

Chair's Verbal Report
Board of Health Meeting of September 18, 2023

AMO Conference

In August, I had the privilege of attending the annual conference of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario along with Council colleagues Riley Brockington and Wilson Lo.

On the sidelines of the conference, we had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services and the Minister of Health as well as with representatives of the Ontario Liberal Caucus and Ontario NDP Caucus.

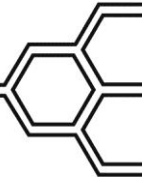
These meetings were very positive, with provincial representatives expressing interest in and appreciation for the work of Ottawa Public Health, particularly as it relates to innovative areas of practice, such as the Neighbourhood Health and Wellness Hubs. / Ces réunions ont été très positives, les représentants provinciaux exprimant leur intérêt et leur appréciation pour le travail de Santé publique Ottawa, en particulier en ce qui concerne les domaines de pratique novateurs, tels que les centres de santé et de bien-être des quartiers.

During the conference, the Minister of Health addressed a key concern of the public-health sector. Specifically, as of January 1, 2024, the Province is restoring the previous 75 per cent provincial, 25 per cent municipal cost-shared funding formula and providing an annual one per cent funding increase to all public health units through 2026.

This is extremely welcome news for the residents of Ottawa, who count on Ottawa Public Health to provide them with programs and services that promote well-being, prevent disease and injury as well as protect the health of our community.

This news comes at a time when Ottawa Public Health is working to reduce a backlog of preventive health services, such as immunization and dental treatment, that has built up over three years of pandemic response. Also, the burden of infectious diseases is greater than it was pre-pandemic, including tuberculosis in the community, as well as respiratory and other infections in congregate-care settings, such as long-term care facilities and childcare settings.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated to all of us the value of public health units in preparing for and responding to health emergencies. They need to be properly



funded to do the important work of monitoring and managing infectious-disease outbreaks and preparing for the next health emergency.

I want to thank the Government of Ontario for recognizing the important work done by local public health units and for answering the public-health sector's call for a stable and predictable funding framework, which will keep our residents healthy and safe. / **Je tiens à remercier le gouvernement de l'Ontario de reconnaître l'importance du travail effectué par les bureaux de santé publique locaux et de répondre à l'appel du secteur de la santé publique en faveur d'un cadre de financement stable et prévisible, qui permettra à nos résidents de rester en bonne santé et en sécurité.**

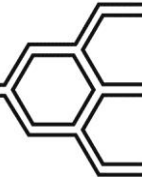
Capital Pride Events

For more than 20 years, Ottawa Public Health has been actively involved in Pride festivities in our city. This year's Capital Pride theme was 'Get Proud,' an urgent call to mobilize against hate and to strive for progress, while celebrating together more loudly and proudly.

Again, this year, OPH partnered with Community and Social Services to mark the launch of Pride Week in Ottawa by raising the Pride Flag in front of the Mary Pitt Centre at 100 Constellation. The event was held the morning of Monday, August 21st, and was livestreamed on OPH's Facebook account, allowing the community and employees to participate virtually. I was attending the AMO conference on that day and could not attend in person, but I am thankful to Member Brent Bauer who participated on behalf of the Board of Health.

On Sunday, August 27th, I was happy to be able to participate in the Pride Parade alongside OPH colleagues, friends and family members. The Pride Parade is always a fun and colourful event and I enjoyed this opportunity to celebrate with our community.

I want to thank everyone who attended and participated in these events and special thanks to OPH staff who helped organize these activities to promote inclusion and well-being with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Ottawa. / **Je remercie toutes les personnes qui ont assisté et participé à ces événements, ainsi que le personnel de SPO qui a aidé à organiser ces activités pour promouvoir l'inclusion et le bien-être de la communauté 2SLGBTQIA+ d'Ottawa.**



Rowan's Law Day

I would like to acknowledge that next Wednesday, September 27, is Rowan's Law Day, which is marked annually on the last Wednesday of September to raise awareness of concussion safety.

Rowan's Law is named after Rowan Stringer, a young athlete from Ottawa who died in the spring of 2013 and this year is the fifth anniversary of it being enacted. It was the first law in Ontario, and in Canada, addressing concussions and athlete safety in sport. The law establishes removal-from-sport and return-to-sport protocols for young athletes if a concussion is suspected.

