

Toronto Public Health's Strategic Plan 2024-2028: 2026 Annual Progress Report

Date: June 23, 2026

To: Board of Health

From: Medical Officer of Health

Wards: All

SUMMARY

On July 8, 2024, the Board of Health adopted the Toronto Public Health (TPH) Strategic Plan 2024-2028, which serves as the guiding blueprint to navigate TPH's key priorities, ensuring continued delivery of high-quality programs and services over a four-year period. The strategic plan identifies five priorities:

1. Strengthen health protection, disease prevention and emergency preparedness
2. Promote health and well-being across the lifespan
3. Promote the conditions to support positive mental health and reduce the harms of substance use
4. Advocate to advance health equity
5. Nurture a positive workplace culture

These priorities are being operationalized through 22 key actions, all of which contribute to TPH's vision of a city where all people can be healthy and thrive.

This second annual progress report provides an update on TPH's progress over the past year in implementing the strategic plan. It highlights initiatives from the past year that demonstrate the strategic plan in action. These initiatives include developing and implementing a climate change surveillance framework, promoting physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour across the lifespan, offering training to front-line staff on trauma-informed approaches to service delivery, implementing sociodemographic data collection, and actioning an employee engagement plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The Board of Health receive this report for information.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact associated with the recommendation of this report.

Funding required to implement the Strategic Plan in 2026, is incorporated within Toronto Public Health's 2026 Operating Budget. Any additional funding required to support implementation in 2027 and 2028 will be identified and requested through the respective annual budget processes.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact Section.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 7, 2025, the Acting Medical Officer of Health presented the Toronto Public Health's Strategic Plan 2024-2028: 2025 Annual Progress Report as part of Item - 2025.HL26.2. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.HL26.2>

On July 8, 2024, the Board of Health adopted Toronto Public Health's Strategic Plan 2024-2028 as part of Item - 2024.HL14.1. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.HL14.1>

COMMENTS

To demonstrate accountability to the Ministry of Health, Boards of Health are required to have a strategic plan that establishes strategic priorities over a three- to five-year period. On July 8, 2024, the Board of Health adopted Toronto Public Health's (TPH) 2024-2028 Strategic Plan. The Board of Health also directed the Medical Officer of Health to demonstrate how Board of Health reports advance strategic priorities, develop an implementation plan and a public dashboard to track progress, and report back with annual progress reports.

On July 7, 2025, TPH presented its first annual progress report on the Strategic Plan 2024-2028 to the Board of Health. The report demonstrated progress made since the strategic plan's launch, including the introduction of 22 key actions to advance the plan's objectives and priorities (see Attachment 1) and the launch of the public-facing [2024-28 Strategic Plan Progress Dashboard](#) to support ongoing monitoring of progress.

Advancing the strategic plan through Board of Health reports

Since July 2025, TPH has produced 30 reports to the Board of Health that reflect work undertaken to advance the five strategic plan priorities. Together, these reports illustrate how activities across TPH align with and support progress on each strategic priority. They demonstrate a strengthened and more intentional alignment between Board of Health reporting and the strategic plan. The integration of strategic priorities into routine

reporting enhances transparency, supports more effective oversight, and enables clearer demonstration of progress and impact.

The table below illustrates the number and examples of reports received by the Board of Health that align with each strategic priority. Attachment 2 includes a detailed list of all reports received by the Board of Health between July 2025 and June 2026.

