

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa
20 April 2020 / 20 avril 2020**

**Submitted on April 7, 2020
Soumis le 7 avril 2020**

**Submitted by
Soumis par:**

Dr. / D^{re} Vera Etches, Medical Officer of Health/ Médecin chef en santé publique

Contact Person

Personne ressource:

**Esther Moghadam, Director, Health Promotion / Directrice, Promotion de santé
613-580-2424, x. 23789, Esther.Moghadam@Ottawa.ca**

Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2020-OPH-HPP-0006

SUBJECT: OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH SUBMISSION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
ONTARIO ON THE POTENTIAL FOR CANNABIS CONSUMPTION
ESTABLISHMENTS AND/OR CANNABIS SPECIAL OCCASION
PERMITS

OBJET: SOUMISSION DE SANTÉ PUBLIQUE OTTAWA PRÉSENTÉE AU
GOUVERNEMENT DE L'ONTARIO QUANT À L'ÉVENTUELLE
CRÉATION D'ÉTABLISSEMENTS DE CONSOMMATION DE CANNABIS
ET AUX PERMIS DE CIRCONSTANCE LIÉS AU CANNABIS

REPORT RECOMMENDATION

That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit receive the Medical Officer of Health's submission to the Government of Ontario's consultation on the potential for cannabis consumption establishments and/or cannabis special occasion permits, as outlined in Document 1, and approve the recommendations contained therein.

RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la ville d'Ottawa prenne acte de la soumission de la médecin-chef en santé publique au gouvernement de l'Ontario quant à l'éventuelle création d'établissements de consommation de cannabis et aux permis de circonstance liés au cannabis, présentée dans le document 1, et approuve les recommandations qui y figurent.

BACKGROUND

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) has been monitoring the regulation of cannabis and responding to opportunities for fostering a public health approach that minimizes the potential health risks and public health impacts. OPH continues to implement an evidence-informed, [comprehensive 4-point plan](#), approved by the Ottawa Board of Health on February 5, 2018, to reduce the harms from cannabis use. This plan responds to the on-going community need to address the legalization of cannabis for non-medical use including the expanding new product classes, such as edibles and vaping with a focus on youth, young adults, and individuals who are pregnant and breast/chest feeding. In addition OPH contributed to the December 5, 2018 Ottawa City Council [Report on Ontario Cannabis Legislation, Cannabis Retail Stores, and Response to Council Direction of August 29, 2018](#).

On February 10, 2020, the [Province of Ontario launched a consultation](#) on expanding cannabis business opportunities. This includes implementing a potential market for facilitating the sale of cannabis for consumption in establishments like lounges and cafes and through a special occasion permit program. The deadline to submit feedback was March 10, 2020.

The BOH has previously adopted recommendations related to the public consumption of cannabis. At the BOH meeting on September 18, 2017, the Board approved the report [Ottawa Public Health Submission in Response to Public Consultation –](#)

[Legalization of Cannabis in Ontario](#). As part of that report, the Board approved the recommendation that the Province of Ontario ban the public consumption of cannabis.

DISCUSSION

OPH is supportive of a public health approach to the legalization of cannabis to minimize the negative health and social impacts. There are public health concerns with increasing access and the normalization of cannabis consumption.

Currently the public consumption of cannabis is regulated under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017* (SFOA). There are currently no restrictions to where ingestible or edible cannabis can be consumed in public, other than in a vehicle or boat. The risks associated with the use of cannabis, as outlined in Document 1, warrant provisions to restrict the public consumption of these products.

The submission, as outlined in Document 1, was prepared considering the available health evidence and lessons learned from regulating other substances. The submission was circulated to members of the Board of Health, however the recommendations contained therein had not, at that point, been formally considered or approved. Accordingly, the purpose of this report is to seek the Board's formal approval of the recommendations.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

To inform the development of the Medical Officer of Health's submission, OPH consulted the City of Ottawa's Emergency and Protective Services Department and incorporated regulatory concerns expressed by the department into the submission.

No public consultation was undertaken in preparing this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments associated with this report's recommendations.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

This report supports the OPH's 2019 – 2022 Strategy, *Protecting Our Community's Health*, with respect to promoting mental health and reducing health and social harms of substance use and influence the social and physical environments that support health and well-being.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Medical Officer of Health's submission to the Province of Ontario in response to the consultation on the potential for cannabis consumption establishments and/or cannabis special occasion permits

DISPOSITION

This report is presented to the Board for approval of the recommendations outlined in the supporting document. OPH will continue to monitor cannabis regulations at all levels of government and report back as needed.