

MIDDLESEX-LONDON BOARD OF HEALTH

REPORT NO. 05-25

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health
FROM: Dr. Alexander Summers, Medical Officer of Health
Emily Williams, Chief Executive Officer
DATE: 2025 January 23

2025 HEALTH PROMOTION PRIORITIES

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health receive Report No. 05-25 re: “2025 Health Promotion Priorities” for information.

Report Highlights

- A prioritization framework was developed to strategically identify programs or topics within the Ontario Public Health Standards to be the target of health promotion-oriented interventions.
- Prioritized areas of focus have been identified for 2025.
- Relevant MLHU teams are engaging in developing and implementing operational plans to address prioritized areas in 2025.
- The prioritization framework and process will continue to be evaluated and revised with a goal of broadening engagement and consultation moving forward.
- Priorities for 2025 are affixed as [Appendix B](#), with definitions of health promotion-oriented interventions found in [Appendix A](#).

Background

The Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) faced significant budget pressures in 2024 resulting in an inability to sustain its previous levels of service. Given the magnitude of the disinvestments and the approved priorities of the agency, a new organizational structure for the MLHU was required.

This presented an opportunity to structure the agency around the public health interventions it delivers, providing multiple benefits, including: enhanced clarity of the work of the agency; an increased emphasis on the skills required to do the work, and an alignment of skills with the work; opportunities to strategically target certain issues, utilizing the full suite of adequately resourced interventions to maximize impact; and greater ability to adapt to changes in priority topics. Organized in this way, MLHU teams are able to employ interventions to target prioritized issues, depending on the burden of illness, the community context, and the policy landscape.

A prioritization framework was developed to strategically identify programs or topics within the Ontario Public Health Standards, 2021 (OPHS) to be the target of health promotion-oriented interventions, namely:

- Communication and Social Marketing,
- Education and Skill Building,
- Healthy Public Policy Development, and
- Community and Partner Mobilization.

Definitions of these interventions are provided in [Appendix A](#).

The prioritization framework is rooted in the National Collaborating Centre's Model for Evidence Informed Decision-Making and includes application of public health expertise with consideration of the local community context, municipal and provincial political climates, and availability of public health resources. Prioritized areas are validated by population health assessment data and peer-review and grey literature as needed. Key questions that guide this process include:

- Does this topic represent a **significant burden of illness** in or risk to our community?
- Can progress in this area make a big **impact** on the health of the community?
- Is this topic a **provincial and/or municipal priority**?
- Can a **local public health agency intervention** be applied effectively to this topic?
- Which **health promotion-oriented interventions** best address this topic?
- Are **equity-deserving groups disproportionately impacted** by this topic?

Health Promotion Priorities for 2025

As part of the MLHU's Organizational Processes and Reporting Cadence, the Senior Leadership Team began the process of identifying 2025 health promotion priorities in July and August of 2024, including consultation with Divisional Leadership teams. [Appendix B](#) outlines prioritized OPHS programs or topics to be addressed using health promotion-oriented interventions in 2025.

Next Steps

Relevant teams are engaging in the development and implementation of operational plans to address health promotion prioritized areas of focus for 2025. The Senior Leadership team will continue to evaluate and revise the prioritization framework and process with a goal of broadening engagement and consultation moving forward.

This report was prepared by the Family and Community Health Division.



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Chief Executive Officer

This report refers to the following principle(s) set out in Policy G-490, Appendix A:

- The Population Health Assessment, Health Equity and Effective Public Health Practice Foundational standards and the Program Standards as outlined in the [Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability](#).
- The *Health Protection and Promotion Act, 1990*
- The following goal or direction from the [Middlesex-London Health Unit's Strategic Plan](#):
 - Client and Community Confidence (Directions 1.1, 1.2)
 - Program Excellence (Direction 2.1)
 - Organizational Excellence (Direction 4.1)

This topic has been reviewed to be in alignment with goals under the Middlesex-London Health Unit's [Anti-Black Racism Plan](#) and [Taking Action for Reconciliation](#), specifically recommendations specifically recommendations Access and Report (4,5,6,7,8); Modify and Orient (9,10,11,14,16,17,19); Partner with Other Sectors (21,22,23,24,26); Engage Healthy Public Policy (33,37); Governance and Leadership (43,45) in the *Anti-Black Racism Plan* and recommendations Awareness and Education; Supportive Environments; Relationships; Governance; Equitable Access and Service Delivery in the *Taking Action for Reconciliation* report.