



## Board of Health Meeting Summary

Wednesday April 10, 2024

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### **Presentation: Chief Medical Officer of Health 2023 Annual Report**

Dr. Thomas Piggott, Medical Officer of Health and CEO, provided a presentation on the recently released Chief Medical Officer of Health's 2023 Annual Report, entitled [\*Balancing Act: An All-of-Society Approach to Substance Use and Harms\*](#). The report draws attention to increasing harms related to tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, and opioids in Ontario. Among each of these substances, data shows that alcohol and tobacco are responsible for the largest number of deaths, hospitalizations, and emergency department visits in Ontario, with societal and health system costs totaling \$11.29 billion in 2020. Together, substance related harms cost Ontario nearly \$18 billion in 2020, which is 5 times greater than the revenue collected through the sale of alcohol and tobacco. The report also highlights pandemic-related trends, including increased use of vaping products, rising cannabis use, elevated prevalence of binge drinking and alcohol toxicity deaths, and growing number of deaths attributable to the concurrent use of multiple substances. The report provides comprehensive, substance-specific recommendations centred on supporting an upstream, public health approach to build healthier communities, promote safer substance use, and protect people from substance-related harms, including substance use disorders and addictions. A recording of the presentation is available [online](#).

### **Staff Report: Association of Local Public Health Agencies Membership Renewal**

PPH recently received the annual membership renewal request from Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) for the 2024-25 period. Given that the Board previously expressed a desire to see the association enhance its advocacy efforts and keep members better informed of these activities, the Board agreed to renew its membership while continuing to seek clarity from ALPHA regarding its advocacy role and the impact of their efforts.

### **Oral Report - Merger Update**

Board of Health Chair, Joy Lachica, provided an oral update on the ongoing voluntary merger work with the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit. Lachica noted that the business case has been submitted to the province for review and approval, with a response anticipated later this summer.