



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

TO:	Mayor and Members Public Health Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	August 16, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	2023 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan (BOH23022) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SUBMITTED BY:	Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That Appendix “A” to Public Health Committee Report BOH23022, the 2023 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Matrix and Action Plan, be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the Ontario Public Health 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 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. The contents of this plan relate to organizational risk.

The Public Health Leadership Team reassessed existing risks and identified new risks to inform the 2023 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Matrix and

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Action Plan (Appendix “A” to Public Health Committee Report BOH23022). The plan includes a total of 26 risks; 24 were carried over from 2022 and two are new. Of these, five are classified as high risk, as they have the highest likelihood of occurring and the greatest potential impact on operations.

Action plans for mitigating and monitoring the high risks are developed and will be implemented by staff in 2023 (Appendix “A” to Public Health Committee Report BOH23022). The Public Health Leadership Team will continue to review and update the action plans on a semi-annual basis.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 4

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: The risk assessment outlines financial risks/concerns. These concerns inform the annual service plan and budget planning process; this report does not ask for new financial investments.

Staffing: The risk assessment outlines staffing risks/concerns. These concerns inform the annual service plan and budget process; this report does not ask for new staffing.

Legal: Board of Health approval and subsequent submission to the Ministry of Health of the 2023 Public Health Services 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 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 Ontario Public Health Standards. As part of 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 as part of the Q3 Standard Activity Report.

Accordingly, in 2018, the Public Health Leadership Team developed the first Public Health Services Risk Management Plan that identified organizational risks across 14

risk categories. This plan was based on the Ontario Public Service Risk Management Framework (Appendix “B” to Public Health Committee Report BOH23022).

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

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

Developing a risk management plan and submitting 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

Finance and Administration has been consulted regarding the development of the 2023 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan, and supports the proposed recommendation.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan focuses on organizational risk and supports the Board of Health in identifying and mitigating issues that place Public Health Services at risk of not meeting established business objectives. To inform the 2023 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan, the Public Health Leadership Team reassessed risks from the 2022 plan (Board of Health Report BOH22014) and identified new risks. A total of 24 risks were carried over from 2022, and two new risks were added.

The most significant organizational risks in the 2023 plan are listed below (Appendix “A” to Public Health Committee Report BOH23022):

- **Financial Risks;**
 - (1.1) Uncertainty related to the impact on Public Health Services programs and services due to budget pressures as a result of changing and insufficient provincial funding, as well as competing priorities at the municipal level.
- **Operational or Service Delivery Risks;**
 - (2.1) The Board of Health may not be able to fully address increased demand due to service backlogs, and worsening and emerging public health issues due to lack of capacity; and,

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- (2.2) The Board of Health will need to work through the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the organization and the roles and responsibilities of Public Health Services
- **People / Human Resources Related Risks; and,**
 - (3.1) The Board of Health may be at risk of precarious staffing due to challenges with recruitment and retention.
- **Information / Knowledge Risks**
 - (5.1) The Board of Health may be at risk due to unreliable information management systems and practices.

Action plans were developed for all five high-risk items listed above, as they have the highest likelihood of occurring and the greatest potential impact on operations (Appendix “A” to Public Health Committee Report BOH23022).

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Board of Health could choose to amend the 2023 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report BOH23022	2023 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Matrix and Action Plan
Appendix “B” to Report BOH23022	Ontario Public Service Risk Management Framework