

## Board Correspondence

September 2023

Date	From	Subject
June 1, 2023	Huron Perth Public Health	Support for <i>Bill S-254, An Act to Amend the Food and Drugs Act</i> (warning label on alcoholic beverages).
June 1, 2023	Huron Perth Public Health	Request for immediate funding for student nutrition programs and to increase funding for future school years.
June 1, 2023	Huron Perth Public Health	<i>Federal School Food Policy</i> : urging the Federal Ministries to continue the work towards a comprehensive, cost-shared, universally accessible National School Food Policy and national school nutritious meal program.
June 6, 2023	Public Health Sudbury & Districts	Support for <i>Bill S-254, An Act to Amend the Food and Drugs Act</i> (warning label on alcoholic beverages).
June 8, 2023	Algoma Public Health	Support for <i>Bill S-254, An Act to Amend the Food and Drugs Act</i> (warning label on alcoholic beverages).
June 9, 2023	Municipality of Chatham-Kent	Proposed additional measures to <i>Bill C-252, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act</i> : prohibition of food and beverage marketing directed at children. Report No. 35-23.
June 21, 2023	Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit	Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit 2024 Budget.
June 23, 2023	Public Health Sudbury & Districts	Resolution #31-23: Public Health Funding.
June 28, 2023	Public Health Sudbury & Districts	Resolution #35-23: <i>Bill 103, Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act (Vaping is not for Kids), 2023</i> .
July 3, 2023	Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit	Concerns about significant funding shortfalls anticipated for 2024.
July 5, 2023	Porcupine Health Unit	Request for air quality monitoring stations in the Porcupine Health Unit region.
July 7, 2023	Association of Ontario Public Health Business Administrators (AOPHBA)	Strengthening of public health system.
July 10, 2023	City of Hamilton	Endorsement of the following correspondence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (2023-04-25) Chatham-Kent: Universal, No-Cost Coverage for all Prescription Contraceptive Options to all People Living in Ontario</li> <li>• (2023-05-08) Timiskaming: Addressing Household Food Insecurity in Ontario</li> <li>• (2023-05-16) Sudbury and Districts: Bill 93, Joshua's Law (Lifejackets for Life), 2023</li> <li>• (2023-06-01) Huron Perth: Federal School Policy</li> <li>• (2023-06-01) Huron Perth: Request for Immediate Funding for Student Nutrition Programs and to Increase Funding for Future School Years</li> </ul>

July 14, 2023	Thunder Bay District Health Unit	Letter of support: Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children - Report No. 27-2023.
July 19, 2023	aPHa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Public Health Matters - A Business Case for Local Public Health</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Public Health Matters (Fall Vaccine Success)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Public Health Matters (A Public Health Primer)</a></li> </ul>
July 31, 2023	aPHa	July 2023 <a href="#">InfoBreak</a>
August 2, 2023	Middlesex-London Health Unit	2024 budget concerns.
August 22, 2023	Ministry of Health	<a href="#">Ontario Investing in a Stronger Public Health Sector</a>
August 23, 2023	aPHa	Public health funding and capacity announcement.
August 25, 2023	aPHa	August 2023 <a href="#">InfoBreak</a>



June 1, 2023

Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos  
Minister of Health, Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Email: [jean-yves.duclos@parl.gc.ca](mailto:jean-yves.duclos@parl.gc.ca)

Dear Honourable Minister Duclos:

**Re: Support for BILL S-254 An Act to Amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages)**

Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH) Board of Health made a motion on May 12, 2023 to endorse Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's (SMDHU) letter to you dated March 15, 2023 (attached), titled *Support for 'BILL S-254 An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages)'*.

The letter from SMDHU outlines how Bill S-254 aligns with Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health, including recommendations for mandatory labelling of all alcoholic beverages with the number of standard drinks in a container, risk levels from Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health, and health warnings.

