



BUILDING A HEALTHIER OTTAWA

OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2018

Message from Councillor Shad Qadri, Chair of the Ottawa Board of Health and Dr. Isra Levy, Medical Officer of Health

We are very pleased to introduce Ottawa Public Health's (OPH) Strategic Plan, 2015-2018.

A new Board of Health was appointed early in 2015. The first meetings of this Board have focussed on its ideas for ways to build a healthier Ottawa. The new Strategic Plan, which establishes a series of strategic directions to guide OPH over the next four years, is the result of a fulsome process undertaken by the Board in consultation with staff that considered local level data, as well as over 2,000 survey responses from residents, community partners, and staff.

This Strategic Plan demonstrates our commitment to the vision, mission, and principles underlying the services we provide to advance health protection and promotion for all Ottawa residents. It also provides a clear picture of where OPH is headed and what OPH plans to achieve over the next few years.

Public health, in partnership with municipal and community partners, plays an important, proactive role in the prevention of diseases and the protection and promotion of population health. This, by extension, helps reduce demand on the broader health care system.

The work of OPH is shaped by many factors. OPH delivers a range of core programs and services in accordance with provincial



requirements, aligned with local needs and priorities. Like our work, the health of the residents we serve is shaped by many factors. This includes the major determinants of health, the social and economic conditions in which people live, learn, work and play.

This Strategic Plan sets the pace for continued excellence and focused efforts in addressing emerging local public health needs. OPH is committed to developing innovative initiatives to deliver on the Strategic Plan. We look forward to working with staff and community partners to advance our vision over the coming years.

Snapshot of Ottawa

Ottawa spans a large geographic area of 2,790 square kilometers, and includes a range of urban, sub-urban and rural communities. Ottawa is growing and becoming increasingly ethnically diverse. In the 2011 census, Ottawa had a population of 883,391.



Ottawa Public Health Mission, Vision and Principles

OPH's new Strategic Plan is driven by its vision, mission, and five strategic directions. Also included in this Plan are five key principles which lay the foundation for the delivery of all of OPH's programs and services. The interconnection between these principles and OPH's vision and mission are illustrated in OPH's framework, which provides the foundation for how the organization operates and the goals OPH aims to achieve.

Vision

All Ottawa's communities and people are healthy, safe and actively engaged in their well-being.

Mission

In partnership with the people and communities of Ottawa, Ottawa Public Health improves and advocates for health and well-being through prevention, promotion and protection.

Principles

Dedicated to Excellence

Champion a dynamic culture of continuous improvement and innovative services as well as providing opportunities for staff, learners, and volunteers to learn, grow, and work to their full potential.

Equitable Opportunities for Health

Work to reduce health disparities for vulnerable populations, while promoting policies that address the social determinants of health (i.e. the social and economic conditions in which people live, learn, work and play).



Evidence-Informed Decision Making

Use the best available information, including research evidence and local context (which includes local community health issues and involves the engagement of community partners), to guide the delivery of public health policies, programs and services.

