



PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY'S HEALTH

Ottawa Public Health's 2019-2022
Strategy: 2021 Quarter 4 Progress Update



Contents

Strategic Goals3

Goal 1 – Drive innovative approaches to mental health and substance use – Status, Highlights and Achievements4

Goal 2 - Healthy Communities by Design - Status, Highlights and Achievements7

Goal 3 – Streamlining through digitization - Status, Highlights and Achievements10

Goal 4 – A healthy workplace and workforce - Status, Highlights and Achievements.....11

Goal 5 - Continuously improve our core work to maximize impact - Status, Highlights and Achievements12

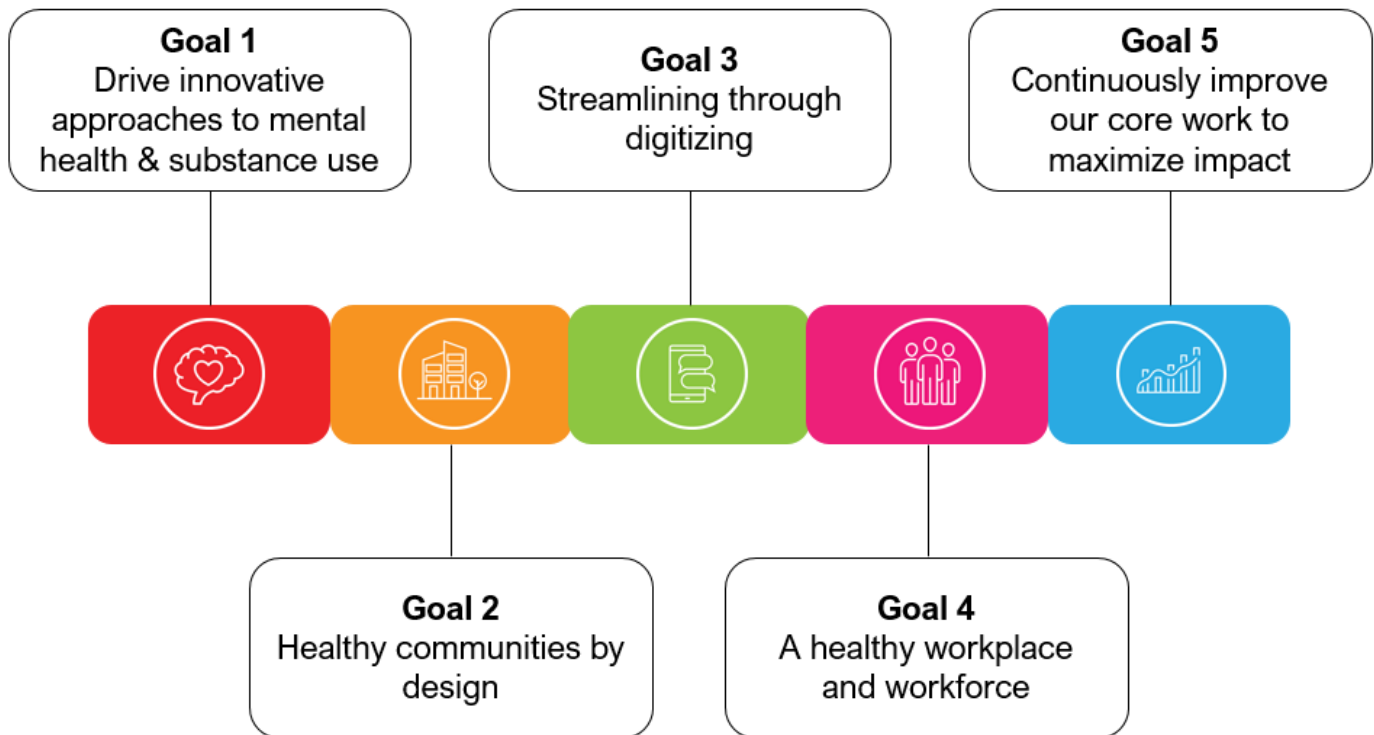
Transformational Initiatives15

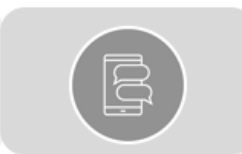
Community and Client Engagement - Highlights and Achievements16

Ontario Health Teams – Highlights and Achievements.....18

Public Health Modernization – Highlights and Achievements19

Strategic Goals





Goal 1 – Drive innovative approaches to mental health and substance use – Status, Highlights and Achievements

Quarterly Status

Q1 2021

Q2 2021

Q3 2021

Q4 2021

Highlights

Mental Health Promotion and Stigma Reduction

Stigma Training

- Reduced stigma and enhanced understanding of positive coping strategies and community services through the delivery of workshops reaching 364 intermediaries, including Elected Officials and City of Ottawa employees, to build their capacity to support Ottawa residents.
 - 93% of participants who completed the client satisfaction survey stated that they understand the impact of stigma and that they know how to access community resources.
 - What clients are saying: *"I LOVED the resources bit of the presentation. I think that's one of the biggest issues with the fight for better mental health for the population: is bringing more resources to the general population."* *"I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for an excellent presentation yesterday. Very practical and presented in plain language. Thank you for your efforts."*

