

# **A Collaborative Inter-ministerial Approach to Developing an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan for Population Health**

## **Discussion Paper**

**Presented by the Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity**

September 2010

This discussion paper provides a summary of the recommendations and opportunities identified by the Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (OCGHEPA) in the *Development of a Food and Nutrition Strategy - Background Document* (OCGHEPA, Sept 2010). The recommendations provided herein are intended to be shared broadly among Ontario government ministry officials and staff as well as key health partners and stakeholders. This report is intended to generate and facilitate dialogue and start the process of a collaborative inter-ministerial approach to an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan.

The Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (OCGHEPA) is calling on the Ontario government to begin a cross-government coordinated approach in the area of food and nutrition through the development of an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy. A provincial strategy developed by a cross-government, multi-stakeholder group will make strides toward improving the health and productivity of Ontarians and lowering the health care and social costs to the Province. Ontario's health care costs are burdened by increasing rates of overweight, obesity and chronic diseases and these costs are on an upward trajectory to consume over half of the provincial budget by 2014 (1). The time to act is now and OCGHEPA proposes work closely with Ontario's government and other important stakeholders to play a key role in the development of a Food and Nutrition Strategy.

Various programs and initiatives currently offered by many different ministries can become more efficient and effective through improved linkages and intersectoral planning and policy development. OCGHEPA has taken the lead in this process with the release of a background document outlining existing programs and initiatives and identifying priority recommendations for action.

The process OCGHEPA proposes won't necessarily take more investments by Ontario, but suggests working together and investing differently with existing resources. By building upon successful existing policies and programs, and having shared objectives and resources, there is potential to realize gains and reduce duplication. It also means

working together to prioritize actions, address gaps, maximize impact and minimize health disparities.

**The top 5 priorities are:**

**1. Form two committees integral to the success of an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy:**

- a) Re-establish a high-level ministers Healthy Living Committee as introduced in 2006 to set broad directions for all ministries on matters related to promoting a healthy province and the development of healthy public policies.**
- b) Establish an inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder committee to begin work on an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan in 2010.**

**2. Identify specific goals, outcomes and health indicators related to childhood obesity, chronic disease prevention and food insecurity that will be monitored and evaluated between now and 2015.**

**3. Begin the process of collaborating among ministries on policy development for the Food and Nutrition Action Plan, especially for policies at the population level; assess each policy option for social equity and for any potential impact on nutritional health.**

**4. Increase investments in population health initiatives aimed at achieving expected outcomes identified in the Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan and offset increased investments with an increase in inter-ministerial initiatives that are jointly funded.**

**5. Develop an infrastructure or mechanism to ensure clear, effective, timely communication occurs at all levels and among all players: within and between ministries, with the advisory committee, non-governmental partners and the public.**

Ontario can become the healthiest province in Canada through an inclusive participatory approach that leverages the strengths, energy and resources of the various ministries within government and other important health partners and stakeholders. These stakeholders include highly skilled, committed people who are aware of the need for immediate action and are ready to collaborate now.

The 2015 Pan Am Games to be hosted by Toronto provide a unique and timely opportunity to create a legacy of health for Ontarians. The Toronto 2015 Vision is to provide a life-affecting experience, transform communities, deliver on commitments and set benchmarks (2). We propose that a collaborative approach to develop an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy should have a similar vision with measurable targets to achieve by the 2015 Pan Am Games. Ontario could showcase to the world its leadership and commitment to transforming lives and improving health for all.

OGHEPA proposes to take a key role in forming an inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder committee and working on the identified priorities. OCGHEPA already has many of the key health partners required to work on a provincial food and nutrition Action Plan at the table. OCGHEPA is a provincial collaboration of health professionals from non-profit, health and academic organizations dedicated to addressing population-based issues relating to healthy eating, physical activity, healthy weights and the determinants of health, including food access, availability and adequacy. The Canadian Cancer Society acts as a secretariat for the group. See Appendix A for a list of OCGHEPA member organizations

## About this Report

This report summarizes the top five recommendations prioritized for action from the *OCGHEPA Development of an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy Background Document (Sept 2010)*. While the background document lists many more recommendations (Appendix B), interviews with key informants who are experts in the areas of food and nutrition, food security, policy development and chronic disease prevention helped identify the greatest priorities for action. This report is for the government, non-governmental organizations, agri-food sector members, academics and other practitioners working in the areas of nutrition, food security, obesity and chronic disease prevention.

