

InfoBreak

alPHA's members' portal



Nov./Dec. 2025

Key Highlights

- Strong Fall Symposium participation; programming shaped by member feedback.
- Strategic advocacy continues (next *Public Health Matters* infographic: *A strong economy supported by healthy communities*).
- Partnerships advancing our impact (OMA, AMO, ROMA).
- Governance updates: Indigenous membership recommendation; ONCA compliance; Late Resolution policy change (details at the 2026 Winter Symposium).
- Save the dates: 2026 Winter Symposium (online, February 11–13) and 2026 AGM & Conference (in person, June 8–10, Radisson Blu Toronto Downtown).

Celebrating a Successful Fall Symposium

- Thank you to everyone who joined us. Strong attendance and engagement underscored the value of sessions shaped by member feedback.
- I'd like to express my deep appreciation to those who made it possible:
 - o alPHA Staff for their outstanding planning and execution;
 - o Speakers, moderators, and facilitators for the high-quality content and discussion;
 - o Our co-host, Southwestern Public Health; and
 - o The Dalla Lana School of Public Health and the Eastern Ontario Health Unit for their support.
- Please save the dates:
 - o 2026 alPHA Winter Symposium (online): February 11–13.
 - o 2026 alPHA Annual General Meeting and Conference (in person): June 8–10, Radisson Blu Toronto Downtown.
- Toronto hotel capacity will be tight—please book accommodations early.
- Registration opens in spring 2026 (as usual).

Advancing Strategic Priorities

- Advocacy that resonates with government:
 - o Continued emphasis on outcomes, value, and practical system impact of local public health.
 - o Next *Public Health Matters* infographic in development: *How Public Health supports a strong Ontario economy*.
- Strategic relationships that amplify our impact:
 - o Following a meeting between alPHA's Executive Committee and the OMA's leadership, we were pleased to see the OMA advocate for strengthening local public health and a provincial vaccine registry during their Queen's Park advocacy day.

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- o Ongoing collaboration with AMO, including participation on its Health Transformation Task Force.
- o alPHA is working on securing a session on the importance of local public health at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Conference, January 2026.
- What's next:
- o Continued engagement with partners to align messages and advance shared priorities ahead of key government decision windows.

Serving Members on Common Priorities

- Updating regarding Resolution A25-02 that was referred to the alPHA Board of Directors for a decision:
 - o The board reached consensus to support the intent of the original proposed Resolution, while also considering member feedback.
 - o alPHA wrote to the Minister recommending:
 - Indigenous membership on Boards of Health, aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (UNDRIP), and the province's new Indigenous engagement guide; and that Indigenous participation should uphold self-determination, respect local governance structures and jurisdictional realities, and be developed collaboratively with Indigenous communities and partners.
 - o Correspondence is posted on our website.
- ONCA compliance and governance updates:
 - o To ensure alPHA's compliance with the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA), alPHA is working with the chairs of working groups and communities of practice that require updates to Terms of Reference.
 - o Late Resolutions:
 - Legal counsel has advised that late resolutions are not compliant with ONCA.
 - The Resolutions Policy will be updated accordingly.
 - Further information will be shared with Members at the 2026 Winter Symposium.

Season's Greetings

- On behalf of the alPHA Board of Directors and Staff, wishing you a safe, restful, and happy holiday season. Thank you for everything you do for local public health across Ontario!



2025 alPHa Fall Symposium: Recap

alPHa 2025 Fall Symposium and Workshops November 5-7, 2025

Thank you to all of the alPHa Members who attended this year's Fall Symposium. We were glad to see so many of you engaged in discussions and dialogue on key public health issues with the new all-day format. A special thanks goes to alPHa Chair, Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, for chairing the event and to Southwestern Public Health for being this year's Fall Symposium co-host.

A huge shoutout goes to the alPHa staff: Loretta Ryan, Chief Executive Officer, Melanie Dziengo, Communications Coordinator, Lynne Russell, Coordinator, Member Services, and Gordon Fleming, Manager, Public Health Issues for their outstanding work on this important Membership event. Many thanks to Obadiah George from the Dalla Lana School of Public Health and Andy Morrisson from the Eastern Ontario Health Unit for their generous event and technical support.

Presentations from this year's Fall Symposium are now available. You will need to log in to the members' side of the website to view these. You can do so here. Please note, we are continuing to receive the presentations, so check back often.

If you have not yet filled out the after-event survey, there is still time to do so. You can be entered into a draw for a gift card. The link to the survey is here, and the final date to fill it out is Friday, November 21.