Foster Resilient Communities

- Increased awareness of mental health and substance use health services and supports that meet the needs of Ottawa's Black community by providing training to 215 participants.
 - Feedback from a presentation delivered to Somali parents and youth: *"We are grateful that you both were able to join us during a busy time for your team and delivering an incredible presentation. The topic, the visuals/video piece, speaking both in Somali and English, providing resources, engaging with the parents through questions, outreach, giving the parents space to comment and ask questions was more than we expected. You guys truly have blown our minds and we invite you to join us again sometime."*
- Developed a neighborhood approach to support mental health and substance use health needs with system navigation and capacity building of service providers in low-income neighborhoods (e.g., Ottawa Community Housing, Boys and Girls Club, CSSD front line staff).
- Increased faith leaders' capacity to provide mental health supports and services to their communities through training, reaching an additional 18 faith leaders and bringing to 92 the total number of faith leaders trained since the training began in February 2021. A participant from Faith Leader training stated: *"This training is really needed for our community"*.
- Enhanced the well-being of workplaces by providing training on psychological health and safety to 154 participants.
 - Client feedback from the United Way Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN)

Conference for Workplace Mental Health: *“Excellent tips and resources shared - thank you so much - really appreciate you and the work of Ottawa Public Health - always so informative and right on the mark”; “Wonderful presentation with lots of tools and resources. Thank-you!”; “Fantastic resources and a really awesome presentation too.”*

- The Healthy Babies Healthy Children’s program completed 1,959 postpartum screens in Q4, representing roughly 87% of Ottawa births. Of those screened, approximately 22% of parents identified with a current or history of mental health illness and almost 13% were screened for Post-Partum Mood Disorder (PPMD) using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) or the EPDS-3. To build capacity to support new parents, approximately 30% of staff on the Healthy Growth and Development (HGD) team participated in the “Women in Mind and Body: Perinatal Mental Health” workshop hosted by The Royal. In addition, to help ensure the continued health and well-being of staff, 95% of HGD staff participated in a webinar titled “For the Love of Nurses: The 4Cs of Wellness - Courage, Connection, Care, and Compassion” hosted by Public Health Ontario.

Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion

- Continued to build capacity of post-secondary institutions to prevent suicide by planning additional Strength, Experience, Learning, and Focus (SELF) trainings. These trainings promote hope, help and strength on campus, supporting students to navigate through COVID-19 while also managing the regular stressors of life. This is done in collaboration with Suicide Prevention Ottawa.

Substance Use Stigma Awareness

- Worked to reduce stigma related to people who use substance by delivering trainings to intermediaries in collaboration with Community Addictions Peer Support Association (CAPSA).
- Increased City of Ottawa staff’s capacity to address stigma by providing a virtual interactive workshop on the topic of Stigma and Substance Use Health in collaboration with the City Wellness Services. The opportunity to reach all City staff through this valuable partnership resulted in over 70 people attending the session with overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Overdose Prevention and Harm Reduction

- Addressed risk of overdoses by providing party safer messaging and naloxone training to event organizers and volunteers attending post-secondary institutions. Naloxone training was also provided to staff at secondary schools with the active offer being extended to all school boards. Both trainings reached over 150 participants, with 100% of those surveyed stating that they intend to obtain a naloxone kit.
- Advanced recommendations outlined in the September 2021 report to the Board of Health to address the current mental health and substance use health concerns that have been worsened by the pandemic, including the overdose crisis. This included sending a letter to the Federal Minister of Health to provide them with the recommendations outlined in the report and adding our voice to the growing calls for the decriminalization of people who use controlled substances.
- Explored how hospital settings can best support the substance use health needs of their clients, in collaboration with Ottawa Community Action Plan (OCAP) partners, including access to opioid agonist treatment, harm reduction services and continuity of care.
- Maintained access to critical frontline services like supervised consumption services, needle and syringe program and take-home naloxone kits and ensured access to COVID-19 testing and vaccination for people who use drugs and are experiencing homelessness/precarious housing by adapting programs in

collaboration with all harm reduction partners.

- Monitored emerging Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) guidelines for Harm Reduction programming and supported partners to adapt in their practice environments (i.e. sharing updated protocols and guidance, etc.).
- Continued to establish new harm reduction partnerships to help mitigate reduction in services across community partner organizations affected by the pandemic. These partnerships include emergency services, outreach programs, and indigenous service organizations as well increased access through emergency departments and increased collaboration with community pharmacy partners.
- Received Ministry of Health approval to evaluate the effectiveness of collaborating with police services to distribute naloxone kits to community members at risk of overdose. Ottawa is one of two cities launching this pilot program in Ontario, which is expected to start in Q1 of 2022.
- Enhanced ongoing evaluation of Safer Supply Ottawa program through allocated increased pilot funding. The hope is to have year one data available in Q1 2022, which will look at the impacts and efficacy of safer supply programming to address the toxic unregulated drug supply.

Supporting the Community to Address Continued and Emerging Issues

- Advanced the development of the substance use health and mental health dashboard through extensive partner consultations on the content and approach, with a focus on OCAP partners.
- Supported low-income neighbourhoods by providing system navigation through initial training of OPH Mental Health (MH) and Substance Use Health (SUH) unit employees with AccessMHA and 1call1click.
- Enhanced the ability of OPH Mental Health (MH) and Substance Use Health (SUH) unit employees to respond to clients in distress by receiving training on Verbal Crisis Intervention Skills.
- Continued to collaborate as facilitator and backbone support for the smoking Community of Practice and the Ottawa Gambling Harm Prevention Network, with feedback from partners that they find the cooperative “meetings very helpful”.
- Contributed to research on alcohol and tobacco use by reviewing and providing feedback on the Public Health Ontario report titled “Tobacco and Alcohol Attributable Burden for Chronic Diseases and Injuries in Ontario by Public Health Unit”.