## Priorities for Action

Based on an environmental scan, the development of a background document, and interviews with and feedback by key informants in nutrition, food security and chronic disease prevention, implementation of the following five priorities are the critical first steps in the development of a collaborative Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan:

### **1. Form two committees integral to the success of an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy:**

- a) **Re-establish a high-level ministers Healthy Living Committee to set broad directions for all ministries on matters related to promoting a healthy province and the development of healthy public policies.**

Re-establishing a Healthy Living Committee is essential to the success of a food and nutrition action plan for the province. Nutrition and health generally, cannot be easily compartmentalized into one or two ministries. We have learned that policies and initiatives of many sectors impact population health. For instance, ongoing activities in education, transportation, children and youth services, and environment all have the potential to affect the nutritional status of Ontarians.

A Healthy Living Committee will:

- Provide a formal mechanism for communication between ministries with respect to health.
- Provide a venue in which policies and programs created in each ministry can be properly assessed for their impact on health and social equity.
- Use the Food and Nutrition Action Plan for the province as a spring board for other areas of work related to health, i.e., physical activity and mental health.

**b) Establish an inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder committee to begin work on an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan in 2010.**

Establishing an inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder committee would be the first step towards the development of a collaborative Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan. In addition to OCGHEPA, members of the committee would include ministerial representation from the ministries of: Aboriginal Affairs, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Children and Youth Services, Community and Social Services, Culture, Education, Environment, Finance, Health Promotion, Health and Long-term Care, Municipal Affairs and Housing and others as deemed appropriate.

The Inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder Food and Nutrition Action Plan committee will:

- Consult and meet regularly with a formal advisory group of stakeholders and experts from non-governmental organizations, agencies and the agri-food sector.
- Set health targets for Ontarians to achieve by a specified time frame – e.g. the Pan Am Games in 2015.
- Facilitate a goal and objective setting process to address specific nutritional health and behavioural outcomes, with senior ministerial staff in collaboration with its advisory committee and with other external partners and stakeholders.
- Identify objectives and policy priorities in each ministry that could be aligned with a nutrition-related health outcome, such as mental health, poverty, affordable housing, social assistance, education.
- Assess any policy changes or new policy options by evaluating its potential to affect population nutrition, food security and overweight/obesity.
- Develop mechanisms and processes to improve communication and cooperation within government and between government and its partners in this strategy process.
- Provide direction and expert advice to the high-level Healthy Living Committee.

The Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating will:

- Take the lead in facilitating this process: assist in the development of the expert advisory committee, identify stakeholders, organizations, agencies and agri-food sector representatives, many of whom were consulted for the discussion document and are ready to invest and engage in this process immediately.

**2. Identify specific goals, outcomes and health indicators related to childhood obesity, chronic disease prevention and food insecurity that will be monitored and evaluated between now and 2015.**

The Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion has surveillance as one of its key functions and has experts in surveillance, epidemiology, biostatistics, geospatial analysis, mathematical modeling and nutrition. OAHPP can help with the identification of specific goals, objectives and target dates for healthy eating and obesity reduction including health and behavioural outcomes and. OAHPP can then develop a **surveillance, performance monitoring and accountability system for the specific outcomes identified in the Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan.**

To monitor the performance of Ontario's Food and Nutrition Action Plan:

- Develop performance-monitoring targets for all food or nutrition-related initiatives in the Strategy, including specific measures for: food intake relative to Canada's Food Guide recommendations, food security and healthy weights.
- Make recommendations for resource allocation based upon the results of performance monitoring in achieving targets.
- Create a mechanism to communicate and share surveillance and monitoring data and results.

