

2024 AGM & Conference

Toronto, Ontario, June 5-7, 2024

Pantages Hotel



Continue the important conversations on Ontario's local public health system's critical role, value, and benefit.

Boards of Health Section Meeting Agenda (revised June 3, 2024)

June 7, 2024 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. EDT

BOH Section Chair: Carmen McGregor

Pantages Hotel, Rehearsal Hall, 3rd Floor, 200 Victoria Street, Toronto, ON M5B 1V8.

<i>A light breakfast will be available at 8:30 a.m.</i>	8:30 a.m. – 9 a.m.
Call to Order, Opening Remarks, and Land Acknowledgement Speaker: Carmen McGregor, Chair, BOH Section, alPHA Board of Directors,	9 a.m. – 9:05 a.m.
alPHA Update/Section Business Speakers: Carmen McGregor, Chair, BOH Section, alPHA Board of Directors and Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHA Section update and approval of minutes from February 16, 2024, 2023, BOH Section Meeting.	9:05 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.
On the Front Lines Back by popular demand! This session features senior public health managers in key public health disciplines – inspections, dentistry, health promotion, and epidemiology. Speakers will discuss key public health issues from the unique perspectives of these affiliate members. Don't miss these important updates! Speakers from the alPHA Board of Directors: Association of Public Health Epidemiologists in Ontario, Caitlyn Paget Association of Supervisors of Public Health Inspectors of Ontario, Steven Rebellato Health Promotion Ontario, Susan Stewart Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry, Paul Sharma Moderator: Cynthia St. John, Affiliate Representative, alPHA Board of Directors	9:15 a.m. – 10 a.m.
Networking Break	10 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

<p>Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Update Speakers: Alicia Neufeld, Senior Manager, Policy, and Daniela Spagnuolo, Policy Advisor, AMO Moderator: Trudy Sachowski, Past-President, alPHa Board of Directors</p> <p>AMO works with Ontario’s 444 municipalities to make municipal governments stronger and more effective. Come and hear the latest from AMO with regards to public health issues, including homelessness, from a municipal perspective with a focus on their recent work.</p>	10:30 a.m. – 10:50 a.m.
<p>Hamilton’s Proposed Board of Health Structure Speakers: Maureen Wilson, BOH Executive Committee, alPHa Board of Directors Jennifer Vickers-Manzin, Affiliate Representative, alPHa Board of Directors Moderator: Abinaya Chandrabalan, BOH Executive Committee, alPHa Board of Directors</p> <p>Earlier this year, Hamilton City Council approved a series of recommendations to apply to the Province of Ontario to become a semi-autonomous board of health, similar to Toronto and Ottawa. The model being pursued would change the board composition with the aim of making it more inclusive and representative of the community. Come and hear about these proposed changes.</p>	10:50 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.
<p>Board of Health Governance Speakers: Monika Turner, Principal, Roving Capacity and Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHa</p> <p>Don't miss this unique opportunity to enhance your knowledge and strengthen local public health leadership in Ontario. Hear highlights about public health legislation, funding, accountability, roles, structures, and much more. You will gain insights into leadership and services that drive excellence.</p>	11:10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
<p>BOH Section Elections</p> <p><i>An election to determine the representatives will be held at the meeting. All nominees must be present.</i></p>	11:30 a.m. -11:50 a.m.
<p>Closing Remarks Speaker: Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHa</p>	11:50 a.m. - noon

The 2024 Conference is co-hosted by alPHa and Toronto Public Health.



The 2024 Conference is sponsored by the following:



REVISED DRAFT MINUTES
Boards of Health Section Meeting
Friday, February 16, 2024 – 2 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Chair: Carmen McGregor

1.0 CALL TO ORDER/LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/WELCOMING REMARKS/INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair, C. McGregor, called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. and provided welcoming remarks and introductions to Boards of Health (BOH) Section members, Affiliates, and speakers.

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

The Land Acknowledgement was read by C. McGregor.

2.0 ALPHA UPDATE AND SECTION BUSINESS

alPHa Update

C. McGregor stated the most pressing issue currently facing public health is the province's *Public Health Strengthening* initiative. She also noted alPHa will continue to well-represent the sector's interests and will work with its key stakeholders including the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and others.