Challenges

- The deployment of MH and SUH team members to support the ongoing vaccination efforts at the end of the quarter, while also meeting the continuing and growing mental health and substance use health needs of the community, created additional challenges.
- The continuing challenges of the pandemic were also felt by the school boards, which made it difficult to co-ordinate and implement supports such as further naloxone training.
- While OPH has continued to make advancements on priorities, progress has not advanced as quickly as hoped as the health unit and the many key partners have been impacted by the COVID-19 response.
- The Harm Reduction unit continues to manage significant staffing issues due to illness and/or isolation leaves, deployments, and work-from home requirements. Mitigation strategies include cross-team staffing support, resource allocation, and adjusted staffing models.



Goal 2 Healthy Communities by Design - Status, Highlights and Achievements

Quarterly Status

Q1 2021

Q2 2021

Q3 2021

Q4 2021

Highlights

COVID-19 Awareness and Communication

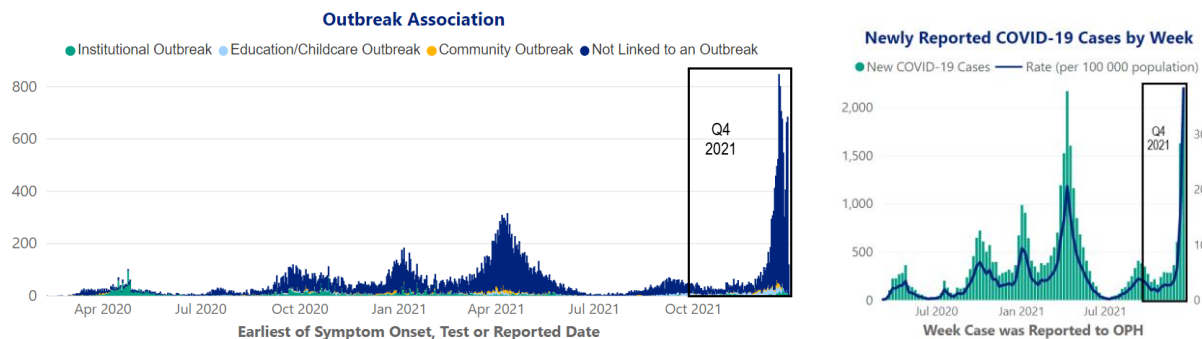
OPH continued to provide communications to support informed decision-making by Ottawa residents. From October to December, OPH quickly shifted capacity to promote vaccination among 5 to 11-year-olds, as well as widespread booster dose implementation with the onset of the Omicron variant. OPH Communications worked closely with school and hospital partners, including CHEO, to support diverse messaging to parents to promote vaccination among school-aged children, including after-school vaccination clinics. OPH continued to encourage residents to follow public health guidance to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Providing information about the provincial changes, mandatory vaccination policies and proof of vaccinations was important during this time, along with the changes to the vaccination clinics, hubs, pop-ups, and mobile clinics.

COVID-19 Control and Containment in Ottawa

The start of the quarter saw low rates of COVID-19 in the community. With the emergence of the Omicron variant, the number of people testing positive quickly surged to the highest levels seen throughout the entire pandemic. By end of Q4, the case rate rose to 667 per 100,000; over three times higher than the previous peak.

As a result of the high rates of COVID-19 in Ottawa and across the province, the testing and case management guidance was modified to prioritize vulnerable populations. By the end of December, only a select group of individuals were eligible for testing. In addition, OPH was no longer communicating with high-risk contacts, and individuals were told to self-isolate if they or someone in their household was symptomatic, regardless of vaccination status. These steps were implemented to ensure resources could be allocated to those with the greatest risk for severe outcome and to minimize the spread of Omicron.

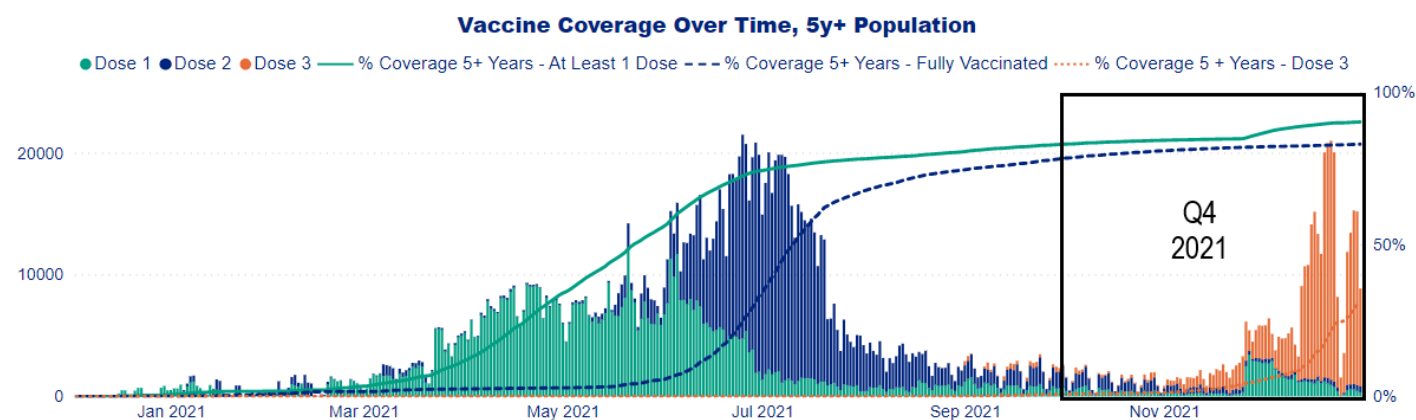
Q4 saw a total of 254 confirmed outbreaks, compared to only 52 outbreaks in the previous quarter (Q3). Work continued to focus on preventing outbreaks through promotion of appropriate infection prevention and control practices in these settings.



COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts

Vaccination efforts continued in Q4 with roll-out of third doses in November 2021. Over 288,000 third doses were administered in Ottawa during the quarter with the highest daily doses administered occurring on December 21 and 22 with 20,768 and 20,825 doses administered each day respectively. OPH and the City of Ottawa continued to operate community clinics as well as pop-up and mobile clinics in priority neighbourhoods and high-risk settings across Ottawa.

By the end of Q4, 90% of Ottawa's eligible population (5+ years) received at least one dose and 83% were fully vaccinated. As for Ottawa's overall population, 86% of residents received their first dose and 79% were fully vaccinated by the end of Q4.



Supporting communities at higher risk of COVID-19 to get vaccinated

OPH continued to work closely with community stakeholders and leveraged partnerships throughout Q4 to support the rollout of third doses, build vaccine confidence, increase vaccination coverage rates, and support sectors to navigate the surge in transmission due to the Omicron variant. Some key examples of the work of OPH's Community Operations Branch in Q4 include:

- Continued to run Neighbourhood Hubs, allowing for the administration of first, second and third doses in high-priority neighbourhoods. These Hubs provide information and access to vaccinations using diverse language supports to meet the needs of the community. There was a total of 14 locations and over 11,800 doses administered in these settings. In addition, these Hubs provided residents a place to obtain vaccine receipts, with over 800 receipts printed.
- Hosted mobile clinics with over 30 partners, with positive engagement and satisfaction from partners. In Q4, there were 58 mobile clinics delivered and over 1,600 doses administered in workplaces, places of worship, community organizations and special events. Surveys of Mobile Clinic collaborators revealed that 92% were satisfied with the quality of the service provided by OPH. Suggested improvements included greater promotion and visibility of clinics as well as allowing the organizations more lead time to promote the clinics.
- Provided continuous communications to community partners and the public around the Omicron variant, vaccination for 5 to 11-year-olds, booster doses for those 18 years and over, as well as information on the changes to testing criteria and isolation periods.
- Continued efforts to ensure partners had access to the most up-to-date information. This included distributing weekly newsletters, responding to inquiries, and targeted email updates. In addition, there was targeted support to local sport-oriented stakeholders and sectors such as places of worship, childcare, post-secondary institutions, multi-unit dwellings, and older adult and volunteer services.
- Started shifting community partner engagements towards a greater focus on mental health and recovery.

Official Plan and Climate Change

As members of the Official Plan team, OPH continued to support the draft Official Plan by providing health expertise while getting the draft Plan to committees and Council and participating in the process at committee and Council (e.g., motions, presentations). The Plan was adopted at a joint meeting of the Planning and the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committees and then at Council, and has now been submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for final approval. In addition, OPH continued to support the City's climate change vulnerability assessment; began the first round of consultations on OPH's Climate Change and Health Vulnerability Assessment on Extreme Heat; and began participating in consultations on the Zoning By-law. Furthermore, OPH presented at both the Canadian Public Health Association and the Ontario Professional Planners Institute conferences about the embedding of healthy communities and resiliency into the City of Ottawa's Official Plan.

Challenges

Changing provincial direction

Frequent guidance changes related to COVID-19 case management and vaccination eligibility required adaptability.

Staffing

With the continued pandemic response and increasing core operational demands, it is a challenge to balance the need for agility and moving highly skilled employees to where they are most needed in the organization, as well as ensuring team and employee continuity and capacity.

During the surge in transmission in Q4, many staff were redeployed to support OPH immunization clinics.

Addressing barriers to vaccination and vaccine myths

Health promotion around COVID-19 vaccines is still needed as many continue to have questions and concerns. Vaccine hesitancy remains a challenge and is being addressed through community outreach and communication strategies.

Programs and Services

The surge in Omicron transmission negatively impacted community outreach activities to underserved and priority populations by restricting in-person interactions and there was a subsequent reduction in community participation as events shifted to a virtual environment.



Goal 3 – Streamlining through digitization - Status, Highlights and Achievements

Quarterly Status

Q1 2021

Q2 2021

Q3 2021

Q4 2021

Highlights

Case and Contact Management (CCM) System

As the number of people testing positive increased during the fall, the province-wide system used to manage COVID-19 cases, contacts, outbreaks, and adverse events following immunization (AEFI) was leveraged to utilize automated options whenever possible and to refer people testing positive and their contacts to provincial workforces.

