

Board Correspondence

April 2022

Date	From	Subject
March 16, 2022	Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit	Ltr to Ministry of Health – Response to the Opioid Crisis in Simcoe Muskoka and Ontario-wide.
March 21, 2022	Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit	Motion in support of OPHA’s statement against displays or racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination and SDHU’s statement about public health not remaining silent.
March 30, 2022	Windsor-Essex County Health Unit	Letter of support – Ontario Regulation 116/20 Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health
March 30, 2022	Windsor-Essex County Health Unit	Letter of support – Health and Racial Equity – Denouncing Acts and Symbol of Hate

March 16, 2022

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Elliott:

Re: Response to the Opioid Crisis in Simcoe Muskoka and Ontario-wide

On March 16, 2022, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) Board of Health endorsed a set of provincial recommendations to help address the ongoing and escalating opioid crisis experienced within Simcoe Muskoka and province-wide. Despite regional activities in response to the opioid crisis, there remains an urgent need for heightened provincial attention and action to promptly and adequately address the extensive burden of opioid-related deaths being experienced by those who use substances.

In the 19 months of available data since the start of the pandemic (March 2020 to September 2021) there have been 245 opioid-related deaths in Simcoe Muskoka. This is nearly 70% higher than the 145 opioid-related deaths in the 19 months prior to the start of the pandemic (August 2018 to February 2020), when our communities were already struggling in the face of this crisis. The first nine months of 2021 saw an opioid-related death rate more than 33% higher than the first nine months of 2020, suggesting the situation has not yet stabilized.

As such, the SMDHU Board of Health urges your government to take the following actions:

1. Create a multisectoral task force to guide the development of a robust provincial opioid response plan that will ensure necessary resourcing, policy change, and health and social system coordination.
2. Expand access to evidence informed harm reduction programs and practices including lifting the provincial cap of 21 Consumption and Treatment Service (CTS) Sites, funding Urgent Public Health Needs Sites (UPHNS) and scaling up safer opioid supply options.
3. Explore revisions to the current CTS model to address the growing trends of opioid poisoning amongst those who are using inhalation methods.
4. Expand access to opioid agonist therapy for opioid use disorder through a range of settings (e.g. mobile outreach, primary care, emergency departments), and a variety of medication options.
5. Provide a long-term financial commitment to create more affordable and supportive housing for people in need, including people with substance use disorders.
6. Address the structural stigma and harms that discriminate against people who use drugs, through provincial support and advocacy to the Federal government to decriminalize personal use and possession of substances and ensure increased investments in health and social services at all levels.

Barrie:
15 Sperling Drive
Barrie, ON
L4M 6K9
705-721-7520
FAX: 705-721-1495

Collingwood:
280 Pretty River Pkwy.
Collingwood, ON
L9Y 4J5
705-445-0804
FAX: 705-445-8498

Cookstown:
2-25 King Street S.
Cookstown, ON
L0L 1L0
705-458-1103
FAX: 705-458-0105

Gravenhurst:
2-5 Pineridge Gate
Gravenhurst, ON
P1P 1Z3
705-684-9090
FAX: 705-684-9887

Huntsville:
34 Chaffey St.
Huntsville, ON
P1H 1K1
705-789-8813
FAX: 705-789-7245

Midland:
A-925 Hugel Ave.
Midland, ON
L4R 1X8
705-526-9324
FAX: 705-526-1513

Orillia:
120-169 Front St. S.
Orillia, ON
L3V 4S8
705-325-9565
FAX: 705-325-2091

7. Increase investments in evidence-informed substance use prevention and mental health promotion initiatives, that provide foundational support for the health, safety and well-being of individuals, families, and neighbourhoods, beginning from early childhood.
8. Fund a fulltime position of a Drug Strategy Coordinator/Lead for the Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy.

The SMDHU Board of Health has endorsed these recommendations based on the well-demonstrated need for a coordinated, multi-sectoral approach that addresses the social determinants of health and recognizes the value of harm reduction strategies alongside substance use disorder treatment strategies, as part of the larger opioid crisis response. Evidence has shown that harm reduction strategies can prevent overdoses, save lives, and connect people with treatment and social services. Further, there is an urgent need to change the current Canadian drug policy to allow a public health response to substance use, through decriminalization of personal use and possession paired with avenues towards health and social services, as our Board called for in 2018. These recommendations collectively promote effective public health and safety measures to address the social and health harms associated with substance use.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL Signed By:

Anita Dubeau
Board of Health Chair
Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

cc: Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions
Attorney General of Ontario
Chief Medical Officer of Health
Association of Local Public Health Agencies
Ontario Health
Ontario Boards of Health
Members of Parliament in Simcoe Muskoka
Members of Provincial Parliament in Simcoe Muskoka
Mayors and Municipal Councils in Simcoe Muskoka

Rachelle Cote

From: allhealthunits <allhealthunits-bounces@lists.alphaweb.org> on behalf of Elizabeth Dickson <edickson@hkpr.on.ca>
Sent: March-21-22 3:43 PM
Subject: [allhealthunits] HKPRDHU Board of Health motion in support of OPHA statement against displays of racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination, & Sudbury & Districts Public Health's statement about public health not remaining silent
Categories: Birthday

Good afternoon,

At its meeting held on March 17, 2022, our Board of Health passed the follow motion in support of OPHA's statement against displays of racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination (tweets dated January 31, 2022), and Sudbury & Districts Public Health's statement about public health not remaining silent.

