



# **Equity, Prevention, Impact:** Ottawa Public Health's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan

Action Plan Update

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## **Preamble**

[Equity, Prevention, Impact: Ottawa Public Health's \(OPH\) 2023-2027 Strategic Plan](#) was approved by the Board of Health in June of 2023. The subsequent [Strategic Action Plan](#), which outlines the detailed objectives, outcomes, and performance measures of each strategic goal, was approved by the Board of Health in December of 2023.

OPH continuously reviews and adjusts the strategic plan and action plan to respond effectively to evolving community needs and changes in our environments. This approach ensures the plan remains effective and relevant as new issues emerge and outcomes are achieved. In addition to this ongoing assessment, the goal teams responsible for implementing the action plan completed an annual review to recognize the achievements and challenges over the past year, and to identify new opportunities to advance the strategic plan. This review ensures the action plan is aligned with community needs and maintains a strong focus on equity, prevention, and impact. Goal teams also sought to identify performance measures that support data-driven decisions while reducing the burden of reporting.

While the strategic goals remain consistent with the previous action plan, adjustments have been made to the objectives, outcomes, and performance measures to better align with community needs and priorities. These refinements reflect OPH's commitment to enhancing its effectiveness in achieving these goals. Minor adjustments are recommended in how OPH aims to achieve the goals, focusing on innovative approaches and collaborative efforts that leverage community partnerships. Additionally, the expected outcomes of this work have been refined to ensure they are measurable and impactful. This document presents the revised action plan to the Board of Health.

## **City of Ottawa Long-Term Plans and Strategies**

OPH and the City of Ottawa (the City) share a unified commitment to improving the quality of life for all residents. OPH's strategic plan and the City's long-term plans and strategies aim to create a healthier, more equitable, and more liveable city for all residents. OPH is advancing municipal partnerships and is engaged on most of the City's long-term plans and strategies, integrating a health, equity, and well-being lens into municipal policies and programs.

## Goal 1: Equity Driven

**In working to improve population health outcomes and opportunities, we collaborate to eliminate health inequities, systemic racism, discrimination, and oppression.**

### Summary of Revisions

OPH completed a rapid health equity situational assessment survey with all applicable OPH teams. Objective 2 has been revised to reflect this significant accomplishment. While progress is being made, further collaboration and action is needed to develop the conditions to support sustained and systematic department-wide progress to impact and improve health equity.

Revisions to objective 3, including the outcome and performance measures, reflect how OPH is shifting its focus towards building capacity across its programs to maximize the diversity of their engagement and relationships, ensuring they reflect the diverse perspectives and voices in the community as the outcome this objective is seeking to achieve. OPH is leveraging existing processes and developing tools to identify partners who are engaging with OPH to improve health equity and to support OPH teams towards more meaningful and diverse engagement, relationships, and partnerships.

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
1: Advance the collection, analysis, and use of socio-demographic data (SDD) within OPH, as guided by data governance principles and community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agreement among community partners on processes to honour data governance principles</li><li>• All applicable OPH teams move forward with the collection, analysis, and use of SDD</li></ul>	1a. Qualitative description of engagement with community partners on data governance principles and processes  1b. Percent of applicable OPH teams maintaining or advancing SDD implementation (planning and onboarding, commencing collection, community engagement, analysis,

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
		disclosure, use, maintaining collection/data quality improvement)
2: Strengthen organizational capacity to address health equity with a focus on improving outcomes for those who are made vulnerable by systems of oppression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthened organizational capacity to integrate health equity strategies or approaches in all programs and services</li> </ul>	2a. Percent of OPH teams using health equity strategies or approaches in their work
3: Increase representation of the diversity of Ottawa in the list of OPH's external partners and promote engagement activities that are inclusive and reflect community voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement tools and an internal process that guides teams to maximize the equity and diversity of relationships such that they are more reflective of the many perspectives and voices in our community</li> </ul>	3a. Percent of equity-denied groups (EDGs) that are identified as key partners in OPH operational plans  3b. Percent of partnerships focused on health equity that are engaged <sup>1</sup> at the involve, collaborate, or empower (invest) level as identified through the annual operational planning process

## Goal 2: Create Conditions to Live Well and Thrive

Influence changes in the built, natural, and social environments that promote health and well-being, and address the impacts of climate change. Essential to this is the interconnection between health and nature.

