

Healthy Communities and Public Policy

Alcohol Portfolio Report

March 2016 – March 2017

Area of Focus <i>(check all that apply)</i>	
Strategic Plan Direction/Goal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ontario Public Health Standard, 2008 (OPHS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Manager: Jennifer McCorrison

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Division: Community Health and Wellness



Summary of Strategic Plan Goal and Operational Plan Objective(s): .

Strategic Direction:	Building Healthy Communities - We will work with communities to support the health and well-being of everyone.
Strategic Goal(s):	We will enhance our understanding of the local needs and priorities of the communities we serve and develop programs and services in response to those needs.
	We will promote healthy environments that support physical and mental health and well-being.
Program Operational Objective:	To inform and support community partners and policy makers in the development and implementation of public policies related to alcohol sales and use.
Is this a new initiative or update of existing initiative?	Existing Initiative/Program Update

Summary of OPHS Program Requirement(s):

OPHS Program:	Chronic Disease Prevention	
	Prevention of Injury and Substance Misuse	
Goal:	To reduce the burden of preventable chronic diseases of public health importance.	
	To reduce the frequency, severity and impact of preventable injury and substance misuse.	
	To enable individuals and families to achieve optimal preconception health, experience a healthy pregnancy, have the healthiest newborn(s) possible, and be prepared for parenthood.	
Strategy:	Assessment and Surveillance	
	Health Promotion and Policy Development	
	Disease Prevention	
Requirement(s):	<i>Chronic Disease Requirements 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 11 & 12</i> <i>Prevention of Injury and Substance Misuse 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5</i>	
Accountability Indicator(s):	N/A	
	N/A	
Has a performance variance or discrepancy been identified?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Highlights:

The vision of the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) alcohol strategy is to create a local community that is free from alcohol-related harms. The group has developed an evidence-based comprehensive strategy to achieve this vision. As described in Board of Health Report BH.01.MAR0216.R04 – Alcohol Harm Prevention Strategy, the alcohol strategy involves both provincial and local actions and also combines a number of strategies such as research, advocacy, partnership, community development and health services to achieve the vision. The following outlines a brief summary of the progress on projects that have been active from March 2016- March 2017.

Local work

Municipal Alcohol Policy Support

Between December of 2015 and June of 2017 WDGPH provided support to municipalities that were interested in improving their municipal alcohol policies (MAPS) or alcohol risk management policies (ARMPS) which regulate the sale, service and consumption of alcohol on municipal property. WDGPH used the Municipal Alcohol Policy Blue Ribbon Measure Form, developed by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), to assess all 10 existing MAPS or ARMPS in Wellington County, Dufferin County and the City of Guelph. Letters were then sent to each municipality notifying them of their score report and offering the assistance of WDGPH to improve their scores. Letters were also sent to municipalities that did not have MAPS or ARMPS to encourage them to consider creating one. Overall, WDGPH worked with four municipalities to help them improve their score. The policies that WDGPH worked with were improved by 41 points, on average.

Local Alcohol Advertising Study

WDGPH is working with a researcher, at the University of Guelph, to conduct a descriptive study about alcohol advertising at the local level. This study will determine the locations, prevalence and types of alcohol advertisements, in the City of Guelph, as well as their characteristics and compliance with national alcohol advertising guidelines and standards. A broader understanding of the local alcohol advertising landscape will help to frame local preventative alcohol campaign messaging as well provide evidence for advocacy on greater advertising restrictions.

Local Alcohol Harm Reduction Campaign

WDGPH is leading a subgroup of the Wellington Guelph Drug Strategy with over ten community partners called the Wellington Guelph Alcohol Harm Prevention Working Group to create a local campaign to raise public awareness of local harms caused by alcohol. The objective of the campaign is to strengthen awareness and understanding of the social and financial impacts on the broader community of high-risk alcohol use. The hope is that the campaign will promote mindfulness and awareness of the consequences of alcohol use amongst users, initiate community action to minimize the effects of alcohol use through advocacy, education and dialogue. The working group has identified key messages and

local pieces of information to share and has hired a local marketing firm to design a campaign. The images and messages are currently being tested and funding opportunities are being explored before the campaign will launch in 2017.

Mental Health Substance Misuse and Addiction Prevention Working Group (MSHMAP) School-based Prevention Program

WDGPH is working with the MSHMAP subgroup of the Dufferin Coalition for Kids (DuCK) to create a comprehensive school-based mental health and substance use prevention program that supports and enhances the physical education curriculum. The program will aim to increase protective factors (e.g. resilience, social and emotional health, positive mental health) and decrease risk factors among youth (e.g. stress, risk of depression, harm related to substance misuse). To date, the group has conducted a literature review and a review of existing school-based mental health promotion and substance misuse prevention programs, created a logic model for the program, and has conducted a needs assessment survey with teachers of the health and physical education curriculum. The next step in the program planning process is to conduct focus groups with teachers to further explore needs and key insights for program development.

