

SUMMARY:

New Program Model to Support Applied Research and Program Evaluation, Education and Professional Development, and Knowledge Exchange Functions in Public Health

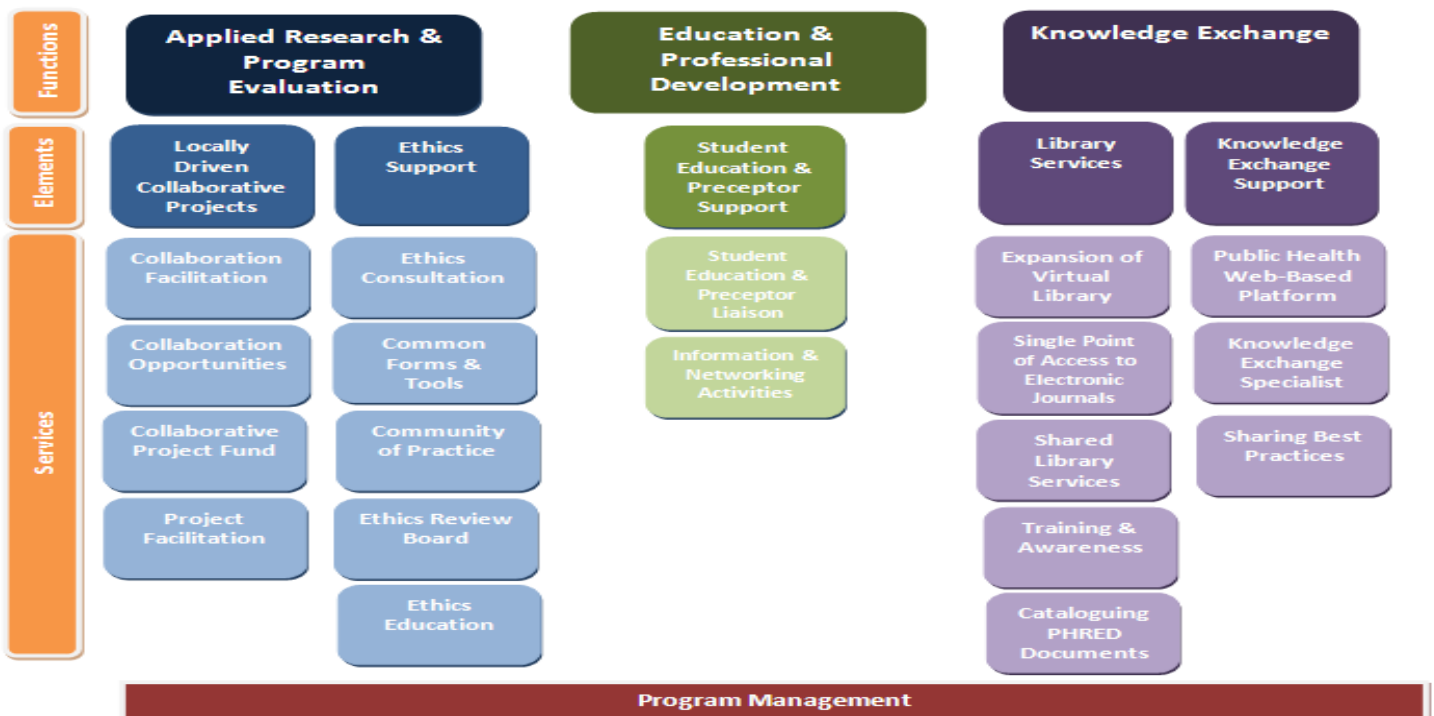
Applied research and program evaluation, education and professional development, and knowledge exchange are critical functions to support public health practice. In January 2011, the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (OAHPP) will start to play a greater role in supporting public health units to address these functions. This arises from the transfer of the provincial share of funding for the Public Health Research, Education and Development (PHRED) program. Designed in response to health unit needs and priorities and extensive consultation, OAHPP is launching a new set of services that will:

- Strengthen the public health system by enabling evidence-informed practice that is responsive to the needs and emerging issues of health units and uses the best available evidence to address them.
- Support health units in generating, accessing and using public health knowledge.
- Facilitate collaboration and provide system-level supports while building on and aligning with local, regional and central capacity.

