

Roles and Responsibilities

**Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
(MOHLTC)
Public Health Protection & Prevention Branch**

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*Foodborne Diseases Investigation & Management:
An Ontario Symposium*

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MOHLTC – Mandate

Provide for the organization and delivery of public health programs and services, the prevention of the spread of disease and the promotion and protection of the health of the people of Ontario

Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.7, s2

MOHLTC – Mandate cont'd

- To prevent or reduce the burden of foodborne illness
 - Reduce incidence of foodborne illness by mitigating foodborne illness risks
 - Reduce exposure to food that is unfit for human consumption
 - Handle and manage food in a safe and sanitary manner
 - Integrate safe foodhandling practices

Ontario Public Health Standards, 2008

MOHLTC – Legislation/ Legislative Authority

- Health Protection and Promotion Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.7
 - Food Premises Regulation (O. Reg. 562/90)
 - Recreational Camps (O. Reg. 568/90)
 - Camps in Unorganized Territories (O. Reg. 554/90)
- Ontario Public Health Standards
 - Food Safety Protocol
 - Drinking Water Protocol
 - Infectious Diseases Protocol
 - Population Health Assessment and Surveillance Protocol
 - Institutional/ Facility Outbreak Prevention and Control Protocol
 - Infection Prevention and Control in Licensed Day Nurseries Protocol

MOHLTC – Legislation/ Legislative Authority ... cont'd

- Memorandums of Understanding
 - Ontario Foodborne Health Hazard and Illness Outbreak Investigation (Ontario MOU)
 - Foodborne Illness Outbreak Response Protocol (FIORP)

MOHLTC – Involvement with Outbreak Investigations

- Primary role of MOHLTC is coordination of outbreaks at the provincial level
- Significant partner is the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (OAHPP)
- Outbreak investigations and management are a collaborative effort between the:
 - Enteric, Zoonotic & Vector-borne Diseases Section (EZVBDS)
 - Environmental Health Section (EHS), and
 - Surveillance Section (SS)

Enteric, Zoonotic and Vector-Borne Diseases Section

- Food and Water-borne outbreak management
- Zoonotic diseases such as rabies, psittacosis and Q Fever
- Vector-borne diseases such as West Nile and Lyme disease

Enteric, Zoonotic and Vector-Borne Diseases Section

Key Activities

- Respond to notification through health units, OAHPP, and iPHIS data
 - Cluster/outbreak identification and investigation
 - Monitor and review laboratory line lists, and iPHIS data
 - Identification of new cases, trends and aberrations
- Assist with outbreak assessment and management
- Provide consultative and technical assistance
- Oversee provision of foodborne diseases prophylaxis (ie. Botulism antitoxin, Hepatitis A vaccine)
- Develop policy and guidance documents
- Act as Canadian Integrated Outbreak Surveillance Centre (CIOSC) enteric administrator for the Province of Ontario

Enteric, Zoonotic and Vector-Borne Diseases Section

Outbreak Management

- Coordinate Provincial Enteric Outbreak Investigation:
 - Evaluate information and initiate investigation
 - Guide and prioritize sample and specimen collection and testing
 - Review, discuss and verify data with local health units
 - Notifications: internal and external communication
 - Establish Outbreak Investigation Coordinating Committee (OICC)

Surveillance Section

Key Activities

- Provide epidemiological support to EZVBDS, EHS and health units in disease surveillance and outbreak management
 - Data collection
 - Analysis and interpretation of trends
 - On-site field support for outbreak investigations and data entry
- Ongoing and episodic collection of data (e.g. iPHIS)
 - Daily aberration detection analysis of reportable disease data in iPHIS using the Early Aberration Response System (EARS)
 - Syndromic surveillance using TeleHealth data and EARS

Surveillance Section

- Establish data reporting standards/directives
 - User guides, Enhanced Surveillance Directives, Policy bulletins
- Develop epidemiological investigation tools (e.g. questionnaires, case report forms, CRN reports) and case definitions

Surveillance Section

Outbreak Management

- Cluster/outbreak verification
 - Determine baseline counts
 - Monitoring for new cases
 - Monitoring for trends and anomalies in data
- Collation of data from various data sources (iPHIS, lab, questionnaires)
- Orient data in terms of person, place, time and exposure
- Analytic studies, if warranted (e.g. case control studies)
- Interpretation of trends, study findings

Environmental Health Section

Key Activities

- Monitor food investigations at the federal, provincial and local level
- Provide guidance and expertise on food and food safety issues as needed
- Monitor all food alerts (CFIA, CIOSC)
- Monitor partner agency food-related testing results and notifications
- Act as MOHLTC Recall Coordinator
- Develop educational resources related to food safety and enteric diseases
- Develop food safety-related policies and standards

Environmental Health Section

Outbreak Management

- Collaborate with EZVBDS on food safety activities related to potential or confirmed enteric outbreaks and food recalls
- Collect, and where necessary, analyze traceback investigation information
- Assist partner agencies with traceback/ traceforward activities
- Monitor sample collection, submission and analysis results
- Support local health units with food premises inspections and environmental investigations, joint agency inspections, and plant investigations

MOHLTC – Internal Communication

- Weekly Outbreak Team meetings
- Briefing notes, emails, teleconferences, Q&As
- Enhance Surveillance Directive (ESD)
- Canadian Integrated Outbreak Surveillance Centre (CIOSC) Alerts
- Coordination of messaging between sections and with Communications and Information Branch (CIB)
- Outbreak Investigation Coordinating Committee (OICC)
 - Health Units
 - Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
 - Partners (OAHPP, CFIA, OMAFRA,, CIOOSC, etc.)

MOHLTC – External Communication

- Public Notices and Advisories:
 - Media releases
 - Media responses
- Important Health Notices (IHNs)
- Industry Recalls and Alerts

Questions?