Municipal Policy beyond MAPS – Exploratory Study

WDGPH, in partnership with the Durham Regional Health Department and the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, has initiated a contract with a municipal planning consultant to explore municipal policy solutions that focus on alcohol sales and consumption off municipal property (e.g. zoning, by-law and licensing policies). A recent report on Addressing Alcohol Consumption and Related Harms at the local level outlines the importance of working with municipalities to address the following policy areas: pricing strategies, outlet density, hours of sale and modifying the drinking environment. There are currently no existing resources, documents, or support systems to guide this type of work, thus this report will be extremely useful to identify potential policy measures. The next steps will be to host discussions with local municipalities to explore the feasibility of the policy measures and potential collaboration.

Preconception Health Screening Research Study

The Family Health Promotion team at WDGPH, developed ***My Health eSnapshot***, a comprehensive Preconception Health risk assessment tool designed to identify risk factors and their impact on future maternal, child and family health. WDGPH implemented a study of My Health eSnapshot in 7 primary care sites across WDG with women of reproductive age. My Health eSnapshot was implemented using a three part model: 1) participants complete the electronic risk assessment tool in their healthcare provider's office, with the results automatically integrated into their electronic medical record, 2) a follow-up discussion about the results with their healthcare provider, and 3) a customized patient handout with evidence –informed health messaging to take home. Screening for alcohol use was included in the risk assessment tool. If a client was screened with-risk for alcohol use they received a customized patient handout, which included information on the low-risk drinking guidelines, birth control and information on the impacts of alcohol on a baby during pregnancy and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).

In 2016, data was collected from 300 participants from the 7 primary care sites in WDG through the risk assessment tool and a series of evaluation tools. Currently, data analysis is in progress to address all of the research questions and to make final conclusions and recommendations. Future analysis will specifically look at the questions specific to alcohol use to understand the prevalence of this risk factor among the study sample and the impact of the patient handout and follow-up discussion with their health care provider to increase their knowledge or influence behaviour change related to alcohol use.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Activities

The Family Health Promotion team is responsible for raising awareness of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and ensuring supportive environments in the community. With the recent changes in Ontario that allowed for the sales of beer, wine and cider in grocery stores, WDGPH identified the grocery stores in WDG that would be impacted by this to ensure compliance with Sandy's Law. Sandy's Law requires that signage is displayed in certain premises that sell alcohol that inform women about the risks of drinking alcohol during pregnancy can cause Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Currently, only one grocery store in WDG can sell alcohol. A site visit was conducted with this grocery store and compliance with Sandy's Law was confirmed.

Every year, WDGPH works to raise awareness of FASD, with specific activities implemented on September 9th, which has been designated as FASD Awareness Day. In 2016, the Family Health Promotion team planned a social media strategy to raise awareness on FASD Awareness Day, by using WDGPH's twitter platform to share messages.

University of Guelph

WDGPH is a member of the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Advisory Committee at the University of Guelph which is an advisory body to the Associate Vice-President (Student Affairs). The central purpose of the Committee is to oversee all the University's alcohol and substance abuse prevention and support programs with the aim of promoting responsible use and providing appropriate supports for at-risk students on and off campus. WDGPH worked with the committee to bring in an expert from the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse to lead the group through a session which aimed to re-focus efforts to reduce alcohol-related harms on campus and developed a work plan to inform 2017.

Provincial work

Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA)- Alcohol Working Group

WDGPH is an active member of the OPHA Alcohol Working Group. Their mission is to inform policy makers of the health and safety impact of alcohol-related policy. Over the past year, the Working Group has engaged in advocacy to inform the provincial alcohol strategy and submitted recommendations around inclusion of alcohol messaging on menus to the government consultation on Bill 45: *Making Healthier Choices Act*. The Working Group also submits monthly e-articles on alcohol news of interest to The Public Health Files newsletter as well as alcohol updates and timely news via OPHA's social media platforms.

Related Board or WDGPH reports:

Board of Health Report BH.01.MAR0216.R04 - Alcohol Harm Prevention Strategy.

- http://www.wdgpublichealth.ca/sites/default/files/wdgphfiles/BH_01_MAR0216_R04%20-%20Alcohol%20Harm%20Prevention%20Strategy.pdf