



**Northwestern  
Health Unit**

www.nwhu.on.ca

**BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THE  
NORTHWESTERN HEALTH UNIT**

MINUTES of the Regular Board of Health Meeting  
August 27, 2021  
Electronic Meeting

**PRESENT:** Doug Lawrance – Chair, Shayne MacKinnon, Trudy Sachowski, Sharon Smith, Jim Belluz, Wendy Brunetta, Jerry O’Leary,

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Marilyn Herbacz, CEO  
Kit Young Hoon, MOH  
Lindsay Koch

**GUESTS:**

**REGRETS:** Nicole Brown

**ABSENT:** Sally Burns

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Doug Lawrance called the meeting to order at 8:35am.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 73-2021 CARRIED</b>	<b>S. MacKinnon W. Brunetta</b>
THAT the Agenda for the Board of Health meeting dated August 27, 2021 be approved.	

**3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST & GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**

None declared.

**4. CHAIR’S ACTIVITY REPORT**

Doug Lawrance shared some of the work he has been involved with, including a panel with TVO related to Municipal Public Health and funding, a video supporting NWHU staff to highlight some silver linings of the pandemic response, completion of his Chair’s message for the NWHU Public Health Report Card.

The Chair invited members of the Board to share highlights of their summer. Sharon Smith indicated that NWHU and Dr. Young Hoon will be invited to meet with Kenora Council to discuss the Needle Exchange Program and some of the challenges going on in downtown Kenora.

Many members shared their appreciation for the Chair’s participation and messaging on the TVO panel.

**5. MINUTES OF BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING, JUNE 28, 2021**

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 74-2021 CARRIED</b>	<b>T. Sachowski S. MacKinnon</b>
THAT the Minutes of the Northwestern Health Unit Board of Health meeting held June 28, 2021 be approved.	

**6. aPHa UPDATES**

**6.1 aPHa Report**

Trudy Sachowski participated in the White Paper with the Dalla Lana School of Health, and ensured that Boards of Health were referenced in the document.

The summer has been busy with aPHa related work with partners and planning related to fourth wave planning.

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 75-2021 CARRIED</b>	<b>W. Brunetta J. Belluz</b>
THAT the August 2021 aPHa Report be received.	

**7. 2021-22 BUDGET/FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Marilyn Herbacz indicated a shift in the timeline for the NWHU Budget Approval to November.

The Board engaged in discussion regarding whether an ad hoc committee for the Budget should be struck, noting that the Executive Committee is mandated to have oversight on the organization's finances.

After some additional deliberation, it was agreed that the Executive Committee will continue to participate in the Budget process with enhanced reporting and participation by the full Board, and subsequent reporting be shared with all municipalities.

<b>Motion / Resolution: #76-2021 DEFEATED</b>	<b>J. Belluz S. Smith</b>
THAT the Board of Health strike an ad hoc Finance / Budget committee for the 2021-22 year.	

**8. CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION**

**8.1 CEO & Finance Report** *Marilyn Herbacz, CEO. Reference #2021.08.27-8.1 The report will be kept on file.*

Marilyn Herbacz spoke to her written report, noting that COVID-19 related expenses are expected to be reimbursed by the Ministry of Health as extraordinary expenses, and that we did not receive the additional funding requested for a Public Health Inspector position. Reports have been adjusted to reflect this.

The Board shared their appreciation for Manager of CDP, Shannon Robinson, who has taken a contract with Thunder Bay District Health Unit as Director of Health Promotion until the end of 2022.

**8.2 Municipal Levy Rebate** *Marilyn Herbacz, CEO*

At its June 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board of Health reviewed a report regarding a rebate to municipalities for the year 2020. The Board agreed in principle to this rebate but did not pass a formal resolution.

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 77-2021 CARRIED</b>	<b>J. O’Leary J. Belluz</b>
<p>THAT the Board of Health authorize a levy rebate to all obligated municipalities for the year 2020 in the total amount of \$119,661.50</p> <p>AND FURTHER THAT a letter be sent to each municipality outlining the amount to be refunded.</p>	

**8.3 IPAC Funding Model Letter** *Marilyn Herbacz, CEO. Reference #2021.08.27-8.3 The report will be kept on file.*

All Northern Health Units are Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Hubs in Ontario, which is unique, as other Hubs in the province are hospitals. IPAC Hubs support congregate living settings and long-term care homes to prevent infectious disease.