<sup>1</sup> Levels of engagement are based on the International Association for Public Participation [IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation](#).

## Summary of Revisions

The revised outcomes of objective 4 aim to highlight the significant impact of integrating work on climate adaptation and mitigation efforts into municipal planning. Additionally, the revisions demonstrate the role OPH has in data collection and sharing, which is crucial to influencing health and housing system planning.

The performance measures of objective 6 were consolidated, reflecting recent progress on the Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessments.

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
<p>4: Enhance municipal partnerships to support mutual goals through the integration of a health, equity, and well-being lens into municipal policies and programs impacting built and social environments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implications for health, equity, and well-being are considered in the City’s planning decisions through the implementation of the <a href="#">Official Plan</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ This includes integrating work on climate adaptation and mitigation in municipal planning</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Data collection and sharing between health and housing partners increases and data is used to inform health and housing system planning</li> </ul>	<p>4a. Qualitative description of engagement with City partners to inform, from a health perspective, the implementation of City strategies such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the Official plan</li> <li>○ the <a href="#">10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan 2020-2030</a>; and</li> <li>○ the food security pillar and integrated and simplified pathways pillar of the Community Safety and Well-Being Plan’s Poverty Reduction Strategy.</li> </ul>

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPH advances priorities within the <a href="#">Community Safety Well-being Plan's</a> Poverty Reduction Strategy</li> <li>• OPH capacity for visualizing data is improved and informs decision-making by OPH and partners</li> </ul>	4b. Development and implementation of a geospatial data visualization and communications framework <sup>2</sup>
5: Strengthen relationships by adopting a whole of community emergency management approach to support those most affected by local emergencies and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community engagement and community action are strengthened in collaboration with OPH teams and partners through promoting relationships and networks for community support and data for decision-making</li> <li>• OPH workforce's knowledge, capacity, and resiliency to manage emergencies with public health impacts is increased</li> </ul>	5a. Percent of indicators met as per the <a href="#">Public Health Ontario (PHO) Emergency Preparedness Framework and Indicators</a>  5b. Percent of adopted recommendations from the <a href="#">How Ottawa Public Health (OPH) Responded to the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Review</a> report that have been addressed
6: Enhance understanding of climate change health impacts and influence the integration of a health and equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessments (CCHVA) are completed with the</li> </ul>	6a. Number of CCHVAs completed and qualitative description of the recommendations adopted

<sup>2</sup> The framework will provide information about the types of datasets that could be used, how they can be visualized, and for what purposes.

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
<p>lens into climate change mitigation and adaptation policies and programs to support community resiliency</p>	<p>participation of City partners and adopted recommendations are implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPH, City partners, and the community are aware of and acting on information about the impacts of climate change on health</li> <li>• A health and equity lens is integrated into City climate change mitigation and adaptation programs, projects, and policies</li> </ul>	<p>6b. Qualitative description of interventions/engagement related to health impacts of climate change, including with City partners, on the implementation of the <a href="#">Climate Change Master Plan</a> and related municipal programs and projects</p>



### Goal 3: Promote Well-being 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, addiction, and suicides across the lifespan.

#### Summary of Revisions

OPH’s efforts to reduce stigma have been embedded within two objectives instead of a stand-alone objective, reflecting the understanding that this work is interconnected and cannot be addressed in isolation. Qualitative descriptions on the advancement of suicide prevention initiatives were included within the existing performance measure of objective 7. This change better aligns with the existing objective statement.

Objective 8 includes outcomes and performance measures related to enhanced prevention strategies to address mental health, addictions and substance use health. This includes the redesigned Pregnancy Circles and the new free virtual Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) program, targeting marginalized pregnant individuals in fifth quintile neighbourhoods and pregnant individuals and parents with young children, respectively.