The Surveillance, Performance Monitoring and Accountability System will:

- Link and exchange knowledge with the agri-food industry to monitor consumer food and nutrition trends to enable Ontario food products to meet consumer demands.
- Measure and monitor household food insecurity using a non-health survey such as Statistics Canada Survey of Household Spending or Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics to identify specific contributing factors.
- Invest in culturally-appropriate surveillance and monitoring of groups that are more difficult to access and who may be at higher risk of nutrition-related health problems, such as Aboriginal peoples or immigrants with language barriers.

The OCGHEPA will:

- Work with the OAHPP to establish goals and objectives for the food and nutrition action plan, while OAHPP is better positioned to carry out the surveillance, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Assist with the roll out and communication of the strategy goals as a whole government initiative with specific measurable short-term targets identified.

**3. Begin the process of collaborating among ministries on policy development for the food and nutrition action plan, especially for policies at the population level;**

**assess each policy option for social equity and for any potential impact on nutritional health.**

Since factors beyond health such as income, housing, education, physical environment, geographical location, local food sustainability and others contribute to Ontarians' food access, consumption and nutritional health, policy development for a food and nutrition action plan needs to go beyond health policy.

Collaboration in policy development for the Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan will be:

- Facilitated by engaging non-governmental partners skilled at advocacy to mobilize citizens to advance healthy public policy; societal attitudes affect whether new policies are implemented and whether they will succeed in yielding positive results.
- Informed by the use of surveillance and monitoring data; for example, by knowing the extent to which commercially prepared foods consumed away from home contribute to excess sodium intake, could help identify a priority target for policy intervention.
- More effective and socially equitable by including a step in policy development that assesses impact on the most vulnerable groups, such as children, immigrants, the elderly and Aboriginals.
- Strengthened by supporting food and nutrition-related municipal policy development across the province; municipal policy can help change public attitudes and lead to province-wide policy (as in the case of smoking restrictions leading to Smoke Free Ontario).
- Able to communicate urgency and facilitate the passing of the existing food or nutrition bills currently stalled or in process in the Ontario legislature [Bill 53, Consumer Protection Amendment Act: restricting advertising of food or drink to children under the age of 13 (3) and Bill 90, the Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act: requiring nutrition information to be posted in chain restaurants (4)].

The Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating will:

- Take a lead in engaging non-governmental partners skilled at advocacy to mobilize citizens to advance healthy public policy. Its members and networks are ready to act now.

**4. Increase investments in population health initiatives aimed at achieving expected outcomes identified in the Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan and offset increased investments with an increase in inter-ministerial initiatives that are jointly funded.**

It's clear that additional resources are required to act on these priorities and begin the collaborative process to developing an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan, with clearly articulated goals and objectives linked to health and behavioural outcomes. Yet,

savings and efficiencies may be gained from working collaboratively, with the elimination of duplicated programs and services and making others more effective. A change in how programs and services are funded can also result in savings and improved outcomes; for example, recognizing that a variety of health providers are engaged in food and nutrition and can be utilized to improve the public's access to information and services or to participate in monitoring, evaluation and research.

Smart investments in a collaborative approach to an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan include:

- Doubling the budget for public health in Ontario from 1.6% to 3.2% of the Ontario Health Budget, to enhance population-based strategies targeted to priority populations in local regions.
- Doubling or tripling the funding devoted to nutrition and healthy eating to demonstrate its priority status and the government's commitment to this process.
- More inter-ministerial investments in population health strategies that can be jointly funded such as the After School Program and the Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act.
- Evaluate new initiatives, such as the Healthy Communities Fund, for effectiveness before committing long-term funding.
- Changing how Community Health Centres and Family Health Teams are funded to allow equitable employment opportunities for nutrition professionals, such as Registered Dietitians.
- Exploring more partnerships when government resources don't have the capacity to deliver on goals (such as with Dietitians of Canada to deliver EatRight Ontario).

**5. Develop an infrastructure or mechanism to ensure clear, effective, timely communication occurs at all levels and among all players: within and between ministries, with the advisory committee, non-governmental partners and the public.**

While a collaborative approach is critical for success in the development of an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan, including specific health outcome oriented goals and objectives, these types of partnerships can be complex and create many challenges. Clear, effective, ongoing communication and defining clear roles and responsibilities can help keep partners engaged and committed to the process. Communication and information sharing can facilitate knowledge exchange, demonstrate investments, reduce duplication and result in cost savings and efficiencies.