Despite being widely socially accepted, alcohol consumption is a complex public health issue that has social, health, and economic impacts on our local communities. Evidence shows that alcohol is a risk factor for numerous chronic diseases, including cancers, as well as injuries and violence. Alcohol consumption in Huron Perth is an ongoing concern. According to the Canadian Community Health Survey, in 2015 to 2020, 21.6% of adults in Huron Perth ages 19 years and older reported drinking at a high-risk level (7+ drinks) in the past week. This was significantly higher than the comparable provincial average of 16.3%. The letter from SMDHU encompasses recommendations that are applicable and beneficial to communities and residents within Huron and Perth counties.

HPPH Board of Health remains committed to working collaboratively with other public health units, non-governmental organizations, health care agencies, and out municipal, provincial, and federal governments to reduce the burden of alcohol on our communities and prevent alcohol-related harms.

The HPPH Board of Health urges support for amending Bill S-254 to implement health warning labels on alcoholic beverages.

Sincerely,



Bernie MacLellan, Board Chair  
Huron Perth Public Health

BM/iki

- cc. Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions ([carolyn.bennett@parl.gc.ca](mailto:carolyn.bennett@parl.gc.ca))  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Ontario ([cmoh@ontario.ca](mailto:cmoh@ontario.ca))  
Senator Patrick Brazeau ([patrick.brazeau@sen.parl.gc.ca](mailto:patrick.brazeau@sen.parl.gc.ca))  
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Local MPs ([john.nater@parl.gc.ca](mailto:john.nater@parl.gc.ca))

June 1, 2023

The Honourable Michael Parsa  
Minister of Children, Community and Social Services

Email: [michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org](mailto:michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org)

Dear Honourable Minister Parsa:

**Re: Request for Immediate Funding for Student Nutrition Programs and to Increase Funding for Future School Years**

I'm writing to you on behalf of Huron Perth Public Health. HPPH has recently endorsed the Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF). The Ontario-chapter (ON-CHSF) members – many of whom deliver school breakfast, lunch, snack or other nutrition and food literacy programs – have identified the same concerns with their local *Student Nutrition Programs* (SNPs) as we are seeing locally.<sup>1</sup>

Currently across Ontario, many school programs are unable to meet current demands, shutting down before the end of the school year or having to limit the foods served in order to get through to the end of the year, due to insufficient funds. There has not been a substantial annual increase to core Ontario SNP funding since 2014. Many programs have felt the strain for years, but the rising food costs of the last two years<sup>2</sup> and increased demand have significantly out-paced current funding. Other schools who have not previously had a program are seeing a demand, but there are no funds for new programs.

There are urgent and immediate needs now. Children and youth need access to nourishing food to thrive and, without further investment, many schools will be unable to continue to provide adequate nourishing food through the remaining school year. ON-CHSF members report, projected budget shortfall for future years is substantial.

We are writing to you to highlight the immediate and longer-term funding needs of SNPs in Ontario. The current reliance on fundraising, volunteers, and donations is inconsistent, unsustainable, and disadvantages those schools who most need the support.

A growing body of research demonstrates that school food programs can benefit students' physical and mental health, improve food choices, and lead to student success (e.g. academic performance, student behaviour, and school attendance).<sup>3</sup> These programs help reduce the \$5.6 billion/year in costs due to nutrition-related chronic disease injuries in Ontario. Well-designed and non-stigmatizing SNPs also have broad, positive impacts on families, communities, and the economy by reducing household food costs, creating jobs, and strengthening Ontario's agri-food sector.<sup>4</sup>

The Ontario government was among the first provincial governments to fund school food programs in Canada and now provides an annual \$27.9M for SNPs in the province. Since Ontario's initial investment, all provincial and

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<sup>1</sup> The national Coalition for Healthy School Food consists of over 250 member and 125 endorser organizations from every province and territory, representing the largest school food network in Canada. Together, we are advocating for the creation of a universal cost-shared school food program that would see all K-12 students in Canada having daily access to healthy food at school.

<sup>2</sup> Consumer Price Index, monthly, not seasonally adjusted. Statistics Canada. Sept 2021 to Sept 2022, food costs increased 11.5% (have rates this high since 1981).

