



THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF PEEL  
HEALTH SYSTEM INTEGRATION COMMITTEE  
AGENDA

**Meeting #:** HSIC 1/2021  
**Date:** Thursday, January 21, 2021  
**Time:** 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM  
**Location:** Council Chamber, 5th Floor  
Regional Administrative Headquarters  
10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A  
Brampton, Ontario  
**Members:** D. Cripps, D.Damerla, M. DiEmanuele, J. Downey, C. Fonseca (Chair), A. Groves,  
N. Iannicca, M. Medeiros, Dr. N. Mohammad, P. Saito, P. Vicente (Vice-Chair)

The meeting will be live streamed on <http://www.peelregion.ca/>.

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1. CALL TO ORDER
2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
4. DELEGATIONS
5. REPORTS
  - 5.1. Update on Supporting Seniors in Peel  
(For information)  
Presentation by Donna Kern, Director, Seniors Services Development, Health Services
  - 5.2. Update on Health System Transformation and the Region of Peel's Advocacy Priorities  
(For information)
6. COMMUNICATIONS
7. OTHER BUSINESS
8. IN CAMERA

**9. NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, May 6, 2021

11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Council Chamber, 5th Floor

Regional Administrative Headquarters

10 Peel Centre Drive, Suite A

Brampton, Ontario

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

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**For Information**

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**REPORT TITLE:**     **Update on Supporting Seniors in Peel**

**FROM:**               Nancy Polsinelli, Commissioner of Health Services

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**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an update on the Region of Peel's current supports and services for Peel seniors; the impacts and opportunities highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic; and, the Region's ongoing commitments to leverage existing community partnerships to advance the Term of Council Priority to Enhance Seniors' Supports and Services and lead system change.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- On June 13, 2019, "Enhancing Seniors' Supports and Services" was identified as one of the Region of Peel's seven Term of Council Priorities (Seniors ToCP). Since then, the Region of Peel (Region) has pursued collaborative opportunities to ensure that the growing population of seniors in Peel and their caregivers can access supports and services to optimize their quality of life.
  - To achieve the Seniors ToCP, the Region will develop a Seniors Master Plan that defines a long-term strategy to maximize quality of life for seniors in Peel, and is strengthening collaboration across Regional seniors' services to optimize planning and delivery of programs in the community.
  - As a municipal level of government, the Region has remained committed to providing high quality services, including the Region's Adult Day Services and ongoing development of the Seniors Health and Wellness Village at Peel Manor.
  - Key partnerships through local Ontario Health Teams, in addition to ongoing collaboration at system tables created in response to the pandemic such as the Integrated Response Table and Community Response Table, are critical to advance the Seniors ToCP and support the needs of seniors during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Collaboration and partnership have remained central to the work of the Region and staff will continue to advance opportunities with community partners, the provincial government and Ontario Health to ensure that seniors in Peel remain healthy, safe and continue to enjoy a Community for Life.
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**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

The Region is experiencing a demographic shift much like other jurisdictions across Ontario, where seniors (individuals aged 65 and older) are the fastest growing age group in the population. By 2041, the number of seniors in Peel is expected to grow to 415,000, an increase of 134 per cent from 2014. By then, one in five residents will be a senior.

## **Update on Supporting Seniors in Peel**

Accelerated growth is also expected among the oldest seniors in Peel, with the proportion of the population aged 85 years and older projected to grow from 1 per cent in 2011 to 3.8 per cent in 2041. As seniors are living longer, their demands, needs, and expectations for community and health services increase and become more complex.

The First Interim Report from the Premier's Council on Improving Healthcare and Ending Hallway Medicine was released on January 31, 2019. In it, the provincial government committed to building long term capacity by ensuring that the existing health system could balance capacity pressures against important measures of health care excellence and sustainability. This included ensuring the availability and appropriate mix of services, especially for seniors. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated system challenges along the continuum of care and further emphasized the need to provide high quality care in the community in order to delay the need for long term care placement and reduce pressures on the acute care system. It is expected that the Provincial Seniors Strategy, currently being developed, will focus on supporting seniors across the entire continuum of care to allow supports for aging in place, remaining healthy, being active and socially engaged, and staying safe and secure.