Effective communication to the public is also critical and needs to be high-profile, such as an announcement by the Premier or via a mass media campaign to get attention and interest.

Mechanisms to ensure clear, effective, timely communication occurs during the development of an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan include:

- Launching the action plan with a public announcement by the Premier, championing Ontario to become the healthiest province by the 2015 Pan Am Games.
- Ensuring the Ministry of Health Promotion's Inter-ministerial Healthy Living Committee has a formalized structure, with terms of reference, clear roles and responsibilities, accountability and a mandate with clear timelines.
- Sharing progress of the collaborative process with the public in a transparent way, such as via an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy or a "healthy Ontario" website that is cross-ministerial.
- Taking advantage of the experience and expertise of already established alliances such as the Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity or the Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance; communications using multiple channels and coming from a collaborative group with individual networks may have a greater impact on a larger audience than those from a single group or Ministry.
- Develop a targeted, well-resourced mass media campaign, with clearly articulated goals and objectives, as part of a comprehensive approach to reduce unhealthy weights and promote healthy eating.

The Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity will:

- Facilitate timely and effective communication throughout its networks of health professionals and health providers throughout Ontario.

## Conclusions

This report summarizes priorities for action on a collaborative approach to developing an Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan. Based upon recommendations from the academic literature, key reports from health organizations and government agencies in Ontario, Canada and beyond as well as key informant interviews, it provides the best advice for making Ontario the healthiest province in Canada through setting health targets and establishing overall food and nutrition goals and objectives that can work collaboratively across ministries and through key health partner organizations and stakeholders to provide effective programs and services that improve the health and productivity of Ontarians and lower the health and social costs to the Province.

Leadership from the Government of Ontario and collaborative partners is necessary to move this plan of action forward. By focusing on these first five priorities, the energy and momentum of the collaborative process will ensure Ontario can meet specific health targets by 2015.

The Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity has demonstrated its support by initiating this process and recommendations to facilitate a plan of action. It will continue to support this process and will be a leading and engaged partner going forward.



## References

1. Rovere, M. and Skinner, BJ. Health care at a crossroads: will Ontario taxpayers continue to pay more and get less? Fraser Forum 02/10. p.10-11. Available at [www.fraserinstitute.org](http://www.fraserinstitute.org) [Accessed April 14, 2010].
2. Toronto 2015 Pan/Parapan Ameican Games [www.toronto2015.org/](http://www.toronto2015.org/)
3. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Advertising Food or Drink), Bill 53 (2008). Available at [www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills\\_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=1982&isCurrent=false&ParlSessionID=39%3A1](http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=1982&isCurrent=false&ParlSessionID=39%3A1)
4. Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Healthy Decisions for Healthy Eating Act, Bill 90 (2010). Available at [www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills\\_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=2385&detailPage=bills\\_detail\\_statuses&Intranet=](http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=2385&detailPage=bills_detail_statuses&Intranet=)

## **Appendix A**

### **Ontario Collaborative Group on Healthy Eating and Physical Activity – Organizations with Member Representatives**

- Canadian Cancer Society (Ontario Division)
- Cancer Care Ontario
- Canadian Diabetes Association
- Dietitians of Canada
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario
- Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Management in Public Health
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport
- Ontario Public Health Association – Nutrition Resource Centre & Food Security Workgroup
- Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health
- Ontario Society of Physical Activity Promoters in Public Health
- Ontario Physical and Health Education Association
- Parks and Recreation Ontario
- University of Guelph, Human Health and Nutritional Sciences
- University of Waterloo, Health Studies and Gerontology

## **Appendix B**

### **Recommendations from the OCGHEPA Development of an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy – Background Document (Sept 2010)**

The OCGHEPA discussion paper assessed Ontario's capacity according to the categories identified in the Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada's "Primary Prevention of Chronic Diseases in Canada: A Framework for Action". For the recommendations in each functional capacity, gaps and challenges are also identified. The following list is only an excerpt; the full discussion paper should be consulted for rationale, context and list of references.