In 2020, Northern Health Units received one-time funding to facilitate this program. There are up to five positions for this program at NWHU, with manager support for this program, which were filled internally. Because of the temporary nature of the funding, NWHU has been unable to fill these positions through external recruitment and seeks to secure stable annual funding to allow for continued success and staff retention within the program.

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 78-2021 CARRIED</b>	<b>J. Belluz S. Smith</b>
<p>THAT the Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit make a request to the Provincial Government to make the IPAC Hub model an ongoing program with stable annual funding to provide for the protection from infectious diseases in community congregate living settings and long-term care homes.</p> <p>AND FURTHER that this resolution be shared with Ministers of Health and Long-Term Care, area partners, Northern Boards of Health, Ontario Health, aIPHa, and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.</p>	

**8.4 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation** *Marilyn Herbacz, CEO. Reference #2021.08.27-8.4 The Report will be kept on file.*

On June 3, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation received Royal Assent as a Federal Statutory Holidays. This new holiday takes places September 30<sup>th</sup> each year.

NWHU offices will be closed in recognition of this date, and staff will be encouraged to participate in learning and reflection related to reconciliation.

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 79-2021 APPROVED</b>	<b>S. MacKinnon T. Sachowski</b>
<p>THAT the Board of Health receive the following Corporate Administration reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021.08.27-8.1 CEO &amp; Finance Report</li> <li>• 2021.08.27-8.4 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation</li> </ul>	

**8.5 FUNDING MODEL LETTER** *Marilyn Herbacz, CEO. Reference #2021.08.27-8.5 The Report will be kept on file.*

At its June meeting, the Board of Health reviewed a letter to the Minister of Health regarding the cost-shared model and related mitigation funding from the Ministry of Health. A request will be made to the Ministry to continue the mitigation funding for municipalities, and to request an increase to NWHU’s base budget.

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 80-2021 CARRIED</b>	<b>J. Belluz W. Brunetta</b>
<p>THAT the Board of Health submit a letter to the Minister of Health requesting the continuation of Mitigation Funding for municipalities for 2021-22 and an increase to NWHU’s base budget to support the organization’s regular programming needs and continued pandemic response,</p> <p>AND FURTHER that all NWHU obligated municipalities receive a copy of this letter, a briefing note outlining the funding model and request being made, and a template letter for each municipality to submit to the Ministry requesting same.</p>	

*Trudy Sachowski left the meeting at 9:58am.*

**9. IN CAMERA**

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 81-2021 CARRIED</b>	<b>J. Belluz S. MacKinnon</b>
<p>THAT the Board of Health moves to an in-camera session at 10:07am to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour Relations or Employee Negotiations (Job Classification)</li> </ul>	

<b>Motion / Resolution: # 82-2021 CARRIED</b>	<b>W. Brunetta S. MacKinnon</b>
<p>THAT the Board of Health move out of in-camera at 10:21am and resume the regular meeting.</p>	

<p><b>Motion / Resolution: # 83-2021</b>  <b>CARRIED</b></p>	<p><b>J. Belluz</b>  <b>S. Smith</b></p>
<p>WHEREAS the COVID-19 Vaccine efforts are continuing into the fall and beyond,</p> <p>AND WHEREAS regular school immunizations have been deferred for two (2) years due to school closures and pandemic response,</p> <p>AND WHEREAS the Canadian Office and Professional Employees Union (COPE) Local 521, and the Ontario Nurses Association (ONA) have agreed in principle to adding this support,</p> <p>THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit approves the addition of an Immunizer to the organization and both unions' collective agreements,</p> <p>AND FURTHER THAT the Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit authorizes the CEO to execute a Letter of Understanding with COPE and ONA to add language reflecting these additions to their respective collective agreements as appropriate.</p>	

**10. PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS**

**10.1 Medical Officer of Health Update** *Dr. Young Hoon, Medical Officer of Health.*  
*Reference #2021.08.27-10.1 The Report will be kept on file*

Dr. Young Hoon spoke to her written report, which was primarily focused on COVID-19 updates, noting that cases are rising slightly, due to increased mobility of people given reduced restrictions nationally.