On June 13, 2019, "Enhance Seniors' Supports and Services" was identified as one of the Region's seven Term of Council Priorities (ToCP). This ToCP had been identified as a priority due to gaps and complexities within the health and social systems in Peel which prevent seniors and their caregivers from successfully navigating and accessing a range of services that support healthy aging. A progress update on all ToCPs was provided to Council at the December 10, 2020 meeting, in the report titled, 'Regional Council Strategic Plan and Community for Life Public Reporting'.

## **2. The Region of Peel's Role in Supporting Peel's Seniors**

While some services that are provided by the Region (e.g., long term care) are required through legislation, many innovative services and programs that the Region offers fill gaps when provincially mandated services or funding are insufficient. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic the Region has built upon this approach to develop innovative programs, supports and services to meet the needs of the older population.

### **a) Term of Council Priority – Enhance Seniors' Supports and Services**

Currently, the Region is focused on advancing two complementary strategies to achieve the mandates of the Seniors ToCP - completing a Seniors Master Plan that defines a long-term strategy to maximize quality of life for seniors and strengthening cross-departmental collaboration on seniors-focused programs to optimize service planning and delivery.

#### **i) Development of the Seniors Master Plan**

The Seniors ToCP project officially launched on March 10, 2020 and targeted several deliverables to achieve in 2020 related to creating a Seniors Master Plan. Initiatives that were underway in the first phase of planning before the COVID-19 pandemic included project planning, stakeholder analysis, and developing a plan to leverage community engagement and feedback, and a current population profile and projections of future status and needs. The next steps will build from the information gathered through the first phase of planning and include community engagement to

## **Update on Supporting Seniors in Peel**

prioritize critical directions and move towards implementation. The Seniors Master Plan will be completed by the end of the current term of Council.

### **ii) Ensuring Regional Seniors Services Collaboration**

Program areas that have not traditionally focused on seniors have been working collaboratively across sector boundaries to achieve multi-system and client-centred solutions that accommodate the unique needs of seniors. Further, pilot opportunities have been carefully selected to advance outcomes that are well-established determinants of healthy aging involving age-friendly housing, age-friendly transportation, integrated community and caregiver supports. For example, the Region's Volunteer Resources and Peel Housing Corporation have come together to design and implement a volunteer telephone companion program and an on-site ambassador program to reduce social isolation and improve overall health and well-being for seniors in Peel Living buildings. Additional efforts to create affordable housing options under Peel's Housing and Homelessness Plan will enable more seniors to age in place.

### **b) Adult Day Services**

Adult Day Services (ADS), which are provided by the Region as well as other community partners, provide a range of supports (including physical, social, and therapeutic activities) for frail seniors. Clients that attend ADS include individuals living with physical or chronic disabilities or cognitive impairments such as Alzheimer's and other dementias. As part of the Region's pandemic response, in person ADS programs were closed to protect client health and most staff were redeployed to support residents in the Region's long term care homes. In order to keep connected during the pandemic, new communication strategies such as publishing weekly electronic newsletters with resources, as well as educational and virtual activities were implemented.

Currently, ADS is being redeveloped to support clients and caregivers at home via telephone and virtual programs. Planning the physical reopening of a modified ADS has necessitated creation of innovative, future-oriented models of care to support clients and caregivers into 2021 as part of our 'next normal'. New programming within a remote, digitally supported care model includes partnering with Volunteer Support Services to support clients and caregivers on our program waitlists.

### **c) Seniors Health and Wellness Village**

The Seniors Health and Wellness Village (SHWV) at Peel Manor redevelopment initiative includes several integrated components that all contribute to improving the lives of seniors and address many of the challenges amplified during COVID-19. Physically, the largest component of the SHWV facility will be the modernized long term care home. The new home will incorporate up-to-date technology, features supportive of dementia care, and design elements that will contribute to improved infection prevention and control.

## **Update on Supporting Seniors in Peel**

### **i) Service Hub**

A Service Hub will operate on the main floor of the SHWV and include a greatly expanded ADS program, an 8-bed respite care unit, a seniors-focused integrated care clinic, accessible dental care, and a variety of other health and social services.

### **ii) Peel Integrated Care model**

The service hub will also support a “Peel Integrated Care” (PIC) model that is currently under development. The ‘designed in Peel’ PIC model is based on the proven Programs for All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) model of care, an integrated service delivery model that is widely implemented across the United States. The PIC model and team are being built iteratively, with the first iteration operational within the Peel Manor ADS space in January 2020. Once the SHWV facility is ready, the PIC team and operations will transfer over to the Service Hub and play a key role in assessing needs and connecting clients with services in the Service Hub as well as those available in the broader community.

