

Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards

Date:	March 21, 2011
To:	Board of Health
From:	Medical Officer of Health
Wards:	ALL
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Health Promotion and Sport released the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards (OPHOS) (1) on February 18, 2011. The standards are appended in Attachment 1.

The OPHOS set out a number of management and governance requirements for all boards of health and public health units across Ontario. The standards outline the expectations for both the board of health as the governing body and the public health unit as the administrative body. While a number of the requirements established echo requirements already found in the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* (HPPA), others are new and based on good governance practices.

Reporting on the achievement of the OPHOS will begin in 2012, with 2011 being an implementation year. Monitoring will not focus on compliance, but rather on outcomes. The OPHOS will be enabled through Accountability Agreements between the provincial government and each board of health. These agreements are expected to be signed in the summer of 2011.

The purpose of this Board of Health report is to inform the Board of Health of the OPHOS, provide an overall assessment of the level of achievement with the requirements, and seek approval to incorporate the OPHOS as part of the Board of Health's orientation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. Board of Health incorporate the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards as a component of all Board of Health Members' orientation.
2. Toronto Public Health staff be directed to report by October 2011 on the actions taken to address gaps in meeting Ontario Public Health Organizational requirements.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

DECISION HISTORY

The Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards have not previously been discussed by the Board of Health.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Organizational Standards were recommended in the Capacity Review Committee's Final Report "Revitalizing Ontario's Public Health Capacity" (2) as one of the types of performance standards and as a component of a Public Health Performance Management Framework. Organizational standards help promote organizational excellence, establish the foundation for effective and efficient governance, program and service delivery and contribute to a public health sector with a greater focus on performance, accountability and sustainability.

The OPHOS articulate the provincial government's expectations for governance and administrative practices which are based on generally accepted principles of good governance and management excellence. The OPHOS are a companion document to the Ontario Public Health Standards which articulate the minimum programmatic expectations for boards of health.

The OPHOS contain 44 requirements. Existing obligations within the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* (HPPA) and its Regulations that relate to governance and management are also included and account for half of the requirements.

The requirements are grouped into the following six categories:

1. Board Structure – goal/objective is to ensure that the structure of the board of health facilitates effective governance and respects the required partnerships with municipalities as well as the need for local flexibility in board structure. All eight requirements in this category are drawn from the HPPA.

2. Board Operations – the goal/objective of this category is to enable boards of health to operate in a manner that promotes an effective board, effective communication and transparency. Only one of the ten requirements is new, all others reiterate HPPA requirements.
3. Leadership – the aim of the two new requirements is to ensure board of health members develop a shared vision for the organization, use proactive, problem solving approach to establishing the organization’s strategic directions, and take responsibility for governing the organization to achieve their desired vision.
4. Trusteeship – the goal/objective of the three new requirements is to ensure that board of health members have an understanding of their fiduciary roles and responsibilities, that their operations are based on the principles of transparency and accountability, and that board of health decisions reflect the best interest of the public’s health.
5. Community Engagement and Responsiveness – the aim of the five new requirements is to ensure that the board of health is responsive to the needs of the local communities and shows respect for the diversity of perspectives of its communities in the way it directs the administration of the health unit in planning, operating, evaluating and adapting its programs and services.
6. Management Operations – the intent of this grouping of requirements is to ensure that the administration of the board of health uses a proactive, problem solving approach to establishing its operational directions, demonstrates its organizational priorities and objective through its actions on program delivery, and functions in an efficient and effective manner. Eleven out of sixteen of the requirements in this category are new.

The provincial government will not be assessing compliance with each of the 44 requirements. The intent is to operationalize the OPHOS via Accountability Agreements. Specific measures will be developed and included in the Agreements. Boards of health, including Toronto, will begin reporting in 2012 on the level of achievement.

COMMENTS

Following the release of the OPHOS, the Medical Officer of Health initiated a process to assess the general level of achievement with the requirements. This included a series of meetings with various areas within Toronto Public Health as well as discussions with Senior Management. In assessing the level of achievement, Toronto Public Health staff assigned an overall compliance rating (Fully Met, Requires Work, Not Met and Not Applicable) to each of the requirements. Attachment 1 provides an overview by requirement.

The results of this initial assessment process indicate that the Board of Health and TPH have achieved most of the OPHOS requirements.

Two areas in particular have been identified in need of further work, specifically:

- Under the Trusteeship category:
 - There is a need to establish an annual board of health self-evaluation process.

- Under the Community Engagement category:
 - As part of this Communication Strategy, there is also an opportunity to explore mechanisms and opportunities to disseminate an annual financial and performance report to the public.

Following this initial assessment, it is evident that there are a small number of areas requiring further work. The Medical Officer of Health will report back by Fall 2011 on progress made to achieve all requirements.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Public Health Organizational Standards, Ministries of Health and Long-Term Care and Health Promotion and Sport, 2011

Attachment 2: Level of Achievement with the OPHOS Requirements

References

- (1) Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport. Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards. 2011. Available from:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/orgstandards/docs/org_std.pdf

- (2) Revitalizing Ontario's Public Health Capacity: The Final Report of the Capacity Review Committee. May 2006.

Available from:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/ministry_reports/capacity_review6/capacity_review06.pdf