

**Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health**  
**MINUTES OF BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Wednesday April 2, 2025**

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The Board of Health of Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Unit met at 2:08 p.m. via the ZOOM platform.

**Members in attendance were:** George Bridge (Chair), Rodrigo Goller, Erin Caton, Ralph Manktelow, Guy Gardhouse, Steve Cavell, Duncan Bull, Campbell Cork, David Anderson, Sandra Starr, Linda Busutil, and Chris White.

**Member(s) with regrets:** None.

**Ex-officio member(s) in attendance:** Dr. Mercer, Medical Officer of Health & CEO.

**Staff members in attendance were:** Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Rita Isley, David Kingma, Kyle Wilson, Emerson Rajaram, Gabriel Agunsoye, Conor Barrett, Karen Mulvey, Patryk Wardach, Michael Whyte, Mai Miner, April Pollington, Camille Loucks, Tyler Black, Shelby Leenders, Brian Herman, Anna Vanderlaan, Justin Angevaare, Julian Martalog, Phil Wong, Liliana Marinko, Shelley Nuhn, Danny Williamson, and Laura Kelly (Recording Secretary).

**Guests in attendance were:** Joanne Shuttleworth (MEDIA), Adam Donaldson (MEDIA), Taylor Pace (MEDIA), Michael Raletic (MEDIA).

**1.0 Call to Order**

**1.1 Land Acknowledgement**

Chair G. Bridge called the meeting to order at 2:08 p.m., and Dr. Mercer read the WDGP Land Acknowledgement in full.

**2.0 Disclosure(s) of Pecuniary Interest**

There are no disclosures of pecuniary interest declared at this time.

**3.0 Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION: “To approve the Minutes of March 5, 2025 as presented.”**

**Moved:** R. Manktelow  
**Seconded:** G. Gardhouse

**CARRIED**

#### 4.0 MOH/CEO Report (Verbal)

MOH/CEO Report (Verbal):

Dr. Mercer provided an update as follows:

- An update on measles was provided by Dr. Mercer.
- The number of confirmed and probable measles cases has reached 661, though this number is likely much higher given the delay in data collection and that many individuals are not seeking medical attention.
- Appreciation was extended to first responders for their efforts during the recent ice storm in Dufferin County. As of the morning update, approximately 8,000 residents remained without power. Portable water is available at municipal offices and the Horning's Mills Community Centre, which is also functioning as a warming centre.
- The Auditor General's report, released the previous morning, provided a provincial snapshot, and identifies several areas of concern across Ontario. WDGPH's Safe Water Program was recognized as performing exceptionally well. P. Wong provided a high-level summary, noting that the unit has reviewed the entire Safe Water Program and that WDGPH staff continue to both meet and exceed legislative mandates to ensure community water safety.
- WDGPH continues to collaborate with local partners on knowledge-sharing initiatives related to Avian Influenza. Efforts include providing timely updates to the community and distributing targeted educational materials to small backyard flock owners through local feed stores and other relevant outlets.
- A board member requested clarification regarding potential cuts to free water testing, and it was confirmed that the program has not been cut. Thanks were extended to the Environmental Health (EH) team for establishing new sample drop-off locations, including a new site serving the Palmerston and Mount Forest areas. The goal is to ensure that residents are within a 15-minute drive of a drop-off location to access this free testing service.

#### 5.0 Presentation(s)

Infectious Disease Spotlight: Avian Influenza

L. Marinko presented in conjunction with Board of Health report BH.01.APR0225.R07 - (see 8.0 BOH Report(s) for summary).

A One Health Approach to Vector-borne Disease: Tick and Mosquito Program Updates

P. Wong presented in conjunction with Board of Health report BH.01.APR0225.R09 - (see 8.0 BOH Report(s) for summary).

#### 6.0 Business Arising

- None.

## 7.0 Consent Agenda

- **BH.01.APR0225.C05** – Vaccine Wastage for 2024
- **BH.01.APR0225.C06** – Vaccine Administration in LTC and Retirement Homes

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

<b>Moved:</b>	<b>S. Cavell</b>	
<b>Seconded:</b>	<b>R. Goller</b>	<b>CARRIED</b>

## 8.0 BOH Report(s)

### **BH.01.APR0225.R07 – Infectious Disease Spotlight: Avian Influenza**

Dr. Mercer introduced and L. Marinko presented on screen and reviewed the contents of BOH Report BH.01.APR0225.R07 – as follows:

- Highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), primarily affecting birds but with potential to infect humans, has led to widespread outbreaks in Canada since 2021, including in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG), resulting in significant economic and public health impacts. While the risk to the public remains low, federal, provincial, and local agencies continue to coordinate surveillance, containment, and preparedness efforts, including access to vaccines for high-risk groups, to mitigate further spread and protect both animal and human health.
- Literature on backyard flocks is currently being distributed through local feed stores. P. Wong noted that WDGPH has created a comprehensive list of supply stores to maximize outreach to flock owners.
- Additionally, materials are made available at municipal offices where zoning permits backyard chickens. Comprehensive information is also accessible on the organization's website by searching for "backyard flocks."

