

Board of Health Meeting November 18, 2021

Summary

2022 Public Health Budget

The Board of Health approved the 2022 General Public Health Programs Budget of \$13,923,746. This included:

- A 2% increase to the 2022 municipal levy to offset the General Public Health Budget shortfall.
- Submission of a Ministry of Health proposal in 2022 for One-Time Ontario Public Health Standard Expenses, and COVID-19 Extraordinary Expenses.
- Retaining the 2022 Provincial Municipal Mitigation funding for obligated municipalities until the 2022 COVID-19 One-Time Provincial Funding is received.
- Requesting that the obligated municipalities “loan” the 2021 Provincial Municipal Mitigation funding back to the Health Unit in January 2022 to provide adequate cash flow until the One-Time COVID-19 funding is received from the province.

Board Stipend

The Board of Health approved no change to the Board stipend of \$90.71/meeting for provincial appointees and the Chair of the Board.

COVID-19 Update

- We have seen a surge in the number of new infections since the beginning of November related to travel, social gatherings with friends and family, and household spread of the infection.
- With the arrival of cooler, drier weather COVID-19 virus droplets can stay in the air longer increasing the opportunity to spread through close contact with an infected person.
- It is critical to continue the COVID-19 precautions we have been doing - stay home when sick and be tested for COVID-19 symptoms, wear a mask when indoors in public spaces and outside if a 2m distance cannot be maintained, limit large social gatherings, and, if not already, be vaccinated.

Vaccine Numbers

- We have now received updated data from the Statistics Canada 2020 Census 2020 population counts. The previous estimates were from the 2020 Ministry of Finance of the population number overall and for each age group. The 2020 Census has indicated that our population has grown by about 4% in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark since 2016.
- Using the Census population numbers means that the proportion of the population who have received the COVID-19 vaccine, while lower, are still very high and in the 90's – first dose is 94.5% and fully vaccinated is 92.2% . Check our [vaccination dashboard](#) updated weekly.
- We encourage all those who have not yet received the vaccine to book through our website or through the Call Centre or walk into a clinic.

Third Booster Dose

- The fixed clinics have been reactivated and the community clinics have been expanded to support a third dose for 70 plus, Indigenous adults, people who have had two doses of AstraZeneca, and eligible health care workers.
- The Health Unit has created a Third Dose Interval Checker to help people know when they are eligible for the third dose - 6 months (or 168 days) after the second dose.
<https://healthunit.org/covid-19-vaccine/>
- Third doses are available at a vaccine clinic appointment or walk-in, and at some local pharmacies, and health care providers. Book through the Health Unit Website or call 1-844-369-1234 for help to book at a vaccine clinic.
- We are encouraging the public to check with friends, family and neighbours 70 plus who are eligible to help them book their booster dose.

Age 5 to 11 Vaccine

- Preparations are underway to provide the COVID-19 vaccine for children age 5 to 11 in collaboration with health care providers at the Fixed Sites and Community Vaccine Clinics.

Preschool Speech and Language Program

Language Express has been providing mostly telepractice services since the beginning of the pandemic. Now we are pleased to be expanding the in-person services we offer to include more families whose needs can't be adequately met through telepractice, all within the parameters of our risk assessment.

Radon Awareness Month

- November is Radon Awareness Month. We are encouraging all homeowners to test their homes for radon, if they have not already done so.

- The LGLDHU has some radon test kits available for purchase on a first come-first served basis at cost (\$20). Test kits can be purchased by visiting our [Brockville](#) or [Smiths Falls](#) offices. You can also purchase a radon test kit by contacting a local hardware store or visit <https://takeactiononradon.ca/> for other options.
- Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer, after smoking. The risk of developing lung cancer from radon exposure depends mostly on three factors: the level of radon you are exposed to, the duration of exposure, and smoking habits. Smoking or radon exposure can increase the risk of lung cancer; exposure to both enhances that risk.
- If radon levels are high then radon lowering measures can be put in place in the home.

Living Wage

- Employers can decide to adopt a Living Wage to support their employees in having enough income for the basics of living in their community. The Living Wage for Ontario Regions was announced last week based on actual costs of essentials for living e.g. food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and recreation. The Living Wage in Lanark, Leeds, and Grenville is \$18.25/hr.