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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health
Report: #2023-INFO-101
Date: December 1, 2023

Subject:

Board of Health Self-Evaluation Survey

Recommendation:

Receive for information

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 To summarize the results of the Board of Health (BOH) self-evaluation survey and identify opportunities for improvements in BOH effectiveness and governance.

2. Background

2.1 The [Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services, and Accountability](#) (OPHS) specify organizational requirements and establish good governance and management practices required of all BOHs. The Ministry of Health holds BOHs accountable for executing good governance practices to ensure effective functioning of boards of health and management of public health units.

2.2 Under the OPHS, Durham Region's BOH (Regional Council) is required to conduct a self-evaluation of its governance practices and outcomes at least every other year. Completion of the self-evaluation survey includes an analysis of the results, BOH discussion, and implementation of feasible recommendations for improvement, if any.

2.3 The previous BOH self-evaluation was conducted in 2017. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Durham Region Health Department's (DRHD's) focus on COVID-19 response since early 2020, a BOH self-evaluation survey has not been conducted since that time.

3. The Survey

- 3.1 On October 27, 2023, the members of Health & Social Services Committee (HSSC), including the Regional Chair, were invited to participate in an online and anonymous BOH self-evaluation survey developed by DRHD staff.
- 3.2 The survey's original deadline of November 10 was extended to November 17 to facilitate greater participation. HSSC members received weekly reminders to complete the survey.
- 3.3 The survey included questions related to BOH roles and responsibilities, information sharing with additional questions for the COVID-19 pandemic, relations, annual review and planning, and suggestions for improving the self-evaluation process.
- 3.4 Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with a list of statements.

4. Survey Results

- 4.1 Five of eight HSSC members responded to the survey.
- 4.2 The survey results are attached to this report and show that most Regional Councillors agree that information shared by DRHD is helpful and understand their roles and responsibilities as BOH members.
- 4.3 All respondents provided positive feedback on board relations with varying strengths of agreement and there was unanimous praise for the information sharing during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 4.4 Respondents noted opportunities for improvement regarding: the level of detail for presentations; the potential to add LinkedIn to the DRHD social media strategy; BOH member participation in available educational opportunities; having a dialogue regarding Durham's changing challenges; and future BOH self-evaluation processes.
- 4.5 Although most respondents agreed with statements on annual review and planning, there were three areas of disagreement with a suggestion for brief updates at HSSC.

5. Previous Reports

- 5.1 Report [#2017-INFO-125](#) provided a summary of the BOH self-evaluation survey conducted in September 2017.