Ottawa Public Health (OPH) continued to support the technical evolution of the CCM. In 2021, the Ministry of Health announced the expansion of CCM to all Diseases of Public Health Significance (DOPHS). This will be a significant and welcome transformation for how OPH does business. Engagement with public health units will begin in late Q1 2022, with the full expansion to all DOPHS by mid-2023.

COVAX ON

OPH has continued to act as the Authorizing Organization for the provincially mandated solution to administer COVID-19 vaccinations and to support partner organizations, such as community health centres, family health teams, and primary care physicians' offices with their use of COVAX. Over the last quarter, there has been a fluctuation in the number of system users, corresponding to the number of vaccinations being administered as part of the city's campaign.

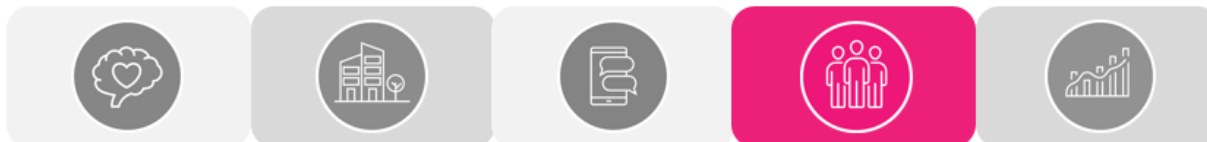
Onboarding and support processes remain in place to ensure the administration of COVID-19 vaccination occurs effectively, efficiently, and securely. In addition, OPH continues to provide support for proof of vaccination status to residents.

OPH will continue to act as a regional hub for vaccine distribution, administration, onboarding, and support, as per evolving provincial direction.

Challenges

The surge in case counts with a more transmissible virus as well as the resource and system limitations, forced the discontinuation of several processes related to case and contact management.

Evolving development and continuous user onboarding and offboarding activities to both of these provincially mandated solutions has made it necessary to closely and regularly monitor our local privacy and security posture to ensure that adequate technical and procedural safeguards are in place.



Goal 4 – A healthy workplace and workforce - Status, Highlights and Achievements

Quarterly Status			
Q1 2021	Q2 2021	Q3 2021	Q4 2021
Highlights			
<p>Wellness Initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to offer Wellness sessions (Coaching Circles and Psychological Debriefs) for OPH's management team (managers, program managers and supervisors) to address results of the City's Employee Pulse survey, which indicated that OPH Managers and Program Managers are faring worse when compared to OPH Employees and/or City Managers and Program Managers. Launched OPH's Fall-ing for you Self-Care Challenge, which included 15 teams and over 130 employees. Employees stated that they enjoyed being able to socialize with colleagues, connect with their teammates and be encouraged to focus on their self-care. Hosted a virtual OPH Holiday celebration, which was attended by over 460 employees. Wellness@Work organized an inspirational speaker, Kellylee Evans, who provided an engaging speech about resilience and coping during difficult times. Many employees appreciated the session, stating that it was inspirational, uplifting, and informative. Developed and disseminated a Joy@Work discussion guide, to support supervisors and leaders to have a meaningful conversation with their employees about joy at work. Employed a variety of communication channels to share resources and information focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building and maintaining a team spirit in a virtual environment Employee recognition Wellness and mental health Recharging as part of OPH's Recovery Plan <p>Vacation Leave</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring employees take time off to recharge is critical in supporting employee wellness. Data from October-December 2021 showed that vacation leave hours were higher than the same time period in 2018, 2019 and 2020. 			
Challenges			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overtime and sick leave hours continued to be substantially higher than in previous years. Balancing manageable workloads while also supporting COVID surges, vaccination efforts and restoring priority programming and services has presented challenges. 			



Goal 5 - Continuously improve our core work to maximize impact - Status, Highlights and Achievements

Quarterly Status

Q1 2021

Q2 2021

Q3 2021

Q4 2021

Quality Improvement Initiatives Undertaken

Q4 saw numerous quality improvement initiatives undertaken by teams across OPH. Examples include:

- Staff at the Sexual Health Clinic participated in a training course entitled LGBT2SQ Foundation through Rainbow Health Ontario to promote high-quality, safe, and inclusive service delivery.
- The Sexual Health Clinic had its client registration form reviewed by clients, staff, and community members. Based on feedback received, the form was updated to better meet the needs of clients and practitioners.
- The Case Management team implemented the following quality improvement activities to increase the number of people testing positive reached during the surge in December:
 - Changing case management practices to align with updated Ministry guidance.
 - Using the Provincial Work Force (PWF) to manage all files that were not from a high-risk setting.
 - Providing advanced notice, using a virtual assistant outreach tool, for all eligible cases.
 - Decreasing data entry requirements.
 - Closing of files where the people who had tested positive were beyond their isolation date.
- An audit of the referrals to and from provincial partners revealed that approximately 30% of files were either not transferred correctly or missed for assignment (either at PWF or on return to OPH) resulting in untimely follow-up. Processes were updated and additional training was provided to OPH staff. These improvements resulted in fewer than 5% of files being transferred incorrectly (down from 30%).
- Optimized reach and reduced barriers to vaccination by continuously adapting strategies and processes for high-priority neighbourhood vaccine clinics based on the findings of a rapid assessment.
- The Community Operations team provided feedback on the first round of after-school clinics to inform the second round, including emphasis on schools in Q5 neighbourhoods and schools in neighbourhoods with existing partnerships.
- The Environmental Health team implemented a new reporting process, utilizing Microsoft Forms, for the retrieval of discarded needles by City departments. This new process allows for increased ease of reporting as it can be completed on site and no longer requires the data be scanned or faxed. Through this new process, data is entered directly into a master dataset, which is accessible by both OPH and City departments. Allowing direct access to the data enables City departments to run their own reports related to their aspects of the program.
- Completed follow-ups with immunizers who experienced a needlestick injury in Q3 to help prevent future needlestick injuries. The Immunization Unit Quality Assurance Team continues to look for ways to prevent Shoulder Injuries Related to Vaccine Administration (SIRVAs) and needlestick injuries and

