

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa
19 June 2023 / 19 juin 2023**

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**Submitted by
Soumis par:**

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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2023-OPH-KPQ-0004

SUBJECT: Ottawa Public Health's Strategic Plan for 2023-2027

OBJET: Plan stratégique de Santé publique Ottawa pour 2023-2027

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit approve Ottawa Public Health's Strategic Plan for 2023-2027, as outlined in Document 1.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa approuve le Plan stratégique 2023-2027 de Santé publique Ottawa, tel que décrit dans le document 1.

BACKGROUND

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) began the strategic planning process in 2022, culminating with the Ottawa Public Health 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, as outlined in Document 1. The new Strategic Plan reaffirms OPH's core purpose, encompassing its vision, mission, and commitments. It outlines strategic goals that not only enhance and build upon its core work, it also drives progress in targeted areas of change. Further, the Strategic Plan continues work advanced during the pandemic. This includes prioritizing the needs of Ottawa's diverse communities, eliminating barriers to achieving health and wellbeing, and recognizing the importance of building genuine and lasting relationships with partners and residents.

A range of diverse inputs were gathered and analyzed to support the strategic planning process. Consultations with employees, partners, and the current and previous Board of Health were carried out to identify the strategic areas and public health challenges to focus on over the next four years. Other sources of input included an environmental scan, an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC), an analysis of Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technology, Legal and Environmental factors (PESTLE), as well as a review of grey literature and the State of Ottawa's Health 2023 report. Voices of community members, particularly from groups with less advantage, were heard through surveys conducted by OPH's Community Engagement Team, interviews with community leaders and key partners, EKOS 2022 residents' poll, and engagement with OPH employees representing equity-deserving groups.

The new Strategic Plan demonstrates OPH's dedication and focus on equity, prevention, and impact.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and amplified pre-existing structural and systemic inequities and barriers, which influenced the pandemic's epidemiology and vaccine uptake.ⁱ The rate of COVID-19 infection was higher among residents of less-advantaged communities.ⁱⁱ These communities are not inherently more susceptible to COVID-19, but underlying social realities, such as systemic racism, barriers to health information and services, and/or participation in occupations without access to paid sick leave contributed to people's exposure to COVID-19. Being equity-driven means bringing public health services and interventions closer to communities facing the greatest barriers. It means building trust with communities and finding ways to support community members to be part of the solutions in influencing the conditions and environments around them to support the health and wellbeing of all.

Currently in Ottawa, the healthcare system is under pressure to meet health needs, and we see an aging population, a high number of people without access to a regular primary healthcare provider, and higher rates of hospitalizations in neighbourhoods with the lowest socioeconomic advantage compared to those with the highest advantage.ⁱⁱⁱ Work to support people to be well and stay well will help ease the burdens on the healthcare system. Being prevention-focused means leveraging all available opportunities to shift our work to address root causes of poor health, to create the conditions that support a healthy community and healthy individual decisions. This work must be done in collaboration with partners and policy decision-makers.

Throughout the pandemic, OPH innovated by developing and adapting programs and services to ensure the delivery of essential public health interventions. The unwavering dedication and resilience demonstrated by our workforce have been instrumental in working in service to the community. OPH will continue to deliver effective, efficient public health practices to best meet the needs of the community. We will maximize our impact by strategically allocating public health resources effectively to reach a broader audience and effect the greatest amount of change. This also means having the right people, skills and resources to do the work.

In collaboration with community members and partners, OPH is committed to making meaningful changes over the next four years. These strategic efforts aim to address complex challenges, leading to improved health and wellbeing of the people and places in Ottawa and greater health equity.

DISCUSSION

Through its core purpose (vision, mission, commitments) and strategic goals, this Strategic Plan provides a framework to collaboratively examine and influence the systemic barriers to health and wellbeing in Ottawa and address key public health challenges.

Equity, Prevention, Impact: Ottawa Public Health 2023-2027 Strategy

Vision: All people and places in Ottawa are healthy and thriving.

Mission: We work together with the community to promote and protect the health and wellbeing of all people in Ottawa.

Our commitments include:

Reconciliation: We are guided by the principles of respect, relationship, reciprocity and reflection as we work in partnership with Urban Indigenous Peoples – including First Nations, Inuit, Métis peoples and communities – to promote social justice and advance Indigenous rights and wellbeing.

Health equity: We identify and address systemic barriers to increase health equity in urban, suburban and rural communities in Ottawa.

Healthy and inclusive workplace: We foster an equitable, diverse and inclusive workforce in service to the community and promote a psychologically healthy and safe workplace culture.

Meaningful engagement & relationships: We build genuine and lasting relationships with partners and residents to collaboratively foster a healthy community.

Evidence-informed: We apply best available evidence, including community voice and local data, to identify issues impacting the community and continuously improve and innovate our work.

Impactful: We aim to strengthen our organizational performance and optimize our resources to better serve the community, while tracking our progress through measurable outcomes.

Strategic Goals:

Strategic Goal 1: Equity-Driven: In working to improve population health outcomes and opportunities, we collaborate to eliminate health inequities, systemic racism, discrimination and oppression.

Strategic Goal 2: Create Conditions to Live Well and Thrive: Influence changes in the built, natural and social environments that promote health and wellbeing, and address the impacts of climate change. Essential to this is the interconnection between health and nature.

Strategic Goal 3: Promote Wellbeing and Reduce Harms: Advance innovative and comprehensive approaches to promote mental health and substance use health while reducing stigma; and decreasing harms associated with substance use and addiction across the lifespan.

Strategic Goal 4: Focus on Prevention: Gather, analyze and share evidence on local health needs and inequities with the healthcare system to strengthen clinical prevention. We will engage with healthcare system partners to help inform decision-making.

Strategic Goal 5: Enrich our Workplaces: Foster a diverse, inclusive, equitable and healthy workforce grounded in a culture of learning and growth. We will support and develop employees and optimize and innovate our processes to better serve the community.

Next steps

Following Board approval, OPH will share the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan with employees and partners, initiating a collaborative process to develop action plans to support its implementation. This inclusive approach includes engaging employees and partners, including community members, in identifying the specific short and long-term objectives, tactics, outcomes and measures of each strategic goal. The action plans will be presented to the Board of Health in a subsequent report. Mechanisms will also be developed for ongoing monitoring and twice annual reporting to the Board on the execution of the Strategic Plan, which includes adjusting the Strategic Plan as needed to meet community needs and changes in our environments over the next four years.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

The Ottawa Public Health 2023-2027 Strategic Plan was informed by employees, community members and partners, clients, City of Ottawa partners, and the current and previous Board of Health.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to approving the recommendation in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no asset management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Accessibility was considered in the writing of this report and the development of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

ALIGNMENT WITH OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This report provides the Ottawa Public Health 2023-2027 Strategy for approval.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1: Equity, Prevention, Impact: Ottawa Public Health 2023-2027 Strategic Plan

DISPOSITION

OPH will work to develop action plans to support implementation of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. The action plans will be presented to the Board of Health in a subsequent report. OPH will also develop mechanisms to monitor and report on progress in implementing the Strategic Plan.

ⁱ Ottawa Public Health. State of Ottawa's Health: 2023 Report. Ottawa (ON): Ottawa Public Health; 2023.

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.