**Council Direction:**

**N/A**

**Information:**

In the 1999-2000 flu season there was above average influenza activity in Ontario creating a heavy burden on the health care system. In response to the high number of cases, and given the evidence on the impact of vaccines, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) demonstrated further commitment to disease prevention by announcing that it would offer free influenza immunization to all Ontario residents in the 2000/01 season.

Because of the large number of people to be immunized annually, many vehicles for vaccine administration are utilized, such as family physicians, public health departments, pharmacies, workplaces and long term and acute care facilities.

Annually, Public Health Services in Hamilton offers influenza immunization at community clinics to help protect the public from influenza. These clinics are open to citizens who live, work or attend school in our jurisdiction. This season's influenza immunization clinics have now been set to begin November 4th and run through until December 10th. As in the past, clinics will be held at various times and locations throughout Hamilton. For a full clinic schedule, please see Appendix A.

Over the past eight seasons, Public Health Services has annually immunized approximately 22,500 people. The following chart depicts the history of the influenza clinics in Hamilton.
Hamilton Influenza Clinic Summary 2000-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Clinics</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of residents immunized</td>
<td>23,098</td>
<td>21,425</td>
<td>21,625</td>
<td>25,036</td>
<td>23,298</td>
<td>23,907</td>
<td>20,500</td>
<td>21,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Budget ($)</td>
<td>469,000*</td>
<td>426,420*</td>
<td>269,480</td>
<td>125,180</td>
<td>116,490</td>
<td>115,485</td>
<td>102,500</td>
<td>108,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Levy Impact</td>
<td>234,500</td>
<td>213,210</td>
<td>134,740</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes pandemic planning response.

The MOHLTC provides $5.00 per dose of vaccine administered at public health community clinics. This amount is to cover the cost of vaccine administration. As noted in the table above, beginning in 2003, the clinics were run with no net levy impact to the City. Costs associated with management, professional and support staff is currently funded under the cost-shared Vaccine Preventable Disease Programs.

During the planning of the 2006 UIIP Program, health units in Ontario were presented with a unique challenge. In August of 2006, the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care (MOHLTC) was notified by the Federal Government that there would be a delay in the availability of the influenza vaccine for the upcoming season. Health units were quickly notified and were instructed to defer influenza clinics open to the general public until November 15, 2006; an almost 4 week delay. Vaccine was distributed as a priority to those facilities that cared for persons at highest risk for influenza-related complications (i.e. long-term care homes, hospitals, physicians). Many other external stakeholders were also affected by the delay in vaccine delivery (i.e. nursing agencies, pharmacies) as they were instructed by the MOHLTC to delay clinics until November 27, 2006.

As such, Public Health Services saw a four per cent (4%) decrease in the number of persons immunized at PHS community clinics in the 2006 year. It may be that by the time public health clinics were offered, people had found alternate places to receive their influenza vaccination (e.g. family physician offices) or chose to defer immunization for the year. The decrease in the number of persons immunized through workplaces (20%) and pharmacies (9%) may also support these assumptions. It is important to note that this drop in coverage was not unique to our area as decreases in influenza immunization rates were reported by public health units across Ontario. In 2007, we saw the numbers of people attending our clinics increase again, though still lower than in 2003-2005. This is also likely an indication that some people are continuing to be vaccinated at alternate locations.
To promote annual influenza immunization, several promotional strategies are used which include, the use of print materials (flyers, posters, mailers), media (radio, newspapers, media release) and the internet. Influenza related information and resources are disseminated to over one thousand facilities across Hamilton including hospitals, physician offices, daycares, schools, poultry processing facilities, recreation centres and museums, municipal service centres, Ontario Early Years Centres, Libraries, SISO, and post-secondary educational institutions. New this year, we have added local grocery stores, LCBO locations and banks on our list of places to receive information packages. Public Health Services’ clinics will be advertised in local newspapers including the Spectator, Hamilton Community News, SNAP, Forever Young, Hamilton Community Guide, McMaster Silhouette, and the Mohawk Satellite). Web-based mailer distribution includes the Hamilton, Flamborough, and Stoney Creek Chambers along with several group associations (Human Resources Professional Association of Hamilton, Canadian Society of Safety Engineers-Hamilton Chapter, Hamilton-Halton Construction Association, and the Occupational Health Nurses Association of Hamilton). A media release will be sent out announcing the clinics; in the past media spots were obtained on 900 CHML, CHTV and Cable 14. This year we have also purchased radio advertising on K-Lite. We are also pursuing inside transit ads at the time of the writing of this report.

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Public Health Services