6. Attachment

- 6.1 Attachment: Durham Region Board of Health Self-Evaluation Results

Respectfully submitted,

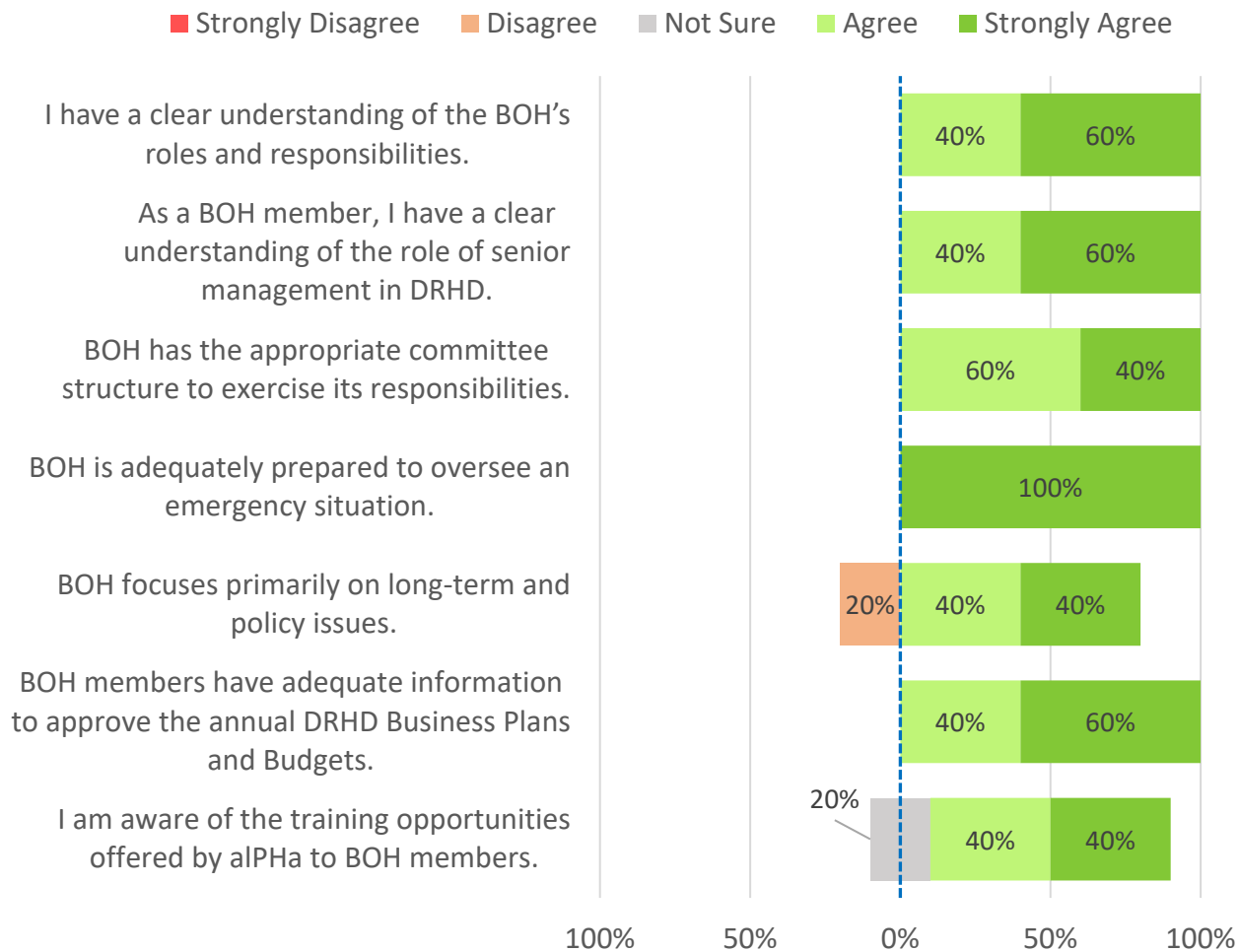
Original signed by

R.J. Kyle, BSc, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC, FACPM
Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health

Durham Region Board of Health Self-Evaluation Results

BOH Roles and Responsibilities

Figure 1: BOH Roles and Responsibilities



Two respondents provided suggestions to clarify BOH members' roles and responsibilities:



