

**Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care**

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**Ministère de la Santé
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February 16, 2018

MEMORANDUM

**TO: Medical Officers of Health, Chief Executive Officers, and
Board of Health Chairs**

RE: Ontario Public Health Standards – Implementation Work Plan Updates

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, January 1, 2018 marked the effective date of the new Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability, and implementation will take place over the year. The ministry is working on a comprehensive work plan which includes engagement, participation and involvement with all of you, and we will provide details, in the ensuing weeks. In the meantime, please see below for some key status updates.

Protocols and Guidelines

- The first batch of protocols and guidelines were shared with you on December 29, 2017, and the second batch were released on February 5, 2018. Over the next few weeks, the Standards Implementation Task Force will review the outstanding protocols and guidelines. Please see **Appendix 1** for the complete list of protocols and guidelines and anticipated release dates for those outstanding.

Indicators

- In my December 29 memo, I announced that an Indicators Implementation Task Force will be established to support the implementation of the Ontario Public Health Standards Indicators Framework.

I will be reaching out to individuals to participate in this critical indicators work, and I will update you on that membership and the Task Force's terms of reference shortly thereafter.

Reporting

- As we continue to work with you and your staff to complete your 2018 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submissions, we are also in the process of developing the other accountability reporting tools required under the new Public Health Accountability Framework, including the Standards Activity Reports (i.e., in year financial/programmatic reports, annual report and attestation). The content and timing for these accountability reports will be shared with Boards of Health shortly.
- The ministry will continue to consult with the field on the development of the accountability reporting tools and we are committed to provide ongoing training and support to throughout this process.

Continuous Quality Improvement

- Ten years passed between the last major update of the Ontario Public Health Standards (in 2008) and this 2018 update. I think we can agree that this is too long a time period. We need to strike a balance between ensuring that the Standards reflect critical new inputs i.e.: new evidence, research findings, learnings from monitoring and surveillance, evaluation results, and providing operational certainty for Boards of Health and staff working in local public health. The ministry is currently considering how best to keep the Standards, protocols and guidelines up-to-date, and we will seek your input into this in the coming months.

Coordinated Research Agenda

- High quality, relevant and coordinated research is needed on an ongoing basis to inform the development of policies and programs, both locally and provincially. While a significant amount of research is conducted within the sector, a coordinated approach would maximize impact by reducing duplication, leveraging capacity within the system, and ensuring that our needs and priorities are being met. As a first step in the development of a coordinated research agenda, we will embark on a consultative process to identify provincial research priorities across the range of programs and services reflected in the modernized standards.

Public Health Workforce

- Another next step with the release of the new Standards will be a process to assess how the current public health workforce is aligned to deliver these programs and services within current resources and to develop various strategies to begin addressing the gaps. We want to engage various disciplines in the field to participate in this work, so please stay tuned for further communication.

Surveillance and Monitoring Strategy and Central Repository (coordinated data backbone, centralized data collection)

- The purpose of the Surveillance and Monitoring Strategy is to provide a framework for what information will be collected and monitored, how it will be organized, captured, and made available through a central repository to support the implementation of Board of Health requirements under the Standards, as well as program reporting and population health assessment.
- The ministry is currently developing the proposed policy approach and will be engaging local public health and other key partners shortly.

Education & Training

- With the significant changes that have been made to the Standards, the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* and the new Public Health Accountability Framework, the ministry recognizes that the sector will require knowledge and awareness of all components of these changes, as well as specific training for components within certain areas. To this end, we will be developing a Coordinated Education and Training Plan, which will organize and prioritize this content over the coming year. The ministry intends to use various training modalities to make this as efficient as possible and a training calendar will be developed so that Boards of Health can plan accordingly.

Evaluation

- The ministry is committed to the systematic evaluation of all aspects of our work, including the new Standards. As we work to develop a comprehensive evaluation plan for the new standards over the next year, we will be seeking feedback and advice from the field not only on the overall plan, but also on how to specifically include local evaluation results as local public health staff also work to evaluate the programs and services they offer in accordance with the Standards.

Evidence and Best Practices

- In recognition of the important role that evidence and best practices play in policy/strategy/program development and implementation, we will consult with our public health and other key partners to explore how best to incorporate and support this critical public sector activity.

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the ministry by e-mail at PHTransformation@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Roselle Martino
Assistant Deputy Minister, Population and Public Health Division

Copy: Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Jackie Wood, Director, Planning and Performance Branch
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Liz Walker, Director, Accountability and Liaison Branch
Laura Pisko, Director, Health Protection Policy and Programs Branch
Dianne Alexander, Director, Healthy Living Policy and Programs Branch
Clint Shingler, Director, Health System Emergency Management Branch

Appendix 1: Summary of Protocols and Guidelines with Release Dates

Document	Release Date or Anticipated Release Date
Child Visual Health and Vision Screening Protocol	February/March 2018
Electronic Cigarettes Protocol	December 29, 2017
Food Safety Protocol	February 5, 2018
Health Hazard Response Protocol	February 5, 2018
Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Protocol	January 3, 2018
Immunization for Children in Schools and Licensed Child Care Settings Protocol	February 5, 2018
Infection Prevention and Control Complaints Protocol	February 5, 2018
Infection Prevention and Control Disclosure Protocol	February 5, 2018
Infection Prevention and Control Protocol	February 5, 2018
Infectious Diseases Protocol	February 5, 2018
Institutional/Facility Outbreak Management Protocol	February/March 2018
Menu Labelling Protocol	December 29, 2017
Oral Health Protocol	February/March 2018
Population Health Assessment and Surveillance Protocol	December 29, 2017
Qualifications for Public Health Professionals Protocol	February 5, 2018
Rabies Prevention and Control Protocol	February 5, 2018
Recreational Water Protocol	February 5, 2018
Safe Drinking Water and Fluoride Monitoring Protocol	February 5, 2018
Sexual Health and Sexually Transmitted/Blood-Borne Infections Prevention and Control Protocol	December 29, 2017
Tanning Beds Protocol	December 29, 2017
Tobacco Protocol	December 29, 2017
Tuberculosis Prevention and Control Protocol	February 5, 2018
Vaccine Storage and Handling Protocol	December 29, 2017
Board of Health and Local Health Integration Network Engagement Guideline	December 29, 2017
Chronic Disease Prevention Guideline	February 2018
Guidelines for Emergency Management	February/March 2018

Document	Release Date or Anticipated Release Date
Health Equity Guideline	February 2018
Healthy Environments and Climate Change Guideline	February 2018
Healthy Growth and Development Guideline	February 2018
Injury Prevention Guideline	February 2018
Management of Avian Chlamydiosis in Birds Guideline	February 2018
Management of Avian Influenza or Novel Influenza in Birds or Animals Guideline	February 2018
Management of Echinococcus Multilocularis Infections in Animals Guideline	February 2018
Management of Potential Rabies Exposures Guideline	February 2018
Mental Health Promotion Guideline	February 2018
Operational Approaches for Food Safety Guideline	February 2018
Operational Approaches for Recreational Water Guideline	February 5, 2018
Relationship with Indigenous Communities Guideline	February 2018
School Health Guideline	February/March 2018
Small Drinking Water Systems Risk Assessment Guideline	February 5, 2018
Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction Guideline	December 29, 2017
Tuberculosis Program Guideline	February 2018