Section Business

C. McGregor introduced the BOH Section Executive members, thanked them for their volunteer leadership and important role in alPHa's work. She provided the BOH Section with an overview of the work the BOH Section Executive does, stating highlights can be found in alPHa's monthly newsletter, *Information Break*. C. McGregor also reminded BOH Section members they can use the dedicated section for Boards of Health members in the newsletter and the resource page on the alPHa website. It was also noted that alPHa frequently communicates with BOH members via email and BOH members should ensure they are on their PHU's distribution list.

Approval of Minutes

C. McGregor called for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 24, 2023, Boards of Health Section Meeting. The motion to accept the minutes as presented was approved and carried.

3.0 ALPHA LEGAL COUNSEL UPDATE FOR BOARDS OF HEALTH

C. McGregor introduced James LeNoury, alPHa's Legal Counsel, to BOH Section members. She noted he would provide a legal update for Boards of Health members.

J. LeNoury stated his presentation would cover process considerations for meetings. He gave BOH Section members an overview of his presentation's topics, noting he would cover: The government merger mandate and the merger process considerations: meetings.

J. LeNoury provided BOH Section members with an overview of key issues in the merger process - saying communications, organizational culture, and systems integration are the most important issues to focus on. This is because the three issues ensure the public and stakeholders are aware of how the health unit is proceeding when merging. J. LeNoury explained the importance of health units doing their due diligence, saying there should be leadership (who will be responsible for the planning and oversight of the proposed merger), a plan (one that includes timelines; the organizational structure; layoffs; and amalgamation of organizational structures); and a parallel process (the leaders in the process review who will help make decisions).

He also covered issues with mergers, saying any merger or acquisitions can fail due to missing their objectives. They also fail because of issues such as incompatible cultures, poor motivation, and loss of key talent. J. LeNoury noted culture is the biggest issue to the success of a merger, saying the merger process should ensure both organizations can come together harmoniously. He stated the health units' cultures should be evaluated ahead of the merger and, if any conflicts arise, they need to be addressed immediately.

J. LeNoury discussed public accountability for meetings, saying local governments must comply with the open meeting rules in the Municipal Act, 2001. He also noted this is fundamental to being accountable to constituents. J. LeNoury stated a board of health is subject to the meeting provisions in sections 238 and 239 of the Municipal Act (with the exception being the City of Toronto). He noted there are exceptions for holding open meetings such as: when open meetings would not serve the public interest or the interests of the municipality and if the closed meeting, when held by a municipality, follows all the procedural rules such as: giving notice of the closed meeting, passing a resolution in public to close the meeting, etc.

J. LeNoury also reviewed how to vote and keep records for a closed meeting. He stated voting is allowed for a procedural matter or when giving directions to officers, employees, agents of the municipality or persons under contract. J. LeNoury noted all resolutions, decisions and proceedings must be recorded. Additionally, to ensure the most thorough record, he stated the ombudsman recommends audio and video recordings be made. There must also be a report on the closed meeting in the open meeting on what occurred during the closed meeting. J. LeNoury provided BOH Section members with an overview of exceptions to open meeting rules such as: labour relations or employee negotiations – section 239(2)(d); litigation or potential litigation – section s. 239(2)(e), and advice subject to solicitor-client privilege – section 239(2)(f). Additionally, he reviewed examples of case law from the Town of Pelham, the Township of The North Shore, and the City of Greater Sudbury and ombudsman complaints from the Township of McMurrich/Monteith, the Township of McKellar, and the Municipality of Grey Highlands.

L. Ryan moderated questions from the audience for J. LeNoury and a question-and-answer session took place. L. Ryan thanked him for his time and for speaking at the meeting.

4.0 ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF ONTARIO (AMO) UPDATE

C. McGregor introduced Lindsay Jones, Director of Policy, Michael Jacek, Senior Advisor, Social and Health Policy, and Daniela Spagnuolo, Policy Advisor from AMO. She noted they would speak about public health issues from a municipal perspective.