Table 1: Alignment of key reports received by the Board of Health with strategic plan priorities between July 2025 and June 2026

Strategic Priority	Number of Reports Received (July 2025-June 2026)	Selection of Key Reports Received (July 2025-June 2026)
1. Strengthen health protection, disease prevention and emergency preparedness	17	HL26.5 - Planning for Climate Change Monitoring to Understand Health Impacts and Support Resilience in Toronto HL28.2 - Publication of Child Care Centre Infection Control Inspection Results HL28.3 - Toronto Public Health Update on Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Prevention HL28.4 - Toronto Public Health's Preparation for FIFA World Cup 2026 HL33.4 – Implementation of a Food Safety Management Plan for Special Events
2. Promote health and well-being across the lifespan	21	HL28.1 - Working with Schools to Improve the Health and Well-being of Children and Youth HL32.2 - Service Agreements Awarded and Executed by the Medical Officer of Health for 2026 HL33.2 - Achieving Universal Student Nutrition – 2026 Service Subsidies

Strategic Priority	Number of Reports Received (July 2025-June 2026)	Selection of Key Reports Received (July 2025-June 2026)
3. Promote the conditions to support positive mental health and reduce the harms of substance use	13	HL29.1 - Our Health Our City: Annual Progress Report 2025 HL31.3 - Health Impacts of Homelessness and Update on the Downtown CORE Pilot HL32.1 - Promoting Positive Childhood Experiences to Improve Health Outcomes Across the Lifespan
4. Advocate to advance health equity	21	HL29.2 - Updated Mortality Trends for Residents of Toronto HL30.5 - Toronto Population Health Status Indicators Update HL31.2 - Actions to Advance Indigenous Health HL33.3 - 2026 and 2027 Toronto Urban Health Fund Allocations and Review Process
5. Nurture a positive workplace culture	7	HL27.5 - Current and Emerging Uses of Artificial Intelligence by Toronto Public Health HL31.1 - 2025: A Year-in-Review of Toronto Public Health HL33.1 - Toronto Public Health's Nursing Recruitment and Retention Strategy

Tracking implementation progress of key strategic plan actions

In summer 2025, TPH began developing action plans for each of the 22 key actions to advance the strategic plan, including how each action would be implemented and measured. These plans will continue to be refined throughout the duration of the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan period.

In spring 2026, the [Strategic Plan Progress Dashboard](#) was updated to report on progress toward completing these key actions. As of spring 2026, two of the 22 actions are complete, 19 are on track for completion, and one is upcoming. The next update to the dashboard is anticipated in fall 2026.

Strategic Plan in Action

The following section highlights select initiatives that demonstrate how TPH is putting the strategic plan into action and advancing progress across its key priorities.

Strategic Priority 1: Strengthen health protection, disease prevention, and emergency preparedness

Protecting the health of Torontonians requires strong, coordinated action to prevent illness, respond to emerging infectious diseases, and address evolving threats. TPH is strengthening health protection, disease prevention, and emergency preparedness by preparing for, and responding to, outbreaks and public health emergencies.

TPH continues to mobilize coordinated, TPH-wide responses to emerging and re-emerging communicable diseases, including Ebola, hantavirus, legionella, mpox clade 1b, measles, and respiratory viruses such as COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus. This work includes both broad City-wide programming and more targeted approaches to outbreaks affecting specific populations, such as recent outbreaks of shigella among people experiencing homelessness. These efforts are in alignment with the Ontario Public Health Standards and are supported through collaboration with City divisions, including Toronto Shelter and Support Services and Toronto Paramedic Services, Public Health Ontario, Ontario Health as well as community partners, to ensure timely, effective, and equitable responses.

TPH continues to adapt and enhance responses to outbreaks and emergencies using established best practices, emergency management principles, emerging evidence, and internally generated lessons learned. Emergency responses focus on communicating effectively with the public and working with partners to monitor, anticipate, and mitigate the health impacts on Toronto residents.

To advance this priority, TPH is making progress across all five key actions, all of which are on track for completion.

Strategic Plan in Action: Develop and implement a climate change surveillance framework to better assess risks of climate change to the health of Torontonians (Action #5)

The Ontario Public Health Standards require boards of health to prepare for emergencies to ensure a 24/7, timely, integrated, safe, and effective response to, and recovery from, emergencies with public health impacts. They also require boards of health to assess health impacts related to climate change. As part of its broader emergency management and climate change work, TPH has developed and is implementing a climate change surveillance framework to better assess and track the risks of climate change to the health of Torontonians.

