



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Toronto Public Health and University of Toronto Affiliation Agreement

Date:	November 3, 2009
To:	Board of Health
From:	Medical Officer of Health
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report requests authority to enter into an affiliation agreement between the City of Toronto and the University of Toronto (U of T). The affiliation agreement will govern placement of approximately 175 University of Toronto students at Toronto Public Health (TPH) each year. These students come primarily from faculties of dentistry, medicine, nursing, nutrition and social work.

Continuous learning is integral to the effectiveness of public health practice. Stronger links with the Dalla Lana School of Public Health and other University of Toronto faculties and programs will enhance knowledge, training and research exchange in areas of shared interest. Additionally, academic affiliations and cross-appointments will provide professional development opportunities for individual staff providing a more seamless flow between research, policy and practice.

The affiliation agreement between the Governing Council of the University of Toronto and the City of Toronto will guide relations between the University and Toronto Public Health, encourage further collaboration, and support staff recruitment through the training of future public health practitioners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The City of Toronto enter into an affiliation agreement with the University of Toronto to describe and clarify the relationship between the two organizations

regarding their common interests in the education of health professionals in public health and related sciences, and research and research training.

2. City Council grant authority to the Medical Officer of Health to execute an affiliation agreement with the University of Toronto in the form or substantially in the form of the agreement in Attachment 1 to this report.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

DECISION HISTORY

The City of Toronto has a long history of student placement agreements with the University of Toronto and other academic institutions. The University of Toronto approached Toronto Public Health to develop a broader affiliation agreement which could be used as a model for other health unit and university partnerships.

Proposed enhancements to the existing student placement agreement between the City of Toronto and the University of Toronto will bring a wealth of interprofessional growth opportunities to both organizations. The involvement of University of Toronto faculty and students in public health practice will expand the creativity and discourse around the salient components of practice. The agreement creates improved opportunities for research, policy and professional development. Toronto Public Health staff will have more opportunities to develop applied research projects, to assist U of T faculty with curriculum development and teaching and to secure cross appointments with the University.

The proposed term of the agreement is five years.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

A wide range of students from numerous disciplines and post-secondary institutions are placed at Toronto Public Health as an essential part of their education. In 2007, 318 students and in 2008, 322 students secured a wide variety of placements at TPH. These students came from community colleges such as Centennial, Durham, George Brown, Humber and Seneca as well as universities such as Brock, Guelph, McGill, Queens, Ryerson, Wilfred Laurier, York and the University of Toronto. University of Toronto students form the largest group and included 175 students placed with Toronto Public Health in 2008.

Placements are meant to prepare students for employment in public health and health care. Students enter the practice arena from both the undergraduate and graduate schools

from a multitude of post-secondary faculties. Toronto Public Health assists students to integrate theory with practice in a public health context. Given the pending shortage of public health practitioners anticipated over the next several years, it is essential to support the training of future professionals in practice settings such as Toronto Public Health.

The 2006 Ontario Capacity Review Committee report, entitled, *Revitalizing Ontario's Public Health Capacity: the Final Report of the Capacity Review Committee* stressed the importance of public health units working with students. Student placements benefit Toronto Public Health in many ways, including providing opportunities for knowledge transfer and for staff to assume mentoring and preceptor roles as well as enhancing service delivery. With an aging public health workforce, student placements are an essential strategy for staff recruitment.

COMMENTS

The University of Toronto and Toronto Public Health affiliation agreement will govern a strengthened relationship and will result in: deeper collaboration; increased evidence-based, efficient and cost-effective public health practice and interdisciplinary research, training and knowledge exchange opportunities; and clarity of roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders involved with student placements.

CONTACT

Maureen Cava
Manager, Professional Practice
Toronto Public Health
Tel: 416-338-2296 Fax: 416-8787
Email: mcava@toronto.ca

Carol Timmings
Interim Director, Planning & Policy
Toronto Public Health
Tel: 416-392-7463 Fax: 416-392-0713
Email: ctimming@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Dr. David McKeown
Medical Officer of Health

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – DRAFT Agreement between The Governing Council of the University of Toronto and City of Toronto – dated September 30, 2009