

**Board of Health  
Minutes**

**March 16, 2022  
9:15 am - 12:00 pm  
Zoom Meeting**

Board Members Present: S. Cairns, R. Cipolla, A. Dubeau, G. Harvey, P. Koetsier, F. Pinto, S. Warnock, P. Willmott, L. Oehm, S. Kinsella, A. Kungl

Regrets: L. Dollin, R. Milne

Staff Present: C. Gardner, K. Ellis-Scharfenberg

**1. Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:15am.

1.1 Welcome to Dr. Rebecca Shalansky, Public Health and Preventative Medicine Resident

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

**Motion 2.0**

**MOVED BY** S. Kinsella

**SECONDED BY** P. Koetsier

THAT the Board of Health approve the agenda as presented.

**CARRIED**

**3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

4.1 Approval of Minutes from February 16, 2022.

**Motion 4.1**

**MOVED BY** L. Oehm

**SECONDED BY** S. Warnock

THAT the Board of Health approve the minutes from the February 16, 2022 Board of Health meeting.

**CARRIED**

## 5. Business Arising

- 5.1 Simcoe Muskoka COVID-19 Update. Presentation. Dr. Charles Gardner and Dr. Steve Rebellato presenting.

C. Gardner provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic noting that the focus is now on recovery. There is currently a downward trajectory of the Omicron wave worldwide with surges occurring in certain places such as China. There is still a large amount of transmission occurring and mortality is now over 6 million deaths worldwide.

Provincially hospitalizations and ICU numbers are decreasing although transmission remains high. Vaccination remains very important and there is a much higher risk for severity of illness for unvaccinated individuals.

C. Gardner noted that COVID-19 wastewater signals in Ontario are plateauing.

The remaining public health restrictions were discussed in Ontario noting that most mask mandates are set to end on March 21 in most settings. Board members discussed the potential for messaging to assist with protecting the most vulnerable. C. Gardner noted that agencies are able to continue to enforce mask mandates through policy if they wish to do so.

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) will continue with a multi-layer approach of public messaging that includes encouraging people to receive vaccination and continuing to wear masks in public locations. The vaccination rates in Simcoe Muskoka are on a downward trajectory, and as a result, planning is underway to catch up on other vaccinations.

S. Rebellato provided an update on Business Continuity and Recovery noting that planning is well underway to repatriate staff to assist in returning to programming to support OPHS and the SMDHU strategic plan. This has occurred selectively based on needs where resources are required to support critical programs.

Board members reviewed the statistics of staff redeployment during the pandemic, and it was noted that while many staff were not officially redeployed to another department, majority of staff were fully or partially redeployed to the COVID-19 response.

K. Ellis-Scharfenberg provided an update on funding should the pandemic continue noting that at this time no communication has been received from the Ministry.

### **Motion 5.1**

**MOVED BY P. Willmott**  
**SECONDED BY S. Cairns**

THAT the Board of Health receive this update as information.

**CARRIED**

- 5.2 Vector Borne Disease Program Update. Briefing Note. Dr. Steve Rebellato, Brenda Armstrong and Rebecca Shalansky presenting.

S. Rebellato and R. Shalansky provided an update on vector-borne diseases which pose a growing health hazard for residents and visitors of Simcoe Muskoka.

It was noted that the effects of climate change are increasing the prevalence of disease vectors resulting in an increased risk of exposure and disease. Also, the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to a shift in behaviours as people are utilizing outdoor venues where disease vectors may be present. As a result, SMDHU will continue vector-borne disease activities in 2022 to account for potential health hazards present in such outdoor settings specific to Lyme disease and West Nile Virus (WNV).

Board members reviewed the incidence rates of Lyme disease in Simcoe Muskoka and Ontario which is on the rise. It was discussed that SMDHU is no longer accepting tick submissions from the public and individuals are encouraged to use eTick.ca.

The SMDHU 2021 Lyme Disease Awareness Campaign was reviewed and the statistics of the public's usage to date and next steps for 2022. Board members discussed the potential to have signage posted on the many trails throughout Simcoe Muskoka as well as additional strategies to ensure the messaging is accessible to the public.

**Motion 5.2**

**MOVED BY R. Cipolla**  
**SECONDED BY F. Pinto**

THAT the Board of Health receive this briefing note as information.

**CARRIED**

**6. New Business**

- 6.1 Ontario Seniors' Dental Care Program – Proposal for South Georgian Bay Area. Briefing Note. Colleen Nisbet and Simone Guenette presenting.

C. Nisbet presented this item noting that the Ministry of Health released an announcement that an additional \$17M would be spent towards additional capital infrastructure improvements for public health units for the Ontario Seniors' Dental Care Program (OSDCP). The Ministry of Health contacted SMDHU directly as it relates to the original proposal for the South Georgian Bay (SGB) site, advising that this project has been selected for consideration for an additional phase of approval spanning from 2022 to 2024. The Ministry is awaiting approval from SMDHU to proceed with a review of the newest submitted business case for SGB. As indicated by the Ministry, this is a one-time opportunity to resubmit this application for the next phase of approval.

It was identified that SMDHU submitted three proposals for infrastructure improvements including an expansion of the Gravenhurst Clinic, an expansion of the Barrie Clinic, and an additional new clinic location to serve the SGB area.

