



Board of Health Meeting Summary

Wednesday November 8, 2023

Cannabis Use Risk Information in Ontario

Retired family physician, Dr. Tom Bell, delivered a presentation on the intersections between cannabis consumption and mental health issues among youth. Dr. Bell discussed the rapid proliferation of cannabis retail stores following the passage of the Federal Cannabis Act and reviewed current consumption trends at the national level. While data suggests overall consumption among youth has declined with legalization, rates of consumption by vaping are increasing, as well as the THC content of the products consumed. Dr. Bell reviewed the far-ranging health effects of cannabis use, from mental health and behavioral issues in adolescents, to other medical issues including cannabis hyperemesis syndrome and use during pregnancy. To ensure appropriate safety and harm reduction response to cannabis use, Dr. Bell recommends that [Canada's Lower-Risk Cannabis Use Guidelines](#) be visibly displayed in cannabis retail locations.

Monitoring Food Affordability and Availability, 2023

Lauren Kennedy, Registered Dietician with the Family & Community Health Team, delivered a presentation on food insecurity and food affordability in Peterborough. Kennedy drew attention to rising cost of food in Canada during the pandemic. Drawing on local monitoring data, Kennedy demonstrated that individuals receiving income supports through the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), and individuals and families on Ontario Works (OW) are most at risk of experiencing food insecurity due to insufficient resources to cover the cost of basic needs. Despite marginal increases to ODSP and OW in 2023, these groups are experiencing even greater end-of-month deficits after paying for other essential, non-negotiable costs. Kennedy notes that while the situation prior to the pandemic was bad, the situation has deepened in severity and is now much worse. Locally, 1 in 5 local households are classified as food insecure, which has significant implications for their health. Peterborough Public Health continues to take several actions to support an income-based solution to food insecurity, including policy-driven responses, and local, provincial, and national collaboration around research and advocacy.

Stewardship Report: 2024 Budget Approval

Matthew Graham, Mayor of Cavan Monaghan and Chair of the Board of Health's Stewardship Committee, presented PPH's proposed 2024 cost-shared budget for approval by the Board of Health. The overall expenses required to retain minimum service levels next year is \$11,554,737, which is a 4.48% base budget increase over 2023. In addition to maintaining existing service levels, this increase will support the creation of a new Indigenous Health Equity position to enhance relationships with First Nations health partners and organizations that serve Indigenous peoples.