



INFORMATION REPORT

TO: Mayor and Members Board of Health	WARD(S) AFFECTED: CITY WIDE
COMMITTEE DATE: May 7, 2012	
SUBJECT/REPORT NO: Issues Response and Service Standards BOH12006(City Wide)	
SUBMITTED BY: Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health Public Health Services Department	PREPARED BY: Dr. Chris Mackie (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5581
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

This report completes two objectives in the Public Health Services Strategic Business Plan approved by the Board of Health May 24, 2011:

- Work to ensure that requests from individual Board of Health members are addressed in the most appropriate manner: consult with individual Board of Health members to identify the range of requests that they would bring to staff; and recommend approaches for the consideration of the Board of Health on how to appropriately address such requests; and,
- Respond to critical demand work in priority.

Information:

In order to align with City of Hamilton goals of providing quality service and improving the perception of the City of Hamilton, Public Health Services (PHS) proposed two objectives related to service in its 2011 Strategic Business Plan. To achieve these objectives, PHS has consulted with Board of Health members about how to improve the consistency of our services to citizens through their offices and how to prioritize critical demand work. As part of this consultation, the effectiveness and efficiency of related communications was also discussed. In order to develop appropriate standards for critical demand work, relevant legislation, regulations and related requirements were also reviewed.

This report summarizes feedback from Board of Health members and sets standards for issues management and critical demand work. Appendix A includes a list of recommendations from Board members to improve service consistency and related communications. Appendix B describes the PHS policy that sets standards for responses and timelines for critical demand issues. These consultations also informed amendments to the Communication Policy that is presented in report #PH06038(a) for the Board's consideration.

Board of Health members provided a range of recommendations related to issues response and related communications. In general, Board members stated that trust of PHS was high and that transparency was valued and should be enhanced. They identified that providing information to Board members and their office staff about programs and services offered by PHS would be central to improving service to citizens on matters related to public health.

Themes that emerged included the need for more information about programs provided by PHS and the desire to ensure that contact can be made with individuals in PHS, not just with an anonymous system. Board members made several specific suggestions to improve communications. These included steps to improve familiarity of board members and their staff with services provided and guidance about preferred methods of communication around upcoming issues. These are summarized in Appendix A. All of these recommendations will be implemented and coordinated with broader City of Hamilton initiatives where applicable.

Board members also identified opportunities to improve the consistency of service to citizens. These included methods for tracking contacts with citizens, steps to ensure issues are forwarded appropriately with adequate continuity, and input on standards for response times. They are included in Appendix A and in Appendix B as appropriate.

Critical demand work is a core component of Public Health Services which must be balanced with management of non-critical issues. Critical demand work can range from responding to urgent issues that are limited in scope such as a subpoena for clinical records to major international crises such as an influenza pandemic. Many of the related response times are mandated under various pieces of legislation, while others require PHS staff to exercise judgment in assessing urgency. Appendix B provides the PHS policy regarding such responses. It reflects the relevant legislation and describes the response times that PHS will be using going forward.

Appendix B also includes a list of services provided by PHS and the names and contact information for relevant staff. This list is a draft, and will be taken to staff in all Board members' offices for input on format, level of information, and usefulness.

Appendices

Appendix A - Recommendations for Improved Service Consistency and Communications

Appendix B - Public Health Response

Recommendations for Improved Service Consistency and Communications

The table below summarizes Board of Health members' recommendations for improved consistency of service to citizens and communications with Board members. Many of these recommendations reinforce practices that are well established within Public Health Services.

Recommendations for Improved Service Consistency and Communications
Improving Public Health Services (PHS) information and service to citizens through Board of Health members' offices
Provide a directory and organizational chart of roles and responsibilities, including contact information
Offer training to staff in Board members' offices regarding who handles which public health related complaints
Provide ongoing education to the public about the mandate of PHS, as well as specific information on important items as they arise
Improve the PHS website, but note that not all Hamiltonians have access to the internet
Work closely with the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) on issues and complaints
Providing timely, accurate information to Board of Health members
Offer workshops for Board members regarding the mandated and legislated roles and responsibilities of PHS
Offer specific educational opportunities to Board members, such as an overview of the Personal Health Information and Privacy Act (PHIPA), or a review of public health governance and related legislation
Provide "real time" updates on important issues
Provide information in advance of complex issues coming to Board
Offer more face-to-face meetings on complex issues to provide information tailored to Board members' needs
Work with Board members in advance to ensure that recommendations coming forward are the most appropriate alternatives
Consider providing verbal updates from the Medical Officer of Health at Board of Health meetings on developing issues
Consider providing quarterly updates to track PHS performance on key indicators
Use multiple methods of communication for complex issues, such as written reports, presentations, face-to-face
Enhancing consistency of service

Set a timeframe for responding to constituent concerns and monitor this
Consider a singular issue/complaint tracking system for all City of Hamilton departments
Continue to stay on budget to ensure sustainability of services
Ensure compliance with mandated response times
Provide a written response as soon as practicable, describing the process and timelines for definitive response

Public Health Services Policy and Procedure Manual

Chapter	00	Administration	00-00
Section			
Subject	00	Public Health Response	
Approved by:	Public Health Services Management Team - 2012-April-05		

Intent To develop a clear process for how Public Health Services responds to concerns or complaints from members of the general public, community organizations, health professionals or Councillors regarding issues of public health and safety.

