



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Communicable Disease Control Division

TO:	Mayor and Members Public Health Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	June 3, 2024
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Indigenous and Newcomer Vaccine Ambassador Project (BOH24017) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Jordan Walker (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7365
SUBMITTED BY:	Jordan Walker Director, Communicable Disease Control Division Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

Discussion of Confidential Appendix “A” to Report BOH24017 in closed session is subject to the following requirement(s) of the City of Hamilton’s Procedural By-law and the *Ontario Municipal Act, 2001*:

- Information explicitly supplied in confidence to the City or a local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them.

RATIONALE FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential Appendix “A” to Report BOH24017 is being considered in Closed Session as it contains information explicitly supplied in confidence to the City or a local board by Canada, a province or territory or a Crown agency of any of them. The funder for this project, fitting the category described above, has directed that no public announcements or disclosure regarding the funding source occur until such time as official announcement is made by the funder.

RATIONALE FOR MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential Appendix “A” to Report BOH24017 is recommended to remain confidential until the project funder has issued an official announcement regarding the funding.

RECOMMENDATION (CLOSED SESSION)

Not Applicable.

RECOMMENDATION (OPEN SESSION)

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.

That the correspondence in confidential Appendix “A” to Report BOH24017 be received and the Medical Officer of Health, or delegate, be authorized and directed to execute all agreements, contracts, extensions, and documents, including submission of budgets and reports required to give effect to the Indigenous and Newcomer Vaccine Ambassador Project.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hamilton Public Health Services has received approval for funding for an Indigenous and Newcomer Vaccine Ambassador Project. The proposed project would result in the hiring of two part-time peer ambassadors with expertise in community engagement to develop and implement health promotion strategies for routine childhood and school-based immunizations with Indigenous and newcomer populations. Peer ambassadors would address access, barriers to immunization, and promote vaccine confidence through: sharing vaccine information in culturally appropriate ways; addressing language barriers; resource development; supporting vaccine promotion at cultural and other events; and, creating strategies to promote vaccine uptake in their communities in partnership with existing community organizations and agencies. Further, these peer ambassadors would help foster trusting relationships with communities that have experienced inequity within the healthcare system or experience barriers to accessing healthcare.

The funding for this project will provide Public Health Services up to \$111,594 for the fiscal year April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025; and up to \$124,878 for the fiscal year April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: There are no implications for base budget for the Community Vaccination and School Clinics Program. Wages and expenses for the project would be managed within the approved funding.

Staffing: The project would require hiring two 0.6 FTE peer vaccine ambassadors on contract until the termination of the funding agreement, March 31, 2026

Legal: Not Applicable.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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During the COVID-19 pandemic a Vaccine Ambassador Program was developed by the Hamilton Black Health Community Leaders Forum and Public Health Services to promote COVID-19 vaccine uptake among Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities. The Vaccine Ambassador Program addressed COVID-19 vaccine confidence using culturally appropriate health promotion strategies, strengthened trust and relationships with community members and partners, and reduced barriers to accessing COVID-19 vaccines. This program was funded through 100% provincial funding from the Ministry of Health for extraordinary costs related to COVID-19 response. This funding ended in December 2023. Recognizing the value and impact of the program, Public Health Services has been seeking other funding opportunities to support a peer vaccine ambassador program.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The Ontario Public Health Standards outline requirements that direct the delivery of mandatory public health programs and services by boards of health pursuant to the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. The recommendations in this report and proposed Indigenous and Newcomer Vaccine Ambassador Project align with the requirements under the Immunization Program Standard to increase public confidence in immunizations; and work with community partners to improve public knowledge and confidence in immunization programs and services.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Finance and Administration was consulted in the preparation of the project application and supported development of the project budget.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Vaccine Ambassador Pilot Program Evaluation Report (BOH23036) demonstrated the value and impact of a peer ambassador program in supporting vaccine confidence and uptake among Black, Indigenous and racialized communities. Approval to receive and utilize the funding described in Appendix “A” to Report BOH24017 would allow Public Health Services to continue to build upon the partnerships developed through the previous Vaccine Ambassador Program and support vaccine confidence and uptake among Indigenous and Newcomer communities in Hamilton.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Not Applicable.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

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Confidential Appendix "A" to Report BOH24017 – Approval Letter for Indigenous and Newcomer Vaccine Ambassador Project

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