### **iii) Advocacy**

Provincial funding to support the redevelopment of Peel Manor is a longstanding Regional advocacy priority. Recently, staff have engaged with the Minister of Long-Term Care (Hon. Merrilee Fullerton) and Minister of Seniors and Accessibility (Hon. Raymond Cho), along with staff from both Ministries, to request support for the Region to expand its provision of much needed services for seniors in Peel, with funding to support the SHWV as a key component of these efforts. In September 2020, the Region of Peel applied for redevelopment funding through the Provincial long term care capital development program but was not successful in receiving funding.

### **iv) Timelines**

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted multiple aspects of the SHWV initiative including the overall construction timeline. The Region is currently assessing the impacts to the project schedule from the ongoing pandemic, and other factors including existing site conditions and contractor challenges. Staff are reviewing options to mitigate these impacts.

The original SHWV facility construction schedule targeted substantial completion in Q3 2021 and move-in is scheduled for Q4 2021. The Service Hub component is scheduled to be fully operational in late 2022, post demolition of the old building and creation of an adjacent seniors-friendly park. Staff will provide a detailed update to Regional Council on progress and next steps for the SHWV at Peel Manor initiative later this year.

## **3. Coordinated Response to Community Needs During COVID-19**

COVID-19 has emphasized the vulnerability of seniors in our community during a time requiring self-isolation and quarantine. While many seniors in Peel continue to live independently in their homes, many others rely on formal supports such as home and community services and/or informal support through their family and caregivers. In

## **Update on Supporting Seniors in Peel**

response, the Region and many community partners have identified new and innovative ways to work collaboratively and bridge existing needs in the community.

### **a) Integrated Response Table**

The Region, in collaboration with Ontario Health Central Region, established the Integrated Response Table (IRT) on April 15, 2020 which meets regularly to coordinate a local response in support of staff and residents living in congregate settings (i.e. long term care homes, retirement homes, homeless shelters and other similar facilities). The IRT includes representation from Central Region Ontario Health, Central West and Mississauga Halton LHINs, Peel Public Health, Peel Region Paramedic Services and local hospitals to interpret and apply provincial direction with respect to COVID testing; to collectively identify congregate settings requiring urgent support; and to mobilize rapid response for testing; surveillance and monitoring; infection prevention and control (IPAC); health human resources; virtual care; and communications.

### **b) Community Response Table**

The Region implemented the Community Response Table (CRT) in March 2020 to support coordination, information sharing, problem-solving, and collaboration among community agencies to respond to needs of vulnerable populations during the pandemic. Health and Human Services staff from the Region have engaged over 90 members from various community and social services organizations, as well as staff from the cities of Brampton and Mississauga, and Town of Caledon, to identify and address key operational priorities and challenges to better serve vulnerable populations including seniors.

Through the CRT, qualitative survey data revealed that seniors were heavily impacted by isolation and the transition of services to virtual programming. Many seniors have struggled with access and use of technology and were left isolated due to their susceptibility to COVID-19 and inability to leave their homes. In response, some community agencies in Peel have offered services such as calling seniors, offering grocery and medicine pick-up, and other supports with daily living to help meet their needs. The CRT-led survey is an example where community service providers, including the Region, have come together to identify existing needs and opportunities.

## **4. The Way Forward**

Collaboration and partnership are central to the work that the Region has committed to achieve for seniors in Peel through the ToCP. During the pandemic, community partners have continued to articulate opportunities for the Region of Peel's system support role to be enhanced: backbone support for planning and coordination tables; support with data collection, management and analysis; and supporting advocacy, along with other more responsive initiatives.

An important example of the Region's collaborative work is the ongoing participation in the development of three local Ontario Health Teams (OHTs). While COVID-19 has forced all OHTs to pivot their focus to more urgent, pandemic-focused priorities, the Region remains a committed partner and continues to work with Peel's hospital and health system partners to address immediate needs in the community, as well as identify opportunities for enhanced wrap-around care for Peel's most vulnerable residents. For example, as an engaged partner in the Brampton Etobicoke OHT, the Region of Peel supported an application for

## Update on Supporting Seniors in Peel

Ontario Health's High Intensity Supports at Home Program (HISHP), which if funded will pilot a coordinated wrap-around approach to care for complex clients within the OHT geography, and leverage existing Regional supports including community paramedics and the Peel Integrated Care team.

