
For Information

REPORT TITLE: **Update on Health System Transformation and Region of Peel's Role in Ontario Health Teams**

FROM: Nancy Polsinelli, Commissioner of Health Services

OBJECTIVE

To provide an update on provincial health system transformation and the Region of Peel's role in supporting and partnering with Ontario Health Teams.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2019, the government of Ontario initiated its provincial health system transformation agenda which included establishing 42 Minister-approved Ontario Health Teams (OHTs). Three of these OHTs are located in Peel, including the Central West (previously Brampton Etobicoke), Mississauga and Hills of Headwaters Collaborative OHTs.
 - While health system transformation has been largely paused during the COVID-19 pandemic, partnership and collaboration through OHTs have been vital to local pandemic response and vaccine planning and delivery.
 - The Region of Peel's leadership and collaboration through local partnership tables as a part of the COVID-19 response and vaccine planning has provided a key opportunity for the Region to work with health system and community partners and local OHTs.
 - As OHTs continue to evolve into a central anchor for local health service planning and delivery, the Region is committed to leveraging existing partnerships and working with all three local OHTs to advance health system planning, integration, and advocacy.
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DISCUSSION

1. Background

a) Status of Health System Transformation

In 2019, the government of Ontario initiated provincial health system transformation with the aim of creating a more integrated system that would organize and deliver health care in a new way. The focus of system changes has been to increase access for clients/patients, help them to navigate the system more easily, and increase accountability. Ongoing transformation has been grounded in the principles of the Quadruple Aim Framework which calls for improving population health outcomes, improving patient/resident/client experience, improving front-line provider experience, and achieving better value.

At the onset of the pandemic, the province paused many aspects of health system transformation to ensure stability and to optimize the use of health care resources to

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respond to COVID-19. However, the province has continued to advance several key priorities including:

- Establishing 51 Minister-approved Ontario Health Teams (OHTs);
- Integrating multiple provincial health agencies and organizations into Ontario Health; and,
- Modernizing home and community care through establishing Home and Community Care Support Services, a new provincial oversight body overseeing client care functions including home and community care, and long-term care home placement.

Modernization of local public health and emergency health services, that was committed before the COVID-19 pandemic, remains paused, and timelines on the resumption of these initiatives have not been confirmed.

The Region of Peel continues to address ongoing public health and vaccination needs related to COVID-19 and engage in regional planning, coordination, and incident management system (IMS) tables with a focus on health system recovery. To remain prepared for ongoing health and operational challenges presented by COVID-19, the Region is planning for a reduced and flexible capacity to address public health issues and a sustainability plan for the mass vaccination program.

b) Regional Role in Local Health System Integration and Ontario Health Teams in Peel

Since the last update to the committee on October 17, 2019, the three OHTs within the Peel catchment area submitted full applications and have received approval from the Minister of Health. Brampton Etobicoke (soon to be renamed Central West), Mississauga, and Hills of Headwater Collaborative OHTs have advanced several milestones and notable developments are included in Appendix I.

Improved coordination of care has been central to the introduction of OHTs. It is envisioned that, at maturity, all health, community, and social services for an attributed population will be under the oversight of a local OHT.

As a co-funder of health services, service provider, and backbone support to the community, the Region is well positioned to provide meaningful input into healthcare planning and local health system operations as an integrated health and social system partner. Appendix II depicts the Region's role as an OHT partner in local health system planning, recognizing that Regional Council has governance and accountability to residents of all Regional services with a vision of Community for Life. Further, as a municipal government, the Region has authority through the *Municipal Act, 2001* to provide services supporting the health, safety and well-being of persons in the community. To this end, the Region has played a leadership role in the development of the Central West OHT, to ensure residents have access to an appropriate bundle of services that ranges from prevention and wellness services to more complex health and social services. While the Region's role in the Central West OHT has been more extensive and well defined to date, the Region continues to be an engaged and integral partner across all three local OHTs.

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2. Achieving Health System Integration Through Partnership and Collaboration

The Region of Peel's leadership and collaboration through COVID-19 response and vaccine planning have provided an important opportunity for the Region to work with local health system partners. Leveraging the success of the partnerships noted below, the Region continues to strengthen community relationships that will inform health system integration and the Region's role in local OHT planning. The Region's focus and expertise in population health and the social determinants of health ensures these components will be applied to system planning and funding priorities locally.

a) Integrated Response Table (IRT)

Established in April 2020, the Region of Peel implemented the Integrated Response Table (IRT), in collaboration with Ontario Health Central Region, to help coordinate a local response in support of staff and residents living in long term care homes, retirement homes, homeless shelters and other similar facilities. This partnership between Ontario Health Central Region, Peel Public Health, Peel Region Paramedic Services and local hospitals presented an opportunity for health system partners to work collaboratively to interpret and apply provincial direction for COVID-19 testing; identify congregate settings requiring urgent support; and mobilize rapid response for testing, surveillance and monitoring, as well as infection prevention and control (IPAC). While this table formally concluded in April 2021, the IRT created opportunities for partners to build and strengthen relationships, share data; leverage health human resources; provide virtual care options; and cooperate on communications.

