

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

Meeting Date: May 6, 2026

Location: 160 Chancellors Way, Guelph ON (Trillium Room)

ATTENDANCE

Members in Attendance:

Linda Busuttil (Chair), Campbell Cork, Guy Gardhouse, Duncan Bull, Steve Cavell, Robin Sedgwick, Anil Kaul, Erin Caton, Rodrigo Goller, Ralph Manktelow, David Anderson, and Chris White.

Members with Regrets: George Bridge.

Ex-Officio Member: Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO.

Staff in Attendance:

Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Rita Isley, David Kingma, Kyle Wilson, Paul Medeiros, Brian Herman, Patryk Wardach, April Pollington, Karen Mulvey, Kyley Alderson, Taylor Besley, Dana Galehdari, Conor Barrett, Gabriel Agunsoye, Yordy Napoles, Chuck Ferguson, Katrina Olsen, Emerson Rajaram, Mike Whyte, Justin Angevaare, Shelley Nuhn, Shelby Leenders, Phil Wong, Alana Byron, and Laura Kelly (Recording Secretary).

Guests in Attendance (via Zoom):

Joanne Shuttleworth (Media), Adam Donaldson (Media), and Taylor Pace (Media).

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Linda Busuttil called the meeting to order at 2:00. Attendance was noted. Quorum requirements were met.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The WDGP Land Acknowledgement was read in full by Dr. Nicola Mercer.

3. DISCLOSURE(S) OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

No disclosures were declared at this time.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 1, 2026.

MOTION: "To approve the Minutes of April 1, 2026 as presented."

Moved: D. Anderson

Seconded: E. Caton

CARRIED

5. MOH/CEO VERBAL REPORT

Dr. Mercer provided a verbal update including the following highlights:

- A VaxLink update was provided, highlighting the development of the in-house barcode scanning browser extension designed to improve clinic efficiency and effectiveness, representing another internal innovation initiative.
- It was noted that May 4–10 is Mental Health Awareness Week. A free parent information session on substance use and screen use is being held Wednesday evening from 6:00–8:00 p.m. at St. Jacobs in partnership with two WDG school boards, where findings from the WHY Survey will be presented.
- An update was provided regarding National Nursing Week taking place next week. The Vice President of Community Health, R. Isley, and PHN R. McDougall were recently interviewed for an upcoming feature story in The Wellington Advisor.
- A tick surveillance and tick dragging update was provided. Activities are being conducted on six private rural properties in Dufferin County, including Board of Health member R. Manktelow's, with approximately 80 residents volunteering their properties for participation.
- An update was provided regarding the implementation of new organizational guidance related to environmental sustainability and the use of artificial intelligence, with consideration being given to balancing the environmental impacts of AI with its operational benefits.
- The importance of responsible AI use was emphasized, noting that it continues to be an important societal discussion.

6. KEYNOTE PRESENTATION(S)

- J. Angevaare presented in conjunction with Board of Health report BH.01.MAY0626.R11 - (see 8.0 BOH Report(s) for summary).

6.1 SUPPLEMENTAL PRESENTATION(S)

- C. Ferguson presented in conjunction with Board of Health report BH.01.MAY0626.R13 - (see 8.0 BOH Report(s) for summary).

7. BUSINESS ARISING

- NONE

8. CONSENT AGENDA(S)

- [BH.01.MAY0626.C08](#) – IPAC Hub Update
- [BH.01.MAY0626.C09](#) – Health Protection 2025 Q1 Summary Report

MOTION: "To receive the Consent Agenda item(s) which have been given due consideration, for information."