The Region's work to advance the SHWV's Service Hub and PIC model, is another important example of how the Region is working with health system partners to build alignment on mutual objectives shared by the Province and OHTs, including reducing use of hospitals, delaying or avoiding admission of seniors into residential care, and providing coordination of care and system navigation of services. Ongoing efforts to build the SWHV Service Hub and PIC model will allow the Region to provide a higher level of value-added supports to Peel's seniors, and their caregivers, allowing them to more successfully age in place.

## CONCLUSION

The Region continues to be a leader in applying innovative approaches to support seniors across the continuum of care and is committed to making changes across the seniors and long term care sector. Moreover, the Region will pursue partnership and collaboration with the province and Ontario Health to provide valuable industry insights and expertise, and to advocate for sustainable funding in support of innovative projects such as SWHV and PIC model.

Staff will report back to Council on the progress of the Seniors Master Plan, Seniors Services Integration Planning, and ongoing advocacy for Provincial funding to support the SHWV and other seniors-focused supports in the community.

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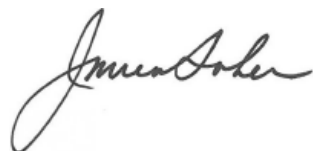
*For further information regarding this report, please contact Donna Kern, Director, Seniors Services Development, [donna.kern@peelregion.ca](mailto:donna.kern@peelregion.ca).*

*Authored By: Niyati Salker, Advisor and Kassandra Masley, Research and Policy Analyst, Strategic Policy and Performance, Health Services*

### ***Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:***

Department Commissioners and Division Directors.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.



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J. Baker, Chief Administrative Officer



# Health System Integration Committee

## January 21, 2021

### Seniors Supports and Services

Donna Kern, Director, Seniors Services Development, Health Services

# Impact of COVID-19

- Existing pressures exacerbated by COVID-19, particularly with racialized and vulnerable populations
- Amplified system-level vulnerabilities
- Disrupted social networks, routines, and respite supports relied on by seniors and their caregivers

# Regional COVID-19 Response for Seniors

Community Response Table

Seniors Subgroup

- Isolation Action Taskforce

Virtual Adult Day Services

Long-Term Care

- Regional Homes
- Integrated Response Table



# Lessons Learned

- Cross-sector multi-agency collaboration in support of vulnerable members of community
- Participation from key system stakeholders and municipal partners
- Regional leadership and expertise in response-coordination, data and intelligence, reporting, and advocacy

# Key Opportunities

## Opportunities for sustained collaboration beyond Covid-19

- Co-create and implement the Seniors Master Plan
  - Establish a community-driven advisory panel
  - Strengthen coordination and integration of seniors-focussed supports and services
- Sustain ongoing forums for connection and collaboration among health and social sector partners
- Strengthen coordination of volunteer resources to support service delivery for seniors
- Develop coordinated system processes to support rapid response in future crises

# Moving Forward

## Regional Role:

### Lead

- Lead broad-scale initiatives with region-wide impact
- Provide leadership and backbone expertise (coordination, data, advocacy) to help system partners achieve outcomes
- Support platforms and opportunities for community insight and participation

### Collaborate

- Coordinate with partners to integrate efforts to bolster system efficiency and effectiveness
- Advance shared vision and priorities through holistic client-centered service delivery

### Participate

- Actively partake in, contribute to, and learn from the community

# Thank You



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**For Information**

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**REPORT TITLE:**     **Update on Health System Transformation and the Region of Peel's Advocacy Priorities**

**FROM:**             Nancy Polsinelli, Commissioner of Health Services

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**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an update on the Region of Peel's health system priority advocacy within the context and status of ongoing Provincial health system transformation as well as impacts from COVID-19.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- In the last year, Ontario has undergone significant reforms to key parts of its health system, including the creation of Ontario Health, Ontario Health Regional Portfolios, and development of local Ontario Health Teams. These changes have been further impacted by ongoing efforts by the Province to modernize both public health and emergency health services, amend legislation aimed at improving home and community care services, and launch a provincial mental health and addictions strategic plan.
  - During the COVID-19 pandemic, progress on health system reforms has been paused to address urgent and immediate pressures within the health system while other aspects adjusted to meet the urgency of need.
  - Throughout the process, the Region of Peel (Region) has remained engaged and continued to identify opportunities to advance key advocacy priorities as part of system reforms by working with other levels of government and sector partners in Peel.
  - While the Province continues to prioritize its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Region continues to build on the community response through collaboration across key areas of need and advocating to the provincial government in order to advance the Region of Peel's own Health Services' priorities within broader health system reforms.
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**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the provincial government set out plans for transformative changes to Ontario's health care system. As previously reported to the October 17, 2019 Health System Integration Committee (HSIC) in the report "Health System Transformation and Regional Health Advocacy Priorities", the provincial government had set course through *Bill 74: The People's Health Care Act, 2019* to re-structure Ontario's health system.

