

## **Board of Health Meeting March 2, 2023**

### **Summary**

#### **One-Time Provincial Funding Requests**

The Ministry of Health has indicated that the Health Unit can submit requests for 100% provincial funding as part of the Annual Service Plan and Budget submission. The Board of Health approved the following eight proposals:

1. COVID-19 General - \$1,070,047
2. COVID-19 Vaccine Program - \$1,293,265
3. Public Health Inspector Practicum - \$31,260
4. Vaccine Refrigerator and Peripheral Devices - \$35,000
5. Virtual Desktop Infrastructure Improvements - \$187,758
6. Fit Testing Equipment - \$12,500
7. Smoke-Free Ontario Enforcement Tablet Upgrade - \$8,000
8. Kemptville Office Site Relocation (Capital Request) – (Estimate of \$250,000)

#### **BOH Vaccination Policy**

The Board of Health Vaccination Policy was generalized to comply with provincial guidelines regarding vaccination requirements. All Board of Health members are highly recommended to be up-to-date on vaccines.

#### **COVID-19**

COVID-19 remains a transmission risk in the region, though we are currently in an inter-wave period.

A steady state for COVID-19 may include:

- Intermittent rising and falling COVID-19 transmission
- New variants causing changes to transmission patterns
- Continued vaccination campaigns; the province has signaled that it may be twice a year (spring and fall); this is tentative and the eligibility of these doses is not yet known
- Movement out of this steady state would be based on a new variant with unexpectedly high severity

## **Other Respiratory Viruses**

It has been a complex fall/winter respiratory virus season, driven primarily by flu transmission, along with RSV transmission among young children. The respiratory season got started in September, peaked in December with more than 400 ER visits per week relating to respiratory infections in our region. This fell in February to more than 100 ER visits per week, and is now back up to more than 200 visits. Dr. Li is expecting complex respiratory virus seasons in the future as COVID-19, flu, and other viruses continue to transmit in new dynamics.

## **Public Health Recovery**

The Health Unit is continuing to resume some of the work that has not been feasible during the pandemic such as in-person food handler courses, community partnerships, reviewing data about health in our community and reviewing processes and programs internally within the organization.

Dr. Li's priority over the upcoming year remains:

- Learning and continuing to orient, and doing a good job of running the day to day work in the role
- The health of the organization and a positive work environment for staff
- Vaccination: both school-based vaccination (which is done by the health unit) and childhood vaccination (which is primarily done by primary care clinics, and for which the health unit fills in the gaps)
- Strategic planning - A new strategic plan will be created for LGLDHU over the course of this year, with much being planned for the spring and summer.