**To:** Chair and Members  
Audit and Administration Committee  
Outstanding Business Item No. N/A and Issue:  

**From:** Ann Pekaruk  
Director, Audit Services  
City Manager’s Office  

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**Date:** April 8, 2008  

**Re:** Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) Compliance - Public Health Services (CM08010) (City Wide)

**Council Direction:**  
Council approved the review of PHIPA compliance in Public Health Services as part of the 2008 Internal Audit Work Plan. The results of any work plan projects are reported to the Audit and Administration Committee.

**Information:**  
The Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA) sets out rules for the collection, use and disclosure of personal health information. The City of Hamilton’s Public Health Services (PHS) is impacted by this legislation as it deals with such health information from various sources as it carries out its functions.

When this review was initiated, it was envisioned as a full compliance review involving the several divisions/sections with Public Health Services which fall under the legislation.

However, after a considerable amount of time was spent interpreting the Act and developing a template/questionnaire to address individual requirements of the Act, it was quickly realized that the commitment of time required by the many PHS staff to meet with the auditor to complete the questionnaire for their area and review example cases and documentation would significantly impact their ability to carry out their day-to-day work.

Instead, management selected a single area to pilot the assignment. After using a pre-booked window of time, it was difficult to make further contact with staff to obtain additional information or clarification. The status of several legislated requirements was inconclusive.
The significant narrowing of the scope of the original intended review as well as the unavailability of staff for any further work resulted in no report being issued for this limited exercise.

This information report is provided as all outcomes of Council approved audit work is to be accounted for to the Audit and Administration Committee.

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Ann Pekaruk
Director, Audit Services
City Manager's Office

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