

# Environmental Health and Infection Control

## Client Feedback Survey

---

**To:** Chair and Members of the Board of Health

**Meeting Date:** February 5, 2025

**Report No.** **BH.01.FEB0525.R02**, Pages: 11

**Prepared By:** Paul Medeiros, Manager, Environmental Health

**Approved By:** Christopher Beveridge, CD, MA, CMM, CPHI(C)  
Vice President, Health Protection and Emergency Preparedness

**Submitted By & Signature:** Original signed document on file.  
**Dr. Nicola J. Mercer, MD, MBA, MPH, FRCPC**  
**Medical Officer of Health & CEO**

---

## Recommendations

---

It is recommended that the Board of Health receive this report for information.

## Key Points

---

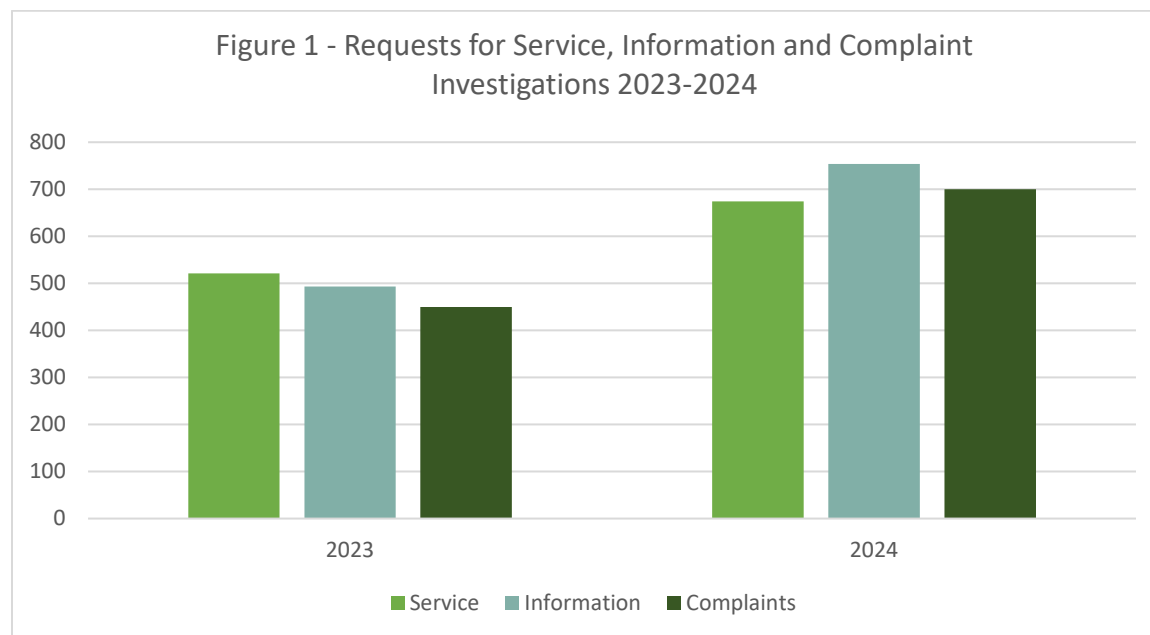
- The Ontario Public Health Standards mandate services such as responding to food safety complaints to promote safe food-handling practices.<sup>1,2</sup>
- From June 26 to July 9, 2024, the Environmental Health (EH) and Infection Control (IC) teams obtained feedback following the delivery of demand services/requests for information.
- 52 surveys were sent with 11 survey responses (three from facility operators and eight from clients), representing a 21% response rate.
- Responses were positive with no identified opportunities for improvement.
- The internal processes used to distribute, collect, analyze, and report on feedback were evaluated and found to be adequate but not ideal as they could not be fully automated, nor was the process able to send surveys to all service recipients.
- Feedback surveys will contribute to the service-focused culture of the EH and IC teams to improve internal processes to help ensure positive health outcomes in the community.

## Background

Collecting client feedback is crucial for organizations because it provides valuable insights into client satisfaction and areas for improvement. This feedback helps organizations understand the needs and preferences of their clients, enabling them to enhance their services and programs. Additionally, it fosters a sense of engagement and trust among clients, as they feel their opinions are valued and considered.

