OACPH Roundtable Discussion: Reorganization of Public Health

May 23, 2019

Internal Communications

Simcoe (Kathy)

* the MOH has a blog (internal) where they post updates and staff can comment and ask questions. The questions are answered directly on the blog for all to see.
* staff are pleased with this open and transparent approach

Niagara (Meredith)

* focusing on open and transparent communication with staff
* as a regional PHU they’re keeping public health and municipality review messaging separate but working collaboratively to ensure they are coordinated

Peterborough (Brittany)

* created a dedicated section on their intranet called “what we know now”
* in addition to having Q&As for staff, they also provide key messages for each so that, if asked, staff can speak consistently about the changes
* committee for psychological safety hosting Therapeutic Thursdays with guest speakers, mindfulness presentations, or a link to a TED Talk
* providing media clips for staff

Southwestern (Meaghan)

* Using MS Teams for videoconferencing and recording regular updates with their MOH which staff can then watch later if they missed it. This ensures that everyone is receiving a consistent message.

Peel (Jeff)

* sharing weekly summaries of what they know and don’t know
* MOH creating and sharing 30 second iPhone video summaries at council meetings which has had great response and generated a lot of questions from staff.

Huron (Barb)

* Gathering and answering staff questions
* Staff questions are also being used to inform the change management plan for Huron/Perth amalgamation
* Multi-layer messaging to deal with the province’s bigger plan while managing the merger
* Created an online portal for staff to get information

PEC-Hastings (Emily)

* Finding it challenging to get info out fast enough as staff are getting information from their networks and alternate sources

York Region (Shana)

* Coordinated with other MOHs with whom they have been advised they are merging with to coordinate the timing of messaging

External Communications

Niagara (Meredith)

* are taking an open and transparent with the media but only responsively
* using social media for advocacy
* Opposition parties are looking for information from the PHU to help bolster arguments for public health. However, the PHU is being cautious as they don’t want to get caught in the middle

York Region (Danielle)

* Taking media requests – aligning messages with regional communications

Southwestern (Meaghan)

* Board has issued response to the media
* Haven’t done any social media advocacy since it’s a conservative riding and they are not sure how that would play and as a new Board they worry that they may not be supported by local politicians

KFLA (Suzette)

* Using social media for advocacy (themes: public health saves lives, public health in action)
* MOH is very active with other Eastern health units

Leeds Grenville (Susan)

* Asked staff to wear PHU-branded clothing when out in the community

Peterborough (Brittany)

* They have found that media request may start off on a public health topic but spokespeople must all be prepared for questions about the reorganization of public health as they will likely be asked, regardless of the initial topic.
* Currently celebrating 100 years of PH in the community with Jane’s Walks to show PH in the community

Support from OACPH

Brittany

* Do we coordinate our messages in a letter to alPHA and OPHA?
* Maybe connect with AMO

Language

Barb

* How are we using the term “modernization”?

Rebecca

* Avoid “modernization”, instead are using budget cuts and downloading in messaging.

John

* ‘restructuring’, ‘amalgamation’, ‘splitting’ are all terms that they are using

Susan

* Leeds Grenville is only using the word ‘changes’ and talking about rural health units
* Not using downloading or modernization