While COVID-19 has forced the Region to pivot focus to more immediate needs and challenges, staff have also continued to maintain focus to support local system planning (i.e. Ontario Health Teams) and advance Regional priorities (i.e. Community Safety and Well-



## **Update on Health System Transformation and the Region of Peel's Advocacy Priorities**

Being Plan). An overview of key provincial health system milestones is summarized in Appendix I.

### **2. Update on Health System Transformation and Regional Health Priorities**

The COVID-19 pandemic has reprioritized Ministry reforms. The provincial government released an Economic and Fiscal Update ('Ontario Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19') on March 25, 2020, and its Budget ('Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover') on November 5, 2020 which have both laid out a comprehensive plan along with several investments totalling \$45 billion over three years to respond to the serious health and economic impacts of COVID-19. Key announcements and investments outlined by the Province centre on policy and funding measures to respond to new pandemic-related pressures on hospitals, long term care homes, public health units, paramedic services, primary care, mental health services, and a wide range of other health and human services.

The urgency of the pandemic has underscored the importance and value of strengthening local health services to keep residents both healthy and safe. The Region has contributed to the local response with a focus on opportunities for innovation, continuous quality improvement and integration.

#### **a) Ontario Health and Ontario Health Teams**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Health (Ministry) established the Ontario Health Agency to assume governance and consolidation of several health agencies and restructured the 14 local health integration networks (LHINs) into five regional offices for Ontario Health. Peel is clustered within the Central Region of Ontario Health with Donna Cripps appointed the transitional lead and Chief Executive Officer.

Following Ministry approval of three local Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) in Peel, the Region has remained engaged with community partners in the full application process.

Currently, local OHTs have pivoted their focus to immediate COVID-19 response and the Region has remained engaged and supportive to key tasks including the coordination of personal protective equipment (PPE) supply distribution, community testing (paramedic services and public health have supported swabbing, and the Region has assisted with providing physical space to offer community testing), case and contact management, and other measures to mitigate COVID-19 impacts in Peel. In addition, the Region has supported local COVID-19 response with other health system partners through coordinated efforts with local hospitals and Ontario Health at the Integrated Response Table and local community and social service providers at the Community Response Table.

#### **b) Home and Community Care**

The Region has long advocated for the integration of home and community care services to reduce service wait times and ensure seamless care transitions from hospital to home, with added capacity to meet the needs of a growing aging population.

The *Connecting People to Home and Community Care Act, 2020*, introduced in February 2020 and passed in July 2020 transitioned LHINs to function as *Home and Community Care Support Services* responsible for interim transitional care coordination. These changes will likely have implications for how local home and community care

## **Update on Health System Transformation and the Region of Peel's Advocacy Priorities**

services are coordinated and funded, including those offered through the Region (i.e. Adult Day Services (ADS)).

The modernized home and community care legislation is intended to remove barriers and restrictions to care in support of increased opportunities for innovation (i.e. virtual care) and improved access to services (i.e. integrated care and congregate settings). This provides a unique opportunity for the Region as a community service partner (i.e. ADS, community paramedicine) to support and innovate new models of care through OHT partnership that address gaps in care needs, such as those surfaced during the pandemic.

### **c) Long Term Care**

In response to serious gaps and challenges exposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Long-Term Care (LTC) launched an independent LTC COVID-19 Commission (Commission) in July 2020. In response to the Commission, staff prepared a submission, on behalf of the Region, in the report titled "The Region of Peel Submission to Ontario's Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission" presented at the December 10, 2020 Regional Council meeting. The report offers insight and experiences from the Region's role as a municipal long term care operator and provides recommendations to address longstanding advocacy efforts related to enhanced funding, increased staffing and additional supports for seniors along the continuum of care. In the coming months staff will continue to engage relevant ministries, sector partners and leverage the work of the Commission to highlight opportunities for meaningful change, particularly for Peel, which has faced among the greatest impacts of COVID-19 compared to the rest of the province.