Policy Public Health Services is committed to providing efficient and effective response to concerns related to public health and safety in a timely and consistent manner.

The Ontario Public Health Standards require that health units respond to reports of health hazards and communicable disease within 24 hours where applicable. On-call staff are available after hours to respond to potential health hazards, case reports and outbreaks of infectious diseases and public health emergencies.

Procedure Any calls from the Contact Center, members of the general public, community organizations, health professionals or Councillors will be assessed and managed in accordance with the following procedure:

- The call will be forwarded to the appropriate program contact (if the call has not already come in directly to the program) as identified in Table 1
- Information will be collected from the caller including:
 - Identity of caller
 - Issue of concern
- The response time for the call to be returned will occur as quickly as possible and at a maximum in the response times as outlined in Table 2
 - Response within 24 hours 7 days a week: Serious health hazards, communicable disease reports or occurrences that have an impact on health
 - Response on the same business day: requests for

- information or response to urgent issues from programs such as Family Health during regular business hours
- Response within 1 business day: Issues that do not involve a current risk to public health or safety
 - The caller will be informed of the next steps in the process and the outcome of the investigation
 - No information regarding an individual will be shared with any outside person without consent unless required under legislation
 - Any communication or information shared with the caller will ensure compliance with Public Health Services policies regarding confidentiality and release of information and with relevant legislation including:
 - Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)
 - Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)
 - Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA)
 - Any calls that are outside the mandate of Public Health Services will be referred to appropriate agency or department for further follow up
 - This policy will be housed on the S drive and updated as needed

Definitions

Communicable disease means a disease specified as a communicable disease under the HPPA

Health hazard as defined under the HPPA means:

- (a) a condition of a premises,
- (b) a substance, thing, plant or animal other than man, or
- (c) a solid, liquid, gas or combination of any of them,

that has or that is likely to have an adverse effect on the health of any person.

References

Relevant PHS policies:

Confidentiality

Freedom of Information requests

Privacy of personal health information

Public Communication

Legislation:

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act,
(MFIPPA), R.S.O, 1990

Personal Health Information Protection Act, S.O, 2004

Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O, 1990, c.H.7.

Resources

History

Name of policy: Public Health Response

Primary author, title, division: Julie Emili, AMOH, OMOH

Date of review & approvals: April 5, 2012

Name of those who reviewed/approved: PHSMT

Table 1: Contact information

Program Areas	Manager	Contact information
Active, Sustainable Transportation, and Land Use (Health Promotion and Policy)	Ann Stanziani	Ext. 2778 ann.stanziani@hamilton.ca
Alcohol, Drug, and Gambling Services	Susan Boyd	Ext. 2888 susan.boyd@hamilton.ca
Assessment of Young Offenders	Kathy de Jong	Ext. 3697 kathy.dejong@hamilton.ca
Breastfeeding	Lesley Jefferies	Ext. 1593 lesley.jefferies@hamilton.ca
Cancer Prevention and Screening (Health Promotion and Policy)	Ann Stanziani	Ext. 2778 ann.stanziani@hamilton.ca
Child and Youth Mental Health	Kathy de Jong	Ext. 3697 kathy.dejong@hamilton.ca
Child Safety (car seats, safe sleep environments, falls)	Sally Coulas	Ext. 7424 sally.coulas@hamilton.ca
Child, Youth and Family Counseling and Assessment	Kathy de Jong	Ext. 3697 kathy.dejong@hamilton.ca
Community Health Bus	Stacey Krestell-Goodman	Ext. 7516 stacey.krestell-goodman@hamilton.ca
Community Influenza Immunization Strategies (not clinics)	Kim Dias	Ext. 7115 kim.dias@hamilton.ca
Daycare Inspections and Complaint Investigations Pertaining to Infection Control Issues	Michelle Baird	Ext. 3529 Cell 905-961-8701 Program Secretary 905-546-2063 michelle.baird@hamilton.ca
Dental Claims Payment	Peter Wiebe	Ext. 3787 peter.wiebe@hamilton.ca
Early Identification of Children with Growth and Development Concerns	Jennifer Vickers-Manzin	Ext. 3559 jennifer.vickers-manzin@hamilton.ca
Falls Prevention (Health Promotion and Policy)	Sue Connell	Ext. 3089 sue.connell@hamilton.ca
Family Home Visitors	Sue Sherwood	Ext. 3803 sue.sherwood@hamilton.ca
Food Premises Inspections	Richard MacDonald	Ext. 5818 richard.macdonald@hamilton.ca