Sharing client feedback with employees can also help improve employee engagement, retention, and productivity. For example, a poll by Gallup found that employees who receive regular recognition and praise are more likely to be engaged, stay with their organization longer, and be more productive.<sup>3</sup> This highlights the importance of creating a workplace culture that values and acknowledges employee contributions, leading to better organizational outcomes.

Between 2023 and 2024, Public Health Inspectors with EH and IC responded to **3592** requests for service or information, or to investigate complaints as shown in Figure 1. We believe that clients perceive our response to be professional and effective. However, without actual feedback, we cannot identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.



## Methodology

The stated objective of this project was to assess a process for obtaining feedback from community members and operators through a feedback survey following the delivery of demand services such as premises complaints or requests for information. After completing the requested service, a link to a short survey was emailed to the person who requested the

service. A phone number was also provided in case the requestor preferred to respond via phone. Responses were anonymous and not linked to the PHI or the service provided. Survey feedback would be used to improve internal processes and to reinforce work practices.

A cross-functional project team included Program Assistants, EH and IC Public Health Inspectors, a Quality Performance Specialist, and the EH Manager. The project team developed a comprehensive project plan and success criteria for the project to include:

1. **Survey Response Rate.** above 20% decided as acceptable.
2. **Quality / Usefulness of information received.** Were the responses actionable?
3. **Efficiency of internal processes.** Were processes smooth and not prone to errors?
4. **Time requirements for Program Admin and PHIs.**

## Survey Questions

The project team developed survey questions to be completed in 2-5 minutes. The content of both the client and operator surveys is included below. A drop-down menu was provided for questions to enhance data integrity (Appendix A and B).

### Client Survey Questions

1. How did you contact us?
2. What service did you connect with us about?
3. Please answer the following questions about your experience with staff. (Yes / I Don't know / No / Not applicable)
  - a. The staff were professional.
  - b. The staff understood my specific needs.
  - c. The staff were reliable.
  - d. The staff demonstrated genuine care and attentiveness.
  - e. Staff were easy to reach with any comments and concerns.
4. Please answer the following questions about your experience with the overall process. (Yes / I Don't know / No / Not applicable)
  - a. The service WDG Public Health provided was helpful and sufficient.
  - b. The service WDG Public Health provided was timely.
  - c. The information presented by the staff was clear.
  - d. I would recommend this service to others.
5. Please provide your feedback on:
  - a. What we did well (if applicable):
  - b. What we can improve (if applicable):

## Operator Survey Questions

1. How did you contact us?
2. Which type of facility do you operate?
3. Did you receive all the resources and information you needed?
4. How would you prefer to receive information?
5. Did you encounter any specific challenges or needs when accessing public health training and resources (e.g., language barriers)?
6. Feedback on staff assistance (Yes / No / Unsure):
  - a. The staff understood my specific needs and were reliable.
  - b. The service was timely, helpful, and sufficient.
7. Feedback on information clarity (Yes / No / Unsure):
  - a. The information presented was clear. Yes / No / Unsure
8. Please provide feedback:
  - a. What we did well (if applicable):
  - b. How we can improve (if applicable):

## Development of Survey Questions

The early stages of this pilot project were informed by two key resources: (1) The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Quality Improvement & Accreditation Program Customer Satisfaction Toolkit <sup>4</sup>. The [U.S.] Association of State and Territorial Health Officials Measuring Customer Satisfaction: 9 Steps to Success <sup>5</sup>. Both documents contained survey examples and considerations for launching customer feedback programs.

## Discussion

---

The project was deemed a success, and the survey process was refined while continuing to solicit client feedback. Analysis of each of the success criteria is included below:

**Survey Response Rate.** 52 surveys were sent. 11 Surveys were completed (3 Facilities and 8 Client Feedback). This equated to a 21% response rate. None of the respondents sought clarification or expressed confusion with any of the questions.

**Quality / Usefulness of information received.** The comments section proved useful in collecting positive narratives from clients. Positive responses were shared with the inspection team to recognize and reinforce service excellence. Responses were overwhelmingly positive so no opportunities for improvement were identified. As time progresses, trends will emerge, and those trends can be used to identify and act on improvement opportunities. In addition, as time progresses, we may receive notification of one-off issues that can be addressed immediately.

**Efficiency of internal processes.** To prevent project bias, the survey link was emailed by the Program Assistant (PA), not the individual PHI. This worked sufficiently however due to the manual work involved an automated system to distribute surveys would be more efficient.