implemented corrective measures as required.

- The IPAC team undertook several quality improvement initiatives to position itself for future waves of COVID-19 and in response to the report from Ontario's Long-Term Care Commission.
 - IPAC assigned specific investigators to each long-term care home (LTCH), which provided stakeholders with a key point of contact and strengthened relationships.
 - In collaboration with Digital Services, IPAC expanded the scope, use and transformation of Hedgehog, the software utilized for public health inspections, to support disclosure, reporting, workload management, continuous quality improvement and digital work infrastructure.
 - In support of the settings-based approach to school health, IPAC facilitated capacity building of the COVID-19 School Support Team (CSST) in outbreak and data management. IPAC enhanced the support and services provided to schools in the management of COVID-19.

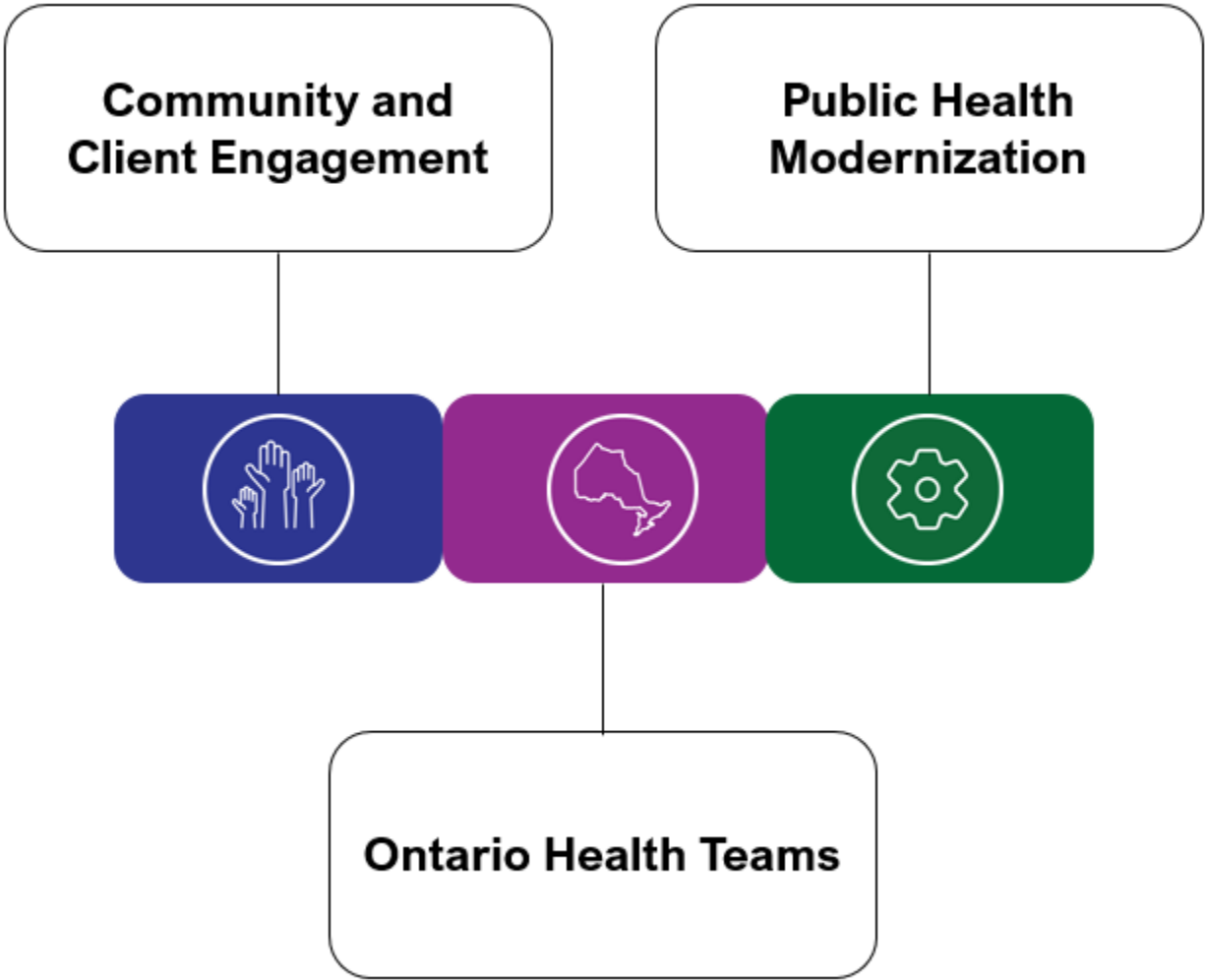
Highlights

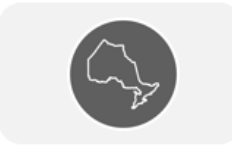
- The Case Management team shifted its practice to improve timely follow-up using the many tools and resources available, considering significant and frequent changes to Ministry guidance.
- The Case Management team noticed demonstrable improvement in data entry by case managers with additional training, clear language in the data entry guides, and timely communications of the importance of certain fields and use in the CCM documentation system.
- Continued implementation of a variety of community vaccination models such as neighbourhood hubs, mobile clinics, and pop ups to increase access to vaccination.
- There were no SIRVAs reported at OPH Immunization Clinics (COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 vaccinations) during Q4.
- There was a total of five needlestick injuries reported, out of 217,237 vaccine doses administered at OPH Immunization Clinics (COVID-19 and non-COVID-19), during Q4.
- IPAC continued to support immunization throughout Q4 for LTCH and retirement home residents and staff for third doses and co-administration of flu/COVID-19 vaccines in congregate settings. IPAC was able to strengthen stakeholder relations by building facilities' capacity to self-administer vaccines and reduce barriers to access by providing mobile immunization clinic supports.
- IPAC renewed and strengthened stakeholder relations across sectors by engaging regularly with partners, providing consultations and IPAC supports. OPH continues to work closely with local and regional partners, including those in acute care (The Ottawa Hospital, Queensway Carleton Hospital, Montfort and Bruyère), community health care (Community Health Centres, Ottawa-Inner City Health), and provincial authorities (Ontario Health, Ministry of Long-term Care, Solicitor General, Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority, Home and Community Care Support Services, Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services), to ensure coordinated and timely response to help prevent severe illness and death due to COVID-19 in high-risk settings.
- OPH has worked across sectors and with various partners to support and advocate for strategies to address isolation policies, critical staffing shortages and acute care transfers and admissions. Strategies include, but are not limited to, site visits (prevention and outbreak management), development of tools, holding Community of Practice meetings, and ongoing communication with the sectors/partners.
- The Dental Clinics hired and trained additional staff to allow for adequate staffing levels and wait list reductions.

Challenges

- Although many quality improvement initiatives were undertaken this quarter, some teams were unable to meet their identified performance measurement targets, with 8 of 20 performance measures receiving a red status.
