

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Council
Conseil**

25 September 2019 / le 25 septembre 2019

**Submitted on September 16, 2019
Soumis le 16 septembre 2019**

**Submitted by
Soumis par:**

**Councillor Keith Egli, Chair, Ottawa Board of Health /
Conseiller Keith Egli, Président, Conseil de santé d'Ottawa**

**Contact Person
Personne ressource:**

**Dr. / D^{re} Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health / Médecin chef en santé publique
613-580-2424, x. 23681, Vera.Etches@Ottawa.ca**

Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2019-OPH-BOH-0012

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEALTH MODERNIZATION AND THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN THE CITY OF OTTAWA AND OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH**

**OBJET: MODERNIZATION DE LA SANTÉ PUBLIQUE ET LA RELATION ENTRE
LA VILLE D'OTTAWA ET SANTÉ PUBLIQUE OTTAW**

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That City Council request that the Mayor ask the Minister of Health to maintain the relationship between the City of Ottawa and Ottawa Public Health, which maximizes the coordination between public health programs and municipal services, and benefits from the integration of administrative and other efficiencies.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil municipal invite le maire à demander au ministre de la Santé de maintenir la relation entre la Ville d'Ottawa et Santé publique Ottawa, laquelle

optimise la coordination entre les programmes de santé publique et les services municipaux, et tire parti de l'intégration des économies administratives et des autres économies.

BACKGROUND

The Government of Ontario released its 2019 Budget on Thursday, April 11, 2019. As part of its budget announcements, the Government proposed significant changes to the structure, governance and funding for Ontario's public health sector. Specifically, the proposal was to reduce the number of public health units across Ontario from 35 locally-based to 10 regionally-based health units, to replace the current 35 local boards of health with 10 regional boards of health, and to shift the funding formula to gradually reduce the Province's share of funding with the first funding changes to be effective April 1, 2019.

There have been various subsequent announcements from the Province with respect to the changes proposed for Ontario's public health sector. There have also been ongoing discussions between the Province and the municipal and public health sectors, as well as amongst Ontario's health units and the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA).

Given the timing of the Provincial Budget's release and publication of the Ottawa Board of Health's April 18, 2019 meeting Agenda, at that meeting, the Medical Officer of Health's (MOH) verbal update focused on the province's proposals relating to Ontario's public health sector - what was known at that time and what remained unknown (see Document 1). Arising from the MOH's verbal update, the Board approved a motion, which was forwarded to Council for consideration at its meeting of [April 24, 2019](#). The motion called for the Mayor to write to the Province of Ontario to communicate Council's unequivocal support for the work of Ottawa Public Health and to request that the Province:

- Maintain the health protection, health promotion and prevention mandate of Ottawa Public Health;
- Maintain the current 75/25 funding formula for Ottawa Public Health and public health programs in Ontario; and
- Initiate consultations with municipalities and public health agencies on the public health system in Ontario.

As a result of the above-referenced motion, on April 29, 2019, Mayor Watson and Councillor Keith Egli, Chair of the Board of Health, sent a joint letter to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (see Document 2).

In the days and weeks that followed the provincial budget announcements similar positions were taken by boards of health and municipal councils across Ontario as well as by organizations such as the Large Urban Mayor's Caucus of Ontario (LUMCO), the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario (MARCO).

In mid-May the Province released proposed boundaries for the 10 regional health entities, which suggested that a new regional health entity in eastern Ontario would include: Ottawa Public Health Unit; Eastern Ontario Health Unit; Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit; Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Health Unit; and the southern portion of the Renfrew County and District Public Health Unit. At the same time, health units were advised that these boundaries were not confirmed and that a final decision would follow consultations.

In late May, the Province announced a reversal of its plans for a change to the cost-sharing funding formula for public health so that changes to the funding formula are now to take effect January 1, 2020 rather than April 1, 2019.

In August, the Province announced that transitional funding would be made available to municipalities starting in 2020 and that a renewed consultation process would be led by a yet-to-be-named Expert Advisor and guided by a discussion paper that would identify proposed boundaries. As of the writing of this report, no details have been received as to whether Ottawa Public Health and the City of Ottawa would qualify for transitional funding and if so, what funding might be expected.