In July 2025, TPH provided an update to the Board of Health on progress made in developing a public health climate change surveillance framework. TPH is a leader among local public health agencies in developing this climate change surveillance framework that is uniquely tailored to Toronto's local context and needs.

As part of the first phase of this work, TPH launched the initial [Climate Change and Public Health Dashboard](#) in March 2026. The dashboard brings together up to 10 years of historical health and environmental data to demonstrate how climate change is affecting the health of Toronto residents over time. Designed as a long-term population health surveillance tool, the dashboard supports evidence-informed planning, policy development, and climate resilience efforts. The initial release includes indicators related to heat and cold, vector-borne disease, severe weather, air quality and wildfire smoke, UV radiation, and food and water safety. Additional indicators will be added in future phases of this work. The dashboard will be updated periodically to share additional information related to the health impacts of climate change.

TPH consulted partners on the development of the surveillance framework. Consultations included local academic researchers, several Ontario public health agencies, and other City of Toronto divisions such as the Environment, Climate and Forestry Division. Initial consultations confirmed the value of TPH's public health climate change surveillance framework and its alignment with work being done in other organizations. Consultations will continue as the surveillance framework indicators are further developed and shared. Community-driven and informed approaches for understanding impacts and adaptation strategies for Toronto's Indigenous residents will be co-developed with Indigenous community partners to inform future phases of this work.

In addition, TPH has leveraged its participation in the Partnership for Healthy Cities to further advance surveillance and evidence generation related to the health impacts of climate change. In 2025, TPH conducted two surveys on Torontonians' awareness and behaviours related to extreme heat and wildfire smoke. This project complements TPH's climate change surveillance framework by generating population-level data on awareness, behaviours, and adaptive capacity to inform the design of public health interventions, policies, and communications aimed at reducing heat and air quality health risks.

Looking ahead, the next phases of this work will focus on validating data sources for additional surveillance indicators and collaborating with academic partners on the use of modelling and other analytic methods to address data gaps. Future phases of this work will also include the identification and application of data and methods to effectively measure inequities among populations most impacted by climate change. TPH will also continue working with the Partnership for Healthy Cities to enhance its communication outreach to populations most vulnerable to extreme heat.

Strategic Priority 2: Promote health and well-being across the lifespan

Promoting health across the lifespan is essential to ensuring that all Torontonians can live, learn, work, and play in environments that support their health and well-being, including as they age. TPH aims to reduce the burden of chronic and infectious diseases through interventions that meet the needs of children and youth, support healthy aging and age-friendly communities, and collaborate with partners to foster healthy social, natural, and built environments. To advance this priority, TPH is making progress across all four key actions, all of which are on track for completion.

Strategic Plan in Action: Provide public health guidance to inform and advance municipal initiatives and policies related to chronic disease prevention (Action #6)

Physical activity is a key driver of chronic disease prevention. However, local data indicate that only a small proportion of Toronto children (7.1 percent) meet daily physical activity recommendations, and just over half of adults meet national guidelines. This highlights a significant opportunity for population-level action.

Recognizing that social, natural, and built environments shape how active people are, TPH is identifying opportunities to promote physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour through evidence-informed approaches that strengthen movement-supportive environments for children, youth, adults, and older adults. This includes efforts to reduce recreational screen time among children, recognizing that limiting screen use can help free up time for active play and other forms of physical activity. TPH is advancing this work in collaboration with City divisions and external partners. In 2025, TPH completed an evidence review and jurisdictional scan on population-level interventions to promote physical activity and reduce sedentary behaviour. Findings are informing the development of a TPH movement promotion strategy.

TPH partnered with Toronto school boards to implement Playground Activity Leaders in School (PALS) in elementary schools. Students were trained as peer leaders to increase opportunities at their schools for movement, belonging and inclusion as well as physical literacy.