- Staffing levels continued to be an issue due to deployments, vacation, and other leaves.
- Although staffing for non-COVID-19 programs and services is increasing, it is still limited given the continued demands of the COVID-19 pandemic response and vaccination efforts.
- The Case Management team was unable to use the virtual assistant outreach tool during a peak period in December due to system improvements resulting from changes to the Ministry guidance.
- The Case Management team was unable to use the Public Health Ontario contact tracing initiative due to their limited inclusion criteria for contact investigations.
- Demand for epidemiological input, products and public inquiries continues to be high.

Transformational Initiatives





Community and Client Engagement - Highlights and Achievements

Projects/Initiatives Undertaken

- Regular engagement with elected officials and stakeholders to keep them informed of the COVID-19 pandemic response and answer questions and concerns.
- Engagement with a wide variety of audiences and through multiple channels to ensure residents and partners have the information and resources they need as it relates to the local COVID-19 situation as well as generally with respect to public health programs and services.
- Active engagement through social media platforms to share public health messaging and regular updates on the pandemic response and vaccination efforts.
- Engagement with the community to collaborate on a variety of partner-led or OPH-led vaccination clinics.
- Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership (OLIP) reviewed OPH's Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression policy and action plan and recommended that OPH undergo a Diversity Audit, which will be initiated in Q1 of 2022.
- Conducted a significant review of the [Businesses, Workplaces and Community Organizations](#) webpage.

Highlights

- Over 420 stakeholder engagements including: scheduled and proactive meetings; responding to inquiries; issuing newsletters and targeted email updates; direct targeted support to local sport-oriented stakeholders and sectors such as places of worship, childcare, post secondary institutions, multi-unit dwellings, older adult, and volunteer services. These engagement activities reached over 42,900 individuals.
- The Sector Engagement (SET) and Business Engagement and Program Support (BEPS) teams were merged into one, forming the Business and Sector Engagement (BASE) team, which has created opportunities to streamline engagement activities.
- Continued to implement a variety of community vaccination models such as neighbourhood hubs, mobile clinics, and pop ups clinics to increase vaccine uptake in priority populations and reach clients facing the greatest barriers.

Challenges

- All Community Operations programs were significantly impacted by the surge in infections resulting from the Omicron variant. This led to redeployment of staff, rescheduling, or cancelling of activities, reprioritization, and additional demands on staff outside of work.
- Pandemic fatigue among partners, sectors, stakeholders, and the public and changing recommendations related to testing eligibility and case management have also presented challenges.
- A Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey revealed that overall satisfaction with OPH resources has dropped since the previous survey completed in April 2021. Many respondents reported they found OPH

resources were not easy to understand, and they were less confident implementing measures in their workplace or setting. To address the survey feedback, OPH completed a significant review of the Businesses, Workplaces and Community Organizations webpage and related resources and policies. In addition, OPH scheduled more frequent check-ins with key stakeholders to provide support and inform them of available resources.