At the Board of Health meeting of September 16, 2019, Chair Egli provided a verbal update in which he reported on meetings held with provincial representatives during the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's (AMO) Annual General Meeting and Conference. During these meetings there was discussion about the municipal transition to the 70/30 funding formula, an upcoming consultation process on public health modernization, and the valued partnership between Ottawa Public Health and the City of Ottawa. Arising from the Chair's verbal update, the Board of Health approved the following motion:

Motion 6/2

Moved by Chair K. Egli

“WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has proposed the reorganization of local public health units into regional public health entities and has announced proposed changes to the provincial funding formula for public health; and,

WHEREAS the provincial portion for cost-shared programs and services will be 70% for the 2020 budget; and,

WHEREAS the Ministry of Health will be undertaking consultations on the implementation of these changes; and,

WHEREAS Ottawa Public Health provides crucial programs and services to the residents of Ottawa; and,

WHEREAS sections 12(1) – (8) of the *City of Ottawa Act, 1999* establish that the employees for the Board of Health are provided by the City of Ottawa and, given that the City of Ottawa provides over eight million dollars (\$8,000,000.00) per year through in-kind supports (such as rent, information technology, purchasing and human resource services and other administrative efficiencies), which would be cost prohibitive to recreate in a different structure;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit recommend that City Council request that the Mayor ask the Minister of Health to maintain the relationship between the City of Ottawa and Ottawa Public Health, which maximizes the coordination between public health programs and municipal services, and benefits from the integration of administrative and other efficiencies; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit request that the Chair of the Board of Health, working with the Medical Officer of Health, ensure that, in calculating future budget allocations, the Ministry of Health recognize the City of Ottawa’s ongoing in-kind contribution, which is not currently accounted in Ottawa Public Health’s annual operating budget.”

The recommendation of this report, being the first Be It Resolved clause of the motion, is presented for Council’s consideration.

DISCUSSION

When the Ontario Government released its 2019 Budget and announced the proposed restructuring of Ontario’s public health sector, two (2) of the stated objectives were to:

- Improve public health program and back-office efficiency and sustainability while providing consistent, high-quality services, be responsive to local circumstances

and needs by adjusting provincial–municipal cost-sharing of public health funding; and

- Remove back-office inefficiencies through digitizing and streamlining processes to ensure public health agencies focus their efforts on providing better, more efficient front-line care.

A meeting with the Minister of Health, held in the context of the AMO AGM and Conference, provided an opportunity to highlight the valued working partnership Ottawa Public Health (OPH) has with the City of Ottawa. It was also noted that the Province's stated objectives with respect to back-office efficiencies and digitization are being achieved at OPH given that OPH is currently moving to an Electronic Public Health Records (EPHR) management system and given the fact that the City provides over \$8M per year through in-kind supports to OPH through such things as rent & facilities, information technology, purchasing, human resource services and other administrative efficiencies, which would be cost prohibitive to recreate in a different structure.

In light of these efficiencies and the current relationship between the City of Ottawa and Ottawa Public Health, the Board of Health is recommending that Council request that the Mayor ask the Minister of Health to maintain the current relationship between the City of Ottawa and Ottawa Public Health, which maximizes the coordination between public health programs and municipal services, and benefits from the integration of administrative and other efficiencies.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

No public consultation was undertaken in preparing this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to approving the recommendation in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications are as outlined in the report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Indicate the report's direct impact on the 2014-2018 Term of Council Priorities: Economic Prosperity, Transportation and Mobility, Sustainable Environmental Services, Healthy & and Caring Communities, Service Excellence, Governance, Planning & Decision Making, and Financial Sustainability. (*Details available on Ottawa.ca.*) If there are no impacts, provide a comment to that effect. If you require assistance, please contact Kendall Gibbons at kendall.gibbons@ottawa.ca or 613-580-2424 ext. 16131.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Medical Officer of Health Verbal Update of April 18, 2019

Document 2 – Letter from Mayor Watson and Councillor Keith Egli, Chair of the Board of Health, to the Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, dated April 29, 2019

DISPOSITION

Following Council approval, the Chair of the Board of Health and the Medical Officer of Health will work with the Mayor's Office to prepare a letter for submission to the provincial Minister of Health.