March 23, 2017
P01-20

Sent via email to:

PHTransformation@ontario.ca

To whom it may concern,

Re: Modernized Ontario Public Health Standards, and Working with the LHINS

Please be advised that the Council of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo at their regular meeting held on March 22, 2017, approved the following resolution:

That the Region of Waterloo forwards a copy of report PHE-17-02, dated March 7, 2017, as feedback, to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, with a copy to the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), as part of the consultation process for the draft revised “Standards for Public Health Programs and Services.”

Enclosed please find a copy of report PHE-17-02. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Dr. Liana Nolan, Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health at 519-883-2240 or lnolan@regionofwaterloo.ca.

Regards,

Tim Brubacher
Council/Committee Support Specialist

TB/vc

cc: Dr. Liana Nolan, Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health
alPHA - Linda Stewart, Executive Director - linda@alphaweb.org
AMO - Monika Turner, Director of Policy - MTurner@amo.on.ca
Region of Waterloo
Public Health and Emergency Services

To: Chair Geoff Lorentz and Members of the Community Services Committee

Date: March 7, 2017
File Code: P01-20

Subject: Modernized Ontario Public Health Standards, and Working with the LHINS

Recommendation:

That the Region of Waterloo forwards a copy of report PHE-17-02, dated March 7, 2017, as feedback, to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, with a copy to the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aPHa) and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), as part of the consultation process for the draft revised “Standards for Public Health Programs and Services.”

Summary:

The key considerations that arise from the draft revised Standards for Public Health programs and Services are as follows:

1) There is a potential increase in resource requirements especially in the areas of
   • LHIN-related work
   • Annual Service Plan submission
   • Visual Screening Services
   • Engaging with Indigenous Populations

   It will be difficult to determine the impact until the Standards, protocols and guidance documents are finalized. The new protocols will be critical. The Ministry is strongly encouraged to engage the field in the development of the guidance documents and protocols. It is anticipated that some new regulations may be required related to enforcement activities (for example working with health care facilities). It is understood that the Ministry intent is to be resource neutral, but it is difficult to assess the impact of the new Standards at this time.

2) There is limited ability to provide feedback due to the tight time frames and
limited scope of the consultation (with a focus on operational and implementation considerations).

3) The impacts of the new Standards will likely unfold and evolve over time. Currently, Region of Waterloo Public Health is well positioned to adapt to the new Standards, based on our organization structure and staff skill sets.

4) There is an increased expectation regarding accountability, with a Ministry focus on value for money and outcomes. The Ministry is strongly encouraged to engage with the field and municipalities on the development of the new accountability framework.

5) There has been a shift towards providing explicit program detail in the protocols rather than the Standards. It is anticipated that there will be more local flexibility in program development. This will lead to an outcome where neighbouring health units may be providing different programs and services, which will potentially require transparency and explanation.

The Waterloo-Wellington LHIN CEO and Board Chair have been invited to come and delegate at a future Community Services Committee meeting to talk about working together with Public Health and the Region of Waterloo, as the Board of Health.

Report:

Process and context summary

On Friday February 17, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care circulated a draft of the revised Standards for Public Health Programs and Services, for comment. Feedback is due to the Ministry by April 3.

As part of the broader health system transformation efforts underway, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced the launch of the review and modernization of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) on November 16, 2015.

From the Ministry of Health perspective, a key purpose of the Ontario Public Health Standards review was to build stronger linkages between Public Health and LHINs, to support integrated planning within an integrated health care system. Other Ministry considerations included:

- Essential public health functions
- Health needs of the population
- Impact of current public health programs
- Most appropriate role for Public Health in an integrated health system
- Enhanced emphasis on responding to local needs and
• Decreasing health inequities by addressing the needs of priority populations

Since November 2015, the Ministry engaged public health and the health sector more broadly through an Executive Steering Committee, a Practice and Evidence Program Standards Advisory Committee, a number of subject specific work groups, and also individual submissions.

As part of the sector engagement activities related to the modernization of the OPHS, Ministry staff are utilizing a number of existing forums to provide an overview of the new standards, including the AMO Health Task Force and the alPHA Winter Symposium. The Ministry will also use webinars and regional consultation meetings to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to:

• seek clarification/context on the draft standards,
• provide input on anticipated operational considerations, and
• provide input on implementation requirements and supports (for example whether new protocols are required, where guidance documents are needed, and what training supports will be beneficial).

The Ministry will also be accepting written submissions which can be sent to PHTransformation@ontario.ca. Boards of health are encouraged to submit consolidated feedback by April 3, 2017.