**Time requirements for admin and PHIs.** PHIs obtained client email addresses when complaints or inquiries were made via phone. Email addresses were then given to the PA to email the survey link to the client. This was a challenge as only 33 email addresses were collected from the 187 call-ins. Of the 95 online requests, 61 email addresses were included by the submitter.

Following this project, the PA worked with the IT department to develop a mechanism for distributing the survey link via bulk text (SMS). This mechanism has been implemented and has simplified the process to increase the number of survey responses facilitating work to create a Power BI dashboard as an ongoing improvement.

## Health Equity Implications

The feedback survey pilot has significant implications for health equity within the community. By actively seeking feedback from community members and operators, the goal is to ensure that services are responsive to the needs of all populations, including those who may experience unintended health impacts. One of the key findings from the project was the positive feedback, indicating that services are generally well received. However, the response rate (21%) suggests that certain groups may not have been adequately represented in the feedback. For instance, individuals uncomfortable communicating in English or those without reliable internet access may have been less likely to participate in the survey. To address this, the survey will be made more accessible by offering alternative methods of participation, including paper surveys or in-person interviews.

## Conclusion

---

The feedback survey pilot conducted by the Environmental Health (EH) and Infection Control (IC) teams from June 26 to July 9, 2024, has provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of demand services such as responding to food safety or recreational water complaints. With a 21% response rate from the 52 surveys sent, the overwhelmingly positive feedback highlights the general satisfaction of community members and operators with the services provided. This pilot underscores the importance of collecting client feedback to continuously improve service delivery and ensure that the needs of all community members are met.

The significance of this report lies in its demonstration of the value of client feedback in enhancing public health services. By actively seeking input from those served, the EH and IC teams can identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, fostering a culture of responsiveness and service excellence.

Plans to automate key process functions to increase the number of surveys sent will help ensure more inclusive client feedback. Additionally, providing translation and offering alternative methods of communication, such as phone interviews, will make the survey more accessible to diverse populations. These actions will help mitigate any unintended consequences and ensure equitable access to feedback opportunities.

## Ontario Public Health Standards

---

### Foundational Standards

- ☐ Population Health Assessment
- ☐ Health Equity
- ☒ Effective Public Health Practice
- ☐ Emergency Management

### Program Standards

- ☐ Chronic Disease Prevention and Well-Being
- ☒ Food Safety
- ☒ Healthy Environments
- ☐ Healthy Growth and Development
- ☐ Immunization
- ☒ Infectious and Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control
- ☒ Safe Water
- ☐ School Health
- ☐ Substance Use and Injury Prevention

## 2024-2028 WDGPH Strategic Goals

---

More details about these strategic goals can be found in [WDGPH's 2024-2028 Strategic Plan](#).

- ☒ Improve health outcomes
- ☐ Focus on children's health
- ☒ Build strong partnerships
- ☒ Innovate our programs and services
- ☐ Lead the way toward a sustainable Public Health system


## References




---

1. Ontario. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Ontario Public Health Standards, 2019. [Internet]. 2019 [cited 2025 Jan 14]. Available from: [Food Safety Protocol, 2019 \(gov.on.ca\)](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/food-safety-protocol-2019)
2. Ontario. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Infectious Disease Protocol, 2023. [Internet]. 2023 [cited 2025 Jan 14]. Available from: <https://files.ontario.ca/moh-infectious-disease-protocol-en-2023.pdf>
3. Gallup. Employee Retention Depends on Getting Recognition Right. Gallup Workplace. 2024 Sep 10. [Internet]. [cited 2025 Jan 14]. Available from: <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/404202/employee-retention-depends-getting-recognition-right.aspx>
4. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Quality Improvement & Accreditation Program Customer Satisfaction Toolkit 4. [Internet]. [cited 2025 Jan 14]. Available from: <https://www.astho.org/globalassets/pdf/accreditation/measuring-customer-satisfaction-nine-steps-to-success.pdf>
5. Association of State and Territorial Health Officials Measuring Customer Satisfaction: 9 Steps to Success. [cited 2025 Jan 14]. Available from: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/qiap/docs/CustomerSatisfaction/CS-SurveyGuidelines.pdf>

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Community Member Feedback Survey



AAA  




Your feedback is highly valued. We're eager to hear about your recent experience with us.