Moved by Mr. Crate
THAT the Board of Health for the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit endorse the Ontario Public Health Association's statement posted January 31, 2022; and

Seconded by Mr. Henderson

FURTHER THAT the Board of Health for the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit endorse Sudbury & Districts Public Health's statement that, "It is important that public health not remain silent and instead state that acts and symbols of hate are unwelcome and should not be tolerated"; and

FURTHER THAT other Ontario boards of health and the Association for Local Public Health Agencies do the same; and

FURTHER THAT these motions be shared with all boards of health, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, area Members of Parliament and Provincial Parliament, the Ontario Public Health Association, and the Association for Municipalities of Ontario.

(OPHA statement posted on social media January 31, 2022

If you have any questions, I would happy to answer them.

Take care,
Liz

Elizabeth Dickson (*she/her*)
Executive Assistant, Office of the Medical Officer of Health and Board of Health
Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit
200 Rose Glen Road
Port Hope, ON L1A 3V6
1-866-888-4577 x1466

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March 30, 2022

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Minister of Health and Deputy Premier
Ministry of Health
College Park 5th Floor, 777 Bay St
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Elliott:

Letter of Support – Ontario Regulation 116/20, Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health

On March 24, 2022 at a regular meeting of the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health, the Board considered a letter from Cynthia St. John, President of the Association of Ontario Public Health Business Administrators (AOPHBA) to Dr. Kieran Moore, CMOH, requesting that Dr. Moore consider extending **Ontario Regulation 116/20 Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health for the duration of public health units' response to the COVID-19 pandemic**. The following motion was passed:

Motion: That the WECHU Board of Health support the letter from the AOPHBA to the CMOH, Dr. Kieran Moore, requesting that Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health be extended for the duration of public health units' response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
CARRIED

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit fully supports the above recommendation, and thanks you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Gary McNamara, Chair
Windsor-Essex County Board of Health

c: Nicole Dupuis, CEO, WECHU
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, aPHa
Ontario Boards of Health
Dr. Kieran, Moore, CMOH
Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario

Sent via email to: Kieran.moore1@ontario.ca

February 9, 2022

Dr. Kieran Moore
Chief Medical Officer of Health
Ministry of Health

RE: Ontario Regulation 116/20, Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health

Dear Dr. Moore,

On behalf of the Association of Ontario Public Health Business Administrators (AOPHBA), I am writing to you concerning the Ontario Regulation 116/20, Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health.

This Regulation, in place since April 2020, has proven invaluable in ensuring that public health units (PHUs) are able to effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since April 2020, public health work has evolved and changed rapidly in response to both local and provincial directions and demands in areas such as case and contact management, outbreak management in our most vulnerable settings, the development and implementation of the vaccination program, and the continued support and leadership provided to community partners including businesses, municipalities, schools, health related agencies, etc.

It is the opinion of the Association Executive that public health units' continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic will be significantly negatively impacted if PHUs do not have the flexibility necessary to deploy staff how and where needed. PHUs have one or more unions within their employ and many of our members have noted that the restrictions of the various collective agreements often do not allow redeployment of PHU staff to different roles or different areas within the PHU, nor assignment of work on weekends, evenings, and holidays, all of which have been critical to vaccine clinics. The flexibility that this Ontario Regulation provides is critical to our ability to continue to plan and execute both local and provincial directives in line with our mandate, for the balance of 2022.

We respectfully ask that you consider extending Ontario Regulation 116/20 Work Deployment Measures for Boards of Health for the duration of public health units' response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,



Cynthia St. John
President
Association of Ontario Public Health Business Administrators (AOPHBA)

c. Brent Feeney, Manager, Funding and Oversight, Office of the CMOH, Ministry of Health
Teresa Bendo, Secretary, AOPHBA
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa)

March 30, 2022

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Minister of Health and Deputy Premier
Ministry of Health
College Park 5th Floor, 777 Bay St
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Elliott:

Letter of Support – Health and Racial Equity: Denouncing Acts and Symbols of Hate

On March 24, 2022 at a regular meeting of the Windsor-Essex County Board of Health, the Board considered a letter from Sudbury & Districts Public Health to Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, President of alPHA, encouraging other Ontario Boards of Health and the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA), to endorse the January 31, 2022 statement of the Ontario Public Health Association **Denouncing Acts and Symbols of Hate**.

