

MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

TO: Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit

DESTINATAIRE : Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la ville d'Ottawa

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7 décembre 2015

FILE NUMBER: ACS2015-OPH-MOH-0007

SUBJECT: **MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH VERBAL REPORT**

OBJET : **RAPPORT VERBAL DU MÉDECIN CHEF EN SANTÉ PUBLIQUE**

*Check upon delivery*

Good morning, bonjour,

Before you begin deliberations on the proposed 2016 Operating Budget, I would like to touch briefly on three items that have arisen since we met in November.

Firstly, Chair Qadri, Deputy Mayor Taylor and I were pleased to host the new Federal Minister of Health, the Honourable Jane Philpott, at one of our influenza vaccination clinics recently, where our team was happy to vaccinate the minister. I am grateful to Dr.

Philpott for choosing to highlight the importance of vaccination at our clinic as her first public act in her new portfolio.

I also draw your attention to the promising information that we can glean from our new Prime Minister's Mandate letter to Dr Philpott, which was made public late last month. The minister is charged, amongst other things, with advancing policy on many of the files this board cares deeply about. These include making high quality mental health services more available to Canadians who need them; and promoting public health, for example, by increasing vaccination rates and by introducing new restrictions on the commercial marketing of unhealthy food and beverages to children. You will appreciate that I am particularly pleased to learn of the prospect that the Federal Government may regulate marketing of unhealthy beverages and foods, and this aligns well with your strategic priorities of healthy eating and active living, as well as advocating for healthy public policy.

Secondly, I mentioned last month that senior officials at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care continue to signal that 2016 will bring a substantial exercise to review and revise the Ontario Public Health Standards and the associated regulations. More recently, we have learned that Regulations for Food Premises; Public Pools; Public Spas; Recreational Camps; and Camps in Unorganized Territory will also be reviewed in the coming months. These regulations cover everything from public pay-per-use campgrounds to hot tubs at City recreation centres.

While change is likely to be burdensome, this is welcome news for Ottawa Public Health. Over the past few years, challenging issues have been identified that may be addressed in the review of these regulations.

The food premises regulation – for example – was last updated in 1991. The review and modernization will allow health departments to have input into clarifying requirements with regards to new and emerging issues, such as how best to approach home-based, online, food service establishments.

OPH staff will be participating in working groups regarding the review of these regulations, and of the Standards too.

Lastly, you will be aware of the planning that is taking place across the country to ensure that Canada is prepared for the successful absorption of refugees from Syria. As noted in the memo I sent to you the week before last, OPH is working with provincial, community and municipal partners to ensure that we are ready and able to contribute appropriately for the arrival of refugees in the city over the next few months. We are

also working with our Local Health Integration Network (LHIN), as it is the LHIN which will have the lead in ensuring health services are wrapped around refugees according to their needs. At this time I am confident that we are ready to address any public health issues that may arise, and I expect smooth management of any such issues.

I will keep you abreast of developments of note on all of these matters, and would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Merci.