

Policy Regarding Delegation of Duties of the Medical Officer of Health

Policy Number	<i>BOH117</i>	Approved Date	<i>February 20, 2019</i>
----------------------	---------------	----------------------	--------------------------

REVISION HISTORY

Reviewed	November 30, 2023	Amended:	June 17, 2026
-----------------	-------------------	-----------------	---------------

Purpose

This policy is established in accordance with the *Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability* to provide adequate coverage and delegation of duty where the Medical Officer of Health of Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is temporarily absent for one or more days.

Regulation

a) Appointment of Medical Officer of Health and Associate Medical Officers of Health

In accordance with the *Health Promotion and Protection Act* (the “**HPPA**”), the Board shall appoint a full-time Medical Officer of Health. In addition, the Board shall, at its discretion, appoint Associate Medical Officer(s) of Health.

Each Associate Medical Officer of Health, under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health, shall assist in the performance of the duties of the Medical Officer of Health in their capacity as Medical Officer of Health, as set out under the HPPA. For greater certainty, the duties of the Medical Officer of Health in their capacity as Chief Executive Officer of Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (the “**CEO**”) shall be delegated in accordance with section (d).

b) Delegation of Medical Officer of Health Duty During Absences

Where the office of Medical Officer of Health is vacant or the Medical Officer of Health is absent or unable to act for any reason, the Associate Medical Officer of Health shall act as and have all the powers of the Medical Officer of Health. Where there are two or more Associate Medical Officers of Health, the Medical Officer of Health shall determine how their duties shall be delegated between the Associate Medical Officers of Health. Where the Medical Officer of Health is unable or unwilling to make such delegations, the Board, by resolution, shall set out the delegation of duties.

Where the office of Medical Officer of Health is vacant or the Medical Officer of Health is absent or unable to act for any reason and there is no Associate Medical Officer of Health or the Associate Medical Officer of Health (s) is/are also absent or unable to act, the Board shall appoint a physician as acting Medical Officer of Health. An Acting Medical Officer of Health shall perform the duties and has authority to exercise the powers of the Medical Officer of Health.

The Medical Officer of Health and Associate Medical Officer of Health of the following neighbouring health units shall be eligible to serve as Acting Medical Officer of Health in the short term absence of the Medical Officer of Health and Associate Medical Officer of Health (s), subject to the approval of the Board:

- i. Grey-Bruce Health Unit;
- ii. Durham Regional Health Department;
- iii. Lakelands Public Health;
- iv. North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit;
- v. Peel Regional Health Department;
- vi. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Health Unit;
- vii. York Regional Health Department; or
- viii. A licensed and practicing physician.

The Medical Officer of Health and/or the CEO Delegate (as defined below) shall establish an Acting Medical Officer of Health coverage schedule for any absence of the Medical Officer of Health and Associate Medical Officer of Health (s).

c) Written Delegation of Medical Officer of Health Duty

Where the Medical Officer of Health delegates their duties to an Associate Medical Officer of Health or Acting Medical Officer of Health for a period of from four to ten working days, such delegation shall be provided in writing to the chair of the Board. Where the period of coverage is longer than ten working days, the Medical Officer of Health shall notify the Board in writing. Where the position of Medical Officer of Health has been vacated, the Board shall delegate Medical Officer of Health duties by Board resolution to an Associate Medical Officer of Health or Acting Medical Officer of Health.

d) Delegation of CEO Duty During Absence

Where the Medical Officer of Health is absent or unable to act for any reason, the Medical Officer of Health shall delegate their CEO duties to a member of Senior Management (the “**CEO Delegate**”) at their discretion and such delegation shall be provided in writing to the chair of the Board where the absence is from four to ten working days. Where the period of coverage is longer than ten working days, the Medical Officer of Health shall notify the Board in writing. The CEO Delegate shall act as the CEO and shall have all the administrative powers of the CEO. Where the position of Medical Officer of Health has been vacated, the Board shall delegate CEO duties by Board resolution.

Amendment

To align with the Ontario Public Health Standards, this policy shall be reviewed and approved by the Board every two years, and may be amended from time to time as the Board deems necessary.

Review/Revision History

November 30, 2023 - review

Revised May 2025 – updated the name change for Haliburton, Kawartha, Northumberland & Peterborough Health Unit, replaced MOH with Medical Officer of Health and used gender-neutral pronouns.

June 17, 2026 - updated current practice to notify Board Chair and Board of delegate coverage; changed Haliburton, Kawartha, Northumberland & Peterborough Health Unit to Lakelands Public Health, included gender neutral pronouns