#### **Recommendations for Planning and Management**

- Re-establish a Minister's Healthy Living Committee as introduced in 2006 to set broad directions for all ministries on matters related to promoting a healthy province and development of healthy public policies
- Establish an inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder committee to work on the development of a collaborative Ontario Food and Nutrition Action Plan. In addition to OCGHEPA, members of the committee would include ministerial representation from the ministries of: Aboriginal Affairs, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Children and Youth Services, Community and Social Services, Culture, Education, Environment, Finance, Health Promotion, Health and Long-term Care, Municipal Affairs and Housing and others as deemed appropriate.
- Develop a business case showing the financial impact of projected health costs due to obesity, chronic disease and health inequities on the province; include an analysis of the opportunities and challenges for Ontario's agri-food sector.
- Encourage the Premier to articulate a vision and a target such as becoming the healthiest province in Canada by the 2015 Pan Am Games or to be the first province to sign on to the development of a national food and nutrition strategy or the first province to make gains on common goals since the F/P/T announcements on the priorities of prevention and promotion, childhood obesity and sodium reduction in September 2010.

#### **Recommendations for Research and Innovation**

- Engage the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (OAHP) to support research and coordination.
- Increase spending on research and practice based evidence that is directly related to food and nutrition.
- Facilitate and provide incentives for research on the food intake and nutrient status of children, older adults, immigrants and Aboriginal populations and the broad determinants of health affecting diet and healthy weights.

- Create a system to help disseminate and share research results among practitioners, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and government.
- Ensure the functions and capacities of the PHRED program (applied, local research, workforce and student development, and knowledge exchange) are not lost, by implementing a blended regional model as stated in the Knowledge to Action (K2A) document (70).
- Implement large-scale promising and innovative programs.
- Ensure evaluation is conducted to provide evidence.

### **Recommendations for Knowledge Exchange and Capacity Building**

- Expand all services of the Program Training and Consultation Centre to address the areas of food and nutrition.
- Use best advice from critical reviews, practice guidelines, etc. to address gaps and build capacity and infrastructure.
- Encourage OAHPP to develop the infrastructure necessary to support the planning, capacity building and knowledge exchange activities for an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy.

### **Recommendations for Goal and Objective Setting**

- Develop an infrastructure involving senior staff from relevant Ministries to work on mutual goal and objective setting for a food and nutrition strategy (e.g. inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder committee recommended under planning and management). Ensure agreed-upon objectives are included in each Ministry's service plans and link some objectives to relevant cross-ministry initiatives, i.e., Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy was linked with the Childhood Obesity Strategy/Ontario's After-school Initiative in 2009 (14).
- The process for goal and objective setting should be facilitated by the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion and include scientific and practitioner input into program logic models developed with goals and objectives, short, medium and long-term outcomes with corresponding indicators and evaluation plans attached.
- Involve expertise from relevant partners (e.g. OCGHEPA and its members, food industry and agriculture sector groups, etc.)
- Goals and objectives should go beyond traditional health outcomes such as BMI, since other food-related areas including nutritious food intake, sustainable local agriculture and food insecurity are also critical to address.
- Set targets (e.g. 2015) and goals that are achievable, attract energy and momentum and build upon the strength of the vision and goals of the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport's Healthy Communities Framework (26).

## **Recommendations for Advocacy and Policy Development**

- Establish a high level inter-ministerial healthy living committee to communicate on policy development across Ministries.
- Integrate a social equity evaluation or population health impact assessment into the policy development stage across all government ministries, i.e., a “health in all policies approach”
- Include a step in policy development that assesses impact on the most vulnerable groups, such as children, immigrants, the elderly and Aboriginals
- Re-tool programs to ensure they are in alignment with the dominant social and political environment to help shift unhealthy attitudes before a policy change (5)
- Make good use of agencies and organizations external to government to provide support for policy and program development and also help with implementing new programs (5).

## **Recommendations for Program Development**

- Adopt and fully implement programs that have been proven successful in other jurisdictions.
- Tailor interventions to disadvantaged populations.
- Integrate existing programs across ministries to become part of a coordinated food and nutrition strategy to be lead by an inter-ministerial healthy living committee.

