

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa
13 February 2017 / 13 février 2017**

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**Submitted by
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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2017-OPH-HPDP-0001

SUBJECT: ADVANCING HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY - *TOWARDS A CULTURE OF ALCOHOL MODERATION*

OBJET: PROMOTION D'UNE POLITIQUE PUBLIQUE SAINE – *VERS UNE CULTURE DE CONSOMMATION MODÉRÉE D'ALCOOL*

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la ville d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du présent rapport à titre d'information.

BACKGROUND

On November 3, 2016, the Board of Health approved a report titled “Towards a Culture of Alcohol Moderation” ([ACS2016-OPH-HPDP-0007](#)), to which was appended the *Status of Alcohol in Ottawa: Let’s Continue the Conversation* report. These two documents demonstrated the need for addressing the social and physical harm in the community that results from excessive alcohol consumption. These reports outlined that alcohol is the most widely used substance in Ottawa, with 83% of the adult population consuming alcohol, and that the associated harms are underreported. Half of the adult population that consumes alcohol is at moderate to high risk of experiencing alcohol-related harm and the second-hand effects from alcohol – the social costs, financial costs and the harm to others – affect the whole community.

OPH is proceeding with the three-point community engagement action plan approved on November 3, which includes: increasing public awareness of the *Status of Alcohol in Ottawa* report; seeking opportunities for collaborative action; and adapting best practices. OPH will be raising awareness of the issues through discussions with community groups and stakeholders and by disseminating information to the general public through online channels.

In addition, OPH will work to advance healthy public policy towards creating a culture of alcohol moderation. Creating this movement will take time and collective action, as it did with reducing smoking rates or making seatbelt use the norm. It will require multi-faceted strategies involving education, awareness and policies. Implementing the best practice policy approaches will first require awareness of the issue and community readiness to take action. To be most effective a comprehensive strategy requires actions in more than one policy area, with targeted and population-wide interventions. A municipal alcohol policy is one example of a population-wide intervention that can be implemented at a local level. Other examples of local-level policies can be found in [“Making the Case: Tools for Supporting Local Alcohol Policy in Ontario”](#), a resource developed by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and Public Health Ontario (PHO).

DISCUSSION

Municipal alcohol policies (MAP) outline the rules and requirements for allowing alcohol use on municipal property, including streets and sidewalks, and city events. MAPs support existing provincial regulations and allow municipalities to set specific restrictions and guidelines for managing alcohol on municipal property. Local policies can help create supportive environments that encourage healthier choices, which are needed in

order to move towards a culture of alcohol moderation. Changing the culture of alcohol use will also require changing people's attitudes and behaviour in adopting low-risk drinking as the norm.

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) developed the Municipal Alcohol Policy Guide to support the development, revision or the consolidation of MAPs. The CAMH guide is endorsed by the Ontario Recreation Facilities Association and the Canadian Recreation Facilities Council. In this guide, the CAMH describes six evidence-based key components that should be included in MAPs in order to lower the risk of alcohol-related harms (Supporting Document 2).

Municipal alcohol policies are considered "Blue Ribbon" when they address all of the key components in addition to involving the community in their development. A quality measure form is included in the CAMH Guide to evaluate MAPs against the criteria of a Blue Ribbon Policy. The City of Toronto and Toronto Public Health (TPH) used the CAMH guide, specifically the Blue Ribbon quality measure form, to identify areas to be revised in order to meet the requirements of a Blue Ribbon Policy. Municipalities that implement blue ribbon policies have reported a reduction in problems such as intoxication, verbal abuse, fights, underage drinking, litter, public complaints, police intervention, injuries, etc. The quality measure form was recently updated by Peterborough Public Health to reflect changes made to the Liquor Licence Act.

Advancing Healthy Public Policy Locally

On November 17, 2016, the City's Community and Protective Services Committee approved a report titled *Updates to Municipal Alcohol Policy and Minor Amendments to Applicable By-laws* ([ACS2016-COS-EPS-0006](#)). In considering this item, Committee also approved the following direction to staff, among others:

Consult with Ottawa Public Health to ensure that the guide document to be provided to event applicants contains information concerning the safe consumption of alcohol, including recent recommendations made by the Medical Officer of Health in that regard. Consultation with Ottawa Public Health should occur prior to Council on 23 November 2016. A letter stating thus from Ottawa Public Health should be circulated prior to Council.

Following the CPSC meeting, staff from Recreation, Culture and Facility Services (RCFS) and Emergency and Protective Services (EPS) consulted with OPH on a proposed a motion (Supporting Document 1) for Council's consideration. The motion outlined OPH's recommendations for amending the RCFS Guide entitled "Your

Planning Guide for Hosting an Event at Which Alcohol Will Be Available”.

On November 23, 2016, Ottawa City Council approved the amendments to the MAP and applicable by-laws as well as the following:

“that the General Manager, Recreation, Culture and Facility Services, in conjunction with the Medical Officer of Health, the General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services and Legal Services, review annually and update the Guide accordingly based on the evolving “best practices” in the field of safe alcohol consumption”

Direction to staff to “meet with the Federation of Community Associations (FCA) to review the Policy and its implementation and that staff report back on the Policy to the Community and Protective Services Committee at the end of 2017”

Current developments

OPH has collaborated with the Recreation, Culture and Facilities Services (RCFS) department to update the planning guide previously entitled “Your Planning Guide for Hosting an Event at Which Alcohol Will Be Available”. The Guide has been amended to include facts about alcohol, recommendations to control excessive consumption and best practices for reducing alcohol-related harms.