Recent provincial directions, including a \$540 million Long-Term Care Preparedness Plan to respond to COVID-19 and a commitment to increasing hours of direct care for residents over the next four years through a provincial staffing strategy will help to address challenges across the long term care sector. However, additional investments and supports to address immediate needs and service gaps in Peel are required. While the accelerated LTC bed development program to increase sector capacity is promising (as seen in the recent partnerships with Trillium Health Partners to build more beds in Mississauga, and LTC bed redevelopment for the Faith Manor LTC home in Brampton), provincial investment to support the Region of Peel's own municipally-operated homes, particularly Peel Manor, has yet to be achieved.

### **d) Mental Health and Addictions**

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing pressures in Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions system and shed light on ongoing challenges across the sector. A call to action by Council was issued to address historical funding needs in Peel as highlighted in a June 25, 2020 report titled "Responding to the Mental Health and Addictions Needs in Peel". The report also acknowledged ongoing work by the Region and community mental health and addictions system that have partnered to mobilize resources and integration of services, including leveraging Peel's Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) Plan, the Region's Community Response Table, and local Ontario Health Teams. In addition, Council passed Resolution 2020-507 (June 25, 2020) directly requesting enhancements to funding for mobile crisis rapid response teams (MCRRT) and other sustainable improvements for supporting people experiencing a mental health crisis.

## **Update on Health System Transformation and the Region of Peel's Advocacy Priorities**

In response, staff are working through community partnerships to support locally-driven advocacy and innovative solutions to address immediate needs in Peel. The Region's work to date has included targeted communication to advance opportunities to improve system capacity by raising concerns of underfunding, service disparities, and waitlists with provincial government leadership (including at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario 2020 Annual Conference with the Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions), and with Peel Members of Provincial Parliament, through a roundtable hosted by the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Mississauga-Malton, Mr. Deepak Anand, and with Ms. Natalia Kusendova, MPP for Mississauga-Centre.

During COVID-19, the Region has also provided additional health and social support to Peel's homeless population through isolation and recovery programs developed by a local collaborative and intersectoral partnership of primary care, public health, mental health, community care and social service providers. Further, through targeted engagement of Ministry staff, the Region continues to highlight existing priorities challenged through the pandemic including the need for enhanced mobile outreach, support for frontline workers, capacity to support self-isolation for precariously housed with mental health and addictions, and issues related to domestic violence.

Future development of the provincial mental health strategy, the "Roadmap to Wellness: A Plan to Build Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions System" (Roadmap) is pending. Since the strategy was released in March 2020, the government has committed an additional \$176 million to support its implementation. The Province also announced further funding for the child and youth mental health sector as well as mobile crisis supports in Fall 2020. Staff continue to work with community partners to understand how these investments will benefit Peel and more importantly, raise awareness to gaps and areas of targeted investments that will address the need in our community.

### **e) Modernization of Public Health and Paramedic Services**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry established consultations directed at modernizing local public health and emergency health services. Two separate reports at the January 23, 2020 Regional Council meeting detailed modernization consultations and separate submissions by the Region to these consultations.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the Ministry paused most modernization activities to focus on immediate public health and health system measures to protect Ontarians. Ministry leadership have indicated that renewed consultations and modernization efforts will resume when pressures from the COVID-19 pandemic have eased, although exact timelines have not yet been confirmed.

In November 2020, the Auditor General, Bonnie Lysyk, tabled a Special Report in the Legislative Assembly on COVID-19 Preparedness and Management. This report highlighted important recommendations following an audit of processes related to emergency and outbreak management, COVID-19 testing, case management, and contact tracing; and communications across all levels of government, including at the local health unit level. Staff continue to monitor the Provincial Government's response to the Auditor General's findings and will consider implications for public health modernization.

## **Update on Health System Transformation and the Region of Peel's Advocacy Priorities**

### **3. Future Direction and Next Steps**

As the province navigates the second wave of COVID-19 and plans for recovery, it is expected that health system transformation will continue to adapt and reflect Ministry directives and lessons learned during COVID-19 pandemic.

Longer-term funding remains a concern for the Region's health services. The Ministry announced funding pandemic-related pressures in both public health and paramedic services. The Minister of Health, in an address at the Annual Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), also indicated that provincial share of land ambulance funding would increase by five per cent in 2020-2021.