Program Areas	Manager	Contact information
		Food Safety Line 905-546-3570 publichealth@hamilton.ca
Food Recalls	Richard MacDonald	Ext. 5818 richard.macdonald@hamilton.ca Food Safety Line 905-546-3570 publichealth@hamilton.ca
Food Safety Complaints	Richard MacDonald	Ext. 5818 richard.macdonald@hamilton.ca Food Safety Line 905-546-3570 publichealth@hamilton.ca
Funeral Home Inspections	Susan Harding-Cruz	Ext. 3576 Program Secretary Ext. 3327 / 3527 susan.harding-cruz@hamilton.ca
Group Home and Lodging Home Inspections (not RCF)	Susan Harding-Cruz	Ext. 3576 Program Secretary Ext. 3327 / 3527 susan.harding-cruz@hamilton.ca
Healthy Babies Healthy Children (home visiting with families with young children)	Dianne Busser Bonnie King Sue Sherwood	Ext. 3655 dianne.busser@hamilton.ca Ext. 1587 bonnie.king@hamilton.ca Ext. 3803 sue.sherwood@hamilton.ca
Health Connections Phone Line	Bonnie King	Ext. 1587 bonnie.king@hamilton.ca
Health Hazards (Asbestos, Potentially Hazardous Odours, Mould, Air Quality, Healthy Housing, Marijuana Grow-Ops, Sewage, Pesticides)	Matthew Lawson	Ext. 5823 matthew.lawson@hamilton.ca PHS Inspection Intake line 905-546-3570
Healthy Eating and Nutrition (Health Promotion and Policy)	Claire Lechner	Ext. 4181 claire.lechner@hamilton.ca
Healthy Pregnancy	Jennifer Vickers-Manzin	Ext. 3559 jennifer.vickers-manzin@hamilton.ca
Healthy Smiles (Community Preventive Clinics, Preventive Dental Clinics)	Pat Tester	Ext. 7158 pat.testers@hamilton.ca
Immunization Clinics	Fiona Newton	Ext. 3284

Program Areas	Manager	Contact information
(non school clinics)		fiona.newton@hamilton.ca
Immunization Records for Schools and Licensed Child Care Centres	Fiona Newton	Ext. 3284 fiona.newton@hamilton.ca
Infection Control Inspections and Complaints in Settings such as tattoo studios, body piercing establishments, hair salons, aesthetic service providers, healthcare, schools etc.	Michelle Baird	Ext. 3529 Cell 905-961-8701 Program Secretary 905-546-2063 michelle.baird@hamilton.ca
Infectious Disease Investigations	Michelle Baird Marcia Matthews	Ext. 3529 Cell 905-961-8701 Program Secretary 905-546-2063 michelle.baird@hamilton.ca Ext. 3542 marcia.matthews@hamilton.ca
Mandatory Food Handler Certification By-Law (Food Safety Education)	Richard MacDonald	Ext. 5818 richard.macdonald@hamilton.ca Food Safety Line 905-546-3570 publichealth@hamilton.ca
Mental Health Case Management for Individuals with a Diagnosed Mental Illness	Valine Vaillancourt	905-546-3597 valine.vaillancourt@hamilton.ca IntÃc 905-528-2683 Community Central Intake for Referrals Crisis or Emergency calls 911 or COAST at 905-972-8338
Mountain Dental Clinic	Stacey Krestell-Goodman	Ext. 7516 stacey.krestell-goodman@hamilton.ca
Nurse-Family Partnership	Dianne Busser	Ext. 3655 dianne.busser@hamilton.ca
Nutrition/Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program	Lesley Jefferies	Ext. 1593 lesley.jefferies@hamilton.ca
Pest By-Law Enforcement (Rats, Mice, Cockroaches, Bed bugs, Hornets, Wasps, Fleas),	Matthew Lawson	Ext. 5823 matthew.lawson@hamilton.ca PHS Inspection Intake line 905-546-3570
Positive Parenting	Sally Coulas	Ext. 7424 sally.coulas@hamilton.ca
Postpartum Depression	Dianne Busser	Ext. 3655 dianne.busser@hamilton.ca