- Change in weather and reduced daylight posed challenges for engagement and outreach on the ground in neighbourhoods.
- Some online engagements sessions were disrupted by people opposed to COVID-19 vaccines. This impacted presenters and led to discontinuing broad communications about larger community Town Halls and a greater focus on smaller targeted sessions. In addition, OPH implemented technical strategies to monitor and limit disruptive participation.



Ontario Health Teams – Highlights and Achievements

Projects/Initiatives Undertaken

OPH continues to contribute to the work of four Ottawa-area Ontario Health Teams (OHTs):

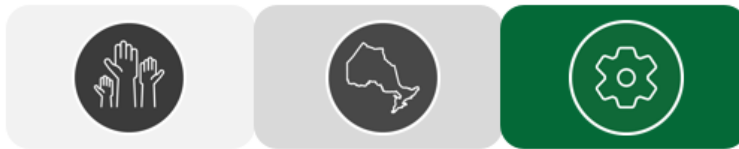
- 1) Ottawa Health Team-Équipe Santé Ottawa (OHT-ESO)
- 2) Ottawa East OHT
- 3) Kids Come First Health Team
- 4) Ottawa West Four Rivers OHT

Highlights

- The OHT-ESO continued its community engagement efforts to increase vaccination rates across priority neighbourhoods. A rapid review and assessment of vaccination strategies was completed. Findings indicate that no approach was more successful than another. They all had strengths and weaknesses and worked concurrently to achieve higher rates of immunization within high-priority neighbourhoods.
- Also completed in Q4 was an evaluation of the OHT-ESO referral initiative for wrap-around supports. This evaluation found that partnerships and collaborations were strengthened, clients received support through efficient processes, and the objectives of the initiative were achieved.
- Kids Come First hosted its first Annual General Meeting in October and initiated priority-setting discussions for the coming year. In addition, a Collaborative Decision-Making Agreement was developed and approved. OPH signed as an Organizational Partner; this formalizes the current processes for working together and aligns with OPH's involvement in other OHTs.
- Four Rivers OHT officially rebranded to Ottawa West Four Rivers and continued to establish its working infrastructure as an approved OHT. OPH is currently participating on this OHT's Mental Health & Addictions action team, and the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion committee.
- As part of OPH's work with the Ottawa East OHT, the Healthy Growth & Development Team continued to participate in the Best Practice Spotlight Organization initiative and is currently implementing best practice guidelines for perinatal depression. This initiative is an example of OPH's commitment to a culture of continuous quality improvement.

Challenges

Leaders' and subject matter experts' capacity to contribute to the various committees and work groups continues to be overstretched due to pandemic response and vaccination efforts.



Public Health Modernization – Highlights and Achievements

Projects/Initiatives Undertaken

- A critical component of OPH's on-going work in the area of public health modernization included strengthening and leveraging local, regional and provincial partnerships. OPH continues to work closely with many regional health and social partners to support the vaccine roll out and to support a regional approach to IPAC and outbreak management, capitalizing on local public health expertise and connections at the regional level.
- The development and implementation of OPH's Recovery Plan, which focuses on three main areas: (1) Recharging employees' wellness; (2) Restoring prioritized public health programs and services; and (3) Re-imagining OPH.

Highlights

Restoring prioritized public health programs and services:

- Orchestrated a departmental wide "Fall Transition Plan" from July to October to restore core priority programs while sustaining key programs and services for COVID-19 operations. Developed and applied a risk-assessment framework to identify key areas of public health work that had been interrupted or were threatened by the COVID-19 response. Top priority programs that were restored included Dental Services, Mental Health and Substance Use, Immunization Catch-up and Flu, Sexual Health and Harm Reduction, Healthy Growth and Development, and Environment Health Hazards.
- Conducted an evaluation of the Fall Transition Plan, as part of the OPH Recovery Plan, to identify learnings for improvements in preparation for the next phase of recovery planning. The evaluation identified key issues and challenges related to employee wellness, workforce stability, talent management and management capacity. The findings, root causes and recommendations have been directly integrated into the present phase of the Recovery Plan as we look to re-imagine what OPH will become in 2022 and beyond.

Re-Imagining OPH:

- Conducted a literature review of lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and identified four key focus areas for future public health exploration. A summary of this information was outlined in four concept papers entitled:
 - Intersection of Health Equity, Population Health Approach, and Social Determinants of Health
 - Collaboration and Community Engagement in Public Health
 - Economic Recovery & Sustainability of Health and Social System
 - Digital Health Technology and Innovative Practices
- Developed and presented the Annual Strategy Action Plan for 2022. This new annual action plan includes 6 goals and one transformational initiative. The new goals focus on advancing health through a health equity lens and greater collaboration and engagement with OHTs, stakeholders, the community, and clients to help strengthen the health system. The annual plan also includes re-imagining and

planning for OPH's post-pandemic future.

Challenges

- There are many unknowns at this time, including the length of the ongoing COVID-19 response. Other factors that may impact planning include changes in operations of local healthcare partners, and the province's post-pandemic healthcare sector and funding.
- While the Fall Transition Plan was successful in reinstating the identified prioritized core programs to the desired levels, uncertainty around COVID-19 resurgences and rapidly changing organizational structure created tremendous strain around areas of employee wellness, workforce stability, talent management and management capacity.