**MOTION: “That the Board of Health receive BOH Report BH.01.APR0225.R07 – Infectious Disease Spotlight: Avian Influenza as presented for information.”**

<b>Moved:</b>	<b>D. Anderson</b>	
<b>Seconded:</b>	<b>C. Cork</b>	<b>CARRIED</b>

### **BH.01.APR0225.R08 – Injury Surveillance and Prevention Report**

Dr. Mercer introduced and M. Whyte reviewed the contents of BOH Report BH.01.APR0225.R08– as follows:

- M. Whyte provided a high-level overview of the Annual Injury Report.

- The report highlights key trends in the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) region, including increases in hospitalizations, emergency room visits, and mortality related to injuries.
- Notably, fall-related injuries account for approximately 60% of all injury-related ER visits. Older adults aged 75 and above are the most affected by falls, while children and youth are more prone to sports-related injuries. Individuals aged 12 to 64 are identified as the group most vulnerable to accidental poisonings.
- It was emphasized that simple home modifications, such as improved lighting and the installation of grab bars, can significantly reduce the risk of injury.
- WDG Public Health (WDGPH) will continue collaborating with community partners to reduce injury-related harm through ongoing data analysis, the use of research evidence, and evaluation support.
- An opportunity was identified to establish a fall prevention awareness group in the Guelph area.
- A board member requested clarification regarding why local injury rates are significantly higher in WDG than the provincial average, it was noted that while WDGPH can analyze data on the types of falls occurring, a complete understanding requires deeper collaboration with community partners—a complex but ongoing effort.
- Any additional relevant information obtained will be shared with the Board.

**MOTION: “That the Board of Health receive BOH Report BH.01.APR0225.R08 – Injury Surveillance and Prevention Report as presented, for information.”**

**Moved: D. Bull**  
**Seconded: S. Starr**

**CARRIED**

### **BH.01.APR0225.R09 – A OneHealth Approach to Vector-Borne Disease: Tick and Mosquito Program Updates**

Dr. Mercer introduced and P. Wong and T. Black reviewed the contents of BOH Report BH.01.APR0225.R09 – as follows:

- Vector-borne diseases, including Lyme disease and West Nile Virus, are growing public health concerns linked to climate change. Rising temperatures and longer summers have contributed to the geographic expansion of vectors such as blacklegged ticks and mosquitoes, increasing the risk of human exposure. WDG Public Health addresses these risks through an integrated program involving passive and active tick monitoring, mosquito surveillance, targeted larviciding, public education, and collaboration with municipalities and community partners.
- One of the most promising upcoming collaborations is with the Zoonotic Program in partnership with the Upper Grand District School Board (UGDSB) and the Wellington Catholic District School Board (WCDSB). The initiative involves providing educational kits to students in biology and ecology classes, enabling them to participate in field collection activities, particularly related to ticks.

- Students will submit their collected specimens to our team for identification, which will contribute to the Agency's data collection and analysis efforts while enhancing student learning.
- The program is currently in its preliminary phase and is scheduled to launch in May 2025.
- The team will also expand the One Health Community of Practice to strengthen regional collaboration on emerging health threats. Public education initiatives will continue, with a particular focus on engaging underserved populations. In addition, surveillance and control measures for vectors will be maintained throughout the WDG region to support early detection and prevention.

**MOTION: “That the Board of Health receive BOH Report BH.01.APR0225.R09 – A OneHealth Approach to Vector-Borne Disease: Tick and Mosquito Program Updates as presented, for information.”**

**Moved: R. Goller**  
**Seconded: E. Caton**

**CARRIED**

#### **BH.01.APR0225.R10 – Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP)**

Dr. Mercer introduced and R. Isley reviewed the contents of BOH Report BH.01.APR0225.R10 – as follows:

- WDG Public Health has offered free dental services to low-income seniors through the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP) since May 2021 in Guelph and May 2022 in Orangeville. The program serves uninsured seniors aged 65+ who meet income eligibility criteria. The Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) expands access to uninsured Canadians with family incomes under \$90,000 but may involve out-of-pocket costs.
- As community needs continue to evolve, WDGP is shifting focus to identifying service gaps and enhancing access, particularly for rural and underserved populations.
- Barriers remain, including limited dentist participation in OSDCP. To address this, WDGP is promoting dental programs through local venues and deploying staff to assist with applications for both CDCP and OSDCP. Further updates will follow as more data becomes available.

**MOTION: “That the Board of Health receive BOH Report BH.01.APR0225.R10 – Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP) as presented, for information.”**

**Moved: C. White**  
**Seconded: D. Anderson**

**CARRIED**

## 9.0 Committee (Verbal) Report(s)

### Finance + Audit Committee Report:

- NONE.