Thank you

Save the date



2026 alPHa Winter Symposium

Feb. 11-13

Continuing the important conversation on Ontario's local public health system



Co-Hosted by Region of Waterloo Public Health

2026 alPHA Annual General Meeting and Conference



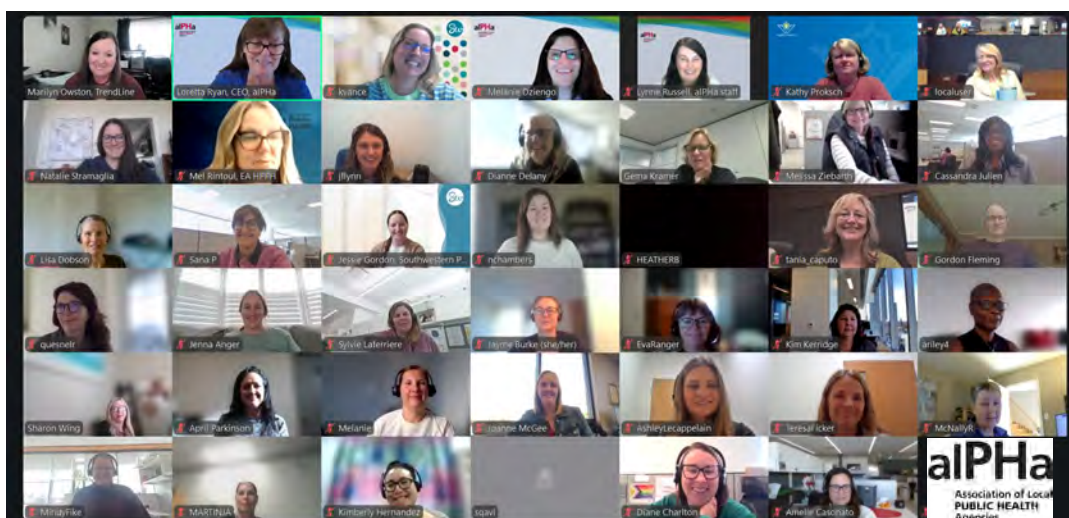
In advance of the alPHA Annual General Meeting and Conference, that is taking place in-person at Radisson Blu Toronto Downtown, June 8-10, 2026, and in anticipation of the impact of the FIFA World Cup, we are sharing the conference hotel room code with the alPHA Membership earlier than usual.

We were able to secure pricing similar to what was offered in 2025 at the new waterfront location. The reservation code is available in an e-mail sent on October 21. Should you need any assistance, please contact the hotel directly (kertricia@radissonblutoronto.com).

We strongly encourage you to book your accommodations as soon as possible as hotel rooms in Toronto are expected to be limited during that time. Please note, registration for the conference will commence at the usual time (in spring 2026).



2025 Fall EA/AA Workshop recap!



Thank you to all those who attended the Executive Assistant/Administrative Assistant (EA/AA) Fall Workshop. It was a huge success and it's all thanks to you and your participation! On Tuesday, November 4, EAs/AAs from across Ontario gathered together to take part in the *Working with Others: Understanding Communication Styles* workshop that was led by Marilyn Owston from Trendline. We hope you were all able to take some time for yourselves and that you will take what you've learned from the workshop and apply it both inside and outside the workplace. We also hope you will be able to deal more effectively with people whether they are colleagues, clients, members of the public, or representatives of other groups or organizations.

A huge thanks goes to the ALPHA staff: Loretta Ryan, Chief Executive Officer, Melanie Dziengo, Communications Coordinator, and Lynne Russell, Coordinator, Member Services, for their leadership and planning on this workshop.

Your support for ALPHA Member Representatives does not go unnoticed. Thank you for all that you do! Please do not forget to fill out your [after-event survey](#). The final date to complete it is Friday, November 21.

ALPHA would like to acknowledge and thank Southwestern Public Health for being the workshop's co-host.

THANK YOU

SWPH's New Strategic Plan: Five Years, Three Priorities, One Vision



**Population
Health**



**Service
Excellence**



**Organizational
Resilience**

Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) recently launched its 2025-2029 strategic plan, reaffirming its commitment to advancing public health in Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas. In consultation with Platinum Leadership, the plan was informed by staff, partners, and residents to ensure SWPH remains responsive to evolving health challenges in the region.

SWPH's leadership and Board of Health established five organizational values: We are accountable, collaborative, equitable, evidence-informed, and strategic.

