



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

TO:	Mayor and Members Public Health Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 10, 2024
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan (BOH24019) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
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SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

That the 2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan, attached as Appendix “A” to Public Health Committee Report BOH24019, be approved.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Public Health Committee with information on risk management activities across Public Health Services, with the aim of seeking approval for the 2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan. As part of the Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability (‘Ontario Public Health Standards’), boards of health are required to develop an organizational risk management framework, create and monitor action plans to mitigate risks, and submit an annual risk management report to the Ministry of Health as part of the third quarter Standards Activity Report.

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,

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.

evidence, and ongoing surveillance and monitoring strategies. The contents of this plan relate to organizational risks.

The Public Health Leadership Team conducted a comprehensive review of the existing risks from the previous year and identified potential new risks to inform the 2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan (Appendix “A” to Public Health Committee Report BOH24019). The plan includes a total of 27 risks; 24 risks were carried over from 2023 and four risks are new. Of these risks, six are classified as high risks, as they have the highest likelihood of occurring and the greatest potential impact on public health objectives. Action plans for mitigating and monitoring the high risks have been proactively developed and will be implemented by staff in 2024. The Public Health Leadership Team will continue to routinely review and update the action plans as needed.

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, ensuring that our financial resources are allocated in a way that effectively mitigates these risks. 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 2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan will ensure compliance with the Ontario Public Health Standards. It also supports the Board of Health in practicing good governance and due diligence by mitigating potential organizational risks.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since 2018, as part of the Ontario Public Health Standards, boards of health must implement a formal risk management framework to identify, assess, and address organizational risks. To demonstrate compliance with this requirement, boards of health must submit an annual risk management report detailing high risks to the Ministry of Health as part of the third quarter Standards Activity Report.

The Public Health Leadership Team reviews and updates the Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan annually, covering 14 categories of risk. This plan is based on the Risk Management Strategy and Process Toolkit, which was

developed by the Ontario Internal Audit Division (Appendix “B” to Public Health Committee Report BOH24019). Action plans are developed to mitigate high risks with the greatest likelihood of occurring and the greatest potential impact on operations, which are regularly monitored and updated.

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 of the Organizational Requirements within the Ontario Public Health Standards. The Board of Health is held accountable to these requirements through the Ministry of Health-Board of Health Accountability Agreement.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Staff consulted with Finance and Administration and Public Health Services’ Human Resources Business Partner to develop the 2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan, who are supportive of the staff 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 2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan, the Public Health Leadership Team reassessed risks from the 2023 plan (Public Health Committee Report BOH23022) and identified new risks. A total of 23 risks were carried over from 2023, and four new risks were added.

The six most significant organizational risks in the 2024 plan are listed below:

- **Operational / Service Delivery Risks**
 1. (2.1) The Board of Health may not be able to fully address increased demand and expectations of public health's role in the community due to the integration of COVID-19 work into existing business operations and other issues arising from a lack of capacity; and,
 2. (2.2) The impact and duration of direct disruptions to program and service delivery from the cybersecurity incident, which has hindered access to critical documents, applications, and communication and connectivity infrastructure.
- **Information / Knowledge Risks**
 3. (5.1) The Board of Health faces a potential risk of ineffective records and information management throughout its lifecycle.

- **Technology Risks**
 - 4. (8.1) The Board of Health remains at risk of a network outage, threats to network security and hard files, and loss of access to critical applications impacting service delivery.
- **Governance / Organizational Risks**
 - 5. (9.1) The Board of Health may be at risk of incomplete risk management due to the delay in fully implementing the risk management framework in Public Health Services' program and project planning due to the cybersecurity incident.
- **Privacy Risks**
 - 6. (10.1) The Board of Health faces potential risks such as privacy breaches, unauthorized external access to Public Health Services' information, and non-compliance with privacy legislation (i.e., the Personal Health Information Protection Act and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act).

Action plans were developed for all six 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 BOH24019).

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Board of Health could choose to amend the 2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report BOH24019	2024 Public Health Services Organizational Risk Management Plan
Appendix “B” to Report BOH24019	Risk Management Strategy and Process Toolkit