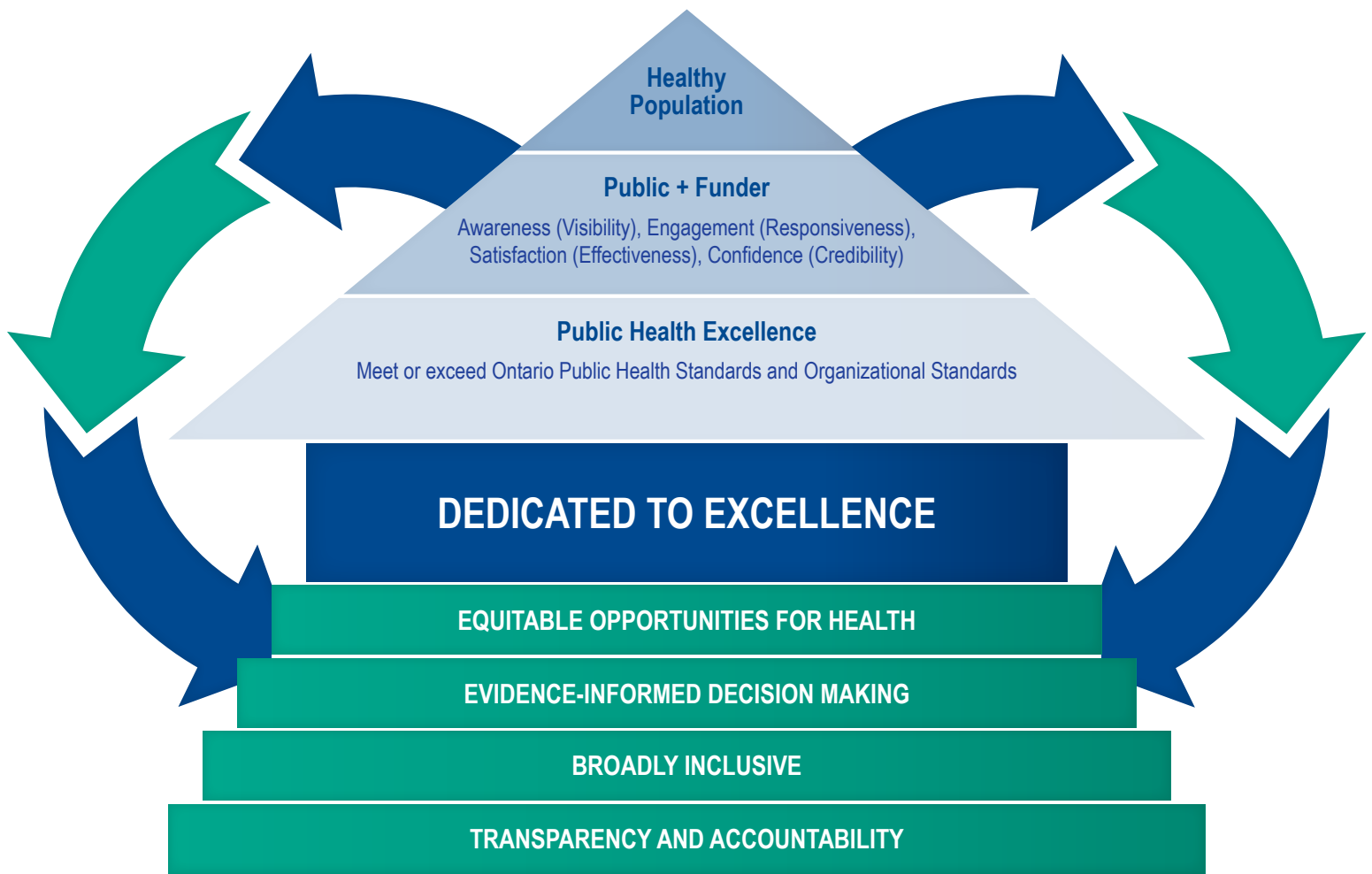
Broadly Inclusive

Work collaboratively with partners and communities to understand local health needs, including consideration of ethno-cultural and demographic shifts, to continually develop enhanced approaches for protecting and promoting health.

Transparency and Accountability

Make informed choices about how human and financial resources are used while meeting provincial and local obligations, and publicly report on the delivery of programs and services in an open and transparent manner.

Ottawa Public Health Framework



Strategic Direction #1

Inspire and Support Healthy Eating and Active Living

Physical inactivity, overweight, and obesity continue to be issues of public health concern. They are contributing to a rise in chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease that are impacting quality of life and placing a growing burden on the health care system. Creating the social and physical environments that enable people to improve their health, in addition to increasing knowledge of what it means to eat well and be active, are central to supporting healthy eating and active living. Continued focus on healthy eating and active living will support OPH to build on previous efforts to address the root causes for the rise in chronic diseases and create supportive environments for healthy living.

AIMS

- Increase healthy eating and safe physical activity among people of all ages, from children to older adults
- Increase the number of people who use active transportation
- Contribute to building healthy, complete communities¹
- Enhance access to healthy foods
- Increase the number of people who have a healthy weight

CONTEXT²

- 60% of people do not eat enough fruits and vegetables a day
- 8% of people were food insecure in 2013
- Only 1 in 4 grade 7-12 students meet the Physical Activity Guidelines of 60 minutes per day, and only 19% walk or cycle to school
- Only 10% of residents cycle or walk to work
- 47% of adults and 23% of children in grades 7-12 self report being overweight or obese
- The leading cause of death for those 65 and older is heart disease



¹ Complete communities “have a variety of housing choices, employment, parks and a wide range of services and facilities accessible by walking, cycling and transit.” (City of Ottawa Official Plan).

² For additional data throughout this document, see Ottawa Public Health’s State of Ottawa’s Health, 2014 report, available at Ottawa.ca/healthreports or contact Ottawa Public Health at 613-580-6744.

Foster Mental Health in Our Community

Mental health is essential for overall health and well-being. Mental health impacts people's ability to enjoy life and realize their full potential. Addressing mental health issues can range from promoting emotional well-being and capacity for dealing with life's challenges, to providing the tools and supports to reduce substance misuse, and preventing suicides. Enhanced focus on mental health in the community, a key issue of concern in Ottawa and one for which there is growing collective community action, will enable OPH to continue to identify gaps, foster connections among community partners, and engage in mental health promotion and substance misuse prevention.

AIMS

- Enhance social connectedness and inclusion in our community
- Promote healthy coping mechanisms and resiliency across the lifespan
- Promote a culture of moderation and decrease harms related to alcohol and substance misuse
- Reduce the rate of suicide and other harms from poor mental health



CONTEXT

- Almost a third of residents exceed Canada's low-risk drinking guidelines, and 44% of adults reported binge drinking at least once in the past year
- There were 1,200 emergency room visits due to self-harm
- 10% of adults reported having been diagnosed with a mood disorder such as depression, and 9% with an anxiety disorder
- 25% of youth in grades 7-12 report visiting a mental health professional at least once in the past year
- On average, more than 60 people die by suicide in Ottawa every year

Enhance Collective Capacity to Reduce Preventable Infectious Diseases

Infectious diseases continue to be a concern for the community. Immunization, where available, saves lives. Continued efforts will ensure optimal immunization levels to provide protection from vaccine-preventable diseases. In addition, public health efforts to reduce outbreaks and prevent and respond to infectious diseases are critical to health and well-being in our community. Working together with community partners will help strengthen the collective capacity to reduce preventable infectious diseases. OPH's efforts to enhance, adapt and leverage our current capacity in this area, and further develop anticipatory systems, will help improve resiliency of the community and our partners to be nimble, adaptive and responsive to preventable infectious diseases.