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
<p>7: Support collective efforts to prevent and address overdoses and suicides, including reducing stigma</p> <p>Advance action plans with mental health, addictions and substance use health service providers, early childhood sector, business sector, housing service providers, community networks, neighbours, and all levels of government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanded comprehensive and collaborative efforts and action plans to address local overdose crisis and suicide prevention and response initiatives</li> <li>Availability of early warning systems is increased, and surveillance of overdoses is improved</li> <li>Community members, businesses, and neighbours have increased</li> </ul>	<p>7a. Qualitative description of the evolution of Ottawa’s Overdose Response Strategy, developed and initiated with community partners, including businesses and neighbours, as well as the advancement of suicide prevention initiatives</p> <p>7b. Percent of participants trained in safeTALK who feel prepared to talk</p>

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
	<p>knowledge of agency roles and collaborative actions, and they have somewhere to turn for coordinated help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community providers working with EDGs have enhanced skills to be able to prevent and respond to overdoses and suicides</li> <li>• Increased knowledge and understanding among health and social service providers, including primary care providers, as well as community members, on the impacts of stigma, the importance of person-first language and how to use non-stigmatizing language related to mental health, addictions, and substance use health</li> </ul>	<p>openly and directly to someone about that person's thoughts of suicide</p> <p>7c. Percent of participants in stigma training who report they have the necessary skills to apply person-first language</p>
<p>8: Foster prevention strategies to maximize impact, including reducing stigma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New pathways are created that improve prenatal and birth outcomes while strengthening parent-child relationships and</li> </ul>	<p>8a. Qualitative description of the use and impacts of timely data available through the <a href="#">Mental Health, Addictions</a></p>

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
<p>Provide innovative interventions that seek to prevent new or worsening mental health, addictions and substance use health concerns through prevention and equity driven interventions across sectors and communities</p>	<p>contributing to healthy child development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened collaboration and improved communication pathways with childcare, Ontario Works, housing, birthing hospitals, midwives, and the Champlain Maternal Newborn Regional Program (CMNRP)</li> <li>• Access to the new redesigned Pregnancy Circles program for marginalized pregnant individuals in fifth quintile neighbourhoods</li> <li>• Enhanced mental health for pregnant individuals and parents with young children through the new free virtual Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) program</li> <li>• Opportunities are identified and actioned to influence healthy public policies to advance perinatal and children’s mental health, as well as</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">and Substance Use Health dashboard</a> and <a href="#">Overdose Reporting tool</a></p> <p>8b. Qualitative description of engagement activities with health and social service sectors (local and provincial), including children, youth and families and EDGs</p> <p>8c. Percent of participants trained in prevention skills who intend to use what they learned</p> <p>8d. Number of clients registered for Pregnancy Circles</p> <p>8e. Number of clients enrolled in the CBT Steps to Wellness Program</p> <p>8f. Percent of participants in stigma training who intend to use the information they learned</p> <p>8g. Percent of youth who want mental health supports but don’t know where to turn</p>

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
	<p>mental health and substance use health across the lifespan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth engagement is enhanced, including youth peer-to-peer connections across diverse communities, to increase youth's healthy coping skills and knowledge of where to turn for mental health, addictions, and substance use health support</li> <li>• Access to community surveillance data is increased for service providers and used in health system and service planning</li> <li>• Reduced practices, both intentional and unintentional, that disadvantage individuals with lived and living experience and expertise in mental health, addictions and substance use health, especially among EDGs</li> </ul>	

## 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.**

### Summary of Revisions

In 2024, OPH successfully completed several initiatives under goal four. One key achievement was conducting an option analysis to identify opportunities to support healthcare system partners to access evidence to inform equitable healthcare planning and patient care. Building on this analysis, OPH will now concentrate on gathering, analyzing, and sharing evidence on primary care attachment by neighbourhood and on preventive care interventions that promote health equity. This includes examining barriers to accessing care. Additionally, OPH’s Community Engagement Team will seek to embed community voices within this work to bring attention to the challenges of accessing primary and preventive care.

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
9: Collaborate with healthcare system partners to gather and analyze evidence <sup>3</sup> on primary care attachment <sup>4</sup> and preventive care interventions <sup>5</sup> to identify and understand local health needs and inequities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shareable, up-to-date knowledge on primary care attachment, including barriers to care, by neighbourhood in Ottawa</li> <li>• Shareable, up-to-date knowledge on access to key preventive care interventions in Ottawa, focused on</li> </ul>	9a. Number of knowledge products produced with an equity lens

<sup>3</sup> Evidence is defined as community voice, local epidemiological data, and research.