L. Jones stated their presentation had three parts: 1. M. Jacek will speak about the mergers process and the work done with alPHa and the Ministry of Health; 2. D. Spagnuolo will present

on access to health services; and 3. L. Jones will speak about AMO's *Social and Economic Prosperity Review*.

M. Jacek stated AMO's position on the province's *Public Health Strengthening* initiative had three main objectives: 1. To keep "local" in the public health system; 2. To maintain effective service delivery; and 3. To ensure the system has the financial footing for municipalities and adequate resources for agencies to get the job done right. He also noted AMO is working with the Ministry of Health to support the voluntary merger process, review the standards and responsibilities, and to review funding. M. Jacek noted here are challenges and skepticism with the merger process. He stated they are working through the issues. This included a joint webinar and a concurrent session at the ROMA Conference in January, noting it was meant to encourage a two-way dialogue. M. Jacek asked for the feedback to be submitted to L. Ryan. M. Jacek then turned the presentation over to D. Spagnuolo.

D. Spagnuolo stated accessing health services is a particular problem in rural and northern areas. She provided BOH Section members with an overview of how a provincial, sector-wide health human resources strategy would improve access to health services across Ontario, saying the strategy should follow the themes of compensation, mental health and well-being, diversity, equity, and inclusion, etc. She also discussed the steps AMO had taken, asking for the Minister of Health for the development and implementation of a sector-wide health human resources strategy. Lastly, D. Spagnuolo stated AMO is engaging with health sector partners and will bring their findings back to the Health Transformation Task Force to inform their strategic approach to ongoing advocacy. She noted a number of alPHa Board members including T. Sachowski who is representing the BOH Section, and alPHa's Executive Director sit on this task force.

L. Jones presented on AMO's *Social and Economic Prosperity Review*. She stated AMO has asked the provincial government to work with municipalities on a joint review of revenues, costs, and financial risks. The review will also include an analysis of Ontario's infrastructure investment and service delivery needs. She also provided BOH Section members with an update on their pre-budget. L. Jones noted they have asked members to work towards securing provincial commitment to a social and economic prosperity review as part of the provincial government's spring budget.

D. Spagnuolo moderated questions from the audience for L. Jones, M. Jacek, and herself and a question-and-answer session took place. C. McGregor thanked them all for their time and for speaking at the meeting, noting the strong relationship they have with L. Ryan.

5.0 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND PUBLIC HEALTH – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AND WHY YOU NEED TO BE READY

C. McGregor introduced Steven Rebellato, Affiliate Representative, alPHa Board of Directors. She noted S. Rebellato would provide BOH Section members with an overview of the risks and benefits of artificial intelligence for local public health. Additionally, he will provide considerations and guiding principles so BOH members can gauge their organizational preparedness for AI solutions.

S. Rebellato stated his presentation will not age well because AI is changing rapidly, and its pace is unprecedented.

He stated the focus of his presentation will be on: The risks and benefits of AI for local public health; data, ethics, and a human-centred approach to AI applications currently being used in North America; and consideration and guiding principles for BOH Section members.

S. Rebellato stated AI isn't a fad and will become more mature as time goes on. He provided BOH Section members with examples of AI that already exist such as AI that creates PowerPoint presentations, Google knowing your search history, and Siri.

S. Rebellato explained important concepts such as: the definition of AI, how it works, and the types of AI that are available. He also discussed AI's current capabilities like facial recognition, predictive typing, ChatGPT, MS Bing, and AI for literature searches and content creation, coding, and graphics. S. Rebellato stated he could have used AI to create his presentation as its power is large. However, he noted though that it currently does an okay job rather than a great job (though it will get a presentation started) but this will improve as AI further develops.

S. Rebellato discussed the status of local public health agencies' AI engagement, noting there is informal collaboration. Examples he provided included staff use and solution sharing. He also reviewed local public health agencies' AI policies. S. Rebellato noted examples have been provided through the business administrators group, saying there are best practices to manage the risks associated with use. There is also accountability and governance, principles of use, transparency and explainability and privacy and a need to ensure there is a human-centred approach.

