

**Subject:** Public Health 2025 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission

**Report to:** Public Health and Social Services Committee

**Report date:** Tuesday, April 8, 2025

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## Recommendations

1. That the Board of Health (BOH) **APPROVE** the Public Health 2025 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission (ASP) to the Ministry of Health for a total gross budget of \$42,358,593 inclusive of three (3) one-time funding requests totalling \$342,640.

## Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek the Niagara Region's BOH (Regional Council) approval for the Public Health 2025 ASP and Budget Submission to the Ministry of Health. The submission includes the BOH-approved 2025 operating budget for Public Health, and three (3) one-time funding requests.
- The 2025 ASP articulates Public Health's plan to meet the Ministry's requirements under the Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability (June 2021) which communicate the Ministry's requirements and establishes an accountability relationship between BOH and Ministry.
- The submission was due to the Ministry before or on March 31, 2025. A draft version was submitted to the Ministry by the deadline and a signed version will be submitted once approved by the BOH.
- The 2025 ASP provides an opportunity to apply for up to five additional one-time grants that would enable capital asset renewal and support Public Health Inspector practicum students.

## Financial Considerations

The Ministry of Health provides cost shared funding to Niagara Region's BOH and has instituted the ASP process as a major accountability mechanism towards provisioning of funding for mandatory and related public health programs and services. The budget figures included in the ASP is the formal request by the BOH to the Ministry for the provincial funding accounted for within the Regional Municipality of Niagara's 2025 Levy Operating Budget that was approved by the BOH on December 12, 2024.

The Public Health budget is largely cost shared between the Ministry and the Regional Municipality of Niagara, with the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP) being the only 100% provincially funded program with base funding. The Ministry's planned allocation for mandatory programs in 2025 is \$24,998,308, representing a one percent growth in base funding over 2024. The provincial cost share ratio for mandatory programs is set at a maximum of 75% of the BOH's gross operating budget; however, the actual cost share ratio for Niagara is 64%.

The 2025 Public Health request to the Ministry is based on gross budget expenditures of \$42,358,593 broken into three streams: mandatory cost shared programs, OSDCP 100% provincial funded, and one-time 100% provincial funded requests, as summarized in Table 1 below. The BOH has previously approved \$14,228,345 in levy funding for Public Health mandatory programs.

The 2025 Public Health operating budget was prepared and approved without consideration of tariff-related impacts, which could not be anticipated at the time. Any impacts resulting from the ongoing economic uncertainty due to tariffs will be brought back to the BOH through future corporate updates.

**Table 1: Summary of 2025 ASP and Budget Submission**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Ministry Funding %</b>	<b>Gross Budget Expenditure (Note 1)</b>	<b>ASP Funding Requests</b>	<b>Levy Funding</b>
Total 2025 ASP Mandatory	64%	\$39,226,653	\$24,998,308	\$14,228,345
Total 2025 ASP OSDCP	100%	2,789,300	2,789,300	N/A
Total 2025 ASP One-Time Requests (Table 2)	100%	342,640	342,640	N/A
<b>Overall ASP Total</b>		<b>\$42,358,593</b>	<b>\$28,130,248</b>	<b>\$14,228,345</b>

Note 1 – The funding agreement with the Ministry of Health for Mandatory Programs includes indirect support costs but excludes indirect capital costs from the funding

formula. As a result, these figures differ from those in the Niagara Region's consolidated budget, which includes indirect capital costs.

The three additional one-time requests are outlined in Table 2 below. These requests are included in the ASP but were not included in the 2025 operating budget as it is uncertain which, if any, will be approved by the province. Should the Ministry approve any or all of the one-time funding requests, a budget adjustment will be processed to reflect these items in the 2025 operating budget.

**Table 2: One-time Funding Requests (100% Ministry funded)**

<b>Request</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Public Health Inspector (PHI) Practicum Program	Two PHI practicum students for 14-weeks to address seasonal workload and support recruitment efforts.	\$24,000
Capital	One single and three double new purpose-built immunization product refrigerators. One has reached end of life and three needed to store more publicly funded vaccine due to larger packaging.	\$89,680
Capital	With the increased number of new purpose-built immunization product refrigerators, a room expansion of the existing room is required.	\$228,960
<b>Total 2025 ASP One-time Requests</b>	N/A	<b>\$342,640</b>

## Analysis

The Ministry of Health's [Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability \(June 2021\)](https://files.ontario.ca/moh-ontario-public-health-standards-en-2021.pdf) (https://files.ontario.ca/moh-ontario-public-health-standards-en-2021.pdf) is created under Section 7 of the Health Protection and Promotion Act to specify mandatory public health programs and services provided by the BOH. The Public Health Accountability Framework articulates the requirements of the BOH to be accountable and transparent for the implementation of The Standards. The accountability framework is supported by three areas of documentation:

1. Accountability documents set out organizational requirements across four domains and the Ministry-Board of Health accountability agreement that establishes the key operational and funding requirements.
2. Planning documents which outline what the BOH will deliver under The Standards in the format of the BOH strategic plan and the ASP submission; and
3. Reporting documents that demonstrate performance against The Standards and the ASP. This includes quarterly reporting and an annual report and attestation.

The ASP describes the programs and services being delivered by the BOH, demonstrating alignment with Niagara priorities and accountability for planning and the use of funds to address The Standards. The ASP template includes the following:

- Community assessment – high level description of the health needs, priority populations, and challenges and risks faced by Niagara residents to inform program planning and service delivery decisions,
- Program plans – description of programs and services that will be delivered under the foundational standard and the nine program standards, including interventions and key partners for delivery,
- Budget submission for each program,
- One-time funding requests; and
- BOH membership, apportionment of costs, and certification of the ASP.

A comprehensive planning process was undertaken to refocus the programs centred around health outcomes and clearly define program goals, objectives, activities, and measurable indicators, all aligned to evidence.

The ASP has not been included as an appendix with this report. BOH members may review the document in full by contacting the Medical Officer of Health.

### **Alternatives Reviewed**

Submitting the ASP is a requirement to receive Ministry of Health funding as outlined in The Standards. The alternative to not submitting the ASP would be loss of provincial funding which would impose an untenable burden on the Regional levy.

The Regional Municipality of Niagara is not required to submit additional one-time funding requests. A total of three (3) one-time funding requests totalling \$342,640, have been included in consultation with our corporate partners. These requests are not

mandatory, nor guaranteed, however, Niagara Region aims to maximize revenue to bring greater benefit to Niagara residents and to stabilize levy costs.

### **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

The ASP is based on Niagara Region Public Health's operational planning that aligns with Council's 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities Effective Region by delivering services in a way that is collaborative, fiscally responsible, and aligned with a skilled workforce. It also aligns with Equitable Region by ensuring services meet the needs of the community in an inclusive, welcoming, and equity-focused way.

### **Other Pertinent Reports**

#### [Public Health 2024 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission](#)

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#### [Public Health 2023 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission](#)

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#### [Public Health 2022 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission](#)

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