



## Board of Health Meeting Summary

Wednesday March 13, 2024

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### **Presentation: Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilience**

Public Health Nurses, Kara Koteles and Kate Dunford, delivered a presentation on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and resilience. Research shows that specific populations disproportionately experience ACEs. Given overlapping public health challenges, this is an ideal time to focus on reducing ACEs. Preventing ACEs requires strategies to tackle the conditions that create stress for families and children. Koteles summarized how child adversity causes toxic stress, resulting in negative health outcomes. Health outcomes can be improved by increasing the range of positive supportive factors that children and families experience, which together bolster resilience against ACEs. Examples of protective factors include having at least one safe, stable nurturing relationship with a caregiver, as well as social supports that promote prenatal health, skill building opportunities, and access to community resources. Resilience can also be fostered through supportive relationships in the community. Currently all Peterborough Public Health projects and initiatives within the domain of child and family health are focused on increasing support at the family, community, and societal levels to promote conditions for resilience. Dunford discussed the current 'In their Own Words' initiative, which seeks to understand parenting strengths, challenges, resources, and needs, with a goal of shaping future program development, community partnerships, and advocacy. Dunford also outlined the outcomes of the recent Community Resilience Summit, held in November 2023. The summit created a vital opportunity to build a collective of understanding of the effects of adversity on lifelong health, connect with local partners, and identify solutions to existing community needs.

### **Presentation: Safe Sewage Program Divestment Update**

Director of Health Protection, Donna Churipuy, delivered a high-level overview regarding Peterborough Public Health's (PPH) pending divestment from the Safe Sewage Program. In April 2023, the Board of Health supported a staff recommendation not to renew this service upon expiry in November 2024. This decision was based on declining revenue, increasing litigation and organizational risk, staffing concerns, lack of connection to Ontario Public Health Standards and Peterborough Public Health strategic priorities, among other factors. To support the divestment process, PPH worked with local municipalities to ensure a smooth transition for all stakeholders, including the Board of Health, industry professionals, local municipalities, and program staff. The Board of Health specifically recognized the work of longstanding Public Health Inspector, Kathleen Shepherd, who's tireless commitment and dedication spanning over 35 years has been indispensable to the success of the Safe Sewage Program.

## **Merger Exploration Update**

The Board of Health reviewed draft Terms of Reference for the Joint Merger Steering Committee. The intended purpose of this committee is to provide oversight, advice, guidance, and recommendations pertaining to the preparation of a joint business case to the Ministry of Health and address matters imperative to achieving a fully operational Board of Health under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act (HPPA)*.

## **Board of Health Committees**

Dr. Thomas Piggott, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer, discussed a recent review of the workplans for all Board of Health committees considering the recent voluntary merger decision. The intention of this review was to align existing committee meetings with the increased capacity demands that are likely to arise as the merger process proceeds. This review led to recommendation to proceed with scheduled meetings of the Stewardship Committee and the Indigenous Health Advisory Circle.