



## MEMO

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

May 23, 2019

To: Mayors, Reeves, and Councils, North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit Service Area

### Re: Public Health Transformation Update

Since the release of the provincial budget in April, health units have received some information concerning the proposed mergers, but many questions remain unanswered.

With respect to regional boundaries, as anticipated, there will be two northern regional health units. One in the west, Northwestern and Thunder Bay and one in the east. The proposed northeast regional health unit currently consists of Algoma, Public Health Sudbury & Districts, Porcupine, Timiskaming, North Bay Parry Sound, the Muskoka region of the current Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, and the Algonquin Park portion of Renfrew County & District Health Unit.

Due to the complexities and implications of severing existing health units to our south and southeast, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (Ministry) consultation will be forthcoming, hopefully, over the next few weeks with involved parties, which includes affected health units, boards of health, and municipalities. The operant word is proposed. A final decision has not been arrived at by the government as much discussion will be required.

The Simcoe Muskoka Board of Health is urging the government not to sever the existing Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) and supports having the entire boundary remain intact and merge with York Region. The five medical officers of health for the northeastern health units slated to merge also strongly support SMDHU's board of health recommendation. Additionally, the five northeastern boards of health are in the process of either sending a letter or passing a motion pertaining to this issue.

It is anticipated that legislation will be introduced this fall to dissolve current health units and create the 10 regional health units, effective April 1, 2020.

In discussions with the Ministry, some information was forthcoming regarding cost-sharing adjustments and the impact it will have on municipalities. The numbers conferred were estimates and the actual budget documents will not likely arrive until mid-June or later detailing the amounts.

Currently, it is estimated the provincial contribution to our budget is 80% and 20% from municipalities. In order to go to a 70%/30% ratio, effective April 1, 2019, an additional amount of \$1.6 M will be required from municipalities which currently contribute approximately \$3.3 M. However, the

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government will offset this \$1.6 M with a one-time municipal mitigation funding amount of \$1.3 M leaving approximately \$300,000 additional funding to come from municipalities. This will cover the time frame from April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020. It is our understanding that beyond 2019 the northeast regional health unit ratio will remain at a 70%/30% split.

The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit Executive Team will be presenting options for Board of Health approval to deal with this \$300,000 shortfall for 2019 and the first quarter of 2020. We are optimistic that this \$300,000 savings can be achieved without impacting jobs, programs and services, or requiring additional municipal levies for 2019. Beyond the first quarter of 2020 budget impacts are unknown at this time.

As more information becomes available I am committed to sharing it with you through your Board of Health representative or directly as the need arises. If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact either myself or your Board of Health appointee.

Sincerely yours,



James Chirico, H.BSc., M.D., F.R.C.P. (C), MPH  
Medical Officer of Health/Executive Officer

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