Peel has been one of the communities most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in Ontario, which has largely been driven by population and demographic factors. Peel region has had the second largest number of COVID-19 cases in Ontario and has been identified as one of the communities with some of the highest rates in Canada. The Province has announced additional funding for Peel Public Health including funding for 64 additional school-focused nurses and funding to increase case management and contact tracing capacity. The Region continues to advocate for COVID-related funding to support the local public health response and broader health system to respond to community needs.

In the months ahead, Regional health services will continue to prioritize its response to COVID-19 with community partners. A leading example of this commitment is the work currently underway through the CSWB Plan that, at its core, addresses the disparity, vulnerabilities and challenge that many residents are experiencing throughout the pandemic. This and many other examples of collaborative partnerships including the Integrated Response Table and Community Response Table during COVID-19, continue to be central to the broader goal to support system transformation that meets the needs of Peel residents and bridges existing gaps in services or supports.

### **CONCLUSION**

Ontario is undergoing significant reforms to key parts of its health system. While progress in some parts of the system has been delayed due to COVID-19, the pandemic has created new opportunities and highlighted the urgency for a region-wide response to improving the local health system. Through collaboration and partnerships, as highlighted through the work with OHTs, CSWB plan and other system tables, the Region of Peel continues to make important contributions toward local health system reforms and advocate for the needs of residents within the new and evolving local health system.

### **APPENDICIES**

Appendix I – Key Provincial Health System Milestones in 2020

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*For further information regarding this report, please contact Brian Laundry, Director, Strategic Policy and Performance, [brian.laundry@peelregion.ca](mailto:brian.laundry@peelregion.ca).*

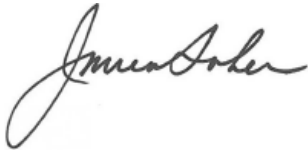
*Authored By: Cullen Perry, Research and Policy Analyst and Niyati Salker, Advisor, Strategic Policy and Performance, Health Services*

**Update on Health System Transformation and the Region of Peel's Advocacy Priorities**

***Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:***

Department Commissioner and Division Director.

Final approval is by the Chief Administrative Officer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Baker", written in a cursive style.

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J. Baker, Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix I  
Update on Health System Transformation and the Region of Peel's Advocacy Priorities

Key Provincial Health System Milestones in 2020

<b>TIMELINE</b>	<b>MILESTONES</b>
<b>Dec 2019</b>	Ministry approval of three Ontario Health Teams serving Peel and area
<b>Jan 2020</b>	Public Health and EHS Modernization consultations. The Region of Peel hosted public hearing and written submission to Ministry
<b>Feb 2020</b>	<i>Connecting People to Home and Community Care Act</i> (First reading. Received Royal Assent on July 8, 2020)
<b>Mar 2020</b>	Ministry releases <i>Roadmap to Wellness: A Plan to Build Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions System</i> and established the Mental Health and Addictions Center of Excellence
<b>Mar 2020</b>	Provincial government invokes <i>Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act</i> and releases Economic and Fiscal Update "Ontario's Action Plan: Responding to COVID-19"
<b>Apr 2020</b>	Provincial government released <i>A Framework for Reopening Our Province</i> to guide people and businesses on restarting the economy
<b>Apr 2020</b>	Ontario Health Board of Directors reappointed (Donna Cripps appointed CEO of Central Region)
<b>Jul 2020</b>	Ministry of Long-Term Care launches independent commission into LTC sector and results of the LTC staffing study released
<b>Jul 2020</b>	Ministry of Long-Term Care announces Accelerated Building Program and Modernized Funding Policy to support the creation of additional LTC bed spaces.
<b>Aug 2020</b>	Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) Conference – COVID-19 remained a focus; the Region of Peel highlighted key health advocacy priorities
<b>Nov 2020</b>	The 2020 Budget (Ontario's Action Plan: Protect, Support, Recover) signaled additional investments to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Several health funding announcements were noted within Public Health, Community Paramedicine, Long Term Care, Community Supports for Seniors, as well as Mental Health and Addictions Supports. Additional investments were also noted for the hospitals given additional costs incurred through ongoing COVID-19 response.
<b>Dec 2020</b>	The Region prepares a submission (shared with Council on December 10) in response to the Provincial LTC Commission