Services will be launched in a phased approach, with some available immediately and others coming online during 2011. Health units, public health associations, and interested individuals will be consulted and involved to help refine services.

Stay tuned by visiting our website at <http://www.oahpp.ca/resources/projects/srke/> or send us an email to receive regular updates at feedback@oahpp.ca. Please contact Shawna Gutfreund shawna.gutfreund@oahpp.ca if you have any questions.

Overview of the New Program Model



Overview of Program Elements and Services

Knowledge Exchange: Library Services

Overview: Access to scientific resources and the best available evidence is essential for health units to guide evidence-based decision-making and interventions and to fulfill the requirements of the Foundational Standard. Library services will build on and complement the existing public health library infrastructure present across the system

Services	Brief Description
Expansion of Virtual Library (VL)	Additional databases will be acquired to serve the needs of health units
Single Point of Access to Electronic Journals	An annual subscription will be provided for all health units to a web-based tool that organizes and provides links to all the public health library's e-resources
Shared Library Services Partnership	A partnership will be established among a few of the existing libraries to provide services to a group of health units without a library. Libraries that participate in this partnership will hire additional library professionals and purchase additional items for their collection.
Training and Awareness	Library awareness and training will be offered to provide professionals with information on what resources are available and how best to use these resources
Cataloguing PHRED Documents	Documents created through the PHRED program will be catalogued and stored in an easily searchable and accessible database

Opportunities for the Field to Participate in the Program Design and Implementation:

- Contribute to the design and completion of an environmental scan
- Participate in a working group that helps shape the shared library services partnership model
- Join the shared library services partnership as a service provider

Knowledge Exchange : Knowledge Exchange Support

Overview: Knowledge exchange support will be provided to help health units and public health associations make available, access, understand, and use the best available evidence on current and emerging public health issues and priorities. It will also provide support and tools to allow them to collaborate and stay abreast and informed of various past and present public health activities and projects.

Services	Brief Description
Public Health Web-Based Platform	The features of the platform will be confirmed after a needs assessment is completed. At a minimum, it will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Searchable electronic warehouse to store final reports, white papers, tools, forms, and other knowledge products • Inventory of activities to enable knowledge of activities occurring in the public health system through providing current information on existing public health resources, experts, activities, programs, and networks across the province • Interactive online collaborative space to support public health professionals collaborate through various tools such as sharing documents, e-learning resources, a calendar of events, blogs, wikis, listserv/communities of practice, and other social media
Sharing Best Practices	Mechanism for sharing best practices (e.g. newsletters, email blasts, case studies, workshops, communities of practice) will be identified through a needs assessments and supported through this program
Knowledge Exchange Specialist	A Knowledge Exchange Specialist will be hired to support the knowledge exchange activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the inventory of activities and developing, disseminating, and posting an annual report • Supporting activities to share best practices • Encouraging the use of the interactive online collaborative space • Identifying and fostering opportunities for collaboration and exchange across the field

Opportunities for the Field to Participate in the Program Design and Implementation:

- Provide OPHA and alPHa, who will be coordinating and playing a leading role in the planning of the Public Health Web-Based Platform, with your needs, priorities, and ideas
- Identify mechanisms for sharing best practices

Applied Research and Program Evaluation: Locally Driven Collaborative Projects

Overview: A locally driven collaborative projects stream will be established to help health units meet the Ontario Public Health Standards by facilitating participation, engagement, and uptake of research and program evaluation activities. It will also facilitate collaboration so the field can work together to explore a topic, intervention, or program related to an identified critical public health issue.