The strategic plan centres on three areas of focus that build on the vision of healthy people in vibrant communities:

- **Population Health:** Focused on improving health outcomes through equity-driven approaches, addressing infectious disease risks, and preventing substance use and mental health concerns.
- **Service Excellence:** Emphasizes strong partnerships and innovation to enhance data quality, client experience, and program effectiveness.
- **Organizational Resilience:** Builds on lessons from COVID-19 to invest in a leaderful culture focused on workforce readiness.

Planning is underway with internal working groups formed to translate these priorities into actional steps for year-one. Progress will be tracked to ensure the work is measured. With this new strategic direction, SWPH aims to foster trust, transparency, and accountability in public health.

Affiliates

Association of Local Public
Health Agencies



Ontario Dietitians in Public Health
Diététistes en santé publique de l'Ontario

Ontario Dietitians in Public Health updates

Ontario Dietitians in Public Health (ODPH) have launched a new website. Visit www.odph.ca to learn more about the work and collaboration amongst dietitians in Ontario's public health agencies to improve population health and health equity. The [2024-25 Annual Report](#) provides an overview of the past year's accomplishments, provincial activities, and projects led by ODPH's members.

ODPH launched a [strategic plan](#) for 2025-2029 with a renewed vision, mission and goals. The strategic planning process was an opportunity to ensure the organization continues to advance public health nutrition and its members as leaders. ODPH's work is member driven and member engaged, foundational to health, evidence informed, health equity focused and is committed to Indigenous engagement.



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Climate Change and Public Health and AI and Public Health reports



Two new reports for Climate Change and Public Health and Artificial Intelligence and Public Health will be available soon. In the meantime, check out the resources that are currently available (linked above).



Government of Ontario releases Fall Economic Statement

The provincial government's Fall Economic Statement, titled *2025 Ontario Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review: A Plan to Protect Ontario*, was released earlier this month. It "continues to protect Ontario and support a more competitive, resilient and self-reliant economy by cutting red tape, investing in infrastructure, supporting workers, improving services and making life more affordable." To read alPHA's summary, click [here](#).



GenWell: Talk to a Stranger Week - Nov. 24-30

Did you know? According to research, a simple chat with a stranger can: improve your well-being, make us happier, increase a sense of connection, and improve levels of trust.

Talk To a Stranger Week is an opportunity to build a sense of connection and community that many need in a post-pandemic world. It is seizing the opportunity that many of us have each day to make a difference in our own lives and the lives of others by simply saying hello, smiling or striking up a conversation with a stranger. This campaign intends to educate, empower, and catalyze Canadians about the many benefits of talking to strangers. To learn more, click [here](#).

talk to a stranger week.
genwell

TALK TO A STRANGER WEEK

NOV. 24-30, 2025

Give TODAY for a more connected TOMORROW

genwell HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT

Media Partner **CBC**

Scan to visit our website

Join us November 24-30, 2025

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Talk To A Stranger Week is an opportunity to build a sense of connection and community that many need in a post-pandemic world. It is seizing the opportunity that many of us have each day to make a difference in our own lives and the lives of others by simply saying hello, smiling or striking up a conversation with a stranger.

www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org @GenWellProject

THE BENEFITS:

Connecting with strangers can enhance our happiness, optimism, empathy, and sense of belonging, grounding us in the world.

Additionally, several long-term benefits arise from these connections, including:

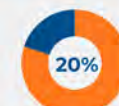
- Increased well-being
- Greater happiness and optimism
- Stronger empathy and compassion for others
- Better cognitive performance
- Heightened sense of connection
- Higher trust levels
- Decreased feelings of social isolation, disconnection, and loneliness

TIPS TO CONNECT:

- Say hello
- Compliment someone
- Make eye contact and smile
- Celebrate or complain about the weather
- Strike up a conversation in a line-up
- Speak about a current event
- Ask for advice
- Tell a joke or make light of a situation



How many years people have been told not to talk to strangers



Percentage of Canadians that speak to strangers each day



How often talking to strangers is a positive experience for both people

genwell HUMAN CONNECTION MOVEMENT

Media Partner **CBC**

"A stranger today can be a friend tomorrow."

Proud health partners:



Make a donation directly to GenWell
Help us scale our impact and bring social health to the forefront across Canada. Scan the QR to access our donations page for more details.

genwell

alPHA Correspondence

Through policy analysis, collaboration, and advocacy, alPHA's Members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention, and surveillance services in all of Ontario's communities. A complete online library of submissions is available [here](#). These documents are publicly available and can be shared widely.