<sup>3</sup> The case for a Canadian national school food program. Hernandez et al., 2018; Nourishing Young Minds. Toronto Public Health, 2012; The impact of Canadian School Food Programs on Children's Nutrition and Health. Colley et al., 2018; Coalition for Healthy School Food

<sup>4</sup> The Burden of Chronic Disease in Ontario. CCO & PHO 2019.

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The Honourable Michael Parsa

June 1, 2023

territorial governments have followed Ontario's lead. In response to recent urgent calls for additional funding because of greater participation and rising food costs, which are not unique to Ontario<sup>5</sup>, many provincial and territorial governments have increased their investments in school food. The 2022-23 school food funding increases include: \$500,000 in Newfoundland and Labrador; \$2 million in New Brunswick; \$2 million in emergency funding in Nova Scotia; \$1.3 million in Manitoba; \$16 million in Quebec; \$214.5 million over three years in Budget 2023 in BC; and \$500,000 in the Yukon. Many of these increases are to the programs' annual operating budgets. However, there has not been a substantial annual increase to core Ontario SNP funding since 2014.

We know Ontario's student nutrition programs have greatly appreciated the additional support that MCCSS provided to SNPs throughout the pandemic, and also your recent statement that no student will go hungry under your watch. We ask MCCSS to again recognize the urgent need at this time and to (1) allocate urgent funding to those programs who need it immediately, and (2) allocate more core funding to programs for the 2023/24 and future school years, when significant shortfalls are expected.

As the federal government prepares to release a National School Food Policy and invest in programs across the country, greater provincial investment in Ontario programs will be seen favourably. We believe that there is a great opportunity for Ontario to show further provincial leadership on student nutrition at this time and to ensure students are well-nourished during the school day.

Your attention to this urgent issue is needed.

Sincerely,



Bernie MacLellan, Board Chair  
Huron Perth Public Health

cc. Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education ([Stephen.Lecceco@pc.ola.org](mailto:Stephen.Lecceco@pc.ola.org))  
Hon. Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health ([sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org](mailto:sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org))  
John Nater, MP Perth-Wellington ([john.nater@parl.gc.ca](mailto:john.nater@parl.gc.ca))  
Ben Lobb, MP Huron-Bruce ([ben.lobb@parl.gc.ca](mailto:ben.lobb@parl.gc.ca))  
Matthew Rae MPP Perth-Wellington ([matthew.rae@pc.ola.org](mailto:matthew.rae@pc.ola.org))  
Hon. Lisa Thompson MPP Huron-Bruce ([lisa.thompsonco@pc.ola.org](mailto:lisa.thompsonco@pc.ola.org))  
Ontario Boards of Health ([allhealthunits@lists.alphaweb.org](mailto:allhealthunits@lists.alphaweb.org))

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<sup>5</sup> For example, see recent media coverage from [PEI](#) and [Newfoundland and Labrador](#).

June 1, 2023

Honourable Karina Gould  
Ministry of Families, Children and Social Development

Email: [karina.gould@parl.gc.ca](mailto:karina.gould@parl.gc.ca)

Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau  
Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food

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Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos  
Ministry of Health

Email: [jean-yves.duclos@parl.gc.ca](mailto:jean-yves.duclos@parl.gc.ca)

Dear Federal Ministers Gould, Bibeau and Duclos:

**Re: Federal School Food Policy**

I write on behalf of the Huron Perth Public Health Board of Health. As the federal government prepares to release a National School Food Policy and invest in programs across the county, we wish to reiterate the call for the development of a universal, cost-shared school food program for Canada and share our concerns about the current state of student nutrition programs in Ontario and our region.

