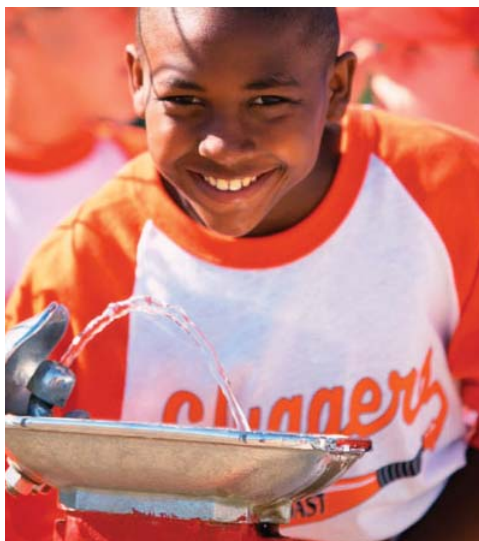


START UP

August 2008



Welcome to START UP

A newsletter to update you on new developments as we build Ontario's first public health agency, the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion.

Called for by many experts post SARS, the Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Agency) is a cornerstone of the Ontario government's intricate and bold plan for public health renewal. Established by special legislation with an independent Board of Directors, it has a mandate to protect and promote the health of all Ontarians.

MESSAGE FROM VIVEK GOEL, PRESIDENT AND CEO

This has certainly been an exciting summer as the Agency continues to move forward at a dramatic pace on many fronts:

- Transition of Ontario Public Health Laboratories
- New Board Appointments
- Agency Start-Up Activities
- Strategic Planning
- Celebrations to honour Dr. Sheela Basrur
- Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach

I invite you to read on to find out more information or visit our web site at www.oahpp.ca. Also in this issue of Start Up, I am pleased to announce the following appointments: Denise Arsenault, Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer and Phil Jackson, Vice President, Strategy and External Relations.



VIVEK GOEL

I am inspired by the support, collaboration and enthusiasm of colleagues across this province and around the world since I became CEO last month. With your help, the Agency will in time, become a central hub, linking researchers, public health practitioners and front-line health care workers to the best scientific intelligence and knowledge from around the world. Together, we will strive to protect and promote the health of all Ontarians.



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TRANSITION OF THE ONTARIO PUBLIC HEALTH LABORATORIES

One of the key functions of the Agency will be to provide scientific and laboratory services and expertise. The government has approved the transfer of the Ontario Public Health Laboratories (OPHL) from the Ministry of Health to the Agency to take effect by the end of 2008.

The OPHL is an essential part of Ontario's public health care system, today and in the future. The transfer will strengthen the OPHL role as world-class facilities and will increase its capabilities by integrating testing, surveillance and research.

We continue to actively work with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care on the development of agreements and plans for the transfer. All parties are committed to a smooth and seamless transfer.

Members of our executive team are planning to visit OPHL labs in the next several months. We look forward to meeting OPHL employees and touring its facilities across Ontario.

A number of modernization initiatives are underway at the OPHL, including implementation of a comprehensive Laboratory Information System to improve service levels, turnaround time and information management capabilities. Assessments of OPHL facilities are underway to understand the extent of capital repairs that may be required. As well, and with the prospect of the transfer of the OPHL to the Agency, the OPHL has already been able to recruit a number of scientists and medical epidemiologists from around the world.



NEW BOARD APPOINTMENTS

Dr. David Walker, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Agency, is pleased to announce that on August 12, Alan Meek and Ron Yamada were appointed as new members. The Agency's board continues to work with the government's Public Appointments Secretariat to recruit its five remaining directors. The board is also completing its governance framework, including its bylaws and corporate policies.

AGENCY START-UP INITIATIVES

The Agency is actively working on several operational priorities. Recruitment of our founding senior management team is well underway. The Agency has retained an executive search firm as a partner in the recruitment of additional members of its senior management team. A list of current recruitment activities is available on the careers section of our web site <http://www.oahpp.ca/careers.php>

We are in the process of developing our initial organizational structure. In addition to the transfer of staff from the Ontario Public Health Laboratories, the model recommended by the Agency Implementation Task Force (AITF) called for the recruitment, over time, of 200 additional research and technical staff in our areas of specialization: strategy, infectious disease and infection prevention and control; health promotion; chronic disease and injury prevention; environmental health, surveillance and epidemiology, research, knowledge exchange and supporting services. We will be following the AITF recommendations for a staffing mix that includes full-time and part-time staff, affiliate scientists and researchers, cross-appointments and secondments. We will be recruiting at a local, national and international level as appropriate.

As a new Agency, we are also building our internal capability for functions such as finance, human resources, information technology, legal, facilities planning and communications. Clive Kessel has been appointed Executive Director; Facilities for the Agency and Lesley Atkinson recently joined the Agency as Director of Communications. Both Clive and Lesley are on secondment from the Ontario Public Service.

The Agency has office space at 415 Yonge Street and is preparing to occupy additional space at 480 University Avenue in the fall of 2008, while continuing negotiations for permanent laboratory space in downtown Toronto. The plan is for the Central Public Health Laboratory, which is currently located at 81 Resources Road in Etobicoke, to move downtown in 2011 or 2012.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DR. SHEELA BASRUR

Consistent with the wishes of Dr. Basrur and her family, the ceremony marking Sheela's passing was held privately with family and close friends in attendance. At the time a commitment was made that a public celebration of her life and contributions would be held in the fall.

The Agency, along with partner organizations, is currently working with her family and a number of friends of Dr. Basrur to plan several events to celebrate her life, including a major event, to be open to the public, in October 2008. As well, in keeping with Minister of Health and Long-Term Care's March 4 announcement, the Agency's offices will be named the Sheela Basrur Centre once the Agency takes occupancy of 480 University Avenue later this Fall.

