

**Report to  
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health  
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa  
1 December 2025 / 1er décembre 2025**

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**Submitted by  
Soumis par:**

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**Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE      File Number: ACS2025-OPH-KPQ-0003**

**SUBJECT: Ottawa Public Health's Strategic Plan for 2023-2027 – Update from  
Quarters Two and Three of 2025**

**OBJET : Plan stratégique de Santé publique Ottawa pour 2023-2027 – Mise à  
jour des deuxième et troisième trimestres de 2025**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:**

- 1. Approve Ottawa Public Health's Strategic Action Plan, as outlined in Document 1.**
- 2. Receive for information Ottawa Public Health's Strategic Plan for 2023-2027 Update from Quarters Two and Three of 2025, as outlined in Document 2.**

## **RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Conseil de santé du Bureau de santé de la Ville d'Ottawa :**

- 1. Approuver le Plan d'action stratégique de Santé publique Ottawa, tel que décrit dans le document 1;**
- 2. Recevez pour information la mise à jour du Plan stratégique de Santé publique Ottawa pour 2023-2027 du deuxième et du troisième trimestre de 2025, tel que décrit dans le document 1.**

**BACKGROUND**

[Ottawa Public Health's \(OPH\) 2023-2027 strategic plan](#) was approved by the Board of Health on June 8, 2023. The plan outlines OPH's priorities to improve health and well-being in Ottawa and advance health equity. Annual action plans detailing the objectives, intended outcomes and performance measures for each of the five strategic goals were approved by the Board in 2023 and 2024.

To support implementation, OPH created an internal governance structure that enables coordination, accountability and evidence-informed decision-making. This structure includes the Strategic Steering Committee (SSC) and five Goal Teams aligned to the strategic plan's priorities. Since September 2023, the SSC has received quarterly updates from Goal Teams and engaged in strategic discussions. Each year, Goal Teams review the action plan to identify achievements, challenges and opportunities to advance the plan. This ongoing process helps OPH adapt to emerging public health needs and continuously improve.

This report presents the revised Action Plan for 2026 and summarizes progress on all five strategic goals during the second and third quarters of 2025. Looking ahead, planning is underway for the next strategic cycle, which will inform priorities from 2027 to 2031.

**DISCUSSION****Action Plan Revisions**

The annual action plan review enables Goal Teams to adapt to evolving public health priorities and respond to emerging risks and challenges. It also ensures that implementation remains informed by community needs and evidence, while being achievable within the context of operational demands. This year's review of the action plan identified only minor revisions, reflecting steady progress and positive momentum across all five strategic goals. These updates are intended to refine the implementation

approach of the strategic plan rather than shift the overall direction. Key revisions include:

- The addition of Health Equity Action Roadmaps (HEARs) within Goal 1, which provide a structured mechanism to deepen, coordinate and sustain the practice of health equity across the organization.
- Adjustments to Goal 2 reflect actions from the Ottawa Leader's Health and Housing Forum and recent progress to address recommendations from the Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessments.
- The renewed focus of Goal 4 reflects the broader spectrum of public health interventions that support clinical prevention and access to primary care.
- Refinements to Goal 5 acknowledge recent achievements and introduce initiatives focused on Indigenous cultural safety and awareness training, peer support and succession planning.

No revisions were identified to Goal 3. For a detailed overview of the Action Plan and its summarized revisions, see Document 1.

### **Status of Strategic Goals**

Progress continues to be made across all strategic goals and OPH remains well-positioned to advance its action plan. Some initiatives are encountering manageable challenges that are being actively addressed. There are currently no initiatives within the action plan that are experiencing major challenges or risks that threaten success. Through the internal governance structure, OPH ensures issues are identified early and responded to as necessary. The summary below highlights accomplishments and challenges across the five goals. For additional details on accomplishments and challenges, see Document 2.

### **GOAL 1: EQUITY-DRIVEN**

OPH advanced its commitment to health equity by expanding the collection, use and disclosure of sociodemographic data (SDD) across key programs, including Healthy Babies Healthy Children, immunization, tuberculosis, sexual health and dental services. A key milestone was the release of the report [Analysis of SDD provided by Clients of OPH's Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program November 2022 to May 2025](#), reflecting OPH's dedication to ethical and purposeful data practices. Despite this progress, the lack of a centralized provincial or local system for SDD collection remains

a challenge, requiring resource-intensive customization by individual teams and services.

As reported in June 2025, OPH is strengthening organizational capacity to address health equity through a multi-phased approach, starting with HEARs. The Health Equity, Diversity and Inclusion service area co-created a HEAR for the Chronic Disease, Injury Prevention and System Integration unit. The HEAR provides clear direction and practical tools to help the team further embed health equity across all stages of the program's continuum—including program ideation, feasibility, design, marketing and client engagement. Seven additional client-facing programs will develop HEARs in 2026 and 2027.

## **GOAL 2: CREATE CONDITIONS TO LIVE WELL AND THRIVE**

OPH helped shape municipal planning initiatives to promote health and equity across Ottawa. OPH submitted a [supporting document](#) outlining the public health benefits of the [New Zoning By-law Draft 2](#). OPH's input helps shape zoning that supports walkable, inclusive neighbourhoods. OPH also continues to support secondary planning processes underway in both the urban expansion lands and intensification areas within the urban area. During the reporting period, OPH continued to review development applications to a limited extent to support implementation of the new [Official Plan's](#) health-promoting policies. There is ongoing opportunity to strengthen OPH's capacity in supporting the review of development applications.

