

Ministry of Health

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Helen Angus
Interim Chair, Board of Directors
Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion
661 University Avenue, Suite 1701
Toronto ON M5G 1M1

Dear Ms. Angus:

I would first like to acknowledge the extraordinary and continuing efforts of the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, operating as Public Health Ontario, to prevent, monitor, detect, and contain COVID-19 in the province. The past several months has been a testament to the valued partnership between Public Health Ontario, the Ministry of Health, and the Office of Chief Medical Officer of Health, Public Health.

As you begin planning for 2022-23, I am pleased to write to you in your capacity of Chair of Public Health Ontario's Board of Directors. Pursuant to the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, this letter sets out my expectation for Public Health Ontario for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

Ontario's board-governed agencies are vital partners in ensuring the delivery of high-quality services to Ontarians. The work that you and your fellow board members undertake to establish the goals, objectives, and strategic direction for Public Health Ontario ensures that objectives under the *Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion Act* (OAHPA) are met. It is important that this direction is consistent with government priorities, your agency mandate, key policies and directives, and my directions, where appropriate. I thank you for your willingness to serve.

As part of the government of Ontario, agencies are expected to act in the best interests of Ontarians by being efficient, effective, and providing value-for-money to taxpayers. Our government's primary focus is to protect every life and every job we possibly can. Without healthy people, we cannot have a healthy economy.

This includes:

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1. Competitiveness, Sustainability and Expenditure Management

- Operating within your agency's financial allocations.
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation, innovative practices, and/or improved program sustainability.
- Identifying and pursuing efficiencies and savings.
- Complying with applicable direction related to supply chain centralization and Realty Interim Measures for agency office space.
- Leveraging and meeting benchmarked outcomes for compensation strategies and directives.
- Working with the ministry, where appropriate, to advance the Ontario Onwards Action Plan.

2. Transparency and Accountability

- Abiding by applicable government directives and policies and ensuring transparency and accountability in reporting.
- Adhering to requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive, accounting standards and practices, and the *Public Service of Ontario Act* ethical framework, and responding to audit findings, where applicable.
- Identifying appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience needed to effectively support the board's role in the agency governance and accountability.

3. Risk Management

- Developing and implementing an effective process for the identification, assessment, and mitigation of risks, including planning for and responding to health and other emergency situations, including but not limited to COVID-19.
- Developing a continuity of operations plan that identifies time critical/essential services and personnel.

4. Workforce Management

- Optimizing your organizational capacity to support the best possible public service delivery.
- Modernizing and redeploying resources to priority areas when or where they are needed.

5. Data Collection

- Improving how the agency uses data in decision-making, information-sharing and reporting, including by leveraging available or new data solutions to inform outcome-based reporting and improve service delivery.
- Supporting transparency and privacy requirements of data work and data sharing with the ministry, as appropriate.

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6. Digital Delivery and Customer Service

- Exploring and implementing digitization or digital modernization strategies for online service delivery and continuing to meet and exceed customer service standards through transition.
- Adopting digital approaches, such as user research, agile development, and product management.

7. Diversity and Inclusion

- Developing and encouraging diversity and inclusion initiatives promoting an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.
- Demonstrating leadership of an inclusive environment free of harassment.
- Adopting an inclusion engagement process to ensure all voices are heard to inform policies and decision-making.

8. COVID-19 Response

- Contributing to public health measures and reopening planning.
- Continuing to provide a leadership role in COVID-19 laboratory testing, including maximizing available public health laboratory capacity to perform testing, providing scientific and technical leadership and support to the network, test development and validation, and input into the provincial testing strategy.
- Undertaking COVID-19 data collection, monitoring, analysis, and reporting.
- Providing scientific and technical advice for COVID-19 case and contact management guidance, including resources to support public health units.
- Supporting COVID-19 vaccine programming, including provincial monitoring and support for Adverse Events Following Immunization and vaccine coverage monitoring and reporting.
- Developing and providing scientific and technical advice for evidence-informed products to inform government policy.
- Providing scientific and technical advice and guidance to public health units and other parts of the health care system as well as other sectors (e.g., Ministry of Education).

9. COVID-19 Recovery

- Identifying and pursuing service delivery methods (digital or other) that have evolved since the start of COVID-19.
- Supporting the recovery efforts from COVID-19.

In addition to these government-wide priorities, I expect Public Health Ontario to focus on:

1. Continuing to work towards developing and implementing strategies for modernizing Ontario's public health laboratory system with the Ministry of Health.

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2. Continuing to represent and contribute to the voice of public health at Ministry of Health and Ontario Health tables, and to the laboratory network to ensure that the public health practice perspective is included in decision making.
3. Working in partnership with Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health to forward the work on chronic disease prevention, management and treatment, from a public and population health perspective, with an initial focus on diabetes. This work will include supporting the government's response to the 2017 Ontario Auditor General audit of chronic disease prevention.
4. Continuing strong partnerships across Public Health Ontario, the Office of Chief Medical Officer of Health, Public Health, and the Ministry of Health, and continuing to be a strong presence and providing expert public health advice and recommendations to the Health Coordination Table, various working groups, and expert panels.
5. Continuing to provide day-to-day operational work, such as surveillance and response as well as support for other critical public health programs and services.

Through these measures, we can continue to ensure that Public Health Ontario is continuing to provide scientific and technical advice and support for those working to protect and promote the health of Ontarians, in accordance with its legislative mandate under the OAHPPA. We are confident that the people of Ontario are going to unleash the economic growth that is necessary for job creation, prosperity, and a stronger province.

I thank you and your fellow board members for your continued support, and for your valuable contributions. Should you have any questions and/or concerns, please feel free to contact Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Kieran Moore, directly.

Sincerely,



Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health

c: Colleen Geiger, President and Chief Executive Officer (A), Public Health Ontario
Dr. Catherine Zahn, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Elizabeth Walker, Director, Accountability and Liaison Branch, Ministry of Health