

Report To: Human Resources Committee, Board of Health
Submitted by: Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health & CEO
Subject: HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE 2018

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- (a) That the Human Resources Committee makes recommendation to the Board of Health to receive this report, for information.**

BACKGROUND:

This report provides an update on the key health & safety activities that occurred within the Agency in 2018.

KEY POINTS

- The Agency's Health and Safety program is in an ongoing state of continuous improvement. Regular enhancements are applied in an effort to ensure that the Agency is in complete compliance with all health and safety legislative requirements.
- Efforts to manage and eliminate health and safety-related risks continued in 2018. Under the leadership of the Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC) and the Health & Safety Officer, the Agency enacted a number of improvements over the course of the year, including the finalization and release of 13 new policies and 11 procedures, including all associated forms.

Operational Plan Objectives

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) is committed to protecting the health and safety of all its employees. In fulfilling this commitment, WDGPH provides and maintains a safe and healthy work environment, while striving to exceed its legislated requirements.

WDGPH recognizes that excellence in health and safety can only be achieved through the active participation of everyone in the organization. To support this commitment educating employees on their duties and responsibilities relating to health and safety is a priority. This is enacted through a comprehensive health & safety management system, which includes the following categories:

- Health and Safety commitment and continuous improvement;
- Health and Safety duties and responsibilities;
- Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC);
- Hazard identification and communication;
- Accident/Incident/Illness and investigation;

- Safe work practices;
- Office safety and general health and safety rules;
- Workplace violence prevention;
- Training and awareness; and
- Emergency response.

2018 Accomplishments:

Continuous Improvement

Thirteen (13) Policies and eleven (11) Procedures and associated forms were developed, reviewed, revised, finalized and released in 2018. WDGPH's continuous improvement focus will continue in 2019 and additional enhancements will be applied to existing policies, as well as new policy development, where required.

Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC)

The JHSC is a key requirement of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* and the Internal Responsibility System (IRS). There are representation requirements for both workers and management on the committee as follows:

- 2 management members;
- 4 worker members; and
- Emergency Preparedness Health & Safety Officer.

At WDGPH, the JHSC is a central committee meaning that it represents all WDGPH locations. In 2018, the JHSC met monthly to discuss health & safety matters and provide guidance to resolve hazards and prevent injuries. The Committee achieved this by performing monthly inspections of the workplace to identify hazards so they can be resolved to prevent accidents and injuries.

JHSC Inspections

In 2018, each WDGPH facility was inspected on a monthly basis by JHSC members for a total of 75 inspections of the required 77. This resulted in a 97% completion rate of required inspections for the year.

18 C-class hazards were identified and corrected (C - Hazard could cause minor injury or illness that is non-disabling, property damage that is not disruptive). No A-class or B-class hazards were found.

JHSC Meetings

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* requires that at least one JHSC meeting be held every 3 months for a total of 4 meetings a year. In an effort to exceed legislative requirements, WDGPH holds monthly JHSC meetings where possible. In 2018 there were 11 JHSC meetings held which is 7 above the requirements.

Meetings were held/rotated through each WDGPH location. Each meeting was chaired by the worker co-chair or the management co- chair, on a rotating basis. Minutes of the meetings were posted on the WDGPH intranet for Staff access.

Training/Awareness

The following training initiatives were completed in 2018:

- Workplace Hazard Information System (WHMIS) – 97% of required staff completed the training.
- CPR – 43% of all WDGPH staff were trained in CPR.
- N95 Respirator Fit Testing – 89% of required staff completed the fit testing.

Accident/Incident Statistics Summary

The following two definitions are provided to set the context for the statistics summary.

Accident: An undesired event that results in a Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) claim and may result in an injury.

Incident (Near Miss): An undesired event that does not result in a WSIB claim but under slightly different circumstances could have and may result in first aid.

Statistics Summary

The total number of reported incidents/accidents for the past four years is shown in the table below (Table 1.). Compared to 2017, there was a 16% reduction in the number of incidents/accidents in 2018.

Table 1.

