in a report titled [Laying the groundwork for Artificial Intelligence to Advance Public Health in Canada](#) and the report recommendations are being considered by Public Health Sudbury & Districts and other local public health agencies to help forge a path forward in implementing AI strategies.

In June 2024, Public Health Sudbury & Districts hosted virtual presentations from the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health, for all staff, about AI initiatives implemented or planned for implementation within local public health agencies. Following these presentations, a group of PHSD staff participated in a Think Tank brainstorming activity to identify ways that the agency can benefit from AI strategies and approaches. An electronic survey was subsequently distributed to all staff to ensure full participation on this topic. Key findings from the staff engagement include input about potential opportunities, dangers, threats, risks, benefits, and concerns of adopting AI technologies.

Building off that work, Public Health Sudbury & Districts developed an internal policy for the use AI in the workplace. The policy allows for staff to explore, learn, and innovate with these new technologies, while also mitigating the risks presented by AI.

Next step to further support the advancement of the AI implementation work will be include advice from experts in the field. A Request for Proposals for Artificial Intelligence Solutions for Use in Public Health was issued in the summer and is in the final stages to award the successful consultant. The consultant will develop an AI strategy that will encompass planning, assessment, consultation, and reporting. A second future phase would include prototyping, training, and development. Once fully launched, this initiative will seek input from a work group of staff internally and will help map out our future state for the use of these new technologies.

It was noted that additional ongoing investments for AI will be proposed in the 2025 cost-shared operating budget to be presented to the Board of Health in November.

Comments and questions were entertained and clarification was provided regarding the emerging themes, required IT systems to support AI and availability of expert consultants. It was noted that not all Boards of Health are exploring AI and that PHSD work will be shared with others. The operational AI policy will be shared with the Board for their information. The Board thanked M.M. Hirji for the update.

7. ADDENDUM

None.

8. IN CAMERA

58-24 IN CAMERA

MOVED BY FORTIN - ANDERSON: THAT this Board of Health goes in camera to deal with information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them. Time: 2:25 PM

CARRIED

9. RISE AND REPORT

59-24 RISE AND REPORT

**MOVED BY TESSIER – NOLAND: THAT this Board of Health rises and reports.
Time: 3:00 p.m.**

CARRIED

It was reported that one matter was discussed to deal with information explicitly supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them. The following motion emanated:

60-24 APPROVAL OF BOARD OF HEALTH INCAMERA MEETING NOTES

MOVED BY BARCLAY – CARRIER: THAT this Board of Health approve the meeting notes of the September 19, 2024, Board in-camera meeting and that these remain confidential and restricted from public disclosure in accordance with exemptions provided in the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

CARRIED

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Board members were reminded to complete the Annual Board Self-Evaluation Survey by October 18, 2024.

Board members are to review the annual mandatory Emergency Preparedness PowerPoint presentation and email R. Quesnel to confirm once the review is completed.

Time was allocated for Board members to complete the October 17, 2024, Board of Health meeting evaluation before adjournment.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The next regular Board of Health meeting is Thursday, November 21, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.

61-24 ADJOURNMENT

MOVED BY NOLAND – LAPIERRE: THAT we do now adjourn. Time: 3:04 p.m.

CARRIED

(Chair)

(Secretary)

Unapproved