<sup>4</sup> Primary care attachment is defined as formal or informal patient access to the same individual primary care provider or group of providers.

<sup>5</sup> Preventive care interventions are clinical activities that focus on preventing disease, injury, or harm to health rather than curing disease. Examples include vaccination, cancer screening, nutrition counselling, provision of smoking cessation medications and well-baby visits.

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
	interventions that promote health equity	
10: Share evidence to inform equitable healthcare planning, with a focus on improving primary care attachment and the delivery of preventive care interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased awareness among healthcare system partners on barriers to accessing primary and preventive care</li> <li>• Increased uptake among EDGs of preventive care interventions</li> <li>• Increased awareness among physicians and nurse practitioners of the impact of preventive care interventions on health equity</li> </ul>	<p>10a. Qualitative description of engagement activities with healthcare system partners (local and provincial)</p> <p>10b. Number of community members who access knowledge products</p> <p>10c. Number of physicians and nurse practitioners who access knowledge products</p>

## 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.**

### Summary of Revisions

Revisions to goal 5 aim to better reflect OPH-led activities to enrich our workplaces. These include scenario-based diversity, equity, and inclusion training related to hiring, the OPH Microaggression Procedure, Wellness at Work (W@W) Action Plan and learning and development activities. OPH will continue to participate in and leverage City of Ottawa programs, such as LEAD IT.

The performance measures of objective 12 were enhanced to provide a more diverse set of indicators of employee wellness, drawing on the Guarding Minds @ Work survey, employee leave data, and an OPH-led wellness plan.

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
<p>11: Foster and grow a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased representation of EDGs at all levels of OPH</li> <li>• Employees' feelings of safety, connection, and ability to be their authentic self in the workplace is increased</li> <li>• Barriers for employees from EDGs to pursue learning, development, and career progression are removed</li> </ul>	<p>11a. Percent of employees and Leadership Team members from EDGs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Indigenous Peoples</li> <li>○ Members of visible minorities</li> <li>○ Persons with disabilities</li> <li>○ Women</li> </ul> <p>11b. Number of reports of microaggressions as per the OPH Microaggression Procedure</p> <p>11c. Percent of microaggressions responded to as per the OPH Microaggression Procedure within 3 business days</p> <p>11d. Number and percent of Supervisors and Managers who have completed scenario-based diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training related to hiring practices</p>

Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
		11e. Number and percent of OPH Management and Professional Exempt (internal and external) and external unionized job competitions where LEAD IT is applied
12: Continuously improve employee psychological safety and wellness at OPH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuous annual improvements are made in the Guarding Minds @ Work (GM@W) key focus areas</li> <li>• OPH employees feel supported by the person whom they report to and their peers</li> <li>• OPH employees inform the development of action plans and initiatives aimed at improving psychological safety and wellness at OPH</li> </ul>	<p>12a. Percent rating change from previous psychological health and safety factors in the GM@W workplace results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Balance</li> <li>○ Workload management</li> <li>○ Psychological competencies and demands</li> </ul> <p>12b. Percent of employees, including members of the Leadership Team, who feel burned out in their job (never or rarely)</p> <p>12c. Average percent of vacation leave taken for all OPH employees entitled to vacation leave</p>



Strategic Objectives	The results we want to achieve	Performance Measures
		12d. Percent of the 2025 Wellness at Work (W@W) Action Plan completed
13: Advance equitable learning and development for all employees to support individual and collective organizational goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OPH employees work in a safe and supportive environment</li> <li>• All supervisors and managers complete the leadership training in line with Corporate Leadership Competencies</li> <li>• OPH managers have supports in place to be familiar with and use best practices to support employee performance and development and ensuring a positive culture environment</li> <li>• All full-time employees have an annual Individual Development Plan</li> </ul>	<p>13a. Percent of full-time employees with an annual Individual Development Plan</p> <p>13b. Percent of current employees with direct reports who have completed all components of the identified corporate foundational leadership training courses</p>