Currently, related Ministry work is still ongoing through:

• a Public Health LHIN Work Stream working group (October 2016 to March 2017) whose mandate is to advise on the implementation of the Patients First Act, specifically implementation of formal linkages between LHINs and boards of health to support alignment and improved population health,
• an Accountability Committee (May 2016 to June 2017) whose mandate is to develop an accountability framework for the public health sector,
• the Executive Steering Committee (December 2015 to June 2017) whose mandate is to provide strategic leadership, oversight and guidance on the review of the Ontario Public Health Standards, including the Accountability Committee,
• anticipated work groups to develop pending protocols and guidance documents, potentially with oversight from the Executive Steering Committee, and
• an Expert Panel (January 2017 to spring 2017) whose mandate is to provide advice to the Minister on structural, organizational and governance changes to public health.

Main changes and potential implications

The new Standards are shorter (45 pages down from the previous 71 pages; 145 requirements down from the previous 305), due mostly to consolidation. The net
resource impacts are unclear since many of the new requirements are undefined (the supporting new protocols are yet to be developed).

The Foundational Standard has been modified to include Population Health Assessment, Effective Public Health Practice, Health Equity (new), and Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery (previously a program standard). The **new expectations regarding the working relationship between public health and the LHIN** will be captured under both the Population Health Assessment and the Health Equity sections. Details regarding expectations for Public Health and LHINs working together are still under development, and are being informed by a provincial Public Health-LHIN working group. An expectation to **engage with Indigenous communities** is also outlined in the Health Equity section. The Effective Public Health Practice section has a new requirement to **submit an Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission**. Details regarding the specifics of these requirements are pending.

A comparison between the Foundational Standard in 2008 and 2017 is outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population Health Assessment</td>
<td>Population Health Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveillance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Knowledge Exchange</td>
<td>Effective Public Health Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Preparedness</td>
<td>Emergency Preparedness, Response &amp; Recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Health Equity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Program Standards are regrouped and modified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Disease Prevention</td>
<td>Chronic Diseases and Injury Prevention, Wellness and Substance Misuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of Injury and Substance Misuse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Safety</td>
<td>Food Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Hazard Prevention &amp; Management</td>
<td>Healthy Environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Water</td>
<td>Safe Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproductive Health</td>
<td>Healthy Growth &amp; Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Health</td>
<td>School Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infectious Diseases Prevention &amp; Control</td>
<td>Infectious &amp; Communicable Diseases Prevention &amp; Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabies Prevention &amp; Control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Health, STI, and BBI</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis Prevention &amp; Control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaccine Preventable Diseases</td>
<td>Immunization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the potential areas for uncertain impacts, in general, there are greater opportunities for local public health to tailor programs based on local need. Many references to direct service provision have been replaced with “ensure access”, with
further detail on provision of service being moved to the protocols.

The key areas of potentially greater resource impacts include:

- LHIN-related work
- Annual Service Plan submission
- Emergency preparedness (potential for new expectations)
- Visual screening services in the School Health Standard (scope yet to be defined)
- Expansion of Healthy Environments area (more proactive than the previous Health Hazards Standard)
- Work with Indigenous populations (more guidance pending)
- Newer enforcement activities (previously aware but explicitly captured in new Standards i.e. healthy menu choices, e-cigarettes)

Corporate Strategic Plan:

The draft “Standards for Public Health Programs and Services” describe the scope of services for local Public Health. This will replace the current “Ontario Public Health Standards, 2008”, and will specify the minimum level of public health programs and services for local boards of health, under the authority of the Health Protection and Promotion Act. This aligns with the Region’s Strategic Focus Area: Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities and the Region of Waterloo’s “efforts to improve population health, support healthy living, disease and injury prevention”.

Financial Implications:

Local public health services are cost shared as a 75% provincial and 25% municipal responsibility. The Region of Waterloo is a co-funder, and deliverer of public health programs and services.

This document is a draft of the revised “Standards for Public Health Programs and Services”. The final document is anticipated to be approved by the Minister of Health and Long Term Care later, in the first half of 2017. In the second half of 2017, the Ministry will develop supporting guidelines and protocol documents.

It is difficult to comment on the potential resource impacts until the Standards are finalized and the protocols are complete. Implementation of the new Standards is currently targeted for January 1, 2018, by the Ministry. It is the Ministry’s stated intention that the revision of the Standards be a revenue neutral exercise.

A new accountability framework is under development, and is not yet complete. It is anticipated that this framework will provide details regarding the Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission.
Other Department Consultations/Concurrence:

Nil

Attachments

A copy of the draft “Standards for Public Health Programs and Services: Consultation Document” can be found at:


A hard copy has been provided for Councillors.

Prepared By:  Dr. Liana Nolan, Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health

Approved By:  Dr. Liana Nolan, Commissioner/Medical Officer of Health