Year	Number Incidents/Accidents
2015	23
2016	18
2017	19
2018	16

Overall, the types of incidents/accidents were similar to those in 2017, consisting of slips/trips/falls; needle stick; exposure to scents; struck against an object; verbal aggression; car incident/accidents; and property damage.

The following table (Table 2) provides a detailed summary of the 2018 incidents/accidents.

Table 2

Type	Incident Details	Corrective Action
Slip, Trip, Fall	(a) Slipped on wet stairs that were just mopped by contract cleaners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities addressed the issue with the contract cleaning staff to not mop the stairs/floors until staff are gone for the day, 4:45pm or later. “Wet Floor” signage placed when mopping.
	(b) Tripped while going up stairs and strained finger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stairwell had appropriate handrails and lighting. Reinforced with employee to use the handrails when using the stairs.
	(c) Employee tripped and fell straining their ankle while walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee sought minor first aid. Reminded to be aware of unfamiliar surroundings. Facilities removed the tripping hazard to prevent further incidents.
	(d) Employee slipped on light snow in parking lot and fell straining back.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities notified and snow removal contractor applies salt/removes snow as soon as possible after a snow fall.
Exposure - Scents	(a) Employee sensitive to scents. A client was wearing strong perfume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee removed themselves from the area. Implemented measures to reduce exposure to scents in reception area. Continue to reinforce WDGPH is a scent free workplace through signage and Stay Well.
	(b) Employee sensitive to scents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee removed themselves from the area. Continue to reinforce WDGPH is a scent free workplace through signage and Stay Well.
Car Incident / Accident	(a) Employee bumped car in front of them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee was reminded of focused driving to avoid distractions, and was reinforced with staff.
	(b) Employee was rear-ended by driver behind them. Employee not at fault, no lost time from work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee called 911 and was assessed for any injuries, no injuries.
	(c) Employee was rear-ended by driver behind them. Employee not at fault, no lost time from work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A safe driving awareness bulletin was posted in the Nov 1 Stay Well newsletter.
	(d) Employee was making a left hand turn at an intersection without traffic lights and was hit by another oncoming vehicle, no lost time from work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 911 was called and employee was assessed for any injuries, no injuries. Employee was advised of the dangers/alternatives to turning left at this specific uncontrolled intersection. A safe driving awareness bulletin was posted in the Dec 6 Stay Well newsletter regarding this intersection and alternative available options.

Type	Incident Details	Corrective Action
Struck Against an Object	(a) Employee opened a door and while bending over to pick up broken cup the door swung back hitting them in the head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee applied ice to head and went to doctor as a precautionary measure.
Potential Exposure – Needle Stick	(a) Picked up harm reduction kits from the harm reduction cupboard, not realizing they had used sharps in them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was no proper sharps disposal bin available for the public to dispose of used sharps/harm reduction supplies. A proper sharps disposal bin was installed.
	(b) Employee was recapping a needle and punctured finger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee sought minor first aid. Proper needle recapping procedure was reviewed with employee. Reinforced that recapping only occurs with clean needles.
Aggression – Verbal	(a) Service provider verbally aggressive with employee during a Health Protection inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed with employee measures to use to help deescalate situations and to keep exit strategies open. Self defense awareness training was provided to staff in the department.
	(b) Service provider verbally aggressive during a Health Protection inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforced with employees that they are to leave the premise if they perceive a threat to safety. A PHI with an enforcement background accompanied PHIs on future inspections to this service provider. By law enforcement or police can also be arranged to accompany PHIs, if needed.
Property Damage - Potential Fire	(a) A small personal space heater was left on after hours and caused charring to the side of a desk, but did not start a fire or cause smoke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All WDGPH facilities were inspected and all heaters were assessed for compliance - any non-compliant heaters were removed from service. Communications to all staff were provided regarding the safety risks of space heaters and that only approved heaters are permitted for use. Any future requests for heaters are to be submitted to facilities for purchase.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND/OR FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A.

REFERENCES:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1. Retrieved from the Queen's Printer for Ontario e-Laws website, 2019: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01>

Related Reports:

BH.01.FEB0718.C02 – Health and Safety Update 2017 – Program/Service Information Report.

APPENDICES:

None.

Original signed document on file

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