

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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DATE: June 15, 2015

15 juin 2015

FILE NUMBER: ACS2015-OPH-MOH-0004

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

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

Check upon delivery

Bonsoir, good evening,

I want to start, tonight, by noting that every year June is marked, in the City of Ottawa, as a month to recognize and celebrate employees. I would like to recognize my colleagues on staff at Ottawa Public Health for their unwavering dedication to providing programs and services to this community. I know you join me in thanking them for all that they do in their day-to-day work to make Ottawa a place where people are healthy, safe and actively engaged in their well-being.

We have a heavy agenda tonight, so I will keep my remarks brief. I want to touch on three items. Number one, an important provincial initiative, second our progress on addressing compliance challenges in vaccine surveillance, and lastly new developments that are creating stresses on our ability to balance the budget.

First, developments in the provincial legislature: Those of you who were here at the time will recall that in 2012 the Board of Health advocated for the development and promotion of menu labeling policies and wrote a letter to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to that effect. Last month Bill 45 – the *Making Healthier Choices Act* was passed and will become law later this year. This new legislation responds to advocacy efforts of this Board and other Boards of Health across Ontario regarding menu labeling, the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* and electronic cigarettes.

As part of the *Making Healthier Choices Act*, food service owners and operators of franchises with 20 or more locations in Ontario will be required to post calories. The *Act* also bans the sale of flavoured tobacco products and the sale and supply of e-cigarettes to anyone under the age of 19.

Public Health Units will be involved in implementation and enforcement of this act, though specific details are still being developed by the province so it is premature to consider implications. In the meantime, OPH has moved forward on our own menu labeling campaign to raise awareness of the importance of understandable nutritional information being available. For example, you may have seen some of these items on OC Transpo buses.

Moving on to the Immunization update, later tonight you will be discussing our plans for the multi-phased re-invigoration of our Vaccine Preventable Diseases work. I do want to mention that the enhanced effort that we triggered in the winter to update student records is progressing to plan. While we have not yet heard from our funders regarding our request for an investment to assist with this initiative, we are intent on getting all 150,000 our immunization records on school children verified for the 2015/2016 school year.

Currently we have 10 nurses and four data entry staff working on the data base, inputting data, cleaning it, addressing duplicate records and contacting parents if the records aren't up-to-date. Over the summer we will increase the nursing complement so that we will have a total of 40 staff deployed getting the database ready for fall. With tremendous help and support from the City's IT Services group we have been able to implement an automated calling system to notify parents, and we have extended our

nursing hours so that we can respond to parent telephone calls in the evenings. School boards have also been very supportive and have been sending out messages to parents for us. And we are getting a good response from parents that we connect with too.

So, while challenges to persist, and the resource burden is very high, our team is getting on with the job. You will hear later, too, that we are also building a sustainability plan so that this type of catch up activity will not be needed in the future.

Lastly, I need to provide you with a brief update on the budget. We have not yet received confirmation of our 2015 funding request from the province. However, the City has recently completed collective bargaining with bargaining units relevant to our programs. Some assumptions that we had made in preparing our budget can, therefore, now be solidified. A consequence is that we will have to manage a new compensation pressure of approximately \$350,000. I am reviewing options, with my management team, so that we can make the necessary spending adjustments to address this new pressure. We intend to balance the budget by year end.

We have also initiated a review of our 2016 to 2018 multi-year financial forecast. For 2016, we will have to manage rising costs due to inflation, collective agreement increases, end of life technology replacement, and emerging community health pressures. I anticipate that rising costs and constrained funding will create similar challenges to balancing the proposed 2016 budget to those we faced last year. That means we will need to address a funding shortfall in order to balance the budget.

We will be tabling a draft budget for 2016 for your consideration in the fall. I anticipate that you will see that we will continue to hold needed growth in our programs in abeyance, and to continue to find efficiencies in our activities.

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