

Board of Health Meeting April 20, 2023

Summary

Strategic Planning

The Board of Health approved the strategic planning process to develop one strategic plan that addresses both population health and organizational excellence, with the engagement of a consultant. The new Strategic Plan will be in effect from 2023-2028 with an annual review and a tentative finalized plan being presented to the Board of Health in October 2023. The Strategic Plan will establish priorities for the health unit's work that will be used to guide decision-making regarding focus and resource allocation.

Mental Health at Work Initiative

This initiative follows a framework from Excellence Canada, and has involvement from staff and management across the organization. During a recent assessment from Excellence Canada the health unit successfully achieved gold certification in mental health at work. This recognizes our organization's commitment and actions in mental health at work.

As per Excellence Canada, organizations certified at the Gold Level demonstrate:

- Organization-wide implementation of a strategic focus on mental health at work
- A sound, structured approach to a psychologically healthy and safe workplace

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The health unit is working with The Inclusion Project, an organization that uses evidence-based frameworks, to conduct an equity, diversity and inclusion assessment of an organization and provide a roadmap with recommendations for moving forward in a strategic way. Our organization's documents have been sent to The Inclusion Project for review. Next steps in the future include consultation with stakeholders, such as employees and Board members. An EDI working group has been formed internally to provide guidance and feedback to The Inclusion Project and to provide internal recommendations.

Municipal Meetings

Monthly networking calls with municipalities are taking place, with the most recent meeting being a retrospective on COVID-19 and a review of emergency preparedness; it was well attended with over 30 participants. The upcoming meeting will be about Planet Youth, which is an evidence-based intervention to prevent youth substance use.

Lyme Disease Reporting

The health unit will no longer report to the province the number of cases of Lyme disease received. We will continue to review each report we receive, but will no longer enter them into the provincial reporting system (called iPHIS) due to the following:

- Lyme disease is not transmitted from person to person; it is transmitted through the bite of a black-legged tick
- As a result, the purpose of tracking and publicly reporting the number of Lyme disease and similar vector-borne diseases is to provide surveillance—that is, to understand whether there is a high level of transmission in a given region
- We already know, and have known for many years, that there is a high level of transmission in our region
- Knowing the specific number of Lyme disease reports in our region does not make a difference in what we do as a health unit, or the recommendations we provide

All of the other work the health unit does related to Lyme disease and tick-borne diseases will be continuing:

- Communication and education for the general public about preventing infection
- Communication and education for clinicians about diagnosis and treatment
- Tick dragging, which consists of capturing and testing ticks for prevalence of bacteria that cause tick-borne diseases

Council Meetings

Dr. Li has been able to attend the Rural Recreation Association conference, which is chaired by one of our own Board members, Richard Kidd. She has been attending municipal council meetings to introduce herself and meet municipal council members, and has been able to stay for some of the meetings to get to know what is happening in each municipality.