- [alPHA Letter - Indigenous BOH Membership](#) - November 12, 2025



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Board of Health Shared Resources

A resource page is available on alPHA's website for Board of Health members to facilitate the sharing of and access to information, orientation materials, best practices, case studies, by-laws, Resolutions, and other resources. In particular, alPHA is seeking resources to share regarding the province's *Strengthening Public Health Initiative*, including but not limited to, voluntary mergers and the need for long-term funding for local public health. If you have a best practice, by-law or any other resource that you would like to make available via the newsletter and/or the website, please send a file or a link with a brief description to gordon@alphaweb.org and for posting in the appropriate library.

Resources available on the alPHA website include:

- Orientation Manual for Boards of Health (Revised Jan. 2024)
- Review of Board of Health Liability, 2018, (PowerPoint presentation, Feb. 24, 2023)
- Legal Matters: Updates for Boards of Health (Video, June 8, 2021)
- Obligations of a Board of Health under the Municipal Act, 2001 (Revised 2021)
- Governance Toolkit (Revised 2022)
- Risk Management for Health Units
- Healthy Rural Communities Toolkit
- The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction
- The Ontario Public Health Standards
- Public Appointee Role and Governance Overview (for Provincial Appointees to BOH)
- Ontario Boards of Health by Region
- List of Units sorted by Municipality
- List of Municipalities sorted by Health Unit
- Map: Boards of Health Types NCCHP Report: Profile of Ontario's Public Health System (2021)
- The Municipal Role of Public Health (2022 U of T Report)
- Boards of Health and Ontario Not-For-Profit Corporations Act
- Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada
- BOH Training Courses





Ontario Public Health Directory: October 2025 update

The Ontario Public Health Directory has been updated and is available on the alPHA website. Please ensure you have the latest version, which has been dated as of **October 28, 2025**. To view the file, log into the alPHA website.



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Respiratory Virus Season

PHO has updated two key resources for the 2025-26 respiratory virus season, to improve the user experience and provide more comprehensive data on respiratory virus activity in Ontario. These resources are intended to support public health units during the 2025/26 respiratory season.

Ontario Respiratory Virus Tool (ORVT)

Provides comprehensive epidemiological information on respiratory virus activity in Ontario, including COVID-19, influenza, and RSV. Key enhancements include:

- New weekly key highlights
- All lab testing data (2020–present) now sourced from OLIS for consistency; replaces previous sources. COVID-19 data previously labeled as episodes will now be referred to as cases.
- Expanded indicators:
 - o ICU bed occupancy for influenza and RSV
 - o Hospital admissions for COVID-19, influenza and RSV.
 - o Combined bed occupancy view for COVID-19, influenza and RSV.

For a detailed description of the enhancements, please visit our [news post](#).

Integrated Respiratory Virus Risk Indicators Report (IRVRI)

Provides short-term projections of COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity, and risk of hospitalization for across pediatric, adult and senior age groups. Updates include:

- Projections for activity now use OLIS data for all viruses, replacing PHO laboratory data for influenza and RSV.
- Graphs have been updated to show hospitalization risk by age group: pediatric (<18), adults (18–64), and seniors (65+).
- Risk levels simplified from five to four (low, medium, high, very high) with standardized thresholds.

These tools are updated weekly on Fridays.

Public Health Ontario

Additional respiratory virus resources:

- o [Timing of Antiviral Susceptibility Testing During Influenza Outbreaks](#)
- o [Respiratory Season 2025-26 Part 1: Surveillance & Testing](#)
- o [Respiratory Season 2025-26 Part 2: Overview of Seasonal Respiratory Virus Immunizations](#)
- o [SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Surveillance in Ontario](#)

Recent Knowledge Products

- [Mpox in Ontario](#)
- [Legionellosis in Ontario](#)
- [Tuberculosis in Ontario](#)
- [Invasive Group A Streptococcal \(iGAS\) Disease in Ontario](#)
- [Measles in Ontario](#)
- [Canadian Dental Care Plan](#)
- [Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Halo Head Spas](#)
- [Public Health Approaches for Women and Pregnant People with Syphilis](#)

Events

- 18 Nov – PHO Rounds: [Taking the Bite Out of Tooth Pain: Using Antibiotics Wisely in Dentistry](#)
- 19 Nov – PHO Rounds: [Toxigenic C. Diphtheriae in a Donkey: Implications for Zoonotic Disease Transmission and One Health Approach](#)
- 20 Nov – PHO Rounds: [Understanding and Communicating Health Risks from Radon Gas](#)
- 25 Nov - PHO Rounds: [Public Health Neighbourhood Nursing: A Mobile Equity Mode](#)
- 26 Nov – PHO Rounds: [Peel Regions Heat Vulnerability Index](#)