Currently across Ontario, many school programs are unable to meet current demands, shutting down before the end of the school year or having to limit the foods served in order to get through the to the end of the year due to insufficient funds. Many programs have felt the strain with limited increases to provincial funding since 2014, while the rising food costs of the last two years and increased demand have significantly out-paced current funding. Other schools who have not previously had a program are seeing a demand, but there are no funds for new programs. There are urgent and immediate needs now. Children and youth need access to nourishing food to thrive and, without further investment, many will not have access to nourishing food at school. The current state of school food programs across Canada is patch-work and resource-limited. While many schools in Ontario do have student nutrition programs partially funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, a significant investment from the federal government would allow for expansion of services and to address existing gaps. The current reliance on fundraising, volunteers, and donations is inconsistent, unsustainable, and puts schools who most need the support at a significant disadvantage. School food programs offer many academic and nutritional benefits and should be implemented along with additional income supports to reduce health inequities and food insecurity for families across Canada. School food policy and programs alone cannot alleviate poverty and food insecurity.<sup>1,2</sup> School food programs can, however, play an important role in improving nutrition

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<sup>1</sup> PROOF, Open Letter: Stop headlining the pan-Canadian school food policy as a way to reduce food insecurity among children. Dec 9, 2022. <https://proof.utoronto.ca/resource/open-letter-on-school-food-policy-consultation/>

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Dietitians on Public Health, Position Statement and Recommendations on Response to Food Insecurity. Dec 2020. <https://www.odph.ca/odph-position-statement-on-responses-to-food-insecurity-1>

intake, supporting healthy growth and development, supporting academic success, attendance and educational attainment, and improving mental health and well-being.<sup>3</sup>

Currently many elementary schools do not have adequate facilities to allow safe food handling and production of onsite food for meal/snack programs or for hands-on food literacy learning opportunities for students. Adequate funding for infrastructure improvements would benefit school food programs and academic learning across health and physical education, science and technology and other cross-curricular learning opportunities, which can build critical food skills for students when transitioning into adulthood.

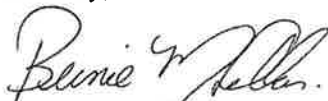
School food programs should be designed to<sup>4</sup>:

- serve tasty, nourishing, culturally appropriate foods
- ensure that ALL students in a school can access the program in a non-stigmatizing manner
- be a cost-shared model, including federal support
- be flexible and locally adapted to the context of the school and region, including commitment to Indigenous control over programs for Indigenous students
- support Canadian farmers and local food producers
- promote food literacy

Huron Perth Public Health Board of Health stands alongside other Boards of Health, School Boards, Municipalities, and other government agencies and organizations in supporting the Coalition for Healthy School Food's vision that every school-aged child and youth has a nutritious meal or snack at school daily.

We urge the federal Ministries of Families, Children and Social Development and Agriculture and Agri-Food to continue your work towards a comprehensive, cost-shared, universally accessible National School Food Policy and national school nutritious meal program with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous partners and stakeholders.<sup>5</sup> Every investment in children and youth counts.

Sincerely,



Bernie MacLellan, Board Chair  
Huron Perth Public Health

BM/ikl

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<sup>3</sup> Hernandez, Kimberley & Engler-Stringer, Rachel & Kirk, Sara & Wittman, Hannah & McNicholl, Sasha. (2018). The case for a Canadian national school food program. *Canadian Food Studies / La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation*. 5. 208-229. 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v5i3.260.

<https://canadianfoodstudies.uwaterloo.ca/index.php/cfs/article/view/260>

<sup>4</sup> Coalition for Healthy School Food. Guiding Principles. 2022. <https://www.healthyschoolfood.ca/guiding-principles>

<sup>5</sup> Prime Minister Mandate Letters. 2021. <https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters/2021/12/16/minister-families-children-and-social-development-mandate-letter> and <https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters/2021/12/16/minister-agriculture-and-agri-food-mandate-letter>





Huron Perth  
**Public  
Health**

- cc. Honourable Michael Parsa, Minister of Children Community and Social Services; [michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org](mailto:michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org)  
Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education; [minister.edu@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.edu@ontario.ca)  
Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health; [sylvia.jones@ontario.ca](mailto:sylvia.jones@ontario.ca)  
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**Public Health  
Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

June 6, 2023

*VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL*

Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos  
Minister of Health, Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos:

**Re: Bill S-254 – An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages)**

The link between alcohol and chronic disease, injury, and death is a significant public health concern.