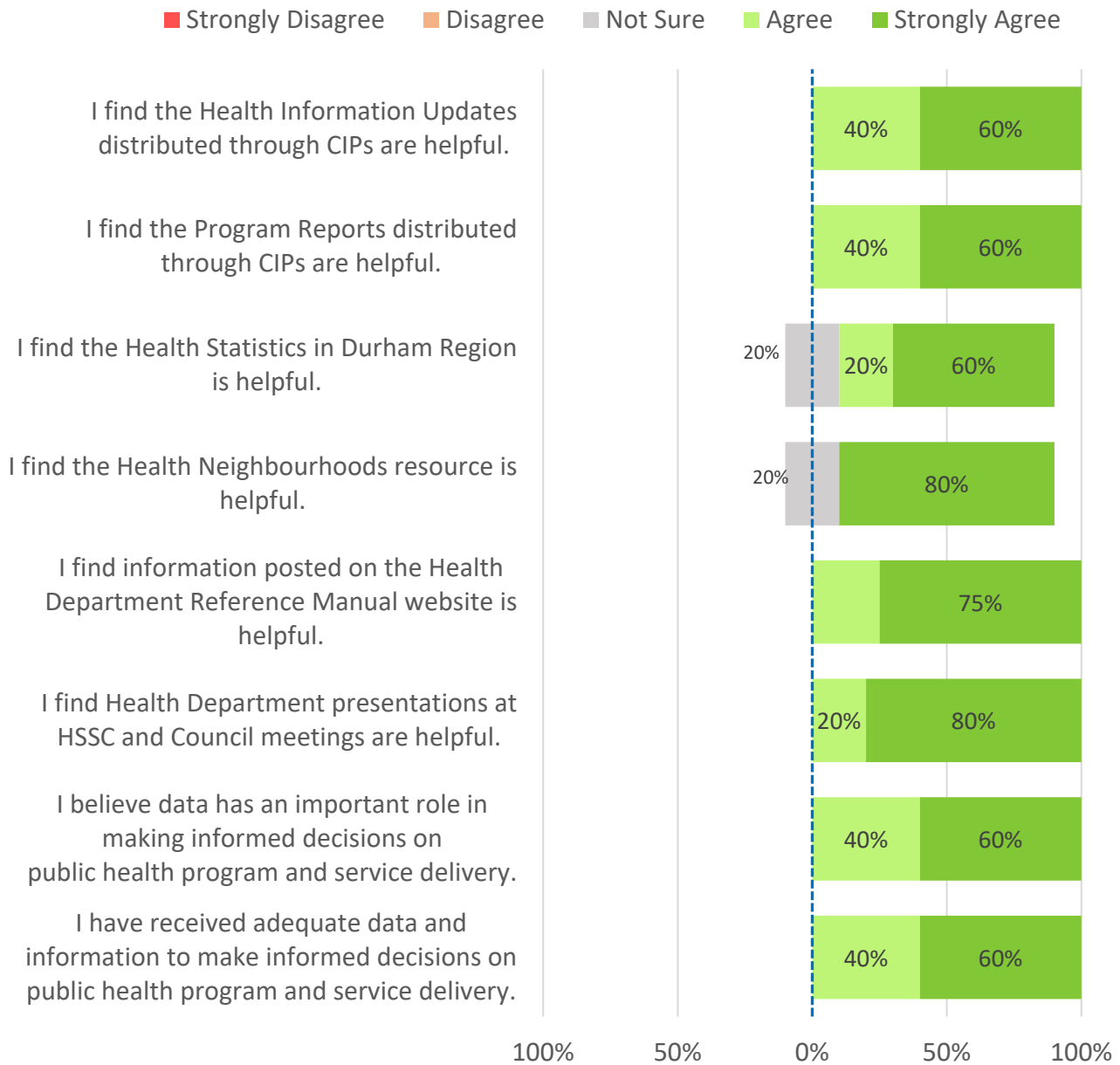
I would like to see an opportunity to have an open dialog in regards to the changing challenges Durham is facing and if there is a need to review our existing committee structure.

I think that we need to look at how we create an opportunity for BOH members to participate more in educational opportunities.

It is important they continue to educate themselves in BOH practices. Many seem to wait for the information to be provided vs going out and doing some research themselves.



Figure 2: BOH Information Sharing



- 80% (4/5) of the respondents currently follow DRHD on social media
- 75% (3/4) found that DRHD's social media strategy for information sharing is very helpful, the rest 25% found that it is somewhat useful.
- 75% (3/4) reported that DRHD Facebook was the most useful social media channel, and one member (25%, 1/4) found that X (Twitter) was the most useful one.

Three members provided suggestions to improve DRHD's information sharing products and also the process of information sharing:



For those not familiar with DRHD presentations are helpful, however for members who have an extensive knowledge at times presentations can be boring. I would like to see more presentations that are technical vs what seems like orientation.

Sometimes the data presented in reports is rather 'granular', this can take time away from focus on higher level issues.

Extending to LinkedIn. I follow Ec Dev on LinkedIn as well and many healthcare providers are also on LinkedIn.



