

Board of Health Meeting June 16, 2016

Summary

Violence Against Women

Erin Lee, Executive Director, from Lanark County Interval House (LCIH), shared a poignant presentation on the public health importance of domestic and intimate partner violence against women. LCIH is the only women's shelter in all of Lanark County and provides support to hundreds of women and children who stay in the shelter every year. LCIH serves hundreds more women and children in their Outreach Programs, and provide a vast amount of free public education, presentations, and workshops. They also provide in-class education to raise awareness about violence and healthy relationships through their "Where is the Love" Project in all area high schools. A key part of their work is advocating for women and engaging in activism to end violence against women.

Erin emphasized the challenges rural women face – isolation, personal transportation, farm and animal care, presence of firearms, lack of community resources, and communication challenges. Her message was that "although some people may think violence against women is not very serious or is a 'private' matter, these attitudes can be changed. Drinking and driving was once treated almost as a joke, but thanks to strong advocacy campaigns, it is no longer socially acceptable and is subject to serious criminal penalties. In the same way, public education, violence prevention programs, a strong criminal justice response, and a united voice including public health, can bring about an end to violence against women."

Patients First Act

The Patients First Act has been introduced in the provincial legislature to "expand the mandate of Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN) to make LHIN's accountable for primary care planning, responsible for the planning and delivery of home care, and formalize linkages between LHINs and public health."

Key public health points of the Patients First legislation are:

- The Board of Health funding and accountability agreements will remain with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
- LHIN's are required to set up sub-regions for the purpose of planning, funding and service agreements.
- The CEO of the LHIN must engage with the Medical Officer of Health whose Health Unit is located in whole or in part within the geographic area of the LHIN for the purposes of health system planning, funding and service delivery.

- A LHIN shall engage and seek advice from each board of health for any Health Unit located in whole or in part within the geographic area of the LHIN in developing its integrated service plan.
- The Lieutenant Governor in Council may change LHIN boundaries.

Changes to the Ontario Health Protection and Promotion Act to support the Patients First Act are:

- Medical Officers of Health are required to engage with their local LHIN for the purposes of health system planning, funding and service delivery.
- A Medical Officer of Health may only delegate this responsibility to another Medical Officer of Health in the same LHIN if the other Medical Officer of Health agrees.

The Medical Officers of Health from the three health units in the South East LHIN continue to meet with Paul Huras, CEO, to plan how to effectively work together, and are participating in the discussions with physicians and nurse practitioners about the sub-LHIN regions. The three board members from the Champlain LHIN region, the Board Chair and Dr. Stewart will meet with the Champlain LHIN CEO on June 30th to explore how the public health unit can work with the Champlain LHIN.

Land Control

The increase of Land Control fees in 2015, combined with an increase in service requests, resulted in a small surplus at the end of the year. Initial service requests for 2016 suggest that the revenue will be comparable to that of 2015. If revenue is less than expected in 2016, then the 2015 surplus can be used to offset any deficit. Therefore the Land Control fees will not be increased for 2017.

Program Update

On May 10th, the Health Unit celebrated the success of the Best Practice Spotlight Organization initiative funded by the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario. This initiative supports the nursing staff and others to use the latest evidence to inform practice. Anne Warren, Board Chair, spoke at the event along with our liaison member from the RNAO.

The fourth annual MyView Youth Film Festival Awards Ceremony was a huge success on June 2nd at the Urbandale Arts Centre Theatre in Kemptville. Film-makers, friends, family and the media were all in eager attendance to celebrate youth film-making about what is important to youth.

Bootleg or synthetic fentanyl is now circulating in our community. This is manufactured in China and is cut into other drugs like cocaine or sold as oxycontin. It is very dangerous because the difference between a dose that gives a high and one that kills is very small. Bootleg fentanyl has caused many deaths already in BC, Alberta and in Ontario.

The Health Unit held a community meeting, with broad sector attendance on Monday, June 13th in Smiths Falls, to discuss what is known about bootleg fentanyl in our region, what is currently being done to decrease its risk, and what we could do collectively to make a difference. Initial areas to work on include: increased communication about the risk, increased distribution of naloxone kits to respond to an overdose, and increased sharing of data on how it is impacting our community. We have distributed information to all students in grades 8 to 12, and teachers and parents with excellent cooperation from both school boards. The community meetings will continue to identify other areas of collaborative work.