

## Middlesex-London Board of Health External Landscape Review – March 2025

The purpose of this briefing note is to inform MLHU Board of Health members about what is happening in the world of public health and impacts to the work of the MLHU and Board. This includes governance and legislative changes, news from other local public units, external reports on important public health matters, learning opportunities and MLHU events. **Please note that items listed on this correspondence are to inform Board members and are not necessarily an endorsement.**

### National, Provincial and Local Public Health Advocacy



#### Ontario Election Results on February 27

On February 27, the incumbent Progressive Conservative Party was re-elected with a majority government.

There were no changes to local elected representation in Middlesex-London:

- Terrence Kernaghan (London North-Centre) – New Democratic Party of Ontario
- Peggy Sattler (London West) – New Democratic Party of Ontario
- Teresa Armstrong (London Fanshawe) – New Democratic Party of Ontario
- Rob Flack (Elgin-Middlesex-London) – Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario
- Steve Pinsonneault (Lambton-Kent-Middlesex) – Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

The Premier (Doug Ford) and Cabinet will be sworn in on March 19, with a new session of the Ontario Legislative Assembly to begin on April 14.

To review full election results, please visit Elections Ontario's [website](#).

#### Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Board of Health, the MOH and CEO looks forward to continuing to discuss critical local public health matters that concern the provincial government post-election with sworn in Members of Provincial Parliament in the coming weeks.

#### United States Tariffs Implemented



On March 4, 2025, the United States imposed 25% tariffs on all Canadian exports to the United States and a 10% tariff on all Canadian energy. In response, the Canadian Government announced retaliatory tariffs on \$155 billion of American goods in a phased approach. The Ontario Government has also announced retaliatory measures including banning U.S.-based companies from participating in government procurement and encouraged municipalities to do the same. Further, the United States has also announced that it may impose additional 25 per cent tariffs on certain industries, including steel, aluminum and autos on March 12.

For a full list of items impacted by Canada's retaliatory tariffs, see the Canadian Department of Finance [website](#).

#### Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Board of Health, MOH, and CEO are actively pursuing a policy of not purchasing items directly from United States suppliers, unless a single-sourced item. Due to retaliatory tariffs, the cost of procurement for some items may increase; however, in cases of costs increasing significantly, MLHU will look for alternative domestic or non-US products.



### **Ontario Superior Court of Justice approves \$32.5 billion tobacco settlement**

On March 6, Chief Justice Geoffrey B. Morawetz has approved a historic \$32.5 billion settlement that will see three major tobacco companies compensate provinces, territories and ex-smokers in Canada.

The settlement was first proposed in October 2024 after unsuccessful years of mediation between tobacco companies JTI-Macdonald Corp., Rothmans, Benson & Hedges and Imperial Tobacco Canada Ltd and their creditors. The purpose of the settlement is for provincial and territorial governments to recoup smoking-related health-care costs.

The settlement details for the companies to pay more than \$24 billion to provinces and territories over about two decades, while plaintiffs in two class-action lawsuits in Quebec will get more than \$4 billion to split between them. Another \$2.5 billion will go to compensate Canadian smokers not included in the lawsuits, and more than \$1 billion will go to a foundation to fight tobacco-related diseases. The money for the foundation also includes \$131 million taken from the amount allocated to the Quebec plaintiffs.

It is noted that legal counsel for the Canadian Cancer Society (a party of the settlement) was disappointed the approved settlement did not contain stronger public health measures for companies and provinces/territories regarding smoking reduction.

**To read the full article, please visit CBC News' [website](#) and to review the full decision, please see decision [Imperial Tobacco Canada Limited, 2025 ONSC 1358](#).**

#### **Impact to MLHU Board of Health**

The Board of Health has previously heard a report regarding tobacco marketing and cost recovery in January 2025 in [Report No. 07-25](#). The MLHU recommended recovery costs from tobacco and vapour product firms, strengthening prevention and cost recovery in phases.

### **Local Public Health News**

#### **Measles Outbreaks in Surrounding Regions**

As of February 26, 2025 Ontario has reported 177 measles cases associated with a multi-jurisdictional measles outbreak which started in October 2024 in New Brunswick. The majority of outbreak-related cases have occurred in surrounding health units of Southwestern Public Health (48%) and Grand Erie Public Health (44.6%). Several exposures associated with the outbreak have occurred in the Middlesex-London region including local hospitals and retail spaces.

On March 11, the MLHU notified the public of a measles case in the region.

**To review the full epidemiological summary of *Measles in Ontario*, please visit Public Health Ontario's [website](#).**



#### **Impact to MLHU Board of Health**

The Board of Health, the MOH, and CEO support collaboration with other regional public health units in the mitigation of infectious diseases and preparation to address any local exposure or cases.