In the 2025-26 school year, TPH onboarded 32 new schools and delivered comprehensive health promotion programming with the support of Into Kids' Health grants. This evidence-informed initiative supports actions focused on enhancing built, social, and natural school environments related to physical activity, healthy eating, mental health and well-being, among other health strategies.

TPH also contributed to research and evidence supporting improvements in physical mobility among older adults through the [EMBOLDEN trial](#) and continues to amplify messaging from [Cycle Toronto](#) to promote cycling as a form of active transportation among older adults.

Creating environments that support physical activity and well-being requires coordinated action with multi-sectoral partners. In partnership with Green Communities Canada, TPH supported equity-deserving schools in advancing active, safe school travel initiatives under the Toronto School Travel Program, helping to make it easier for students to use sustainable and active modes of transportation to get to and from school. Capacity building initiatives are also being implemented to integrate physical activity, leadership development, and active and safe school travel.

In 2025, the City of Toronto's Transportation Services Division and TPH re-established a collaborative working relationship to identify opportunities for education and engagement initiatives that support the City's [Micromobility Strategy](#), which includes cycling as a form of active transportation. TPH also collaborated on the [8 80 TowerPOPs](#) study, which aims to activate underused spaces in close proximity to high-density apartment towers to improve physical health outcomes. TPH and other City of

Toronto Divisions continue to participate in knowledge exchange initiatives to explore opportunities to unlock the potential of inner suburban spaces in promoting health and well-being, in support of the [plazaPOPS: Creating an Equitable and Healthy Public Realm in Toronto](#) project. Together, this work reflects a shift toward a more coordinated, systems-level approach to chronic disease prevention that is grounded in data, evidence, and a strong health equity lens.

Looking ahead, TPH will continue to build on its partnerships, examine inequities that contribute to reduced levels of physical activity and higher chronic disease burden, and advance the development of a TPH movement promotion strategy.

Strategic Priority 3: Promote the conditions to support positive mental health and reduce the harms of substance use

Rising mental health challenges and substance use have significant impacts on the health and well-being of Torontonians, including increasing risks of drug toxicity deaths. TPH aims to address these challenges by responding to the drug toxicity epidemic, reducing harms associated with substance use, strengthening trauma-informed and stigma-reducing public health services and promoting positive mental health. To advance this priority, TPH is making progress across all five key actions. Out of the five actions, one is complete, three are on track for completion and one is upcoming.

Strategic Plan in Action: Offer training to all front-line staff on trauma-informed approaches to delivering public health services (Action #13)

TPH plays a critical role in strengthening the City's workforce to deliver trauma-informed, stigma-reducing public health and community services. This work aligns with priorities outlined in the City's Our Health Our City: A Mental Health, Substance Use, Harm Reduction & Treatment Strategy for Toronto; Ontario's Early Adversity and Resilience Framework; and the Indigenous Health Strategy.

TPH co-chairs a provincial Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilience Community of Practice that developed the Ontario Early Adversity and Resilience Framework to guide public health practice in addressing the impacts of early adversity across the life course. In May 2026, TPH presented a report to the Board of Health, Promoting Positive Childhood Experiences to Improve Health Outcomes Across the Lifespan, highlighting prevention of early adversity and strengthening positive childhood experiences as critical upstream strategies to improve population health outcomes. The Board of Health directed the Medical Officer of Health to advance a coordinated trauma-informed approach to City services that recognizes the impacts of trauma, adversity, racism, and violence to foster trust, safety, and prevent re-traumatization.

An initial focus of this work will be training to enhance organizational capacity, building on foundational staff training launched in 2025 on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), resilience, and trauma-informed supervision. This training builds staff knowledge and provides practical skills to support trauma-informed, stigma-reducing service delivery. An internal Community of Practice has also been established to facilitate ongoing adoption across the organization.

TPH's clinical services, including sexual health and harm reduction and treatment programs, embed trauma-informed approaches to foster trust and continuity of care for clients. This includes staff training, non-judgmental and low-barrier service models, and policies that prioritize safety, transparency, empowerment, and gender- and equity-informed practice. These services and programs continue to enhance staff capacity to strengthen the delivery of trauma-informed, stigma-reducing services.

