



# WECHU Programs and Services Overview 2024

Essex County Council

# Community Needs and Priority Populations

- Local public health risks and challenges – evidence informed local approaches
- Data driven community needs – local data challenges
- Local Priority Populations with integration of high risk postal codes and High Priorities Communities fund work integration
- Plans are a balance of Provincial requirements for programming and locally responsive efforts in most needed areas (required under Public Health mandate)

# Ontario Public Health Standards

## STANDARDS:

4	FOUNDATIONAL STANDARDS
9	PROGRAM STANDARDS
3	FRAMEWORKS

## SUPPORTING MATERIALS:

23	PROTOCOLS
20	GUIDELINES
13	REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

# Program Standards

1

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION  
AND WELL-BEING

2

HEALTHY GROWTH AND  
DEVELOPMENT

3

FOOD SAFETY

4

SAFE WATER

5

HEALTHY  
ENVIRONMENTS

6

INFECTIOUS AND  
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES  
PREVENTION AND CONTROL

7

IMMUNIZATION

8

SCHOOL HEALTH

9

SUBSTANCE USE AND INJURY  
PREVENTION

# 1

# Chronic Disease Prevention & Well-being

## Mental Health

- Develop and build capacity within local system to inform “upstream” approaches to promoting positive mental health.
  - Collate and share local mental health data, best practices, community education, and resources for system navigation

## Healthy Eating Behaviours

- Serve as the backbone organization behind the Windsor-Essex Food Policy Council
  - Development of a local food strategy to coordinate partners and collectively assess needs and action strategies
- Provision of direct client supports for healthy eating behaviours
  - Lead agency amongst community partners

*Departments that support this standard: CDIP, Healthy Schools & Oral Health*

# 1

# Chronic Disease Prevention & Well-being

## Physical Activity Promotion

- Working with partners to develop and implement local strategies to reduce sedentary behaviours
  - Education for older adults, improving access to recreation for low income families
- Utilization of emerging social platforms and technologies to provide tools, reduce barriers, and educate community on how to meet recommendations for daily physical activity

## Built Environment

- Providing expertise in consultation with municipalities to support built environment planning

*Departments that support this standard: CDIP, Healthy Schools, & Oral Health*

# Healthy Growth & Development

## Breastfeeding

- Direct lactation support through in person and virtual consultation services with certified Lactation Consultant
- Hotline offered to support new parents
- In hospital infant feeding assessment and 48 hours phone call post-partum

## Nurse Practitioner clinic

- Nurse Practitioner clinic for those unattached to a Healthcare Provider to provide primary care to infants and mental health support to new mothers

*Departments that support this standard: Healthy Families*

# Healthy Growth & Development

## Preconception/Prenatal /Parenting Support

- Positive parenting classes and supports for high-risk groups
- Delivery of preparation for parenting courses with local partners
- Provision of multivitamins, connections to social services (e.g., food, income, housing), and guidance on healthy lifestyles for healthy pregnancies

*Departments that support this standard: Healthy Families*



# 3

## Food Safety

- 24/7 on-call response for food-borne illness/outbreaks & emergencies
- Routine inspections of high, medium and low risk food premises (3, 2, 1 annual inspections)
- Complaint inspections
- Inspections and public disclosure of outcomes
- Food handler training & certification
  - Online and targeted priority groups

*Departments that support this standard: Environmental Health*

# 4

## Safe Water

- Recreational Water facility inspections
  - Pools, Spas, Splash pads, Waterslides, Wading Pools
  - Beach water quality testing
- Drinking Water Monitoring and Surveillance
  - Small water system inspections and operator training
  - 24/7 response to water-borne illness reporting
- Public disclosure and education regarding water safety
- Safe water public education and awareness

*Departments that support this standard: Environmental Health*

# 3

## Healthy Environments

- Planning and response to environmental hazards/exposures
- Inspecting public spaces based on legislated requirements and operator education
  - Seasonal Housing
  - Recreational Camps
  - Ice rinks/arenas
- 24/7 on-call response to health hazards to reduce public exposure

*Departments that support this standard: Environmental Health*

## Opioids and Other Substances

- Serve as the founding and “backbone” organization behind the Windsor-Essex Community Opioid and Substance Strategy
- Community hub for the distribution of Naloxone to partner agencies
- Increase public awareness of overdose prevention and the benefits of harm reduction
- Lead agency for the establishment of a CTS; includes community consultation, leasing of space, retrofit, Ministry applications, and liaison role
- Development and distribution of resources for referral pathways and system navigation
- Surveillance of overdose and community alert system

*Departments that support this standard: CDIP, Healthy Schools, Infectious Disease Prevention*

## Tobacco and Vaping

- Reduce youth access to tobacco and vaping products
- Development of municipal policy support through enforcement of *Smoke-free Ontario Act, 2017* and smoking/vaping bylaws
- One-on-one cessation services offered through counselling and NRT distribution
- Working with local partners regarding substance treatment

## Alcohol and Cannabis

- Increase the use of screening tools and referrals amongst community agencies
- Support municipalities with assessment of new cannabis retail operations prior to opening.

