

Regional Public Health Entity – Options

BRIEFING NOTE

For Board of Health Meeting on June 6, 2019

SUMMARY

The 2019 Provincial Budget included the development of 10 Regional Public Health Entities (RPHE) from the existing 35 public health units. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has proposed a grouping of health units within the 10 RPHEs– one proposal is a Regional Public Health Entity with Ottawa, Renfrew, Eastern Ontario, Leeds, Grenville and Lanark, and Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington. The ministry is planning to hold a consultation with municipalities and public health units to obtain feedback on their proposals.

Several options for a RPHE are being proposed/developed that include the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit:

- Southeastern Regional Public Health Entity which would include four Health Units (Eastern Ontario; Leeds, Grenville and Lanark; Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington; Hastings Prince Edward);
- Eastern Ontario Public Health Unit proposed by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus resolution to include all rural Counties from Peterborough, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge and east to the Quebec border;
- East Regional Public Health Entity that would include the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, Eastern Ontario Health Unit, and Renfrew and District Health Unit – all bordering on Ottawa.

The Board of Health has a key role to play in the consultation with other Boards of Health to identify which option(s) would best meet the needs of the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark communities.

BACKGROUND

The 2019 Provincial Budget included the development of 10 Regional Public Health Entities from the existing 35 public health units. The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit was included in a Regional Public Health Unit with Ottawa, Renfrew, Eastern Ontario, and Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington.

The Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit has been working with three like Health Units bordering on the St. Lawrence to propose a Southeastern Regional Public Health Entity which would include four Health Units (Eastern Ontario; Leeds, Grenville and Lanark; Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington; Hastings Prince Edward). (See previously circulated document)

The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus passed a resolution on May 24, 2019 to include all rural Counties from Peterborough, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge and east to the Quebec border in an Eastern Ontario Public Health Unit. This would include seven health units – Peterborough; Halliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge; Hastings, Prince Edward; Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington;, Leeds, Grenville and Lanark; Eastern Ontario; and Renfrew.

COMMENT

The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus proposed Eastern Ontario Public Health Unit would include a very large geographic area and considerable complexity in integrating seven health units within it. Our Health Unit Senior Leadership Team has identified a new option to consider which respects the spirit and scope of the Wardens' Resolution, and would be a more manageable size including all rural health units close to it.

This new option for an East Regional Public Health Entity would be in the most eastern part of the province, and would include the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, Eastern Ontario Health Unit, and Renfrew and District Health Unit – all bordering on Ottawa. In this option, a formal relationship would be established with Ottawa Public Health, building on the collaborative working relationship we have now for efficient and effective public health programs and services.

This proposed three health unit Regional Public Health Entity with a formal relationship with Ottawa Public Health has several advantages.

- The three small urban/rural health units (Leeds/ Grenville/ Lanark, Renfrew, Eastern Ontario) would be together in an East Regional Public Health Entity without a large urban centre as requested in the Resolution by the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. It is consistent with another MOHLTC proposed Regional Public Health Entity in South West Ontario that has three small urban/rural health units grouped together.
- The five Counties (United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Lanark County, Renfrew County, the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry, and the United Counties of Prescott and Russell) could each have strong representation on the Board, and their funding would stay within rural communities. This autonomous Board of Health would be easily formed as all Health Units currently have autonomous Boards of Health.
- The proposed East Regional Public Health Entity would maintain and enhance already existing relationships and explore new opportunities with Ottawa Public Health for programs and services.
- It would meet the expectations for Regional Public Health Entities outlined in Dr. David Williams' letter to Boards of Health on April 29, 2019:
 - o Enhanced system capacity;
 - o Consistent service delivery;
 - o Greater coordination to support health system planning; and
 - o Local public health presence in the community.

Prepared by:
Paula Stewart, MOH/CEO
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