*WHEREAS alcohol is a well-established risk factor for premature death and injury due to unintentional injuries, violence, cancer, liver disease, heart disease, and high blood pressure; and*

*WHEREAS the Canadian Center on Substance Use and Addiction released new guidelines and information in January 2023 about alcohol consumption and health; and*

*WHEREAS within the Public Health Sudbury & District's catchment area, only 37% of adults report that they are aware that consumption of alcohol every day may increase their risk of cancer; and*

*WHEREAS Public Health Sudbury & Districts has elevated and increasing rates of heavy drinking (27.9% PHSD in 2019/2020, compared with 15.6% for the province); and*

*WHEREAS the Ontario Public Health Association and multiple Ontario boards of health in Ontario are writing in support of Senator Brazeau's Bill S-254 – An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages), which, if passed, would require the industry to*

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Letter to Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos  
Re: Bill S-254 – An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (warning label on alcoholic beverages)  
June 6, 2023  
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*include informative labels on alcoholic bottles discussing health risks and standard drink size;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts similarly convey its support for federally mandated health risk labels on all alcohol containers sold in Canada and urge members of parliament and senators to support Bill S-254.*

Based on new guidelines published by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health, the health risks associated with alcohol consumption are better known. However, given current perceptions and routine promotions of alcohol consumption within popular culture, a gap exists between the populations' understanding of the associated health risks and alcohol consumption behaviours. A review of data in the area served by the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts points to an evident gap in this understanding.

The Board of Health plays a key role in advocating for the best interests of those who live in Sudbury and districts. Alcohol warning labels, including information about standard drink sizes, empower individuals to make informed decisions about their alcohol consumption and their health.

We thank you for your attention to this important health promoting initiative. We ask that you support Senator Brazeau's call through Bill S-254 to implement alcohol labelling to ensure Canadians make informed decisions about their alcohol consumption and their health.

Sincerely,



René Lapierre  
Chair, Board of Health

cc: Patrick Brazeau, Senator  
Donald Plett, Senator  
Raymonde Saint-Germain, Senator  
Scott Tannas, Senator  
Jane Cordy, Senator  
Marc Gold, Senator  
Carolyn Bennett, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, Government of Canada  
France Gélinas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt  
Jamie West, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury  
Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Medical Officer of Health, Government of Ontario  
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada  
All Ontario Boards of Health



June 8, 2023

*Via Email*

Honourable Jean -Yves Duclos  
Minister of Health, Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Jean-yves.duclos@parl.gc.ca

Dear Honourable Minister Duclos:

**Re: Support for Bill S-254, an Act to amend the Food and Drug Act (warning labels on alcoholic beverages)**

On April 26, 2023, the Board of Health for Algoma Public Health (APH), the local public health agency for the District of Algoma in Ontario, received information on alcohol-related harms and the newly released Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health, which outlines the current evidence linking alcohol to many health conditions and aims to help people make informed decisions about their alcohol consumption. At this time, a motion was passed to endorse Bill S-254 – An Act to Amend the Food and Drug Act (Warning Labels on Alcoholic Beverages), which calls on the federal government of Canada to implement alcohol warning labels.<sup>(1)</sup>

The Board of Health for Algoma Public Health is asking the federal government to express support for Bill S-254, by implementing alcohol warning labels that:

1. Indicate the volume that constitutes a standard drink; and
2. Detail the number of standard drinks in the beverage container; and
3. Display health messages regarding the relationship between the number of standard drinks consumed and health outcomes, including the risk of cancer.