Recent Presentations

- [“All in her Head”: The Health Impacts of Intimate Partner Violence and Evidence Based Strategies to Promote Women’s Health](#)
- [The Ontario Early Adversity and Resilience Framework: From Research to Action](#)



Upcoming DLSPH Events and Webinars

Health Security Unbound: Navigating Power, Surveillance, and Ethics (Nov. 24)

2025 Solutions for Healthy Cities Symposium (Nov. 25)

Hazel McCallion Lecture in Shaping Healthier Communities (Nov. 25)

Climate Change and the Developing and Aging Brain (Dec. 2)

CPE Speaker Series: Strategic Placement and Accessibility of Naloxone Kits in Canadian Communities (Dec. 4)

Catalyst Seminar Series: Artificial Intelligence and data (Dec. 9)

Catalyst Seminar Series: Supporting vulnerable populations (Jan. 13, 2026)



Do I need additional insurance for valuable items?

In partnership with ALPHA, BrokerLink is proud to offer preferred home and auto insurance rates for members, get a quote today. Did you know that your home insurance may not adequately cover your collectibles and valuable assets? Here's how to make sure you're protected by insurance.



Simplify Training, Communication, and Engagement with Vocalmeet

Juggling staff development, compliance, stakeholder engagement, and event delivery (often with limited resources!) can be tough. Thankfully, proudly Canadian Vocalmeet is here to help with our easy, all-in-one platform.

Key Benefits for Public Health Units:

1. Integrated Learning Management

Vocalmeet's learning management system (LMS) lets you deliver onboarding, compliance, and ongoing professional development (online and in-person, live and on-demand). Assign courses to specific groups (staff, management, or volunteers), track progress automatically, and generate downloadable certificates on completion.

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And, with full mobile access and multilingual support, your team can access essential training anytime, anywhere. Additional features include discussion forums, live polls, and automated notifications to keep everyone engaged and on track.

2. Effortless Event and Meeting Management

Run public health conferences, internal training, or community workshops with ease. Vocalmeet manages registrations, tracks attendance and compliance, and integrates directly with your Zoom for seamless virtual or hybrid delivery. Set your required minimum number of attended minutes and automatically issue completion certificates—no manual tracking required.

3. Automated, Targeted Communications

Create and schedule important updates, reminders, or community bulletins with a simple drag-and-drop editor. Separate users into custom groups (cohorts) to target your messaging, and automate reminders for training deadlines, event dates, or compliance renewals.

Vocalmeet's platform reduces manual workload and ensures nothing slips through the cracks.

4. Centralized Contact and Unit Management

Vocalmeet's secure database allows you to manage all staff, volunteer, and stakeholder information in one place. Group contacts by role, location, or project and enable self-service access so users can update their profiles and retrieve documents themselves.

Plus, you can easily generate real-time reports on engagement, event participation, or training completion for compliance and strategic planning.

Why Choose Vocalmeet?

- We're natively all-in-one: Our platform is built as a single, integrated system—that means learning, events, communications, and contact management are connected from day one.
- We're modular: Select only the features your unit needs and add more as you grow. Pay only for what you use.
- We're secure: we offer built-in privacy and compliance controls, with all your data hosted on our own Canadian servers (preserving your data sovereignty).
- We're with you every step of the way: We provide continuous support by assigning a dedicated project manager to guide you from planning through implementation and beyond.

Ready to streamline your unit's operations, strengthen compliance, and boost efficiency? Contact [Vocalmeet](#) today to learn how we can help you operate more efficiently, improve your offerings, and achieve more with less.



Inviting all Public Health Organizations to submit a project to our AI4PH Internship Program!

Do you belong to a public health organization looking to explore the abilities of AI to address pressing public health challenges? Do you have data and a vision for transformative change?

AI4PH can help you bring that vision to life. They are inviting organizations to collaborate with them in developing 3-6 month AI for Public Health internship projects. The projects are designed to build AI talent, skills, and capacity and help you leverage AI for your organizational needs. Just bring your project idea, and we'll work with you to formulate it, match you with the right talent, and explore funding opportunities to support your interns. It's that simple!

Register your interest here: [Partner Registration Form](#) by November 28, 2025.

Check out their website and learn how they can support you in making giant leaps in the field of AI and Public Health: <https://ai4ph-hrtp.ca/partners/>



NEWS

News Releases

The most up to date news releases from the Government of Ontario can be accessed [here](#).



alPHA's mailing address

Please note our mailing address is:

PO Box 73510, RPO Wychwood
Toronto, ON M6C 4A7

For further information, please contact info@alphaweb.org.



Algonquin Provincial Park

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