



REPORT FOR ACTION

Disclosure of Infection Prevention and Control Inspections of Licensed Child Care Centres in Toronto

Date: March 20, 2019

To: Board of Health

From: Medical Officer of Health

Wards: All

SUMMARY

Toronto Public Health (TPH) inspection staff conduct Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) inspections at approximately 1,050 licensed child care centres annually under the *Infection Prevention and Control Protocol, 2018* of the Ontario Public Health's Standards. Effective July 1, 2018, The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care added a new requirement through the *Infection Prevention and Control Disclosure Protocol, 2018*, that all IPAC inspections of licensed child care centres be made available online on the Board of Health's website.

This staff report provides an overview of TPH's actions towards fulfilling this new requirement of the Ontario Public Health Standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends:

1. That the Board of Health receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact associated with this report.

DECISION HISTORY

There is no prior decision history associated with this report, as this is a new initiative.

COMMENTS

Inspections of Licensed Child Care Centres

The Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) and accompanying program-specific Protocols establish the minimum requirements for public health programs and services to be delivered by Boards of Health

(http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph_standards/protocolsguidelines.aspx#protocols).

Under the *Infection Prevention and Control Protocol, 2018*, Toronto Public Health (TPH) Public Health Inspectors are responsible for conducting annual infection prevention and control (IPAC) inspections at approximately 1,050 child care centres (CCCs) that are licensed by the Ministry of Education. Infection prevention and control inspections cover several domains, including but not limited to, review of and adherence to administrative health policies of the CCC, observation of cleaning and disinfection practices, hand hygiene, and inspection of washroom and diapering areas. Public Health Inspectors also attend CCCs to investigate complaints and to respond to outbreaks, as per the *Infection Prevention and Control Complaint Protocol, 2018*.

Under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA), operators "shall ensure that any direction of a medical officer of health with respect to any matter that may affect the health or well-being of a child receiving child care" is carried out. Child care centres have high rates of compliance with IPAC requirements and best practices specified by the Board of Health. Upon initial inspection 84% of CCCs received satisfactory inspections in 2016, 94% in 2017, and 90% in 2018. Public Health Inspectors provide on-site remedial education and conduct re-inspections for premises that do not have satisfactory inspection results.

Child care centre operators are required under the CCEYA to keep one copy of the IPAC inspection report on site. Toronto Public Health can provide infection prevention and control inspections results for a licensed CCC to persons other than the premise owner or operator upon request.

Public Health Inspectors routinely inspect CCCs at least once per year under the *Food Safety Protocol, 2018*. Food safety inspections may be conducted concurrently with IPAC inspections. City of Toronto, *Municipal Code Chapter 545-Licensing* requires that CCC operators post the food safety inspection notice and produce the relevant report upon request by any person. Food Safety inspections for licensed CCCs are disclosed online through TPH's DineSafe website (<https://www.toronto.ca/health/dinesafe/>).

Toronto Children's Services also conduct annual quality assurance assessments of child care centres under service contracts to the City of Toronto for fee subsidy or other funding. This quality rating covers several domains including following regional public health procedures. Child care centres that have been assessed have a "Quality Makes a Difference" sticker displayed at their centre. Individual quality ratings are posted on a City of Toronto webpage (<https://www.toronto.ca/data/children/dmc/a2z/a2za.html>) and a parent can request written reports from the child care supervisor.

The Ministry of Education oversees the licensing of child care centres and enforcement of all aspects of the CCEYA, including compliance with any directions of the Medical Officer of Health. Results of annual licensing and any monitoring inspections are given to the operator and are posted on a Ministry of Education webpage (<http://www.iaccess.gov.on.ca/LCCWWeb/childcare/search.xhtml>).

Modernization of the Ontario Public Health Standards

Effective July 1, 2018, the MOHLTC published the *Infection Prevention and Control Disclosure Protocol, 2018* requiring Boards of Health to publicly disclose the results of all IPAC inspections for licensed child care centres online on the Board of Health's website. Disclosure requirements also extend to re-inspections and complaint-based investigations where IPAC lapses have been identified.

This new requirement for online disclosure enhances program transparency and accountability and is in alignment with the priorities of the MOHLTC and current practices of other oversight agencies. Online disclosure may further improve operator compliance with IPAC requirements and best practices and increase the public's awareness about TPH's inspection program of licensed CCCs.

Steps towards Fulfilling the New Ministry Requirement

Toronto Public Health has taken several steps to ensure the Board of Health comes into compliance with this new disclosure requirement. Toronto Public Health consulted with CCC owners and operators and Children's Services to assist TPH in developing a disclosure system. As part of this process, TPH staff administered an online survey in November 2018 to members of the child care community that included questions about TPH's Infection Prevention and Control program and the anticipated disclosure initiative. Fifty-five percent of 157 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that an IPAC disclosure system would be beneficial to the overall operation of their CCC and to the public.

Toronto Public Health is also supporting CCC owners and operators to understand and be able to comply with the directions of the Medical Officer of Health. Staff revised TPH program materials, including the manual for CCC operators, *Infection Prevention and Control in Child Care Centres: Requirements and Best Practices*, and the IPAC inspection report, to ensure that expectations are clear and can be applied consistently. Toronto Public Health also hosted four Child Care Operator In-services in October 2018 to inform them about the anticipated disclosure initiative and to reinforce infection prevention and control requirements and best practices.

Toronto Public Health will launch the online web disclosure system in September 2019. The visual style will be consistent with established TPH inspection disclosure systems (DineSafe, BodySafe, SwimSafe). The system will be searchable by premise name or location, providing the user the ability to view the inspection result for the premise, including deficiencies and public health actions taken.

Toronto Public Health will provide CCC operators with updates about the initiative by email prior to and at the time of the web disclosure system launch. Toronto Public Health will also promote this new system to parents through social media.

After implementation, TPH will monitor and evaluate the online public disclosure program. Based on evaluation findings and pending any further disclosure specifications received from MOHLTC, additional program enhancements can be phased in as needed and with the necessary consultation.

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SIGNATURE

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