### Executive Committee Report:

- NONE.

### Human Resources Committee Report:

G. Bridge, Chair, and Dr. Mercer provided an update advising that the Human Resources Committee met, virtually, on April 2, 2025, to review/discuss the following matter(s):

#### Terms of Reference – April 2, 2025

As per the established schedule, the Terms of Reference are reviewed every two years to ensure continued relevance. Minor revisions are proposed as follows:

- Mission statement was updated to reflect the 2024–2028 Strategic Plan.
- Under the Membership section, it was clarified that the Chair of the Board is designated as an ex officio member of all board committees. This role does not contribute toward quorum requirements. The Board Chair however can be appointed to all board committees and in that case does count in quorum.
- Inclusion of a provision for Electronic Participation, in accordance with By-Law No. 1, Section 7.2.

### **Motion passed at the April 2, 2025 BOH Meeting:**

**MOTION: “That the Board of Health accepts the recommendation of the Human Resources Committee and receives and approves the Human Resources Terms of Reference, as presented.”**

**Moved: C. Cork**

**Seconded: D. Anderson**

**CARRIED**

#### BOH Policy and Procedure CA.45.01.200 – Medical Officer of Health/CEO Performance Appraisal

The above-noted P&P was reviewed and there were minor revisions proposed as follows:

- It was noted that a review process occurs every 2–3 years for all Board of Health P&Ps. A discrepancy was identified in the process for reviewing the Medical Officer of Health/CEO.
- The process has since been revised to address and correct this discrepancy.
- Responsibility for the MOH/CEO review has been formally transferred from the Executive Committee to the Human Resources Committee.

**Motion passed at the April 2, 2025 BOH Meeting:**

**MOTION: “That the Board of Health accepts the recommendation of the Human Resources Committee and receives and approves BOH Policy and Procedure CA.45.01.200 – Medical Officer of Health/CEO Performance Appraisal, as presented.”**

**Moved: D. Anderson**

**Seconded: E. Caton**

**CARRIED**

- See Closed Session Reports at #12.

**11.0 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.

(3:32) The Open Session portion of the meeting ended, and everyone disconnected from the meeting.

**12.0 CLOSED SESSION**

- To approve Closed Session Minutes of March 5, 2025 [personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees].
- To receive Closed Session Human Resources Committee Reports BH.05.APR0225.R01 – Annual Health and Safety Activities Report [personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees]; and Annual Key Human Resources Activity Report [labour relations or employee negotiations and personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees].
- To receive Closed Session MOH/CEO Report (Verbal) [personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees].

**MOTION: “To move into Closed Session to approve the Closed Session Minutes of March 5, 2025 [labour relations or employee negotiations and personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees]; to receive Closed Session Human Resources Committee Reports BH.05.APR0225.R01 – Annual Health and Safety Activities Report [personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees]; and Annual Key Human Resources Activity Report [labour relations or employee negotiations and personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees]; and to receive Closed Session MOH/CEO Report (Verbal) [labour relations or employee negotiations and personal matters about an identifiable individual, including BOH employees].**

**Moved: R. Goller**

**Seconded: D. Bull**

**CARRIED**

**Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health**  
**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH**  
**Wednesday April 2, 2025**

**CLOSED SESSION**

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**Members in attendance were:** George Bridge (Chair), Guy Gardhouse, Ralph Manktelow, David Anderson, Duncan Bull, Sandra Starr, Linda Busuttil, Steve Cavell, and Chris White.

**Member(s) with regrets were:** NONE.

**Ex-officio member(s) in attendance were:** Dr. Mercer, Medical Officer of Health & CEO.

**Staff member(s) in attendance were:** Rita Isley, David Kingma, Kyle Wilson, Phil Wong, Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, and Laura Kelly (Recording Secretary).

**Guest(s) in attendance were:** NONE.

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**CLOSED SESSION MINUTES TO BE PROVIDED UNDER SEPARATE COVER.**



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**(4:18) Returned to Open Session.**

*Motions to be brought into Open Session:*

***MOTION: “That the Board of Health approve the Closed Session Minutes of March 5, 2025, as presented.”***

***MOTION: “That the Board of Health receive Closed Session Human Resources Committee Report BH.05.APR0225.R01 – Annual Health and Safety Activities, as presented, for information.”***

***MOTION: “That the Board of Health receive Closed Session Human Resources Report BH.05.APR02254.R02 – Key Human Resources Activity as presented, for information.”***

**MOTION: “To ratify the Closed Session decisions of the April 2, 2025 Board of Health meeting.”**

**Moved: L. Busuttil**

**Seconded: S. Starr**

**CARRIED**

**13.0 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

**MOTION: “To adjourn the meeting.”**

**Moved: C. White**

**Seconded: D. Anderson**

**CARRIED**

**APPROVED this 7<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2025.**

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**Board of Health Chair**

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**Medical Officer of Health, CEO**