

Middlesex-London Board of Health External Landscape Review – September 2024

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.**

Local Public Health News



Ontario Protecting Communities and Supporting Addiction Recovery with New Treatment Hubs

On August 20 during the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference, the Hon. Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier/Minister of Health announced that the Ontario government is banning supervised drug consumption sites within 200 metres of schools and childcare centres. To restrict access to dangerous and illegal drugs moving forward, the government will also introduce legislation this fall that would, if passed, prohibit municipalities or any organization from standing up new consumption sites or participating in federal so-called “safer” supply initiatives. If passed, the legislation will also prohibit municipalities from requesting the decriminalization of illegal drugs from the federal government.

Ontario has also announced HART Hubs, connecting people with complex needs to comprehensive treatment and preventative services that could include:

- Primary care
- Mental health services
- Addiction care and support
- Social services and employment support
- Shelter and transition beds
- Supportive housing
- Other supplies and services, including naloxone, onsite showers and food

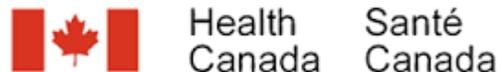
For more information, please visit the Ontario Government Newsroom [website](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The current consumption and treatment site in London (Carepoint) at 446 York Street is not impacted by these changes announced by the Minister of Health. The Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) and the Regional HIV/AIDS Connection (operators of Carepoint) continue to support members of the community who use services at Carepoint.

National, Provincial and Local Public Health Advocacy

Health Canada introduces new measures to help prevent harms to youth from nicotine replacement therapies



On August 22, the Honourable Mark Holland, Minister of Health announced that Health Canada is introducing new measures for nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) through a Ministerial Order to reduce the appeal of, access to, and use of these products by young people for recreational purposes, ensuring access is restricted to adults who use these products to help them quit smoking.

The Order introduces new measures that will:

- Prohibit advertising or promotion, including labelling and packaging, that could be appealing to youth.
- Require NRTs in new and emerging formats, such as nicotine pouches, to be sold only by a pharmacist or an individual working under the supervision of a pharmacist, and to be kept behind the pharmacy counter.

- Prohibit NRTs in new and emerging formats, such as nicotine pouches, from being sold with flavours other than mint or menthol.
- Require a front of package nicotine addiction warning, as well as a clear indication of the intended use as a smoking cessation aid for adults trying to quit smoking.
- Require manufacturers to submit mock-ups of labels and packages for all new or amended NRT licenses to ensure no youth appeal.

For more information, please visit the Health Canada Newsroom [website](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

The Board of Health previously heard about the dangers of certain nicotine replacement therapies (nicotine pouches) being accessed by youth in the community ([Report No. 16-24](#)). The Board also endorsed a resolution on the same matter from the [Windsor-Essex County Public Health Unit](#) and submitted a letter to Health Canada on March 22.



Kearon: Stigma a barrier to effective overdose response

Dr. Kearon had an op-ed published in the August 31, 2024 edition of the London Free Press on International Overdose Prevention Awareness Day. This op-ed was published after the Provincial Government's announcement to close ten (10) consumption and treatment sites that are within 200 meters of schools or child care centres.

To read the full article, please visit the London Free Press [website](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

August 31 was International Overdose Prevention Awareness Day. As a co-chair of the Community Drug and Alcohol Committee, the Middlesex-London Health Unit continues to support all four pillars of the Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy, including harm reduction.

MLHU Representation at AMO Conference

From August 18-21, more than 3,300 municipal leaders, government officials, public servants, sponsors, exhibitors, and media gathered in Ottawa to take part in the 2024 AMO Conference. MLHU was represented by Chief Executive Officer, Emily Williams and Acting Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Joanne Kearon.



To learn more about AMO, please visit [AMO's website](#).

Impact to MLHU Board of Health

MLHU Delegates also met with Minister Sylvia Jones (Health), Parliamentary Assistant Laura Smith (Children, Community and Social Services), Deputy Leader of the Green Party of Ontario Aislinn Clancy and the Official Opposition on public health matters.