The following motion was passed:

Motion: That the WECHU Board of Health support the letter from Sudbury & Districts Public Health to Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, President, Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA), endorsing the January 31, 2022 statement of the Ontario Public Health Association Denouncing Acts and Symbols of Hate

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit fully supports the above recommendation, and thanks you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Gary McNamara, Chair
Windsor-Essex County Board of Health

c: Nicole Dupuis, CEO, WECHU
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHA
Ontario Boards of Health
Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Parm Gill, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism
Sean Fraser, Minister of immigration, Refugee and Citizenship, Government of Canada



**Public Health
Santé publique**
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

February 23, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Dr. Paul Roumeliotis
President
Association of Local Public Health Agencies
480 University Avenue, Suite 300
Toronto, ON M5G 1V2

Dear Dr. Roumeliotis:

Re: Health and Racial Equity: Denouncing Acts and Symbols of Hate

At its meeting on February 17, 2022, the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts carried the following resolution #08-22:

WHEREAS the reduction of health inequities is a goal of Ontario's public health programs and services as set out in the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS), health equity is a Foundational Standard of the OPHS, and programs and services must be implemented in accordance with the Health Equity Guideline which includes the requirement to apply anti racist, anti-oppressive, and culturally safe approaches to public health practice; and

WHEREAS the Vision of the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts, Healthier communities for all, is further guided by its Mission and Strategic Plan, both of which prioritize action in support of health equity; and

WHEREAS the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts is a leader among Ontario local public health agencies in their longstanding commitment to health and racial equity, including notably, the September 2019 endorsement of the Racial Equity Action Framework for Improved Health Equity; and

WHEREAS recent events in Ontario have included public displays of racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination, all detrimental to optimal health for all and prompting the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) on January 31, 2022, to issue the following statement:

While the right to protest is a fundamental element of our democracy, OPHA is disturbed by the hate filled racist and white supremacist symbols and messages flowing from the demonstrations in Ottawa. We denounce all forms of hate, bigotry, racism, antisemitism, and discrimination. Acts and

Sudbury

1300 rue Paris Street
Sudbury ON P3E 3A3
t: 705.522.9200
f: 705.522.5182

Elm Place

10 rue Elm Street
Unit / Unité 130
Sudbury ON P3C 5N3
t: 705.522.9200
f: 705.677.9611

Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est

1 rue King Street
Box / Boîte 58
St.-Charles ON P0M 2W0
t: 705.222.9201
f: 705.867.0474

Espanola

800 rue Centre Street
Unit / Unité 100 C
Espanola ON P5E 1J3
t: 705.222.9202
f: 705.869.5583

Île Manitoulin Island

6163 Highway / Route 542
Box / Boîte 87
Mindemoya ON P0P 1S0
t: 705.370.9200
f: 705.377.5580

Chapleau

34 rue Birch Street
Box / Boîte 485
Chapleau ON P0M 1K0
t: 705.860.9200
f: 705.864.0820

toll-free / sans frais

1.866.522.9200

phsd.ca



Re: Health and Racial Equity: Denouncing Acts and Symbols of Hate

February 23, 2022

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symbols of hate are unwelcome and should not be tolerated. Silence is not acceptable. We urge political leaders from all levels & parties to speak out against such hate and racism, and to promote the importance of vaccines and other public health measures that are protecting all of us, especially the most vulnerable, against illness, hospitalization, & death. Change can only happen when we stand up and speak out. Let's work together to build a society that values diversity, inclusion, and optimal health for all.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts endorse the January 31, 2022, statement of the OPHA; and

FURTHER THAT the Board of Health encourage other Ontario boards of health and the Association of Local Public Health Agencies to do the same; and

FURTHER THAT that this resolution be shared with all boards of health, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, area Honorable Members of Parliament and Provincial Parliament, the Ontario Public Health Association, the Association Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), among other stakeholders.

A reduction of health inequities is a goal of Ontario's public health programs and services as set out in the OPHS. Both aIPHa and local Boards of Health have a long-standing history of supporting various health equity measures (e.g., food security, Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action, living wage, low-income dental, use of a health equity lens, national pharmacare, extending the Ontario Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Nutritional Allowance). Thanks to efforts like these, public health addresses the social determinants of health and promotes health equity. There is still work to be done. Recent events in Ontario have included public displays of racism, anti-Semitism and discrimination, all detrimental to optimal health for all. In supporting health for all, it is important that public health not remain silent and instead state that acts and symbols of hate are unwelcome and should not be tolerated. Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,



Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

cc: All Ontario Boards of Health
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies
Pageen Walsh, Executive Director, Ontario Public Health Association
Jamie McGarvey, President, Association of Municipalities Ontario
Jamie West, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury
France G linas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt
Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin
Paul Lefebvre, Member of Parliament, Sudbury
Marc Serr , Member of Parliament, Nickel Belt
Carol Hugues, Member of Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin-Kapuskasing