

For Information

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REPORT TITLE: **NEW ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS**

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OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this report is to update Regional Council on the new Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The new Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards promote organizational excellence by establishing standard management and governance requirements for all boards of health and public health units.
- The Organizational Standards requirements have six domains: Board Structure, Board Operations, Leadership, Trusteeship, Community Engagement and Responsiveness, and Management Operations.
- The Standards will be implemented in the summer of 2011.
- Reporting on the achievement of the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards will begin in 2012, following the development of a measurement strategy.
- Peel Public Health is well positioned to meet the new requirements which complement our strategic priorities and current adherence to standard management practices outlined in the requirements.

DISCUSSION

1. Background

On March 7, 2011, the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards were released by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Public Health Practice Branch) and Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport (Standards, Programs and Community Development Branch).

The Organizational Standards complement the new Public Health Standards introduced on January 1, 2009 (as reported to Regional Council on January 22, 2009) and establish the governance and management requirements for all boards of health and public health units. The standards were developed through consultation with key stakeholders in the public health sector. Ontario is the first Canadian jurisdiction to publish Organizational Standards for boards of health.

April 12, 2011

NEW ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

The Organizational Standards are informed by the *Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA)*, public health core competencies, accreditation standards, Public Health Capacity Review Committee recommendations, and performance management literature on governance and organizational effectiveness.

a) Governance Models for Ontario Boards of Health

There are two general types of board governance models within Ontario's public health sector. The majority of boards of health are autonomous, functioning separately from municipal government but comprised of municipal councilors and non elected appointees. The remaining boards of health are Councils of Regional Government or single-tier municipalities. Regional Council serves as the Board of Health for Peel Region and is legally accountable to the government of Ontario for meeting all standards.

Autonomous boards do not have the benefits of regional government infrastructure. As a result, there is variation in the standard governance of public health units across the province. The Organizational Standards were created in an effort to build a public health system with a greater focus on performance, accountability and sustainability.

b) Overview of the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards

Many of the requirements outlined in the Organizational Standards directly reference the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. Other requirements are derived from existing sources such as performance management literature on evidence-based practices in governance, accreditation standards and expert recommendations. The new requirements relate to governance and management of boards of health as well as requirements from existing sources.

The Standards outline Board of Health responsibilities in the following five areas:

- Board Structure,
- Board Operations,
- Leadership,
- Trusteeship,
- Community Engagement and Responsiveness.

The sixth standard, Management Operations, outlines expectations of the public health unit as the administrative body.

2. Findings

A review of the new Organizational Standards indicates that Regional Council already meets the majority of the standards, due in large part to the infrastructure provided by the Region. The following section highlights the impact of the new Organizational Standards for Regional Council. For a more detailed analysis of each standard, number of requirements and implications for Peel, refer to Appendix I.

a) Impact of New Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards on Board of Health

The Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards will have very little impact on the structure or operations of Regional Council as they are based almost exclusively on

April 12, 2011

NEW ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

previous requirements outlined in the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. However, the trustee requirement places emphasis on transparency, accountability and evaluation, and introduces the implementation of an annual comprehensive orientation plan and a self-evaluation process of governance practices and outcomes which must occur every two years.

The Leadership Standard speaks to the board of health providing leadership to establish the organization's strategic directions. Consistent with this goal, the Peel Public Health 10-Year Strategic Plan, endorsed by Council, articulates a clear vision for the organization that is grounded in input from internal and external stakeholders, and addresses Peel specific health issues and internal organizational development needs.

The Community Engagement and Responsiveness requirements will strengthen action already taken by Peel Public Health at the program level. Strategies to engage stakeholders and community partners are routinely integrated into planning and implementation. Success By 6 Peel, a regional collaborative of more than 40 organizations, is an example of the Region's commitment to collaborate with the purpose of strengthening services for young children and their families.

b) Impact of New Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards on Management Operations

The Organizational Standards will strengthen existing internal policies and procedures to ensure optimal operations and program delivery. The Region of Peel provides a detailed system of financial policies and procedures, procurement, human resource policies and staff development strategies. In addition, Peel Public Health has policies in place to ensure appropriate records management and compliance with all applicable privacy legislation, acceptable research ethics and risk management.

The Region of Peel is a leader in promoting organizational excellence. Corporate initiatives that already support continuous improvement include:

- The achievement of the National Quality Institute's (NQI) Canada Award of Excellence (CAE) (2006), CAE Order of Excellence (Quality Category) (2009), CAE Healthy Workplace Award (2009).
- The Common Purpose initiative launched in December 2009 includes a focus on employee engagement, client satisfaction, and trust and confidence, as well as a measurement strategy.
- Corporate Performance Measurement Framework Development Project within the Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) Program.