b) Community Response Table (CRT)

The Region established the CRT in March 2020 to support coordination, information sharing, problem-solving, and collaboration among community agencies to respond to the needs of vulnerable populations during the pandemic. The Region engaged over 90 members from various community and social services organizations, and 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. During the pandemic, the CRT partners in collaboration with the Community Safety and Well-Being and Peel Poverty Reduction Committees, were able to respond collectively to social, health and equity issues impacting the most vulnerable residents in Peel. As we enter a period of pandemic recovery, the CRT model (CRT 2.0) can continue to help community partners come together to respond to emerging community needs and issues.

c) Community Planning Table (CPT) and Community Equity and Engagement Advisory Table (CEEAA)

With leadership from the Region and membership from Trillium Health Partners and William Osler Health System, Ontario Health Central Region, Peel Regional Police, Peel Senior Link, and the Central West OHT Collaboration Council, the Community Planning Table (CPT) informed the development of Peel's Mass Vaccination Program. Through system partnership, the CPT offered guidance to the mass vaccination program and an opportunity to share lessons learned and jointly problem-solve.

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Parallel to the CPT, the Region also established the Community Equity and Engagement Advisory Table (CEEAA) to provide advice, and guidance on the application of provincial directions and equity considerations for Peel's mass vaccination program. With membership from the Regional Diversity Roundtable, Community Response Table, and High Priority Community Strategy Partners (including broad representation from health and social services across the Peel community), the partners worked collaboratively to enable, support and advise on increasing vaccine confidence and addressing systemic barriers to vaccine uptake for priority populations.

In addition, dedicated planning tables for the Black, African, and Caribbean Communities have been established as well as for the Indigenous Communities. These planning tables continue the work that was initiated through the CEEAA and involves many of the same community partners and the Region.

3. Current Status of Region of Peel's Role in Local OHTs

Currently, the Region continues to play an integral role in the Central West and Hills of Headwaters OHTs with representation on their Collaboration Councils (Steering Committees) and active participation in working groups and planning tables. Building from pandemic-focused partnerships, the Region continues to explore a more significant role in the Mississauga OHT going forward.

The Strategic Policy and Performance Division has been actively coordinating across the various teams to ensure regional representation and participation on each OHT's different committees and working groups. The Division continues to make connections with teams across health services and other departments so that there is collective understanding and mobilized effort to support local OHTs. An internal organizational structure is being developed to support coordination of information sharing, planning, communication, and resource utilization.

Since late August 2021, the Region has been convening bi-weekly meetings with partners representing the Central West OHT, Hills of Headwaters Collaborative OHT, Mississauga OHT, Ontario Health Central Region, and the Region of Peel. This collective has been working together to plan and coordinate the development of COVID-19, Cold, and Flu Care Clinics (CCFCC) across Peel. These CCFCCs are intended to integrate COVID-19 assessment, testing, vaccinations, and therapeutics at one site so patients can readily access these services. There are currently four clinics operating in Peel with plans underway for several more. While these CCFCC are starting with clinical services related to the COVID-19 pandemic, additional services may be added in the future that will support health system recovery in this next phase of the pandemic.

As OHTs become a central anchor to health service planning and delivery at a local level, the Region of Peel will endeavor to establish clear coordination with each local OHT and keep Regional Council appropriately informed.

4. Next Steps

COVID-19 has amplified existing vulnerabilities and inequities and prompted collaboration across sectors to meet the needs of different population groups. As a system leader and key partner in local OHTs, the Region is committed to leveraging new relationships that have formed throughout the pandemic as well as existing partnerships and relationships to

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advance the shared objective of achieving greater health system integration. In time, partnerships across health, community and social services will further integrate within the OHT structure with a goal of more holistic and seamless support for clients.

Regional reporting and updates on local health system coordination and integration efforts will continue to be tabled through the Health System Integration Committee of Council.

CONCLUSION

The role of local OHTs will be central to achieving greater health system integration at a local level and at maturity health services currently governed by the Region are anticipated to be formally integrated within OHTs. Given the Region's substantial input to health system delivery and its commitment to advocate for greater integration, funding and other health priorities on behalf of Peel residents, OHTs provide an important partnership opportunity for the Region of Peel to support ongoing health system planning, collaboration and advocacy. Further, actively participating with local OHTs provides an opportunity to help shape future system integration and ensure Peel residents are optimally served.

APPENDICES

Appendix I – Region of Peel Timelines in Development of OHTs (March 2022)

Appendix II – Regional Role in Ontario Health Teams – Governance

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