OPH's collaboration with the City of Ottawa extended to the [Climate Ready Ottawa Strategy](#), the City's long-term climate adaptation strategy, which was approved by City Council on November 12, 2025. OPH contributed to background materials and embedded a health perspective by co-locating staff with the climate team. OPH will collaborate on a subset of actions related to a cooling strategy, community climate preparedness and extreme weather preparedness and response.

## **GOAL 3: PROMOTE WELL-BEING AND REDUCE HARMS**

OPH prioritized harm reduction and overdose prevention, despite a significant operational shift. Effective October 1, 2025, OPH's Supervised Consumption Services at 179 Clarence Street were closed as the Ontario Ministry of Health did not grant permission to apply for an exemption renewal request to Health Canada. While this closure marks a notable change, OPH remains committed to supporting individuals who rely on harm reduction services by continuing to offer naloxone training and distribution,

harm reduction supply distribution, sexually transmitted and blood borne infection testing and treatment and system navigation services at the same location.

Naloxone distribution efforts were notably expanded during the reporting period. OPH onboarded six new Ontario Naloxone Program partners, including Wabano and two local shelters, exceeding the annual target. Over 1,000 participants received in-person overdose prevention and response training, and 1,325 naloxone kits were distributed during festivals and large events. These efforts reflect OPH's continued leadership in overdose prevention and its commitment to reducing opioid-related harms in the community.

OPH led and designed a public health event in recognition of World Suicide Prevention Day, strategically engaging over 100 attendees from emergency services, social services, healthcare and the broader community. Additionally, the team continues to deliver suicide prevention training and reached 341 frontline intermediaries across Ottawa equipping them with the skill to recognize and respond to individuals at risk. With 97% of safeTALK participants reporting they feel prepared to talk openly and directly to a person about thoughts of suicide, these participants now serve as critical connectors and contribute to local suicide prevention efforts.

#### **GOAL 4: FOCUS ON PREVENTION**

OPH is strengthening clinical prevention by sharing evidence on local health needs and inequities. A key achievement was the development of a briefing note summarizing OPH's work and insights on primary care access and attachment since January 2023. This informed the [Primary Care Provider Recruitment and Retention Strategy](#), approved by City Council on October 22, 2025.

In addition, OPH prioritized public education and provider engagement to strengthen clinical prevention efforts. Messaging about the human papillomavirus vaccine was reframed to emphasize cancer prevention, with outreach targeting healthcare providers and the public. OPH also published three Public Health Update articles, covering culturally safer care for Indigenous patients, connecting vulnerable populations to community supports and promoting active lifestyles through the Whole Day Matters toolkit.

#### **GOAL 5: ENRICH OUR WORKPLACES**

OPH advanced its commitment to Indigenous cultural safety through training and experiential learning opportunities. OPH hosted a Learning Circle to foster a shared

understanding of Two-Eyed Seeing in public health, promote cultural safety and awareness and build capacity in working with Indigenous partners and communities. Additionally, OPH facilitated a series of Blanket Exercises, providing OPH staff with immersive experiences to increase knowledge and understanding of the history of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples. These exercises support recommendations from the Indigenous Cultural Safety Organizational Assessment.

### **Strategic Planning Cycle & Next Steps**

OPH initiates a strategic planning cycle every four years. This process provides an opportunity to align organizational priorities with evolving community needs. By focusing efforts on a shared vision, mission and strategic goals, strategic planning guides decision-making and supports OPH to advance health and well-being in Ottawa through an equity-informed lens.

In August 2025, staff began planning a comprehensive approach to develop the 2027–2031 strategic plan. The approach includes four phases: define the current state, engage interest holders, develop and validate the plan, finalize the plan (through Board of Health approval). A range of inputs will be gathered and analyzed throughout the strategic planning process, including through a situational analysis and internal and external engagement activities. The situational analysis is based on a rigorous methodology which aims to explore the internal and external factors that could influence the capacity, performance and outcomes of public health systems in Ottawa. Findings will be synthesized into strategic insights to support priority setting.

Consultations with employees, partners and the Board of Health will occur using an ongoing engagement process. Findings will highlight key public health challenges and inform the priorities for the next four years. In 2026, the Board of Health can expect to receive reports on the current strategic plan and to participate in dedicated engagement opportunities to inform the future strategy. The next report on the strategic plan will be submitted to the Board of Health in June 2026.

### **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

### **CONSULTATION**

The OPH 2023-2027 strategic plan was informed by employees, community partners, clients, City of Ottawa partners and the current and previous Board of Health.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

**ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no accessibility implications associated with this report.

**ALIGNMENT WITH OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

This report provides an update on the strategic plan.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1: Ottawa Public Health's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan – Action Plan Update

Document 2: Ottawa Public Health's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan – 2025 Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 Update

**DISPOSITION**

This report is presented to the Board of Health to approve the revisions to the action plan and to provide information on progress to advance the strategic plan during Q2 and Q3 of 2025.