He noted the risks of AI such as data privacy and security, algorithmic bias, limited access and resources, a lack of transparency, and threats of misinformation/disinformation. S. Rebellato provided BOH Section members with the potential impact of AI, saying there can be both positive and negative impacts through education, socioeconomic factors, and social and community needs. He also spoke about the ethics associated with AI and who can access it, saying it will impact BOHs and populations because more powerful tools are more expensive, and therefore, are investments for public health. Other challenges include: a limited capacity for AI expertise in public health; educational infrastructure for future leaders; data quality (which is paramount); whether or not AI will exacerbate health inequity; and 'AI-creep' which is solutions that have already infiltrated common platforms such as Apple (face ID) and Microsoft (Co-pilot).

S. Rebellato noted the potential and benefits of AI such as GPT development, leveraging 'big data' to improve public health response and policy, etc.

He also discussed applications of AI that are happening right now. This includes the Chicago Department of Health and their use of predictive modelling for lead poisoning prevention and bots used by the Region of York and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health and their chatbot.

S. Rebellato stated he is providing ongoing updates to ALPHA on AI and is preparing a resolution for the AGM. He also reminded BOH members they need to have an AI policy in place given the pace of development. He stated members should keep the Fair, Appropriate, Valid, Effective, and Safe (FAVES) principle in mind.

M. Wilson moderated questions from the audience for S. Rebellato and a question-and-answer session took place. M. Wilson then passed the meeting over to C. McGregor, noting she had found S. Rebellato's presentation fascinating and that she is looking forward to having an AI page on the ALPHA website and is excited for his presentation at the Fall Symposium.

6.0 REFLECTIONS FROM SOUTHWESTERN PUBLIC HEALTH'S MERGER – CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

C. McGregor introduced Cynthia St. John, Chief Executive Officer, Southwestern Public Health. She noted that, as a follow-up to her presentation at the 2023 ALPHA Fall Symposium, C. St. John would speak about her reflections on the successes and challenges with developing a newly merged public health unit.

C. St. John stated her presentation is not meant to be a guide for health units that are looking at mergers. Instead, they are points to consider. She reiterated Southwestern Public Health came together from two large rural and small urban health units in 2018, saying the separate organizations were similar in size in terms of employees, budget, and population served. And, at that time, there was no pre-announced financial support for mergers from the provincial government. C. St. John acknowledged timelines for the mergers to occur are short, saying it's important to lean on the legal team and to use their advice throughout the process.

She noted the merger team's early work included deciding the type of governance they would need and how many representatives from each municipality there would be. They also created a Transition Governance Committee and took legal and financial considerations and communication into consideration. C. St. John stated the committee did the work (with staff leadership support) while the legal team developed by-laws, reviewed policies, and drafted agreements to form the new health unit.

C. St. John also provided her reflections, saying stakeholder engagement, vision setting, commitments to others, and evolving together are vital. She also noted the work done with the two boards at the beginning was used throughout every major decision that had to be made. C. St. John stated external support was used to facilitate discussion so both boards could contribute. She also noted the commitment to each other and trust in the other made the merger possible because both boards were able to jump in with both feet and were willing to tackle any obstacle to see the vision be a success.

Furthermore, she spoke about Southwestern Public Health's evolution, noting they serve almost 230,000 people. C. St. John stated the health unit has robust staff groups, a new capacity, new systems, and varying governance interests that deliver community needs. She also noted they still have tailored programs and services for niche communities. However, C. St. John conceded that it takes considerable time to develop a new workplace culture (about 5-10 years) and SWPH is still evolving as a new organization. In hindsight, the work of getting to a merged state fell on too few people

and instead, and if there was a next time, they would invest more in champions in merging.

C. St. John noted the government's *Strengthening Public Health* initiative has a different landscape — especially because more people than ever are aware of the work public health does. She also noted there might be more scrutiny. C. St. John stated it's important to have a high-functioning health unit deliver in the day-to-day while planning a merger. She noted merging needs to be done with an honest intention while not sacrificing programs and services.

C. McGregor moderated questions from the audience for C. St. John and a question-and-answer session took place. She also thanked C. St. John for her presentation, saying it was great to have her speak at the meeting.

