

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

FROM: Dr. Isra Levy
Ottawa Public Health

Contact:
Dr. Isra Levy
Medical Officer of Health
Ottawa Public Health
613-580-2424 ext. 23681
isra.levy@ottawa.ca

EXPÉDITEUR : D^r Isra Levy
Santé publique Ottawa

Personne ressource :
D^r Isra Levy
Médecin chef en santé publique
Santé publique Ottawa
613-580-2424, poste 23681
isra.levy@ottawa.ca

DATE: March 2, 2015

2 mars 2015

FILE NUMBER: ACS2015-OPH-MOH-0002

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

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

Check upon delivery

Good evening, Bonsoir,

I am very pleased to welcome our new public members and I look forward to working with all of you in the coming term. Thank you for your interest and congratulations on your appointments. Welcome also Minister Naqvi and former Member Keeley.

At the last meeting of the Board of Health, in January, we tabled our Draft Operating Budget for 2015. Since that time, we have received community responses to the draft budget, a summary of which was recently shared with you.

The way we deliver programming is changing. The draft budget before you today allows for a re-orienting of our family and child health programming, to increase focus on clients with identified risk factors, and to respond to calls from new parents. I want to reiterate that OPH will be continuing to provide support to all families.

It is our aim that any new parent who requests a home visit from a public health nurse will get one. As always, residents can connect with a nurse over the phone too, by calling our public health information and coordination line.

We are also looking for new ways to work within existing funding, including by bringing more resources online. We recently launched our Parenting in Ottawa Facebook page in November and the response has been rapid and reassuring. Thousands of Ottawa residents have visited our pages, and over 7700 “Facebook likes” are already noted. Nurses are online to answer questions that come from one of the thousands of parents who have connected with us.

Many of you will have also heard recent media reports about our immunization program.

I want to convey to all residents that Ottawa is a community that is well-protected against vaccine-preventable diseases, with generally good rates of immunization coverage and low rates of vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles. Ottawa Public Health (OPH) is working hard to keep it this way.

In recent weeks, members of the media have questioned whether OPH is in contravention of any laws with respect to immunization. At this time the Ministry has requested that all Medical Officers of Health complete a checklist that indicates whether their Board of Health is currently meeting the Ontario Public Health Standards and Protocols in respect of the Vaccine Preventable Diseases Program. If the Standards or Protocols are not being met, the Ministry requires that a compliance report template be completed. The City Clerk and Solicitor has provided his opinion that we are in compliance with statutory and regulatory obligations. In addition, I can confirm that we are preparing plans to address any variances from the standards or protocols with which we must comply under the Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement and will provide the Board with additional updates in the weeks and months to come. In addition, I can confirm that OPH is committed to full compliance, across all Standards and protocols and will be providing the Board with additional information in the weeks and months to come.

Staying with the subject of vaccine preventable and infectious diseases, in my last update I mentioned that we have had an extremely busy respiratory virus season in our community. OPH continues to work with long-term care facilities and retirement homes to reduce the spread of these viruses, and the impact in our community. It has been one of the more severe influenza seasons we've seen in decades with 21 deaths now laboratory confirmed as associated with the flu in Ottawa. More than 1600 residents or staff of long-term care and retirement homes have been ill with influenza and about 150 have been hospitalised. Fortunately, while we continue to see outbreaks we are now past the peak of the flu season.

Our close connection with provincial and federal public health professionals also continues on the Ebola file, and we continue to monitor travelers returning from West Africa, in order to ensure that any signal that they may become ill is quickly heeded. And, we of course continue our routine work; conducting restaurant inspections, offering fall prevention programming for seniors, and providing clinical services at our sexual health and dental clinics, just some examples of the programs and services that many of you heard about during the orientation session last week.

I will wrap up there, except to commit to and reassure you that despite our funding challenges and the need to re-orient programming, I am confident in OPH's ability to continue to deliver quality programs and services that the residents of Ottawa deservedly expect of us.

That concludes my verbal report. As always, I am happy to answer any questions.