

Board of Health

Minutes

**October 15, 2025
9:15 am - 12:00 pm
Teleconference**

Board Members Present: A. Kungl, R. Cipolla, A. Dubeau, B. Norris, B. Gordon, H. Eves,
J. Leduc, J. Smith, L. Oehm, N. Nigussie, P. Koetsier, S. Cairns,
S. Warnock, S. Read, S. Kinsella, T. Walker

Staff Present: Dr. L. Simon, K. Ellis-Scharfenberg

1. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:16am.

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

A.M. Kungl read the land acknowledgment in full.

1.2 Welcome Dr. Michelle Quaye, Public Health Physician

A.M. Kungl welcomed Dr. Quaye to Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

Dr. Quaye provided a brief overview of the Public Health Physician role that will transition into Associate Medical Officer of Health next year.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion 2.0

MOVED BY H. Eves

SECONDED BY P. Koetsier

THAT the Board of Health approve the agenda as presented.

CARRIED

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

There was no declaration of conflict of interest.

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Approval of Minutes from September 17, 2025.

Motion 4.1

MOVED BY S. Cairns

SECONDED BY A. Dubeau

THAT the Board of Health approve the minutes from the September 17, 2025 Board of Health meeting.

CARRIED

5. In Camera

Motion 5.0

MOVED BY R. Cipolla

SECONDED BY B. Gordon

THAT the Board of Health go in camera to approve the September 17, 2025 In Camera Minutes and discuss two governance items and one HR item.

CARRIED

Motion 5.0.1

MOVED BY S. Cairns

SECONDED BY R. Cipolla

THAT the Board of Health come out of In-Camera and report.

CARRIED

Motion 5.0.2

MOVED BY A. Dubeau

SECONDED BY H. Eves

THAT the Board of Health support the submission of the letter in Appendix A to the Minister of Health requesting an extension of the term for the one board member wishing to continue on the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit Board of Health.

CARRIED

5.1 Approval of In Camera Minutes from September 17, 2025

5.2 Governance Item

5.3 Governance Item

5.4 HR Item

6. Business Arising

6.1 Strategic Plan Development 2026-2029.

Briefing Note. K. Ellis-Scharfenberg and S. Ross presenting.

Dr. L. Simon welcomed K. Ellis-Scharfenberg and S. Ross.

K. Ellis-Scharfenberg shared a presentation with the Board of Health to provide an update on the development of a new 2026-2029 strategic plan drafted from key findings from the internal and external partner engagement activities.

Draft vision, mission and values were shared for the Board's review and feedback.

The development of draft strategic directions, goals and objectives currently remain in progress. This item will be brought back for the Board to review in November prior to approval of the final product in January.

Motion 6.1

MOVED BY N. Nigussie

SECONDED BY B. Gordon

THAT the Board of Health receives this briefing note and accompanying presentation as information.

CARRIED

7. New Business

7.1 SMDHU and Innovation.

Briefing Note. S. Rebellato and S. Gill presenting.

Dr. L. Simon introduced N. Riewe, S. Gill and S. Rebellato.

S. Rebellato reviewed the content within the briefing note which reports positive experiences to date using SAM - the SMDHU Generative AI Chatbot - and the AI Scribe pilot. SMDHU continues to seek ways to improve efficiency using innovative tools including a pilot of Microsoft 365 Copilot and Predictive Modelling for Food Premises Inspections.

Dr. L. Simon shared appreciation of the expertise Dr. S. Rebellato brings to the role of Chief Innovation Officer.

The Board of Health held discussion on privacy protocols for AI use.

Preliminary evaluation indicates that the use of AI and innovative tools are building SMDHU program capacity and are valuable in times of surge/after hours capacity.

Motion 7.1

MOVED BY P. Koetsier

SECONDED BY S. Kinsella

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

CARRIED

7.2 Simcoe Muskoka On the Move.

Briefing Note. Dr. L. Simon, C. Shoreman, C. Bushey and M. Bovett presenting.

Dr. L. Simon introduced C. Shoreman, C. Bushey and M. Bovett.