Services	Brief Description
Collaboration Facilitation	A Knowledge Exchange Specialist will be hired to assist with the projects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinating activities to support the identification of themes and topics • Fostering collaboration and partnerships by connecting those with similar interests • Assisting project applicants formulate the research question, methodological approach, and the knowledge transfer strategy • Helping promote the progress of the findings/outcomes of the various projects
Collaboration Opportunities	Provide the field with opportunities to come together to brainstorm and align their research and program evaluation efforts to generate a prioritized set of critical public health issues and potential/preferred topics for the locally driven collaborative projects (e.g. face-to-face meetings)
Collaborative Project Fund	A collaborative team, including health units from different regions and of various sizes, can submit an application on a topic identified by the field for funding up to \$100K per year for up to two years. A maximum of \$400K will be available each year. Applications must also include funding for students. Only one application per topic will be submitted per funding cycle
Project Facilitation	A Project Facilitator will be hired to assist with the coordination of the projects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with health units and other partners to help formalize the collaboration • Managing the application and review process • Assisting health units in identifying and applying for external funding opportunities • Circulating funding opportunities to health units through a monthly e-blast

Opportunities for the Field to Participate in the Program Design and Implementation:

- Participate in a working group that will help develop a framework for identifying themes, and the tools and processes for the submission, review, and approval
- Attend a session at the Ontario Public Health Convention (in April 2011) to begin brainstorming ideas for locally-driven collaborative projects and to identifying opportunities for collaboration
- Participate in follow-up collaborative sessions after the Convention to continue working on ideas for locally driven collaborative projects
- Submit an application with a team of colleagues from different organizations for a locally driven collaborative project

Applied Research and Program Evaluation: Ethics Support

Overview: Leveraging off the work and resources from OAHPP, ethics support will be available to help health units address their ethics needs related to research, program evaluation and quality improvement initiatives.

Services	Brief Description
Ethics Consultation	An informal consultation service will be available for those planning or reviewing a project at a local health unit should ethical issues be identified
Ethics Board of Record	An ethics review board will be established and made up of staff from OAHPP, public health units, and community members to conduct reviews requiring a full board. Options will be explored for the ethics board to conduct delegated/expedited reviews. As well, a provision will be established to ensure that during public health emergencies all health units could access the ethics review board with an accelerated process to review protocols. Use of this board will be voluntary
Common Forms and Tools	Working with the health units, common forms and tools will be developed to assist with the ethics review oversight and used by the ethics review board of record and can be used and/or adapted by individual health units
Community of Practice	To build on existing competencies and to facilitate exchange of knowledge, ideas and experience regarding ethics review of research and other evaluative activities in public health, a public health ethics community of practice will be formed
Ethics Education	A range of ethics education services will be offered including webinars, online modules, a collection of case studies, and other written materials

Opportunities for the Field to Participate in the Program Design and Implementation:

- Participate in a focus group to identify education and other ethics support needs
- Participate in a working group to help guide the development of the common forms and tools, and the public health ethics community of practice
- One-year secondment of an individual from a health unit to assist in implementation of the ethics services

Education and Professional Development: Student Education and Preceptor Support

Overview: Supporting students and preceptors is an important component of nurturing the next generation of public health professionals. Student Education and Preceptor Support will allow for sharing of ideas and developing resources to enhance the student placement process and preceptor development across health units in Ontario

Services	Brief Description
Information and Networking Activities	A student education and preceptor community of practice will be created. As well, a series of virtual and face-to-face meetings will be organized in order to vet workplans, develop and share resources, support each other in finding solutions to challenges, and to celebrate successes.
Student Education and Preceptor Liaison	<p>A part-time Student Education and Preceptor Liaison will be seconded from a health unit to coordinate the student education and preceptor support including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing workplans • Planning and organizing meetings (e.g., face-to-face and teleconference) • Managing the community of practice • Developing and implementing knowledge exchange strategies for the knowledge products and resources created • Facilitating collaboration among health units • Representing and promoting the work of this program element

Opportunities for the Field to Participate in the Program Design and Implementation:

- Identify needs related to student placements and preceptor support
- Provide lessons learned and resources from own health unit regarding student education and preceptorships
- Participate in the information and networking activities (e.g. join the student education and preceptor support community of practice)