To further support this work, TPH is expanding Trauma-Informed Care training to all frontline staff, with a Trauma-Informed Care expert delivering sessions from June 2026 through December 2026, with 1,500 training spaces available. This initiative aims to build a deeper understanding of the widespread and long-term impacts of trauma and violence, while strengthening staff capacity to respond in ways that promote safety, healing, empowerment, and trust.

Through these efforts, TPH continues to embed a trauma-informed lens across services, recognizing how structural and systemic inequities shape lived experiences and ensuring approaches remain compassionate, responsive, and equitable.

Looking ahead, TPH will continue to build internal capacity and expand this training for frontline staff. TPH will also work in collaboration with relevant City divisions, agencies and corporations to support a coordinated trauma- and violence-informed approach to City services, including sharing learnings to contribute to a common understanding. This work will further support the advancement of trauma-informed principles over time. TPH will also continue to strengthen partnerships with community organizations and internal partners to support more integrated, trauma-informed service delivery, including sharing knowledge and lessons learned to inform partners' approaches and strategies.

Strategic Priority 4: Advocate to advance health equity

Social factors such as gender, race, and socioeconomic status intersect to shape health outcomes, with overlapping and compounding effects across identities. These outcomes are further influenced by structural and systemic contributors, including inequitable social, economic, and political policies and systems, which produce avoidable and unfair differences in health across populations. TPH advocates for and advances health equity by assessing and reporting on health inequities and population health needs, collaborating across sectors to address local health needs, and sharing evidence, advocating, and collaborating to influence actions that impact population health. To advance this priority, TPH is making progress across all four key actions. Out of the four actions, one is complete and three are on track for completion.

Strategic Plan in Action: Implement the Sociodemographic Data Collection Plan (Action #15)

The Ontario Public Health Standards require public health units to identify and address the needs of priority populations. Collecting and assessing sociodemographic data helps TPH understand who is being reached, identify underserved groups, tailor programs, and evaluate health equity impacts and outcomes.

Sociodemographic data include characteristics such as age, sex, gender, racialized group, ethnicity, income, education, language, housing status, employment, and geography. This data provides important context for understanding the multifaceted determinants of health and measuring differences in health and health care that may be considered unfair or unjust. TPH is committed to collecting sociodemographic data only when there is a clear and purposeful plan to use it to improve services or advance equitable outcomes. This work aligns with the City of Toronto's [Data for Equity Strategy](#), which guides consistent and responsible data collection, use, and governance.

In November 2025, TPH began to roll out sociodemographic data collection using the Toronto Community Health Information System at a TPH breastfeeding clinic. Initial program data indicates strong participation, with over 200 clients contributing data to date. Early insights show meaningful variation in race, income, and immigration status. TPH is exploring how these insights can inform program planning, for example, comparing client sociodemographic profiles across breastfeeding clinics or combining sociodemographic data with neighbourhood-level Child and Family Inequities Scores to assess clinic locations and outreach needs.

Overall, findings from the initial rollout demonstrate that sociodemographic data collection is feasible and valuable when implemented intentionally, incrementally, and with appropriate resources, staff training, and community partnership. At the same time, opportunities exist to strengthen community-led governance, transparency, and accountability, particularly with Indigenous communities (OCAP: Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession) and Black communities (EGAP: Equity, Governance, Access, and Protection).

Looking ahead, TPH will explore a phased expansion of sociodemographic data collection to additional breastfeeding clinics, followed by reproductive, post-partum, and early years services. This will support a more complete understanding of client pathways, service utilization, and unmet needs. Broader expansion will require assessing program readiness and technology needs across TPH's various data systems. TPH is also exploring the development of a TPH-wide sociodemographic data governance framework and opportunities to advance community-led data governance, aligned with the [City of Toronto's Black Data Governance Framework](#) and [Data for Equity Strategy](#).