C. Bushey shared a presentation with the Board of Health to provide an update on the active school travel policy recommendations designed for municipalities and school board consideration to support active school travel as well as the municipal-wide approach to implementing On the Move in Bradford West Gwillimbury.

The Board of Health held broad discussion on the uptake and potential facilitators and barriers to implementing the On the Move program throughout the Simcoe County and Muskoka regions.

A.M. Kungl exited the meeting at 11:10 am; R. Cipolla chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Motion 7.2

MOVED BY J. Leduc

SECONDED BY N. Nigussie

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

CARRIED

7.3 2025 Implementation of Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA).

Briefing Note. Presented by Dr. C. Lee, N. Riewe and M.A. Holmes.

N. Riewe provided an update to the Board of Health on the status of monitoring immunization records and affidavit rates for philosophical exemptions of students attending childcare, elementary and high school in Simcoe Muskoka.

Students attending elementary or secondary school must be immunized against the designated diseases listed in the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA), or have a valid exemption on file, or they may be suspended from school during ISPA enforcement.

The Board held discussion on the rise in affidavits on file.

M.A. Holmes shared that the Immunization program has reverted the affidavit process back to the former process that was in place, in order to ensure it is a fully informed decision for families. This is intended to address one of the factors that may be contributing to the rise in affidavits.

Motion 7.3

MOVED BY L. Oehm

SECONDED BY J. Smith

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

CARRIED

7.4 SMDHU Enhancing Access to Sexually Transmitted and Blood Borne Infection Testing.

Briefing Note. Dr. C. Lee, N. Riewe and Y. Phan presenting.

Y. Phan shared a presentation with the Board of Health on the September 2025 launch of the Get A Kit program, which is designed to remove barriers to accessing sexually transmitted and blood borne infection testing by offering free laboratory-based testing to any residents of Simcoe Muskoka through an online platform.

A Get A Kit awareness campaign will launch in November and will provide communication materials to local health care providers and service agencies to help promote to the public.

SMDHU has partnered with Chippewas of Rama First Nation to include HIV self-test kits in medicine bundles. A sample medicine bundle was shown to the Board.

Motion 7.4

MOVED BY S. Warnock

SECONDED BY T. Walker

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

CARRIED

8. Items of Education

8.1 aPHa 2025 Fall Symposium and Workshops

November 5 - 7, 2025

Registration open until October 31, 2025

To register email Melissa.Nickason@smdhu.org

8.2 Save the Date: aPHa 2026 AGM & Conference

June 8 - 10, 2026

To reserve accommodations, please email Melissa.Nickason@smdhu.org

It is strongly encouraged to book accommodation as soon as possible; hotel rooms in Toronto expected to be limited.

9. Items of Information

9.1 Correspondence to and from SMDHU

a. Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit Medical Officer of Health Blog

from Dr. C. Gardner to staff and the Board of Health members for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit re: Thank you and goodbye.

b. Letter from Ann-Marie Kungl, Chair of the Board of Health for Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

to Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit partners and public health organizations re: Introduction of Dr. Lisa Simon, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer.

c. Letter from Dr. Lisa Simon, Acting Medical Officer of Health and CEO, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

to SMDHU partners and public health organizations re: Introduction of Dr. Michelle Quaye, Public Health Physician.

9.2 Province of Ontario Hiring Freeze

a. Press Release from the Government of Ontario

re: Ontario Implementing Hiring Freeze for Provincial Agencies.

9.3 aPHa InfoBreak

a. Fall 2025 InfoBreak

10. Announcements

- Call for agenda items

11. Date of Next Meetings

- November 19, 2025
- January 21, 2026

There will be no Board of Health meeting in December, 2025.

12. Adjournment

Motion 11.0

MOVED BY S. Read

SECONDED BY S. Cairns

THAT the Board of Health meeting be adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

CARRIED

ORIGINAL Signed By:

Ann-Marie Kungl

Chair, Board of Health

ORIGINAL Signed By:

Dr. Lisa Simon

Medical Officer of Health (Acting)

ORIGINAL Signed By:

Ralph Cipolla

Vice Chair, Board of Health