



Windsor-Essex County Health Unit Board of Health

RECOMMENDATION/RESOLUTION REPORT – Public Health Support for Windsor Essex Community Safety and Well-Being Plan

2026-09-24

BACKGROUND

The [Windsor Essex Community Safety and Well-Being \(WECSWB\) Plan](#) is a municipally mandated, multi-sector framework intended to improve community outcomes through coordinated action on complex social issues. The refreshed 2026-2029 plan emphasizes social development, prevention, and risk intervention, and is grounded in local data, community voice, and cross-sector collaboration. Organized around three pillars, engaged communities, safer public spaces, and coordinated systems; the Plan provides a shared regional agenda for addressing complex social issues through coordinated action and shared accountability.

This approach aligns closely with the [Windsor-Essex County Health Unit \(WECHU\)'s 2026-2030 Strategic Plan](#), which prioritizes collaborative action on community health priorities, advancing health equity, and strengthening partnerships with organizations that serve priority populations. The WECHU programming in Comprehensive Health Promotion, Substance Use and Harm Reduction, and Healthy Families contributes directly to these shared goals through upstream prevention, early intervention, equity-focused planning, and coordinated service delivery. Across these areas, the WECHU works with community partners to address substance-related harms, promote resilience and healthy relationships, strengthen supportive environments for children, youth, and families, and improve access to programs and services for populations experiencing disproportionate barriers to health and well-being. Through initiatives such as the Windsor-Essex Community Opioid and Substance Strategy (WECOSS) and the Substance Supports in Neighbourhoods Accessed through Police Partnerships (SSNAPP) grant, the WECHU contributed to many of the outcomes achieved under the previous CSWB Plan. Continued alignment with the WECSWB Plan provides an opportunity to further coordinate local efforts, reduce duplication, and focus collective action on priority populations across Windsor and Essex County.

The [2026-2029 WECSWB Plan](#) identifies a shared regional agenda for improving safety, belonging, service access, and coordinated systems of support, with an explicit focus on prevention, risk reduction, and action for priority populations. Formal Board of Health support reinforces WECHU's role as a public health partner in this work and confirms that WECHU's strategic priorities and program directions are aligned with the Plan's pillars of engaged communities, safer public spaces, and coordinated systems. A Board resolution also signals the importance of sustained cross-sector collaboration to address the social and structural factors that shape health, safety, and well-being across Windsor and Essex County.

The relevance of the WECSWB Plan to WECHU and the Board of Health is further grounded in the statutory and practice framework for public health in Ontario. Under the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Ontario Public Health Standards, boards of health are responsible for population health assessment,

advancing health equity, evidence-informed planning, and collaboration with community partners to address the social and structural determinants that influence health and well-being. The WECSWB Plan's emphasis on prevention, risk reduction, coordinated systems, and priority populations is therefore directly relevant to public health practice. For WECHU, continued participation in the Plan supports its legislated mandate and reinforces a population health approach that strengthens cross-sector collaboration, improves community conditions, and contributes to safer, healthier, and more equitable communities across Windsor and Essex County.

PROPOSED MOTION

WHEREAS the WECSWB Plan provides a municipally mandated, multi-sector framework to improve safety and well-being through social development, prevention, and risk intervention, with a focus on priority populations and shared community outcomes; and

WHEREAS the WECHU 2026-2030 Strategic Plan emphasizes leading collaborative action on community health priorities, advancing health equity, strengthening partnerships with organizations serving priority populations, and using evidence-informed planning to improve population health; and

WHEREAS WECHU programming in Comprehensive Health Promotion, Substance Use and Harm Reduction, and Healthy Families supports many of the same goals advanced through the WECSWB Plan, including healthier and more engaged communities, safer public spaces, coordinated systems of support, prevention, early intervention, and equitable access to services; and

WHEREAS priority populations in Windsor-Essex County may experience disproportionate barriers to health, safety, belonging, and well-being, and may benefit most from coordinated, cross-sector approaches that address complex and overlapping needs; and

WHEREAS strengthening partnerships among public health, municipalities, health care, education, housing, and community and social service sectors is essential to improving outcomes for individuals, families, and communities across Windsor and Essex County;

WHEREAS under the Health Protection and Promotion Act and the Ontario Public Health Standards, boards of health are mandated to assess population health, address health inequities, apply evidence-informed planning, and collaborate with community partners on the social and structural determinants of health; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health affirms its support for continued alignment between the WECHU and the priorities, pillars, and implementation directions of the WECSWB Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health endorses a collaborative, equity-focused approach that prioritizes coordinated action for priority populations in Windsor-Essex County, with an emphasis on prevention, upstream action, and equitable access to programs and services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health encourages the identification of opportunities to:

- improve service coordination for priority populations;
- reduce duplication and gaps in community response;
- strengthen data-sharing, knowledge exchange, and joint planning where appropriate; and
- advance health equity through collective action on the social and structural factors affecting health and well-being.