**Motion 6.1**

**MOVED BY** A. Kungl

**SECONDED BY** L. Oehm

THAT the Board of Health receive this briefing note for information;

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Board of Health support the submission of a business case proposal for the next phase of approval to the Ministry of Health to create a new dental clinic in the South Georgian Bay area.

**CARRIED**

**7. Advocacy**

7.1 Opioid Crisis Update. Briefing Note. Carolyn Shoreman and Mia Brown presenting.

C. Shoreman provided an update of the opioid crisis in Simcoe Muskoka and across Ontario noting that there continues to be a significant rise in opioid poisonings and related deaths due to the increasingly toxic and unregulated drug supply being sold on the street level.

Board members reviewed the comparison of emergency room visits for opioid poisonings in Simcoe Muskoka which have more than tripled when compared to what was observed between 2010 and 2014 and more than quadrupled when compared to the rates between 2004 and 2008.

Harm reduction measures were discussed including the need for advocacy of supportive housing, drug prevention programs, patient-

centred Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT) programs and the decriminalization for personal use of psychoactive substances.

The Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy Steering Committee was discussed noting that some of the pillar tables continue to meet and collaborate. The steering committee has the intention to refresh the regional structure and workplan activities before the end of 2022 if possible.

Board members discussed the current situation in Simcoe Muskoka regarding access to treatment services and the potential for additional services.

**Motion 7.1**

**MOVED BY** R. Cipolla

**SECONDED BY** S. Warnock

THAT the Board of Health endorse the advocacy items to the provincial government outlined in Appendix A, in order to address the ongoing and escalating opioid crisis experienced within Simcoe Muskoka and province wide;

AND FURTHERMORE THAT the Board of Health write a letter to the Ontario Minister of Health highlighting these advocacy items;

AND FURTHERMORE THAT a copy of this letter be sent to Ontario Boards of Health, the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, the Attorney General of Ontario, the MPs and MPPs in Simcoe Muskoka, mayors and councils in Simcoe Muskoka and Ontario Health.

**CARRIED AS AMENDED**

**8. Announcements**

A. Kungl complimented N. Riewe, M. Brown and C. Gardner on the exceptional quality of work and leadership provincially and requested acknowledgements be provided to them from the Board.

It was noted that M. Brown and the communications team will connect with any Board members to augment proposed public health messaging related to amplifying harm reduction messaging throughout the community.

R. Cipolla requested that the presentations on Vector-Borne Diseases and the Opioid Crisis be shared with Board members for their distribution as needed.

**9. Items of Education**

- 9.1 Save The Date: aPHa Annual Conference and Section Meetings.  
Tuesday, June 14, 2022

**10. Items of Information**

- 10.1 Letter from the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to Stephen Kinsella, Board Member for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit re Congratulatory Letter on the Reappointment to the Board of Health.
- 10.2 Letter from the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to Larry Oehm, Board Member for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit re Congratulatory Letter on the Reappointment to the Board of Health.
- 10.3 Letter from the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to Scott Warnock, Board Member for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit re Congratulatory Letter on the Reappointment to the Board of Health.
- 10.4 Letter from the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to Peter Willmott, Board Member for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit re Congratulatory Letter on the Reappointment to the Board of Health.
- 10.5 Letter from Anita Dubeau, Board Chair for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit to Warden Cornell and Council, County of Simcoe re Board of Health 2022 Funding Notice.
- 10.6 Letter from Anita Dubeau, Board Chair for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit to Mayor Clarke and Council, City of Orillia re Board of Health 2022 Funding Notice.
- 10.7 Letter from Anita Dubeau, Board Chair for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit to Chairman Klinck and Council, District of Muskoka re Board of Health 2022 Funding Notice.
- 10.8 Letter from Anita Dubeau, Board Chair for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit to Mayor Lehman and Council, City of Barrie re Board of Health 2022 Funding Notice.
- 10.9 Public Health Sudbury & Districts and the COVID-19 pandemic: From risk to recovery and resilience (February 2022).
- 10.10 Email from Penny Sutcliffe, Medical Officer of Health from Public Health Sudbury & Districts re Motion in support OPHA statement against displays of racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination.

10.11 Letter from Penny Sutcliffe, Medical Officer of Health from Public Health Sudbury & Districts to Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, alPHa President re Health and Racial Equity: Denouncing Acts and Symbols of Hate and COMOH Motion of Support.

10.12 Letter from Mayor Andy Mitchell, Board of Health Chair, Peterborough Public Health to the Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health re Enhancing Uptake of Third COVID-19 Vaccine Doses and the Proof of Vaccination Record.

10.13 alPHa Information Break – February 16, 2022.

**11. Date of Next Meetings**

- April 20, 2022
- May 18, 2022

**12. Adjournment**

**Motion 12.0**

**MOVED BY** P. Willmott

**SECONDED BY** S. Kinsella

THAT the Board of Health meeting be adjourned at 11:17am.

**CARRIED**

**ORIGINAL Signed By:**

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Anita Dubeau

Chair, Board of Health

**ORIGINAL Signed By:**

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Dr. Charles Gardner

Medical Officer of Health