AIMS

- Increase immunization coverage rates and reported coverage rates
- Enhance preparedness to respond to infectious diseases in our community
- Reduce outbreaks in our community
- Enhance partnership to leverage resources for maximum impact

CONTEXT³

- There were almost 5000 cases of reportable infectious diseases reported to OPH in 2014, including:
 - Sexually transmitted infections of chlamydia (2,580 cases, which is almost double that from 10 years ago), and gonorrhea (328 cases, which has increased sharply)
 - The respiratory infection of influenza (522 cases)
 - The bloodborne infection of hepatitis C (241 cases)
 - The enteric infections of campylobacter enteritis (223 cases) and salmonellosis (180 cases), which can be spread by contaminated food or drink
- In the 2013-2014 outbreak season, OPH investigated almost 130 institutional outbreaks including, 73 respiratory, 54 enteric, which includes 6 acute care clostridium difficile outbreaks
- Sporadic cases of vaccine-preventable diseases, such as measles and pertussis, continue to affect Ottawa residents. The resurgence of diseases such as measles is mainly attributable to importation of cases by underimmunized people visiting countries where these diseases are endemic

³ Updated data from what was published in the State of Ottawa's Health 2014 Report.

Strategic Direction #4

Develop an Adaptive Workforce for the Future

An organizational culture that fosters ongoing learning, is committed to the effective use of evidence to inform decision-making, and is responsive to the diverse communities it serves, creates the conditions for innovation and continued excellence in public health. A focus on developing an adaptive workforce will build on the tools and approaches for addressing changing and emerging needs of the community through enhancing OPH's workforce to expand our reach and augment our impact in the community.



AIMS

- Create a work environment that supports innovation
- Enhance capacity to develop healthy public policy
- Enhance use and integration of evidence-informed decision making
- Enhance capacity to reach and serve diverse communities (specifically communities facing health inequities)

CONTEXT

- Ongoing efforts to create a highly skilled, competent, and responsive workforce will enhance OPH's capacity to respond to the strategic directions identified in this plan, as well as deliver on OPH's core mandate.
- Staff capacity and knowledge is a key driver for success in delivering innovative and high quality public health programs and services, leveraging partnerships with the community, as well as reaching groups with risks, and addressing the determinants of health.
- OPH's Employee Engagement Action Plan indicates that staff are dedicated to further develop their capacity and skills

Strategic Direction #5

Advance Healthy Public Policy

Health is influenced by many factors. Healthy public policy seeks to improve population health by having a positive impact on the conditions in which we live, learn, work and play. Through advancing healthy public policy, and providing an informed health lens across policy sectors, the Board of Health will seek to champion the health of Ottawa's communities and people.



AIMS

- Enhance awareness and understanding of health implications of public policy
- Influence municipal and provincial decisions that impact health
- To be a public health knowledge resource

CONTEXT

- The development and support of healthy public policy by the public health sector is recognized as an important means for improving population health.
- Through partnerships and stakeholders, there are many opportunities for OPH and the Board to engage in healthy public policy and to identify opportunities to integrate policy development into their work

OPH Strategic Plan 2015-2018

- Increase healthy eating and safe physical activity among people of all ages, from children to older adults
- Increase the number of people who use active transportation
- Contribute to building healthy, complete communities
- Enhance access to healthy foods
- Increase the number of people who have a healthy weight

- Enhance social connectedness and inclusion in our community
- Promote healthy coping mechanisms and resiliency across the lifespan
- Promote a culture of moderation and decrease harms related to alcohol and substance misuse
- Reduce the rate of suicide and other harms from poor mental health

**Inspire and Support
Healthy Eating and
Active Living**

**Foster Mental Health
in Our Community**

Vision

All Ottawa's communities and people are healthy, safe and actively engaged in their well-being

Mission

In partnership with the people and communities of Ottawa, Ottawa Public Health improves and advocates for health and well-being through prevention, promotion and protection

**Advance Healthy
Public Policy**

- Enhance awareness and understanding of health implications of public policy
- Influence municipal and provincial decisions that impact health
- To be a public health knowledge resource

**Enhance Collective
Capacity to Reduce
Preventable
Infectious Diseases**

- Increase immunization coverage rates and reported coverage rates
- Enhance preparedness to respond to infectious diseases in our community
- Reduce outbreaks in our community
- Enhance partnership to leverage resources for maximum impact

**Develop an
Adaptive Workforce
for the Future**

- Create a work environment that supports innovation
- Enhance capacity to develop healthy public policy
- Enhance use and integration of evidence-informed decision making
- Enhance capacity to reach and serve diverse communities (specifically communities facing health inequities)