

# The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders

## Leading the Way for Public Health Nursing






The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders (OPHNL) fully supports the recent reports from the Chief Medical Officer of Health ([Being Ready](#)) and Association of Local Public Health Agencies ([Public Health Resilience in Ontario](#) and [Pre-Budget Submission: Public Health Programs and Services](#)). In addition, OPHNL recommends that:

**The Province increase and stabilize permanent funding for public health nurses to address service delivery backlogs and implement innovative, convenient and easily accessible programs to promote health, prevent disease, and support the Province’s identified priorities immediately and over the long term.**

Public health units provide upstream programs and services that are key to mitigating the long-term health, psychological and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The public health workforce is comprised of a highly integrated interdisciplinary team of public health professionals. It is the role of OPHNL, while acknowledging the valuable work of our interdisciplinary partners, to speak specifically to the contribution that public health nurses make through mandated and locally innovative programs and services.




Public Health Nursing programs and interventions aim to address health inequities by focusing on priority populations. Through increased and stabilized permanent funding for public health nurses local public health units can flexibly respond to community needs and achieve the desired outcomes by scaling up or introducing interventions that support the Province’s identified priorities.

The chart below represents a **few examples of nurse-delivered evidence informed programs and interventions** from across the province. These programs and interventions have been successfully implemented in collaboration with local communities to achieve desired outcomes.

Desired Outcome	Examples of Programs & Interventions
 Improved vaccination rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Community and school based vaccine clinics</li> <li>◆ Health teaching to decrease vaccine hesitancy</li> <li>◆ Health promotion to create supportive environments, tailor health services for priority populations, provide health education, and enforce legislation</li> </ul>
 Reduced impact of adverse childhood experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Health promotion to support healthy behaviours during preconception and pregnancy and reduce risk factors for poor fetal outcomes.</li> </ul>
 Increased number of children are ready for school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Home-visiting and community programs that (a) support healthy relationships between parents and children, and (b) support and assess healthy childhood growth and development (e.g.: Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Nurse Family Partnership, positive parenting programs)</li> </ul>
 Increased number of children with developmental concerns who are identified early	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Intersectoral systems navigation and coordination to improve access to services</li> </ul>
 Improved access to mental health supports across the lifespan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Health promotion programs that support social connectedness, positive self-esteem, resilience, and positive coping skills.</li> <li>◆ Groups that support perinatal and post partum mental health (e.g.: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy groups)</li> <li>◆ Screening and early identification</li> <li>◆ Intersectoral systems navigation and coordination to improve access to services</li> <li>◆ Peer to peer support</li> </ul>

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Desired Outcome	Examples of Programs & Interventions
 <p>Increased support for mental and physical health in children and youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Partnerships with Boards of Education</li><li>◆ Comprehensive School Health to create and implement school policies and environments that build resilience, support healthy behaviours and prevent chronic diseases</li><li>◆ Support children and families with emerging health issues and future outbreak readiness</li><li>◆ Support children and families for school readiness, healthy transition to secondary school, and healthy transition to postsecondary/workforce.</li></ul>
 <p>Reduced harms of substance use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Comprehensive School Health to create and implement school policies and environments that support healthy behaviours</li><li>◆ Home-visiting and community programs that support healthy relationships between parents and children and healthy behaviours</li><li>◆ Outreach harm reduction programs (e.g. naloxone, safe supply distribution, consumption and treatment sites)</li></ul>
 <p>Reduced impact of infectious disease on the population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Health promotion to support healthy behaviours and reduce risk factors for severe illness from infectious diseases; and address health equity and reduce risk factors for infectious disease transmission</li><li>◆ Infection prevention and control education and support</li><li>◆ Case and contact management</li><li>◆ Trusted community relationships across many settings to promote future outbreak readiness and facilitate quick response to public health concerns</li></ul>

For more information about two key innovative public health nursing initiatives and how they make a difference in the community see the [Nurse Family Partnership Report](#) and [School Focused Nurse Initiative Evaluation](#) including [OPHNL's Recommendations](#).

The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders, which includes the Chief Nursing Officers across the province, promotes and protects the health of Ontarians through excellence in public health nursing leadership. For more information visit <https://ophnl.org/>