More than 75% of Canadians report consuming alcohol, and only 28% of Canadians are aware of the linkage between alcohol and cancer.<sup>(2)</sup> When asked if warning labels on alcoholic beverages would change behaviour, two-thirds of those surveyed said they would decrease their consumption with this knowledge.<sup>(2)</sup> In Algoma, over 1 in 4 residents drink heavily and breast and colorectal cancers are more frequently diagnosed, compared to Ontario.<sup>(3)</sup> APH's Board of Health is committed to influencing the development and implementation of healthy policies and programs related to alcohol and other drugs, with a goal of reducing harms associated with substance use.

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**Blind River**

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**Elliot Lake**

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Bill S-254 aligns with the recent call to action in Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health, regarding mandatory labelling on alcoholic beverages, including the number of standard drinks in a container, risk levels from Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health, and health warnings.<sup>(1)</sup> In Canada, tobacco and cannabis products, two other legally regulated substances, are already subject to mandatory warning labels under the Tobacco and Vaping Products and Cannabis Acts, which have been found to be among the most direct and prominent means of communicating with smokers.<sup>(4)</sup> In the same way that packaging and health warnings on tobacco products were used as part of a broader public health approach to reducing tobacco-related harms, labels on alcoholic beverages can help people make informed choices about their alcohol consumption, and raise awareness of alcohol-related harms.

We ask for your support of Bill S-254 and the implementation of federally mandated labels on all alcohol containers sold in Canada, to better inform Canadians about the health risks of alcohol. This is especially important given that the majority of Canadians are unaware that alcohol is classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a Class 1 carcinogen and is a cause of 7 different types of cancer, including breast and colon.<sup>(5)</sup>

Thank you for your consideration in advocating for improved health of Canadians.



Sally Hagman  
Chair, Board of Health,

cc: Dr. J. Loo, Medical Officer of Health and CEO for Algoma Public Health  
The Honorable Senator Patrick Brazeau  
Local Councils  
Local MPs  
The Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
Ontario Boards of Health

June 9, 2023

Bureau of Policy, Intergovernmental and International Affairs, Food Directorate  
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Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

**Re: Consultation on Restricting Food Advertising Primarily Directed at Children**

At the May 18, 2023 meeting, the Middlesex-London Board of Health carried the following motion regarding Bill C-252, *An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (prohibition of food and beverage marketing directed at children)*:

It was moved by **A. DeViet, seconded by M. Smibert**, that the Board of Health:

- 1) Receive Report No. 35-23 re: "Support for Health Canada's policy update on restricting advertising of food and beverages to children"; and
- 2) Submit a letter on behalf of the MLHU Board of Health in support of Health Canada's recent policy update on restricting the commercial advertising of food and beverages to children along with these additional measures:
  - Increasing the age to under 18 for restricting commercial advertising
  - Expanding restrictions to all advertising types such as celebrity and character endorsements as indicated in Bill C-252.

Youth are vulnerable to the advertising of the food and beverage industry. This exposure influences children and youths' food preferences, purchase requests, and consumption patterns which negatively impacts their health and wellbeing. Advertising of food and beverages influences choices in food and is considered an environmental determinant of health.

Current proposed amendments to Bill C-252, *An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (prohibition of food and beverage marketing directed at children)* include focuses on television and digital media and limits restrictions to children under 13. This leaves various advertising techniques unrestricted and youth aged 13-17 vulnerable to harmful advertising.

The Middlesex-London Board of Health would like to propose the following additional measures (amendments) be considered for the policy update:

- Increasing the age to under 18 for restricting commercial advertising; and
- Expanding restrictions to all advertising types such as celebrity and character endorsements as indicated in Bill C-252.

Attached to this letter is Report 35-23 re: Support for Health Canada's Policy Update on Restricting Advertising of Food and Beverages to Children for further reference.