RCFS is assisting OPH to identify groups or individuals who frequently rent city facilities for events. OPH will then contact these groups and individuals to share the *Status of Alcohol in Ottawa* report and to offer a group discussion as part of OPH’s strategy to raise awareness of the issue and harms related to alcohol.

Advancing Healthy Public Policy Provincially

As municipal alcohol policies are influenced by provincial regulations, OPH will also seek to advance healthy public policy at the provincial level, with support from other stakeholders and other health units. The Ontario government regulates the sale and service of alcohol through the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) and the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO).

In 2015, the [Ontario government](#) announced its intent to develop a province-wide Alcohol Policy. Although consultations with stakeholders were completed in early 2016, the policy has not yet been released. OPH is monitoring the situation through involvement with the Ontario Public Health Association and continues to advocate for action in this important policy area.

NEXT STEPS

OPH is moving forward with the community engagement plan approved by the Board in November 2016. As healthy public policy is a critical factor in changing the current drinking culture, OPH will continue to seek opportunities to influence policies by:

- 1) Working with internal and external partners to increase awareness of the issues related to excessive alcohol consumption to prepare support for adopting best practices for municipal alcohol policy for next review
- 2) Working with partners to assess community readiness for local action in the seven evidence-based alcohol policy approaches
- 3) Scoping the OPH contribution to an evaluation of the revised 2017 RCFS Guide and 2016 MAP
- 4) Continuing to monitor provincial action on alcohol policies including the release of a province-wide Alcohol Policy.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

There were no consultations associated with this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There is no accessibility impacts associated with the recommendations of this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1: Motion No. 42/2 from Ottawa City Council Meeting of November 23, 2016

Document 2: CAMH Municipal Alcohol Policy Guide: Key Components

DISPOSITION

This report is presented to the Board for information purposes.

Document 1**MOTION NO. 42/2**

Moved by Councillor S. Qadri

Seconded by Councillor D. Deans

WHEREAS at its meeting of November 3rd, 2016, the Ottawa Board of Health received a report from the Medical Officer of Health entitled "Status of Alcohol in Ottawa: Let's Continue the Conversation" and also approved the "Strategic Initiative Towards a Culture of Alcohol Moderation" which is a community engagement approach that proposes, among other goals, to raise awareness about the status of alcohol in Ottawa, raise awareness of harms related to alcohol consumption, influence community social norms, and promote healthier communities; and

WHEREAS the Recreation, Culture and Facility Services Department is currently reviewing and updating its information package for distribution to event sponsors and organizers who are subject to the City's Municipal Alcohol Policy, which includes a reference to a document entitled, "Your Planning Guide for Hosting an Event At Which Alcohol Will Be Available" ("Guide"), which provides important information and recommendations to event sponsors and organizers for safe and successful events; and

WHEREAS it is desirable that these ongoing revisions to the Guide include information from Ottawa Public Health regarding the safe consumption of alcohol and moderation in alcohol consumption, as well as other key information found in the Board of Health's report and approved community engagement approach noted above; and,

WHEREAS the inclusion of this Guide as part of the documents provided to every sponsor who applies under the City of Ottawa's Municipal Alcohol Policy would be of benefit to all concerned;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Section 5.1 of the proposed Municipal Alcohol Policy (Document 1) be amended to ensure that the revised Guide document entitled, "Your Planning Guide for Hosting an Event At Which Alcohol Will be Available," include information on the following subject matters and be part of the documentation given by the City under the City's Municipal Alcohol Policy to every event sponsor or organization by either electronic or hard copy:

1. Important facts about alcohol and controlling excessive consumption, including best public health practices to reduce harms from overconsumption of alcohol;

2. References to information, best practices and other resources of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario;
3. Providing food for the duration of the event, where alcohol is served
4. Providing alternative non-alcoholic beverages, including the provision of water to event participants;
5. Special considerations for serving alcohol;
6. Reducing the risk of injury, liability or property damage; and
7. Safe transportation options and recommendations;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the General Manager, Recreation, Culture and Facility Services, in conjunction with the Medical Officer of Health, the General Manager of Emergency and Protective Services and Legal Services, review annually and update the Guide accordingly based on the evolving "best practices" in the field of safe alcohol consumption.

Document 2

CAMH Municipal Alcohol Policy Guide: Key Components

The six key components for an effective MAP are:

- 1) Designation of properties, facilities and events where alcohol may or may not be used:** Specify where alcohol will be allowed and not allowed. For example alcohol use is not permitted in facilities' lobbies or dressing rooms, at family events such as family days or sports tournaments
- 2) Alcohol management practices** that control how alcohol is used: Outline specific practices that are to be carried out before, during and after the event to protect attendees from harm to themselves and others.
- 3) Prevention Strategies to reduce harm:** The goal of these strategies is to prevent intoxication and associated harms. Under the Liquor License Act of Ontario, it is not legal to serve alcohol to someone who are intoxicated or near the point of intoxication
- 4) Enforcement procedures and penalties:** outlines short- and long-term penalties for non-compliance with the policy or associated by-laws or acts
- 5) Required signage that conveys municipal authority and clarifies rules:** Outlines the required signage where alcohol is available
- 6) Ongoing policy support and monitoring:** Outlines the policy implementation plan including parameters on when and how often the policy will be reviewed and how compliance may be monitored, and if implementing, parameters for municipal inspections