Moved: E. Caton

Seconded: D. Bull

CARRIED

9. BOH REPORT(S)

[BH.01.MAY0626.R11](#) – Scalable Innovation for a Sustainable Public Health System

- J. Angevaere and M. Whyte presented on screen as the keynote and reviewed the report.
- A PHIZ.ca update highlighted increased collaboration across units and strong engagement with innovation initiatives, emphasizing work developed “by public health, for public health.”
- Board member, E. Caton, spoke positively about the report, highlighting opportunities for expansion and the importance of maintaining in-house solutions to support data sovereignty.
- Board member, D. Bull inquired about VaxLink’s availability in community clinics. It was noted that implementation is currently limited to public health clinics, with growing interest from other health units. Dr. Mercer noted the tool’s low barrier to adoption, low cost, and planned free availability to providers, particularly those using the TELUS CHR platform.
- D. Bull also asked whether learnings from other health units are being incorporated into the portal. It was noted that contributions are currently primarily from WDGP, with outreach to other health units ongoing.
- Board member, A. Kaul inquired whether the tool reduces risk. Future enhancements, including expiry monitoring and operational improvements, were discussed. It was noted that the tool will support clinic operations and assist with onsite monitoring of expired vaccines, though broader vaccine wastage and cold chain management extend beyond the scope of VaxLink.
- Discussion occurred regarding potential enhancements, including improved vaccine wastage monitoring and additional remote vaccine management options in community settings.
- Acting Chair L. Busuttill inquired about provincial attention to public health innovation. Dr. Mercer noted that WDGP regularly shares its innovation work provincially to encourage similar approaches and greater data science and engineering capacity across the sector.

MOTION: "To receive Board of Health report BH.01.MAY0626.R11 – Scalable Innovation for a Sustainable Public Health System, as presented, for information."

Moved: E. Caton

Seconded: R. Manktelow

CARRIED

BH.01.MAY0626.R12 – Reducing Youth Access to Tobacco and Vaping in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph

- P. Wong reviewed the highlights of the report for the Board.
- It was reported that inspection numbers have increased alongside improved compliance rates, including a reported 50% decrease in non-compliance.
- Targeted enforcement activities are occurring at vape stores and tobacco vendors located near schools.
- Discussion occurred regarding the growing number of single-use disposable vape products and associated process gaps, including concerns related to batteries ending up in landfills and creating potential fire hazards.
- Board member, E. Caton, commented positively on the work and inquired whether discussions have occurred with the Province regarding inclusion of these products within the provincial recycling program. It was noted that this is anticipated to be considered in the coming year. Dr. Mercer further noted that while the issue may appear small in scale, disposable vape products often contain residual nicotine, creating additional challenges related to safe recycling and disposal.
- It was further noted that concerns exist regarding all components of disposable vape products, and that manufacturers should play a greater role in addressing these issues.
- Board member, S. Cavell, inquired about the retail cost of disposable vape products. It was noted that products generally retail between \$30 and \$50, depending on the number of puffs desired from the individual vape.
- Board member, A. Kaul, inquired about test shopping practices. It was noted that test shopping occurs frequently, with vendors visited multiple times per year, and that a zero-tolerance approach is applied, including charges where appropriate.
- Acting Chair, L. Busuttil, inquired whether listings exist identifying unsafe shops or repeat offenders. It was noted that certain charges are publicly disclosed through mandated disclosure requirements and may be viewed through the 'Check Before You Choose' platform; however, not all tobacco-related charges are disclosed under the current protocol.

MOTION: "To receive Board of Health report BH.01.MAY0626.R12 – Reducing Youth Access to Tobacco and Vaping in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph as presented, for information."

Moved: D. Anderson

Seconded: A. Kaul

CARRIED

BH.01.MAY0626.R13 – Corporate Communications Annual Report

- The report highlighted significant growth in WDG Public Health Communications activities in 2025, including a 56% increase in social media impressions, a threefold increase in engagement, and more than 611,000 website views, with measles-related information generating the highest public interest.
- Communications supported timely and accessible public health messaging through media relations, social media, website content, blogs, and library services, while continuing to prioritize health equity, accessibility, and evidence-informed communication practices.
- Key priorities for 2026 include addressing vaccine hesitancy and AI-related health misinformation, as well as continuing to enhance public access to information through the newly redesigned WDG Public Health website.

