



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Office of the Medical Officer of Health

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	April 19, 2021
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	2021 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan (BOH21003) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Chelsea Kirkby (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3539
SUBMITTED BY:	Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That Appendix “A” to Report BOH21003, the 2021 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Action Plan, be approved by the Board of Health.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the Ontario Public Health Standards (Standards), Public Health Accountability Framework and Organizational Requirements, boards of health are required to develop an organizational risk management framework, create action plans to mitigate risks, and submit an annual risk management report to the Ministry of Health.

There are two types of risk that boards of health regularly encounter:

1. Issues that may be creating a risk to the public’s health; and,
2. Issues that place the organization at risk of not meeting established business objectives.

Public Health Services (PHS) addresses risks to the public’s health by delivering effective public health programs and services that are informed by population health assessment, evidence, and ongoing surveillance and monitoring strategies. COVID-19 is an example of both a health risk and an organizational risk. The contents of this plan

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

**SUBJECT: 2021 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan
(BOH21003) (City Wide) - Page 2 of 5**

relate to organizational risk and include organizational risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as other sources.

The Public Health Leadership Team has reassessed existing risks and identified new risks to inform the 2021 PHS Organizational Risk Management Plan (Appendix “A” to BOH21003). It is important to note that the majority of the risks detailed in the plan are associated with the impact, uncertainty and persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of risks impacted by COVID-19 fall under the operational / service delivery and people / human resources categories.

A total of 23 risks have been carried over from the 2020 plan and six new risks have been added that are directly related to the impact of COVID-19. To demonstrate the severity of the risk COVID-19 poses to achieving business objectives, there are 13 risks – more than ever before – that fall into the high-risk category and seven risks have increase in risk rating since 2020.

Action plans for mitigation and monitoring will be implemented by staff in 2021 (Appendix “A” to BOH21003). The Public Health Leadership Team will continue to review and update the action plans on a semi-annual basis.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 5

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: No financial implications.

Staffing: No staffing implications.

Legal: Approval and submission of the 2021 PHS Organizational Risk Management Plan will ensure compliance with the Public Health Accountability Framework and Organizational Requirements. It also supports the Board of Health in practicing good governance and due diligence by mitigating potential organizational risks.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 2018, the Ministry of Health introduced the new Ontario Public Health Standards (Standards) to support ongoing transformation of the public health system in Ontario. The Ministry of Health also developed the Public Health Accountability Framework and Organizational Requirements to ensure that boards of health have the necessary foundations within the four domains of program and service delivery, financial management, governance and public health practice to successfully implement the Standards (BOH17010(b)).

As part of the Public Health Accountability Framework and Organizational Requirements, public health units must have a formal risk management framework in place to identify, assess and address organizational risks. To demonstrate compliance with this requirement, boards of health must submit a risk management report annually to the Ministry of Health.

Following the release of the new Standards in 2018, the Public Health Leadership Team developed its first PHS Risk Management Plan that identified organizational risks across 14 risk categories. This plan was based on the Ontario Public Service Risk Management Framework (BOH17039).

Each year, the PHS Organizational Risk Management Plan is reviewed and updated by the Public Health Leadership Team. Action plans to mitigate the risks that have the greatest likelihood of occurring and greatest potential impact on operations are monitored and updated on a semi-annual basis. Progress on the implementation of these action plans and risk reduction strategies is reported to the Board of Health on an annual basis.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Development of a risk management plan and submission of an annual risk management report to the Ministry of Health is a requirement within the Public Health Accountability Framework and Organizational Requirements. The Board of Health is held accountable to these requirements through the Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Following the introduction of the new Ontario Public Health Standards in 2018, a consultation on the development of the PHS 2018 Risk Management Plan (BOH17039(a)) was conducted with Corrine Berinstein, Senior Audit Manager, Health Audit Services Team of the Ontario Internal Audit Division. Corrine provided guidance on the interpretation and use of the Ontario Public Service Risk Management Framework. During this time, consultation was also sought from Charles Brown, Director of Audit Services, City of Hamilton, to ensure the 2018 plan was in alignment with the future direction for enterprise risk management at the City of Hamilton. The same framework used in the PHS 2018 Risk Management Plan has been applied to the 2021 plan.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The PHS Organizational Risk Management Plan focuses on organizational risk and supports the Board of Health in identifying and mitigating issues that place PHS at risk of not meeting established business objectives. To inform the 2021 PHS Organizational Risk Management Plan, the Public Health Leadership Team reassessed risks from the

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

**SUBJECT: 2021 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan
(BOH21003) (City Wide) - Page 4 of 5**

2020 plan (BOH20003) and identified new risks. More risks have been identified in the 2021 plan than the 2020 plan due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The most significant organizational risks in the 2021 plan are listed below.

Financial Risks:

- The Board of Health may have financial management risk due to financial forecasting gaps.

Operational or Service Delivery Risks:

- The Board of Health will need to manage the risks of uncertainties of how COVID-19 will play out, how work is being done, and public health modernization (including broader legislation and frameworks);
- The Board of Health will not meet program targets due to the lack of capacity for regular programming during the COVID-19 response; and,
- The Board of Health is at risk of significant community planning tables moving ahead without PHS involvement (e.g., Infant and Early Years Mental Health System Support Committee, Hamilton Health Team, Child & Youth Mental Health Secretariat, Schools, Safe Transitions, Drug Strategy).

People / Human Resources:

- The Board of Health may be at risk of precarious staffing;
- The Board of Health may be at risk of higher employee absenteeism and burnout resulting from increased stress and decreased work satisfaction during the COVID-19 response;
- The Board of Health may be at risk of lack of recharge and inability to maintain intensity and level of COVID-19 response; and,
- The Board of Health may be at risk of performance at the individual and organizational level being impacted by reasons related to the reasons above including transition back to post COVID-19 work environment.

Environmental Risks:

- The Board of Health may be at risk from a natural, technological or human-caused emergency impacting the environment.

Information / Knowledge Risks:

- The Board of Health may be at risk due to unreliable information management systems and practices.

Technology Risks:

- The Board of Health may be at risk of not being able to update policies and procedures quickly enough to keep up with rapidly changing and new technology nor having capacity to align with best practices for data management.

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

**SUBJECT: 2021 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan
(BOH21003) (City Wide) - Page 5 of 5**

Governance / Organizational Risks:

- The Board of Health may be at risk of incomplete risk management due to the appetite for risk culture not being clearly defined and articulated for staff.

Strategic / Policy Risks:

- The Board of Health is at risk of changing priorities due to COVID-19 recovery.

It is important to note that the majority of the risks listed above are related to the risks associated with the impact, uncertainty and persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic. This illustrates the multiple dimensions of risk that this issue poses to the organization. Action plans were developed for all the high-risk items listed above as they have the highest likelihood of occurring and greatest potential impact on operations (Appendix “A” to BOH21003).

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Board of Health could choose to amend the 2021 PHS Organizational Risk Management Plan.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

Our People and Performance

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report BOH21003: 2021 Public Health Services Organizational
Risk Management Action Plan

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.