Figure 3: Information sharing during the COVID-19 Pandemic

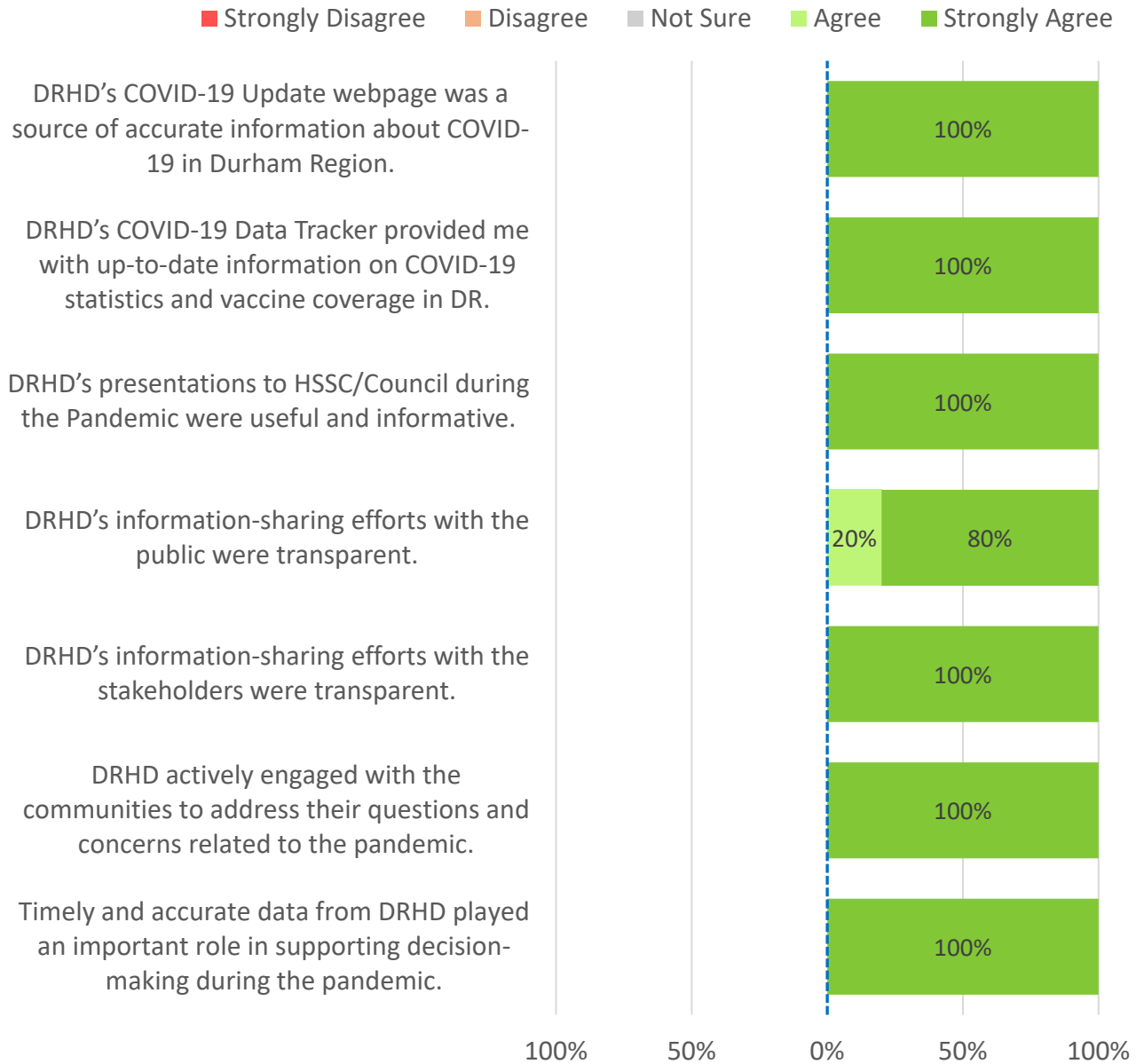
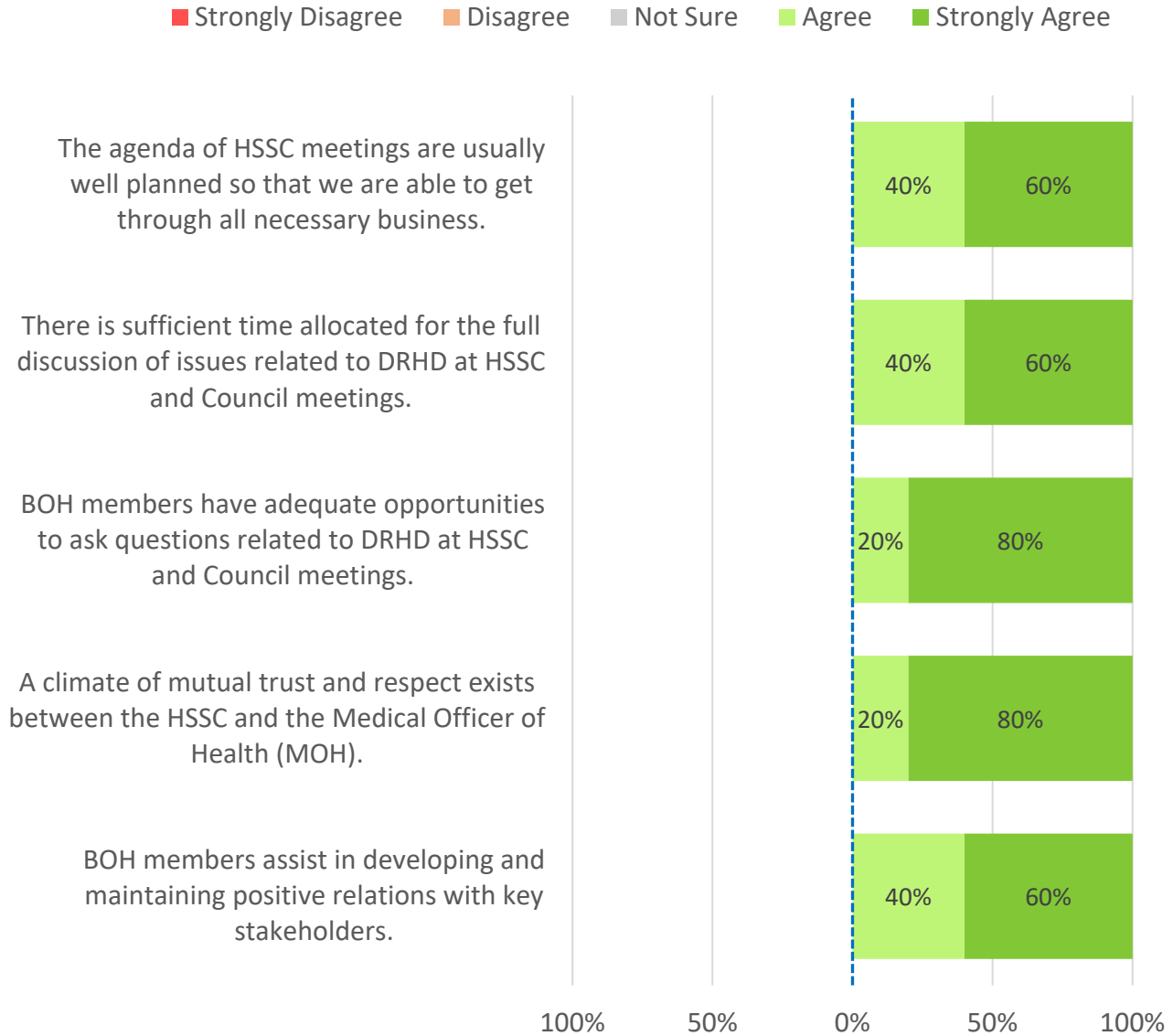
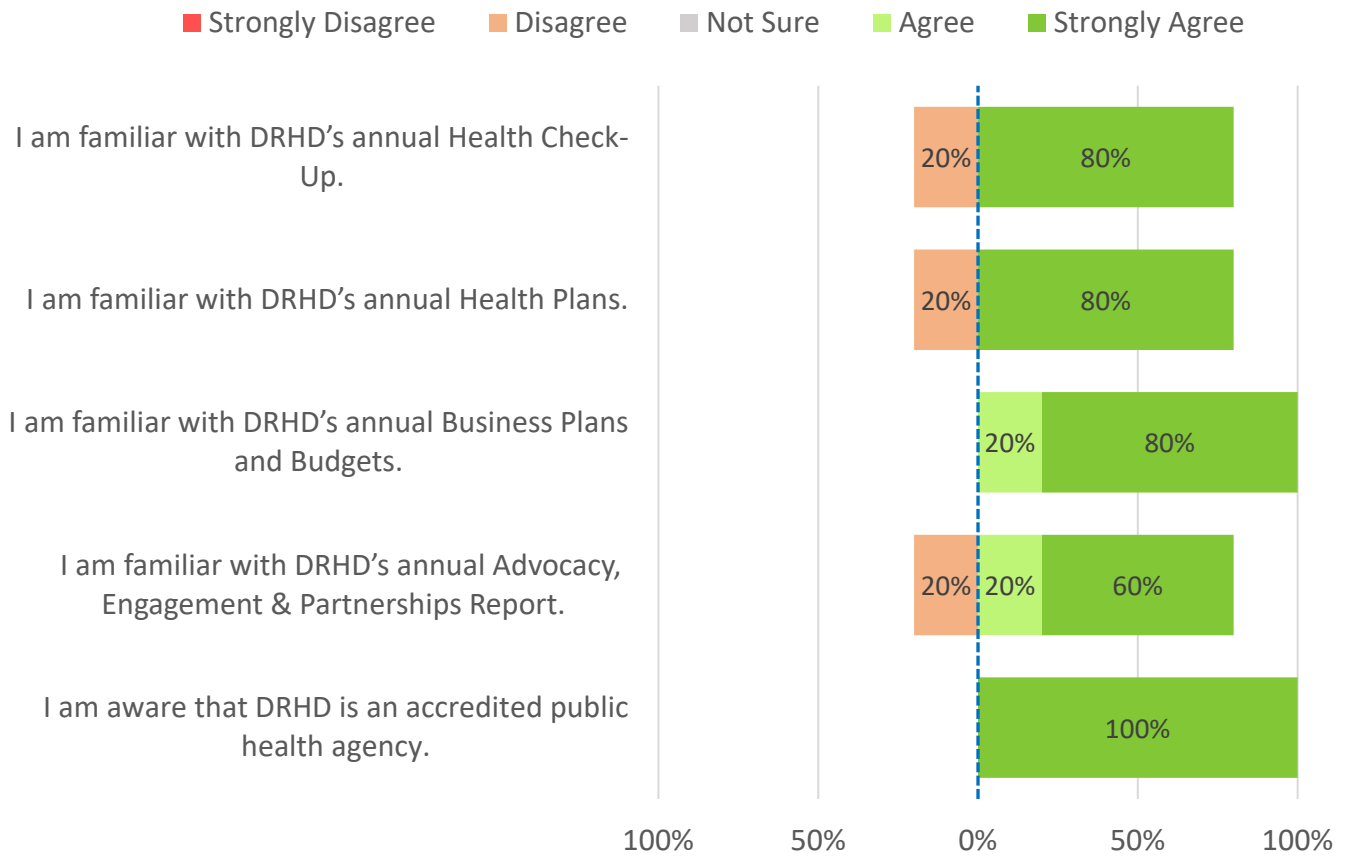


Figure 4: Board Relations



No comments were provided for the question on any areas for improvement in BOH relations.

Figure 5: Annual Review and Planning



One respondent provided a suggestion on Annual Review and Planning:



Perhaps brief updates at Committee on the Durham Health Check Up/Annual Health Plans/Advocacy?"



Board of Health Self-Evaluation Process

Respondents did not provide comments on the question if the current survey an effective way to assess the BOH's governance practices and strategic outcomes.

The most important questions to include in the BOH self-evaluation survey include:

- Expansion on the question of Committee Structure
- Listed above and financial requirements

Two respondents provided suggestions to improve Regional Councillors' participation in the BOH self-evaluation process:



“It would be helpful to have a special meeting to enable some open discussion by members on their thoughts about the BOH followed by the self evaluation”

I think we should continuously look at self-evaluation throughout the year. As we move through changes the understanding of the needs is fluid.