MOTION: "To receive Board of Health report BH.01.MAY0626.R13 – Corporate Communications Annual Report as presented, for information."

Moved: A. Kaul

Seconded: D. Bull

CARRIED

BH.01.MAY0626.R14 – Food Safety Program Update

- The report highlighted the broad scope of WDG Public Health's food safety program, noting that non-restaurant food premises, including special events, food trucks, shared kitchens, retail settings, and home-based businesses, represent most regulated food facilities and require tailored, risk-based oversight approaches.
- In 2025, Public Health Inspectors conducted 4,447 food inspections across restaurants and non-restaurant settings, with non-restaurant premises demonstrating comparable or lower complaint and infraction rates despite operating in more variable and less standardized environments.
- The report emphasized the importance of flexible, future-focused food safety oversight as food systems continue to evolve through new technologies, innovative food production models, and changing consumer practices, while also supporting health equity through education, accessible training, and guidance for small and emerging food operators.

MOTION: "To receive Board of Health report BH.01.MAY0626.R14 – Food Safety Program Update as presented, for information."

Moved: E. Caton

Seconded: R. Goller

CARRIED

10. COMMITTEE REPORT(S)

➤ BH.04.MAY0626.R04 – 2025 Draft Audited Financial Statements

- C. White introduced the report and placed the following motion in front of the board.

MOTION: “That the Finance + Audit Committee makes recommendation to the Board of Health to receive Finance + Audit Committee Report R04 – 2025 Draft Audited Financial Statements as presented, for information, and approve the 2025 Draft Audited Financial Statements, as presented in Appendix 1, for information.

Moved: R. Goller

Seconded: D. Bull

CARRIED

➤ BH.04.MAY0626.R05 – Stewardship of Management Operations

- C. White introduced the report and placed the following motion in front of the board.

MOTION: “That the Finance + Audit Committee makes recommendation to the Board of Health to receive Finance + Audit Committee Report R05 – Stewardship of Management Operations as presented, for information.

Moved: D. Bull

Seconded: C. Cork

CARRIED

➤

11. CORRESPONDENCE

- NONE.

Media and Public attendees were asked to leave the meeting, at this time, as this Board of Health meeting contains a “Closed Session” section which falls under the exemptions pursuant to Section 239 of the *Municipal Act*. Please note that this session is **not** open to members of the public or the press.

12. CLOSED SESSION

- ▶ To approve the Closed Session minutes of April 1, 2026
- ▶ To receive Closed Session Finance + Audit Committee Report BH.04.MAY0626.R06 – Insurance Renewal: Liability and Cyber Report [the security of the property of the BOH].

MOTION: “To move into closed session to approve the closed session minutes of April 1, 2026 [personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees, and labour relations and employee negotiations]; and to receive Closed Session Finance + Audit Committee Reports BH.04.MAY0626.R06 – Insurance Renewal: Liability and Cyber Report [the security of the property of the BOH].

Moved: G. Gardhouse

Seconded: C. White

CARRIED

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH

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CLOSED SESSION

ATTENDANCE

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Members with Regrets: George Bridge.

Ex-Officio Member: Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health and CEO

Staff in Attendance:

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Guests in Attendance:

None.

CLOSED SESSION MINUTES TO BE PROVIDED UNDER SEPARATE COVER

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[Return to open session:]

Motions to be brought into open session:

MOTION: That the Board of Health approve the Closed Session minutes of April 1, 2026.

MOTION: That the Board of Health receive Closed Session Finance + Audit Committee Report BH.04.MAY0626.R06 – Insurance Renewal: Liability and Cyber Report, as presented, for information.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: "To adjourn the meeting."

Moved: E. Caton

Seconded: R. Sedgwick

CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 pm.

APPROVED this 3rd day of June, 2026.

Board of Health Chair (Acting)

Medical Officer of Health, CEO