There is some modelling indicating that a fourth wave of the virus could be high-risk if public health protective measures are restrictions are removed. Continuation of restrictions and increased vaccine coverage rates will help to mitigate the risk, but it is still likely that a fourth wave will have a substantial impact on health care services across the province. It was noted, however, that modelling takes into consideration many factors, but is not always 100% accurate, and is often applied to larger urban centres. Modelling indicates that it is likely that the virus in the fourth wave will primarily impact pockets of unvaccinated and vulnerable populations, as well as those who are not yet eligible to receive the vaccine, such as youth under the age of 12.

NWHU is working to engage a third-party modelling expert to facilitate a modelling process for its catchment area to help prepare for a more localized response.

The Province has indicated that there is an expectation for local public health units to implement public health restrictions based on localized virus activity, and will not apply provincial restrictions unless they find it necessary. This would mean an increased workload for NWHU to manage and police restrictions and maintain communications, hotline calls and complaints. NWHU is working on planning and assessing capacity for this.

*Trudy Sachowski returned to the meeting at 10:55am.*

**Vaccine Passports/Certificates**

The Province is currently in discussions with local public health units about the issuance of a provincial certificate or passport for those who have received the COVID-19 vaccine.

Right now, people who receive vaccines in Ontario receive a receipt from the COVax system which they can carry and present as needed. If there is a desire for a more official ‘card’ or ‘passport’, this would need to be done at a provincial level for capacity reasons.

People who would like a copy of their receipt, and who have a green Ontario health card, can access this online.

NWHU can, however, support a policy indicating the need for proof, if appropriate. Dr. Young Hoon will continue to monitor communications from the Province and other provincial groups and health units.

**10.2 Supervised Consumption Sites** *Dr. Young Hoon on behalf of Gillian Lunny, Manager – Sexual Health and Harm Reduction. Reference #2021.08.27-10.2 The Report will be kept on file.*

Dr. Young Hoon provided a summary of the report shared with the Board, highlighting that NWHU will seek to engage a third party to facilitate a feasibility study for Supervised Consumption Sites in the NWHU catchment area – specifically Sioux Lookout, Kenora, and Fort Frances, and potentially Dryden – to determine the needs of NWHU communities. The main benefit to these sites is saving lives and preventing death. A feasibility study will include stakeholder engagement, including the population who would potentially use such sites. The study is not an indication that NWHU would be the lead for the sites but would be a support or partner as appropriate.

The Board engaged in some deliberation of the benefits and challenges of Supervised Consumption Sites in the region. It was suggested that the study also include support services like addictions treatment centres.

<p><b>Motion / Resolution: # 84-2021</b> <b>CARRIED</b></p>	<p><b>W. Brunetta</b> <b>J. Belluz</b></p>
<p>THAT the Board of Health receive the following Public Health Program reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021.08.27-10.1 Medical Officer of Health Update</li> <li>• 2021.08.27-10.2 Supervised Consumption Sites Briefing Note</li> </ul>	

**11. BOH HOLIDAY GATHERING / RETREAT**

Marilyn Herbacz proposed, depending on case numbers and fourth wave impacts to our area, an in-person gathering of the Board with preventative measures in place, for the holidays, as has been done in previous years.

It was agreed that the Board will meet in person in October in Dryden, with the condition that it will be cancelled at the discretion of Dr. Young Hoon related to the status of the pandemic.

12. MICROSOFT TEAMS UPDATE

13. AMENDMENTS: None.

14. NEXT MEETING DATE

- Friday, September 24, 2021 via Microsoft Teams at 8:30am
- Friday, October 22, 2021 in Dryden

15. ADJOURNMENT


The Chair accepted a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:19pm.

Motion / Resolution: # 85-2021 CARRIED	J. Belluz S. Smith
THAT the Board of Health Meeting be adjourned at 12:19pm.	

BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THE NORTHWESTERN HEALTH UNIT:

CONFIRMED AS WRITTEN

THIS 24 DAY OF September 2021

  
 MEETING CHAIR, BOARD OF HEALTH

  
 RECORDING SECRETARY