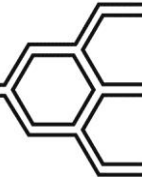
We can all show our support for Rowan's Law Day by promoting concussion safety, sharing our stories, and learning about the signs and symptoms of a concussion. / **Nous pouvons tous montrer notre soutien à la Journée de la loi de Rowan en promouvant la sécurité contre les commotions cérébrales, en partageant nos histoires et en apprenant à connaître les signes et les symptômes d'une commotion cérébrale.**

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Orange Shirt Day

September 30th is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. First recognized in 2021, this federal statutory holiday honours the children who never returned home from residential schools, the survivors, their families and communities. It's also an opportunity to bring awareness to the painful legacy and ongoing impacts of the residential school system. / **C'est aussi l'occasion d'attirer l'attention sur le passé pénible et les effets persistants du système des pensionnats.**

Leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, we can take the time to learn and reflect on the meaning of this day by reading the Truth and Reconciliation report or a book by an Indigenous author, watching an Indigenous film on residential schools, listening to a podcast or webinar hosted by Indigenous Knowledge Keepers, or taking a moment for quiet reflection on the impact that colonization has had on the lives of Indigenous Peoples and the actions that we can take to address racism and advance Indigenous rights. And then we can share what we have learned with colleagues, family, and friends.

September 30th is also Orange Shirt Day, an Indigenous-led grassroots commemorative day intended to raise awareness of the inter-generational impacts residential schools have had on individuals and families and to promote the concept of "Every Child



Matters". The orange shirt represents the stripping away of culture, freedom and self-esteem experienced by Indigenous children over generations.

A live national broadcast will commemorate National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and Orange Shirt Day on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on September 30, 2023. People can join in person or watch the broadcast online to memorialize the children lost to the residential school system and honour Survivors and their families. Learning and commemorating the truth of our collective history from First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis knowledge keepers is a vital part of the reconciliation process - a shared responsibility for all Canadians that requires ACTION, not just on this day but every day. / **Apprendre et commémorer la vérité de notre histoire collective auprès des gardiens du savoir des Premières nations, des Inuits et/ou des Métis est un élément essentiel du processus de réconciliation - une responsabilité partagée par tous les Canadiens qui nécessite d'AGIR, non seulement en ce jour, mais tous les jours.**

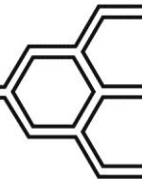
Bill 93, Joshua's Law (Lifejackets for Life)

During last spring's session of the Ontario legislature, Goldie Ghamari, the MPP for the local riding of Carleton, introduced a Private Members' Bill - Bill 93, also known as Joshua's Law, or Lifejackets for Life.

If enacted, the Bill would require parents and guardians to ensure their children who are 12 years of age or younger wear a personal flotation device or life jacket while on a recreational boat. / **S'il est adopté, le projet de loi obligera les parents et les tuteurs à s'assurer que leurs enfants âgés de 12 ans ou moins portent un vêtement de flottaison individuel ou un gilet de sauvetage lorsqu'ils sont à bord d'un bateau de plaisance.**

At this time, the laws in Canada only require that there be one properly fitting lifejacket or personal flotation device for each person onboard a recreational boat. There are no laws making it mandatory for passengers to wear a lifejacket or personal flotation device while on the water.

We know that prevention is the most effective way to avoid injuries and deaths related to drowning. In fact, Ottawa Public Health has been a member of the Ottawa Drowning Prevention Coalition since 2002. Other members of the coalition include CHEO, the Lifesaving Society, the Canadian Red Cross, the Ottawa Fire Service, Ottawa Paramedic Service, Ottawa Police Service and Ottawa's Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services, among others.



Drowning is preventable, yet there are still on average 152 preventable water-related deaths in Ontario each year. Bill 93 seeks to prevent some of those deaths by ensuring that children 12 years of age or younger wear a lifejacket or personal floatation device while on the water rather than simply requiring that one be onboard.

Having reviewed the draft Bill, OPH staff have expressed support for it. Board Members may have also seen, in our Communications package for this meeting, a letter from the Chair of the Board for Sudbury and Districts Public Health expressing support for Bill 93, and that letter was endorsed by the City of Hamilton's Public Health Committee.

Similarly, I am hopeful Board colleagues will join me in expressing support for Bill 93. I've asked Member Bauer to introduce a motion on my behalf.

That concludes my verbal report. / **Cela conclut mon rapport verbal.**

I would be happy to take any questions.