As well, the infrastructure priorities identified in Peel Public Health's 10-Year Strategic Plan, represent a proactive approach to establishing operational improvement in three important areas addressed within the Ontario Standards: i) performance management, ii) communications and iii) workforce development.

One new professional practice support requirement is the designation of a Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) who will be responsible for nursing quality assurance and nursing practice leadership. The model outlining the role and requirements of this position is still in development for implementation in 2013.

April 12, 2011

NEW ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

In addition, Boards of Health that function as part of regional government must provide a service level agreement that ensures timely, cost-effective corporate services (e.g. IT, HR and financial management services).

3. Proposed Direction

Based on our initial review, Peel Public Health is well positioned to meet the new requirements given our existing strategic priorities and policies that ensure accountability. The effort required to bring Regional Council and the management team into full compliance will likely be small. Public Health staff will now begin the detailed process of measuring baseline performance and assessing the impact of the implementation of specific standards.

The Standards will be implemented in conjunction with the release of the Accountability Agreements which are expected to be signed between health units and the province in the summer of 2011. The Accountability Agreements, currently under development, will include new performance management improvement requirements. The content of the Accountability Agreements is still being determined.

Reporting on the achievement of the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards will begin in 2012, following the development of a provincial measurement strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications of the Public Health Organizational Standards at this time. However, introduction of initiatives to enhance board and management functioning may require human resource commitments in the future.

April 12, 2011

NEW ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

CONCLUSION

The new Public Health Organizational Standards, which complement the Ontario Public Health Program Standards, are grouped into six domains of governance. The Standards will be enabled through the Accountability Agreements which are expected to be signed in the summer of 2011. Initial analysis indicates that Council as the Board of Health and Peel Public Health is already compliant with the majority of requirements.

Over the next few months, the management team will assess the overall impact of the Standards on expectations for Regional Council and management operations, and provide input into the development of the proposed provincial measurement strategy. Peel's Medical Officer of Health will provide further updates to Council on the implementation of the Standards and the Accountability Agreement process.



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NEW ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

APPENDIX I

Organizational Standard	Requirements	Pre-existing vs. New Requirements	Impact for Peel Public Health Board of Health
<p>Board Structure Purpose: To ensure that board of health structure facilitates effective governance</p>	8 Requirements	<p>Pre-existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements reflect existing provisions within the HPPA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact on structure or Regional Council is already in full compliance
<p>Board Operations Purpose: To enable boards of health to function optimally promoting effective communication and transparency</p>	10 Requirements	<p>Pre-existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 Requirements reflect existing provisions within the HPPA <p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 new requirement to develop and implement specific board policies and by-laws pertaining to governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No impact on operations Regional Council is already in full compliance; policies outlined in Regional Councillors' Reference Manual
<p>Leadership Purpose: To ensure board of health provides leadership in establishing the organization's strategic directions and takes responsibility for governance towards the desired vision</p>	2 Requirements	<p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New requirements pertaining to board stewardship and strategic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 year strategic plan is already underway (2009) Updates are provided to Council.
<p>Trusteeship Purpose: To ensure board of health understanding of fiduciary roles and responsibilities and to promote decisions based on transparency and accountability and reflective of the best interest of the public's health</p>	3 Requirements	<p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New requirements pertaining to transparency and accountability, board training and board self-evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biennial self-evaluation process required Will explore expanded training opportunities for Council members
<p>Community Engagement & Responsiveness Purpose: To ensure board of health is responsive to local needs, and planning and operations reflect a</p>	5 Requirements	<p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New requirements pertaining to community engagement, stakeholder involvement, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management team is already providing leadership at the operational level Processes of community and stakeholder engagement

NEW ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

Organizational Standard	Requirements	Pre-existing vs. New Requirements	Impact for Peel Public Health Board of Health
diversity of perspectives		policy development, public reporting, and client service standards	already integrated into planning at the program level; e.g. Success By 6 Peel; award of numerous research grants in partnership with academic institutions.
<p>Management Operations Purpose: To articulate expectations for public health unit management operational directions.</p>	16 Requirements	<p>Pre-existing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 requirements reflect existing provisions within the HPPA <p>New:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 new requirements pertaining to financial & procedures, procurement, communications, information management, research ethics, human resources and staff development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RoP is currently a recognized leader in accountability and quality improvement as acknowledged by the NQI Awards • RoP currently engaged in a performance management process • Infrastructure priorities coincide with 3 important areas identified in the new OPHOS: i) performance management, ii) communications and iii) workforce development