*Departments that support this standard: CDIP, Healthy Schools, Infectious Disease Prevention*

- Providing school-based immunization clinics to eligible students (grade 7)
- Assessing and enforcing the requirements of the ISPA in schools and licensed child care centres
- High Risk Seasonal Vaccination Support
  - Focus on priority and at-risk groups including pediatric, immunocompromised
- Emergency response vaccination supports for outbreaks and emerging infectious diseases (i.e. RSV, Monkeypox, chicken pox, polio)
- Vaccine response planning for emerging infectious diseases

*Departments that support this standard: Healthy Schools*

- ISPA Exemption Process Support
- Respiratory illness/seasonal influenza campaign
- Local health care provider engagement to support immunization in community with focus on high priority groups
- Managing supply, distribution, and cold-chain for publically funded vaccines
- Monitoring and investigating all local AEFIs

*Departments that support this standard: Healthy Schools*

# Infectious and Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control

- Response, tracking, and management of outbreaks
- Monitoring vector-borne diseases and transmission (mosquito surveillance and larviciding program)
- Investigation/contact tracing of communicable diseases (Diseases of Public Health Significance)
  - Case and contact management for STBBIs
  - COVID-19 Response (CCM)
  - Monkeypox response

*Departments that support this standard: Infectious Disease Prevention & Environmental Health*



# Infectious and Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control

- Animal Bite Investigations and Rabies Prevention Program
- Tuberculosis (TB) testing, tracking, and case management (including management of latent TB infections and medical surveillance)
- Collaboration with local partners and health care providers on reporting requirements, immunization and high risk client outreach
- Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) program
  - Hub Lead (non-cost share programming)
  - Conducting IPAC inspections of applicable facilities
  - Working with high risk facilities to support IPAC fundamentals
  - Host local IPAC Community of Practice

*Departments that support this standard: Infectious Disease Prevention & Environmental Health*

## 9

# School Health

- Dedicated support to high needs school on priority topics (annual school health assessments)
- Providing age appropriate mental health and well-being supports (sleep, suicide prevention, resilience strategies) – collaboration with Board strategies
- Working with partners to prevent sexual violence occurrences/provide student supports (focus on consent)
- Education and support to reduce substance use in schools (including tobacco, vaping and e-cigarettes)
- Training and support related to healthy eating in schools with a focus on food literacy

*Departments that support this standard: Healthy Schools*

## Healthy Smiles Ontario

- Operation of a City and County dental clinic to serve eligible children 17 and under
- Oral health screening in all local elementary schools with RDH and DA
- Parental notification and enrollment into HSO program for free treatment through referral or in house
- Provision of oral health services to qualifying students
- Education/support and health promotion in schools

*Departments that support this standard: Oral Health*

# Oral Health

## Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program

- Provides access to free dental care for those 65 years and older through internal WECHU City and County dental clinics and/or referral to community dental office
  - Check-ups, including scaling, fluoride and polishing
  - Repairing broken teeth and cavities
  - X-rays
  - Removing teeth or abnormal tissue (oral surgery)
  - Treating infection and pain (endodontic services)
  - Treating gum conditions and diseases (periodontal services)
  - Provision of dentures as needed

*Departments that support this standard: Oral Health*

# Strengthening Public Health Strategy

- August 2023, the Ontario government announced that the province would be moving forward with a strategy to strengthen the public health sector.
- The Strengthening Public Health Strategy aims to optimize capacity, stability, and sustainability in the public health sector.
- One of the key initiatives of this strategy is clarifying board of health roles and responsibilities through the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS).
- The government initiated a review of the OPHS striving to refine, refocus and relevel board of health roles and responsibilities, including relationships and alignment across and beyond the broader health care system.
- As part of this review, the government is seeking to support boards of health by exploring opportunities to shift some roles and responsibilities to a regional or provincial level.
- The anticipated timeline of implementation of the new standards is January of 2025.