By completing this brief 2-minute survey, you're helping us enhance our processes, accessibility, and our ability to serve the community.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from the survey at any time prior to submission. The survey can be completed anonymously. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health is committed to providing help to people with disabilities in the survey process. If you require any help, please advise Amanda Waechter, and we will work with you to meet your needs. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Amanda Waechter at 519.822.2715 X 4207 or [Amanda.Waechter@wdgpublichealth.ca](mailto:Amanda.Waechter@wdgpublichealth.ca)

Thank you for your participation in shaping our future endeavors. Your insights shape our commitment to excellence.


**1. How did you contact us?**

Please select:

☐ Phone
 ☐ Email
 ☐ Fax
 ☐ Other
 [reset](#)

**What service did you connect with us about?**

Please select:



**2. Please answer the following questions about your experience with staff.**

Staff:

The staff was/were professional.

☐ Yes
 ☐ I don't know
 ☐ No
 ☐ Not applicable
 [reset](#)

The staff understood my specific needs.

☐ Yes
 ☐ I don't know
 ☐ No
 ☐ Not applicable
 [reset](#)

The staff was/were reliable.

☐ Yes
 ☐ I don't know
 ☐ No
 ☐ Not applicable
 [reset](#)

The staff demonstrated genuine care and attentiveness.

☐ Yes
 ☐ I don't know
 ☐ No
 ☐ Not applicable
 [reset](#)

Staff were easy to reach.

☐ Yes
 ☐ I don't know
 ☐ No
 ☐ Not applicable
 [reset](#)



### 3. Please answer the following questions about your experience with the overall process.

#### Process/Follow-Up:

The service WDG Public Health provided was helpful and sufficient. ☐ Yes ☐ I don't know ☐ No ☐ Not applicable [reset](#)

The service WDG Public Health provided was timely. ☐ Yes ☐ I don't know ☐ No ☐ Not applicable [reset](#)

The information presented by the staff was clear. ☐ Yes ☐ I don't know ☐ No ☐ Not applicable [reset](#)

I would recommend this service to others. ☐ Yes ☐ I don't know ☐ No ☐ Not applicable [reset](#)

### 4. Please provide your feedback on:

What we did well (if applicable):


[Expand](#)

What we can improve (if applicable):

[Expand](#)

**Submit**

## Appendix B: Operator Feedback Survey



A A A  
 🔊 🗲 🗲

Your feedback is highly valued. We're eager to hear about your recent experience with us.

By completing this brief 2-minute survey, you're helping us enhance our processes, accessibility, and our ability to serve the community.

Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your decision to participate, or not, will not affect your relationship with your Public Health Inspector or the outcomes of any future inspections.

You may withdraw from the survey at any time prior to submission.

The survey can be completed anonymously. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health is committed to providing help to people with disabilities in the survey process. If you require any help, please advise Amanda Waechter, and we will work with you to meet your needs. If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact Amanda Waechter at 519.822.2715 X 4207 or [Amanda.Waechter@wdgpublichealth.ca](mailto:Amanda.Waechter@wdgpublichealth.ca)

Thank you for your participation in shaping our future endeavors. Your insights shape our commitment to excellence.

---

**How did you get in touch with us?**

☐ Phone  
☐ Email  
☐ Fax  
☐ Other (please specify)

reset

---

**Which type of facility do you operate?**

☐ Food Premises  
☐ Small Drinking Water System  
☐ Personal Service Settings  
☐ Tobacco and Vape  
☐ Recreational Water  
☐ Recreational Camp  
☐ Other (please specify)

reset

---

**Did you receive all the resources and information you needed?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

reset

---

**How would you prefer to receive information?**

☐ Email  
☐ Mail  
☐ Over the phone  
☐ One-on-one  
☐ Group session/Webinar  
☐ I don't have a strong preference  
☐ Other (please specify)

reset

---

**Did you encounter any specific challenges or needs when accessing public health training and resources (e.g., language barriers)?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

reset

Feedback on staff assistance:	
The staff understood my specific needs and were reliable.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not applicable <a href="#">reset</a>
The service was timely, helpful and sufficient.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not applicable <a href="#">reset</a>
Feedback on information clarity:	
The information presented was clear.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Not applicable <a href="#">reset</a>
Please provide feedback:	
What we did well (if applicable):	<div></div> <a href="#">Expand</a>
How we can improve (if applicable):	<div></div> <a href="#">Expand</a>
<div>Submit</div>	