7.0 CLOSING REMARKS

C. McGregor thanked Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, Karine Hébert, and Andy Morrisson from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit for their event support. She also thanked Obadiah George from the Dalla Lana School of Public Health for his technical support, and L. Ryan and the alPHa staff for their work.

C. McGregor reminded BOH Section members about the 2024 Annual General Meeting & Conference, which is taking place in Toronto on June 5-7. She noted alPHa will be in touch with more information about the event.

C. McGregor adjourned the meeting at 4:26 p.m.



ELECTION TO THE aPHa BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2026 Page 1/2

ACCLAIMED:

For the **South West** Region:

- **Bernia Martin** (BOH, Southwestern Public Health)
Bernia Martin was elected Councillor for the City of Woodstock and County of Oxford in October 2022 and was subsequently appointed to the Southwestern Public Health Board of Health as Vice Chair for the 2023 year.

Raised in rural Southwestern Ontario, and a graduate of the University of Waterloo, she is no stranger to the unique opportunities and challenges that face the residents of our region, and as a local business owner and elected official, Board Chair Martin is dedicated to advancing local public health work in our community and committed to creating healthier and more vibrant places to live and work.

With her extensive experience in governance, business ownership, and public service, Bernia Martin is well-equipped to contribute to the aPHa Board of Directors and the aPHa Board of Health Section Executive. Her proven commitment to public health, coupled with her strategic thinking and ability to collaborate with a diverse range of stakeholders, ensures she can effectively share her board of health perspective, contribute to the development of strategic initiatives, and uphold the mission and objectives of aPHa.

The SWPH Board of Health is confident that Chair Martin will make meaningful contributions to aPHa's mission of strengthening leadership and advocacy for local public health agencies in Ontario.

ELECTION TO THE aPHa BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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CANDIDATES FOR THE EAST REGION (2 IN TOTAL):

- **Wess Garrod**

Wess Garrod is a provincial Order-In-Council appointee to the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington (KFL&A) Board of Health. He has been with the Board for 10 years and is currently serving as Chair. Wess serves the aPHa Board as the East Region BOH Representative, currently Vice President and Executive Committee member, having served Treasurer and BOH Section Chair.

Wess was a Secondary School Teacher, Principal and Senior Staff Member with the Limestone District School Board (LDSB) for 32 years. After retiring, he served as an LDSB School Board Trustee. He has been recognized for his contributions with the 'Outstanding Service Award' and the establishment of the 'Wess Garrod Healthy Active Living Award' presented annually to an LDSB educator.

Currently, Wess serves on the Board of Directors for the Limestone Learning Foundation and is President of the Kingston Track and Field Club. He was recognized by the City of Kingston as the final medal bearer for the Rick Hansen 25th Anniversary Tour and for his leadership in the building of Kingston's Track & Field facility.

Wess has displayed exemplary devotion to public health at the local and provincial levels with his outstanding contributions to aPHa, earning him aPHa's Distinguished Service Award in 2023. He is a strong, unwavering advocate for local public health.

- **Tammy DeGiovanni**

Tammy DeGiovanni is a dynamic health leader with over 25 years of experience. She holds a Master of Health Administration, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, and is a Certified Health Executive with the Canadian College of Health Leaders.

Tammy's career began as a Registered Nurse across diverse settings. She then moved into leadership roles in pediatric acute care, including the organization-wide implementation of an electronic health record. She is now the Senior Vice-President of Clinical Services and Chief Nurse Executive at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, overseeing all clinical programs, nursing and health professional practices. Tammy serves on the CHEO Board and various regional and provincial committees to advance healthcare system changes.

She collaborates with the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Health Sciences as a guest lecturer and works with the CHEO Research Institute to integrate evidence-based care. Additionally, Tammy has been Vice-Chair of the Ottawa Board of Health for six years and is active in community organizations related to the arts, schools, sports, and her neighborhood.

Tammy's extensive leadership and strategic expertise make her an ideal candidate for the aPHa Board of Directors, with a strong focus on governance structures that help teams achieve their mandates, aligning with the goals of Public Health Boards across the Province.