## **Recommendations for Communications**

- Develop infrastructure to coordinate and manage communications in Ontario’s food and nutrition field.
- Engage the MN-HEAL to profile food and nutrition issues to create a demand for an Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy. Encourage public health practitioners to take advantage of the services offered, i.e., media training by the MN-HEAL to increase capacity.
- Develop a targeted, well-resourced social marketing campaign as part of a comprehensive approach to reduce unhealthy weights and promote healthy eating.
- Re-establish a Minister’s Healthy Living Committee as introduced in 2006 to create a formal communication channel for health issues across Ministries. Set up mechanisms and incentives to promote engagement and commitment to an intergovernmental approach.
- Clearly communicate the urgency and importance of the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy by having the Premier make the announcement about its launch.
- Support a new inter-ministerial, multi-stakeholder committee to work on identified priorities in food and nutrition. Take advantage of the experience and expertise of already established alliances such as OCGHEPA and the Ontario Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance.

## **Recommendations for Financial Transfers**

Double or triple per capita spending on population health and health promotion strategies to be on par with Quebec or British Columbia. This can be achieved by:

- Doubling the budget for public health in Ontario from 1.6% to 3.2% to enhance population-based strategies, targeted to priority populations in local regions
- Increasing the proportion of the Ontario Diabetes Strategy that is directed toward prevention programs.
- Expanding existing programs such as the After-school Initiative and the Northern Vegetable and Fruit Program to reach more at-risk communities each year.
- Doubling or tripling the funding devoted to nutrition and healthy eating in the Ministry of Health Promotion's Operating Budget to demonstrate its priority status.
- Amend the Healthy Communities funding requirements so that initiatives that focus solely on nutrition and food skills can be included.

## **Recommendations for Human Resources**

- Create human capacity at all levels: including sufficient positions for Registered Dietitians to support provincial initiatives.
- Ensure Ministries with nutrition-related policy or programs have in-house expertise for planning, implementation and evaluation.
- Develop recruitment and retention incentives for Registered Dietitians to go to under-served communities, which are often those most at-risk
- Create more community-based internship or training opportunities for graduates of accredited nutrition university programs to develop the workforce.
- Provide sufficient funding to Community Health Centres and Family Health Teams to allow equitable employment opportunities to health professionals such as Registered Dietitians
- Explore more partnerships when government human resources don't have the capacity to deliver on goals (such as with DC to deliver EatRight Ontario).
- Encourage OAHPP to develop and implement a public health workforce capacity survey to examine current capacity and inform knowledge exchange and capacity building initiatives to improve knowledge, skills and abilities within the existing nutrition workforce

## **Recommendations for Evaluation and Learning**

- Strengthen linkages with organizations with capacity to conduct evaluations, such as universities, colleges and OAHPP (PHRED).
- Use evaluation results to secure growth and expansion of small initiatives to become population-wide.
- Fund evaluation as a necessary component of any new program or policy and ensure the expertise is on staff or contracted with a partner as necessary.

- Emphasize early outcome evaluation of any new intersectoral partnership initiatives.
- Identify specific indicators to be collected but allow local autonomy to conduct evaluation.

### **Recommendations for Surveillance, Performance Monitoring and Accountability**

- Encourage the OAHPP develop a surveillance, performance monitoring and accountability system for the Ontario Food and Nutrition Strategy, with specific outcomes and health determinant indicators
- Participate in strengthening and enhancing the Ontario Risk and Behaviour Surveillance System to provide local surveillance data and ensure food and nutrition indicators are included (i.e., knowledge, attitudes and behaviours for supports and barriers to healthy eating, cost of a nutritious food basket, macro and micronutrient intake, etc.)
- Develop specific targets for the province with respect to diet and obesity reduction.
- Use surveillance trends to inform food (including behaviour, intentions, resiliency), nutrition and obesity policy development.
- Prioritize development of surveillance tools for groups most at-risk and missed in traditional surveillance, such as Aboriginals and immigrants with language barriers.
- Include more performance monitoring targets in initiatives with nutrition as a key component, as was done in the Ontario Diabetes Strategy.