Program Areas	Manager	Contact information
Rabies program	Susan Harding-Cruz	Ext. 3576 Program Secretary Ext. 3327 / 3527 susan.harding-cruz@hamilton.ca Rabies Line Ext. 2287
Residential Care Facilities Inspections	Michelle Baird	Ext. 3529 Cell 905-961-8701 Program Secretary 905-546-2063 michelle.baird@hamilton.ca
Respiratory and Gastrointestinal Outbreak (including c. difficile) Management in Institutions and Community Settings	Michelle Baird	Ext. 3529 Cell 905-961-8701 Program Secretary 905-546-2063 michelle.baird@hamilton.ca
Road and Pedestrian Safety (Health Promotion and Policy)	Sue Connell	Ext. 3089 sue.connell@hamilton.ca
Safe Water (Public Water Supplies, Small Drinking Water Systems, Private Well Water Supplies, Public Pools and Recreational Beach Monitoring)	Eric Mathews	Ext. 2186 eric.mathews@hamilton.ca Safe Water Hotline 905-546-2189
School Dental Screening	Pat Tester	Ext. 7158 pat.teste@hamilton.ca
School Health - Elementary School Team	Marie Verbickas	Ext. 3548 marie.verbickas@hamilton.ca
School Health - Secondary School Team	Rosemarie McKee	Ext. 3784 rosemariemckee@hamilton.ca
School Immunization Program – Hepatitis B, Meningococcal and HPV vaccines administered to Grade 7 and 8 students	Kim Dias	Ext. 7115 kim.dias@hamilton.ca
Sexual Health and STD Clinics	Fiona Newton	Ext. 3284 fiona.newton@hamilton.ca
Sexually Transmitted Infections, HIV, Needle Exchange (not needle clean up)	Linda Blake-Evans	Linda Ext. 3286 Program Secretary Ext. 3541 linda.blake-evans@hamilton.ca
Special Events Inspections	Richard MacDonald	Ext. 5818 richard.macdonald@hamilton.ca Food Safety Line 905-546-3570 publichealth@hamilton.ca

Program Areas	Manager	Contact information
Standing Water By-law	Susan Harding-Cruz	Ext. 3576 Program Secretary Ext. 3327 / 3527 susan.harding-cruz@hamilton.ca West Nile Virus Hotline 905-546-3575 (Customer Contact Centre answers line)
Street Outreach Service to Individuals Experiencing Homelessness	Valine Vaillancourt	905-546-3597 valine.vaillancourt@hamilton.ca IntÃc 905-528-2683 Community Central Intake for Referrals Crisis or Emergency calls 911 or COAST at 905-972-8338
Substance Misuse Prevention (Health Promotion and Policy)	Sue Connell	Ext. 3089 sue.connell@hamilton.ca
Suicide and Bullying Prevention (Health Promotion and Policy)	Sue Connell	Ext. 3089 sue.connell@hamilton.ca
Tick identification (for Lyme Disease)	Susan Harding-Cruz	Ext. 3576 Program Secretary Ext. 3327 / 3527 susan.harding-cruz@hamilton.ca
Tobacco Control including Smoking Cessation Clinic, Smoke-Free Ontario Act and City of Hamilton Bylaw #11-080 enforcement, youth tobacco use prevention, youth engagement	Heidi McGuire	Ext. 6170 heidi.mcguire@hamilton.ca
Tuberculosis Control	Marcia Matthews	Ext. 3542 marcia.matthews@hamilton.ca
Vaccine Ordering, Distribution and Storage	Kim Dias	Ext. 7115 kim.dias@hamilton.ca
Violence Prevention (Health Promotion and Policy)	Sue Connell	Ext. 3089 sue.connell@hamilton.ca
West Nile Virus program	Susan Harding-Cruz	Ext. 3576 Program Secretary Ext. 3327 / 3527 susan.harding-cruz@hamilton.ca West Nile Virus Hotline 905-546-3575 (Customer Contact Centre answers line)

Program Areas	Manager	Contact information
Workplace Health Promotion (Health Promotion and Policy)	Claire Lechner	Ext. 4181 claire.lechner@hamilton.ca
Youth Mental Health (Health Promotion and Policy)	Sue Connell	Ext. 3089 sue.connell@hamilton.ca

Table 2: Response times

Response within 24 hours 7 days a week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Food recalls -Outbreak response including surveillance activities -Priority ID cases -Emergency response -Health hazard investigation -Adverse water reports -Heat/Cold alerts -Vaccine delivery -Complaints -Cold chain failures including power failures that cause transfer of vaccine to other sites
Response same business day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communications/ media relations support for urgent/ emergency issues -Media Requests -Health Connections calls - Urgent home visits
Response within 1 business day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Legal requests: subpoena, coroner - Client complaints - CAS letters - Adverse Events -Immunization clinics for new refugee arrivals