We will provide more information on the public celebration and related activities in the near future as planning is finalized. We are honoured and proud to provide our assistance, working with others to support this activity. In her unique way, Sheela touched the lives of so many people and it is only fitting that her contribution to Canada, to the public, the city and the public health community be celebrated in a manner that allows us all to mark her contributions.



DR. SHEELA BASRUR

ANNOUNCING SENIOR MANAGEMENT APPOINTMENTS

Denise Arsenault was appointed Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer of the Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, effective July 28. Denise, who has extensive experience in finance, general management and health care, is a valuable addition to our founding leadership team. She brings significant private and public sector experience to the Agency. Prior to joining the Agency, Denise worked with MDS Inc., which included MDS Laboratories until it was sold last year. During her six years with MDS, Denise held several positions and most recently, was Vice President of Finance and Global Controller.



DENISE ARSENAULT

For 10 years, Denise held senior management positions at the University Health Network and Hamilton Health Sciences, where her responsibilities included finance; laboratories and other diagnostic services; facilities planning and management; and support services. She is a Chartered Accountant who, for 10 years, worked with Ernst and Young in its audit and consulting practices as well as serving, on a secondment basis, as CFO in a number of Ontario hospitals.

Phil Jackson, Vice President of Strategy and External Relations, joined the Agency on July 1st 2008. Phil previously worked at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in a wide range of senior management positions. In 2003/4 Phil led the team supporting Dr. David Walker and the Expert Panel on SARS and Infectious Disease Control. Subsequent to that he joined Public Health at the Ministry working closely with Dr. Sheela Basrur and others on a wide range of key public health initiatives, including the creation of PIDAC and the development of regional infection control networks. Phil also worked, in conjunction with Dr. Donald Low, on a range of activities to support modernization of the Ontario Public Health Laboratories. He was instrumental in the creation of the Agency Implementation Task Force Report and the subsequent work to bring forward the legislative approach to creating the Agency.



PHIL JACKSON

CREATING OUR FIRST STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Agency is currently developing its first Strategic Framework which will balance longstanding needs identified in multiple prior reports and emerging high-priority issues. For the first Framework, the priority for the Agency has been to identify a number of key areas of activity, identified in the work of the Public Health Capacity Review Committee, the Agency Implementation Task Force, Ontario Expert Panel on SARS and Infectious Disease Control and in other reports. Some examples of these areas include:

Infectious Disease Prevention and Control

Building on progress to date, we will be seeking to grow the capacity to deliver timely training and support, improve laboratory based surveillance, and strengthen our linkages with partners working in animal health and zoonotic disease control and prevention. This work will go hand-in-hand with an ongoing dialogue with partners at the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care regarding the supports required to strengthen both infection prevention and control and outbreak response capacities.

Surveillance and Epidemiology

Working in collaboration with others we will seek to enhance both the availability and frequency of risk factor, laboratory, and reported data for surveillance and analytical purposes. This work will proceed incrementally as we build linkages with data holders and potential collaborators within and outside the health sector.

Public Health Professional Development and Training

Working collaboratively, an early priority for the Agency will be to enhance the training and development opportunities available for various professionals within public health and beyond as a means to recruit and retain for the future. This work is intended to address the long recognized gap in both entry level placements and mentorship, through to mid-career professional placement and development.

A number of these activities can, in partnership with others, be initiated early in the Agency's mandate. A process is simultaneously being led by the Ministry of Health and Long Term-Care to identify emergent priorities in conjunction with other ministries such as the Ministries of Health Promotion, Environment and Labour. This input will be important for the first Framework document and for the Agency's evolving planning cycles.

A Philosophy of Balanced Growth – Recognizing the breadth of the Agency's mandate, we have adopted a conscious policy of balanced growth, both across all the areas of the mandate from health promotion to health protection, and between a commitment to high quality rigorous research and analysis, and to timely, relevant and responsive relationships with partners in the field.

Building Field Engagement – As the Agency grows, we will move to create a formal strategic planning sub-committee of the board. This subcommittee, which will include board and non-board members as authorized in legislation, will play a key role in refining and re-balancing what will be a rolling three-year plan to be reviewed and updated annually.

In addition, in late Fall we will be seeking input on the creation of effective tools and processes to allow for broader public health and health sector field input into the planning process. The mechanisms being envisaged would include a formal reference panel, formal survey mechanisms and topic-specific forums.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The Agency will be sponsoring and participating in several upcoming conferences and events in the next few months.

On October 6, 2008, Phil Jackson, Vice President of Strategy and External Relations, will be chairing the Ontario Hospital Association Conference on Infection Prevention and Control in Toronto.

Vivek Goel, Agency CEO, will be participating as part of a panel at the Gairdner Foundation Public Lecture on Human Papilloma Virus and Cervical Cancer on October 21, 2008. Fellow panelists will include Andre Picard and Joan Murphy. The master of ceremonies for the event will be Anna Maria Tremonte and the keynote speaker will be Professor Harald zur Hausen. As well, the Agency is co-sponsoring the Gairdner Foundation Special Symposium on Vaccine Development for Cancer and Infectious Diseases, which will take place on October 22, 2008 in Toronto.

The Agency is organizing a half-day session at the joint conference of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies and the Ontario Public Health Association Conference. The session which will take place on October 28, 2008, in Niagara Falls, will include an update on the Agency's start-up activities and strategic planning process, as well as a guest speaker on the topic of Design, the Environment and Human Health.

On October 31, 2008, Vivek Goel will moderate a panel on Determinants of Our Health: Toronto in a Global Village, sponsored by Toronto Public Health and the Centre for International Health, Dalla Lana School of Public Health.



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