Strategic Priority 5: Nurture a positive workplace culture

TPH's ability to advance public health depends on a skilled, supported, and engaged workforce. As an organizational priority, TPH is investing in its people and fostering a positive workplace culture through four key actions: promoting innovation, continuous improvement and learning; developing and retaining a skilled and diverse workforce; creating a welcoming and inclusive work environment; and strengthening collaboration across the organization to enhance impact. To advance this priority, progress is being made across all four key actions, all of which are on track for completion.

Strategic Plan in Action: Fostering a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and learning (Action #19) in a welcoming and inclusive work environment (Action #21)

TPH is implementing its Employee Engagement Action Plan, which was informed by a staff survey and feedback, and focuses on strengthening communication, enhancing senior leadership engagement, and expanding learning and development opportunities.

TPH's first Employee Engagement Pulse Survey focused on senior leadership engagement, defined as employees feeling that senior leaders care about their well-being, are trustworthy, and are effective in their roles. The survey achieved a 74 percent participation rate and demonstrated improvement across seven benchmark measures compared to the City's 2023 Employee Engagement Survey. The executive team has held directorate town halls and organized three TPH-wide sessions in January 2026 to increase senior leadership engagement. The TPH Employee Recognition program has also been enhanced, including updates to the Cheers to Peers Program and TPH Shout Out Program. Achievements are now regularly recognized in the weekly Medical Officer of Health message, and a recognition program review is planned for 2026.

TPH has expanded learning and leadership development opportunities. In 2025, TPH partnered with Toronto Employment and Social Services and Toronto Shelter and Support Services to participate in the Black Staff Mentorship Program. The program advances the [Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#) by supporting Black staff in clarifying career goals, building leadership skills, and expanding professional networks. The program delivered 13 events, engaging 1,075 participants, with 75 percent of participants reporting they were extremely satisfied. TPH is continuing the program into 2026 and will be working with partners to offer opportunities such as mentor development, professional skills webinars, and networking events.

TPH's People Leadership Development programming showed strong engagement. Thirty Minutes for Managers, a bi-weekly forum for people leaders launched in 2026, averaged 141 participants and was highly rated for relevance. TPH's bi-monthly Leadership Talks have also had strong participation and have been well received in 2026, with 96 percent rating the content as useful and relevant, and 89 percent reporting they were satisfied or extremely satisfied with their experience.

In addition, TPH has expanded learning opportunities to be accessible to all staff across the division. In 2025, the bi-monthly Leadership Talk Program included a Leadership For All component, offering leadership and professional development to staff at all career stages. TPH also launched the Shape Your Career Program, delivering five career-focused workshops to over 250 employees, with 83 percent of participants rating the sessions as excellent. TPH is exploring opportunities to expand the program to include more tailored, role-specific learning aligned with career development pathways.

Looking ahead, TPH will continue to apply a data-driven approach to employee engagement through Employee Engagement Pulse Surveys to monitor progress and inform decision-making. Surveys are planned to support ongoing measurement, continuous improvement, and informed decision-making. Through this work, TPH is strengthening its ability to respond to employee needs, enhance engagement, and foster a more connected, inclusive, and resilient workforce.

Next Steps

TPH will continue to implement the Strategic Plan 2024-2028, advance the 22 key actions and strengthen strategic alignment across programs and services. Progress will continue to be monitored through semi-annual updates to Strategic Plan Progress Dashboard and annual reporting to the Board of Health. TPH will report back to the Board of Health in July 2027 with the next annual progress update.

Strategic Impact

TPH's Strategic Plan 2024-2028 provides information on implementation progress made since the last annual report in July 2025 and it advances all of the strategic plan's priorities.

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SIGNATURE

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Medical Officer of Health

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Strategic Plan 2024-2028 Priorities, Objectives, Actions
Attachment 2: Alignment of Reports Received by the Board of Health between July 2025 and June 2026 with Strategic Plan Priorities