Sincerely,



Matthew Newton-Reid  
Board Chair  
Middlesex-London Health Unit

CC: Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Health of Canada  
Honourable Patricia Lattanzio, Member of Parliament, Saint-Léonard—Saint-Michel  
Dr. Theresa Tam, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada  
Dr. Alexander Summers, Medical Officer of Health  
Julie Goverde, Acting Manager, Community Health Promotion  
All Ontario Boards of Health

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TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Dr. Alexander Summers, Medical Officer of Health  
Emily Williams, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: 2023 May 18

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**SUPPORT FOR HEALTH CANADA'S POLICY UPDATE ON RESTRICTING ADVERTISING OF FOOD AND BEVERAGES TO CHILDREN**

***Recommendation***

*It is recommended that the Board of Health:*

- 1) *Receive Report No. 35-23 re: "Support for Health Canada's policy update on restricting advertising of food and beverages to children";*
- 2) *Submit a letter on behalf of the MLHU Board of Health in support of Health Canada's recent policy update on restricting the commercial advertising of food and beverages to children along with these additional measures:*
  - *Increasing the age to under 18 for restricting commercial advertising*
  - *Expanding restrictions to all advertising types such as celebrity and character endorsements as indicated in Bill C-252.*

**Key Points**

- Children and youth are vulnerable to the advertising of the food and beverage industry. Constant exposure influences children and youths' food preferences, purchase requests, and consumption patterns which negatively impacts their health and wellbeing.
- Health Canada released a policy update in April 2023 to protect children by restricting food and beverage advertising. However, the policy update solely focuses on television and digital media and limits restrictions to children under 13. This leaves various advertising techniques unrestricted and youth vulnerable to harmful advertising.

**Background**

**Food and Beverage Advertising**

Food and beverage advertising substantially influences food and beverage choices and preferences, and has been identified as an environmental determinant of health (Potvin Kent et al., 2022). Children and youth are exposed to food and beverage advertising on a constant basis. In 2019, approximately \$628,600,000 was spent on food advertising, with more than 90% of the advertising being for foods that do not meet Canada's Food Guide (Potvin Kent et al., 2022). Over 50 million food and beverage advertisements were found on popular children's websites in 2015-2016, and over 90% of those ads were for foods high in sodium, sugar, and/or saturated fat (Heart & Stroke, 2021). Digital advertising via social media, the internet, and mobile devices is less costly, and has been shown to be more effective and persuasive compared to traditional media (Potvin Kent et al., 2022). Social media advertising provides companies with the ability to directly interact with consumers, which provides valuable information to companies (Potvin Kent et al., 2022). In addition, the use of digital media by children and youth has been increasing, resulting in increased exposure to digital marketing (Potvin Kent et al., 2022).

### **Negative Health Impacts of Food and Beverage Marketing to Children and Youth**

The food industry appeals to children and youth using cartoons, celebrities, popular music, slang, and sports to market their products (Heart & Stroke, 2021, Truman & Elliott, 2019; Harris et al., 2020). Children are targeted because they are unable to critically assess advertisement messages, can influence family spending, and provide an opportunity to establish brand loyalty at a young age (Ontario Dietitians in Public Health [ODPH], 2019). Youth are also vulnerable to marketing due to their cognitive and emotional development, peer pressure, high levels of exposure to advertising, and increased independent purchasing power (Harris et al. 2020; Truman & Elliot, 2019). These factors can influence children and youths' food preferences, purchase requests, and consumption patterns, which negatively impacts their health and wellbeing (Hastings et al., 2006; & Cairns, Angus, & Hastings, 2009; Wilcox et. Al., 2004; Carter et al., 2011; Dietitians of Canada 2010).

### **History of Legislation**

The Canadian Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative set voluntary standards for the food industry to follow. However, this voluntary approach has not been effective at reducing food and beverage advertising to children (ODPH, 2019). Policies to protect this vulnerable population from food and beverage advertising have been established in many countries including Mexico, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Brazil, and the province of Quebec in 1980 (ODPH, 2019). Legislation in Quebec has resulted in children seeing fewer food and beverage ads, and fewer characters being used for food and beverage marketing in comparison to other Canadian provinces (Potvin Kent et al., 2011).

In September 2015, *Bill S-228, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (prohibiting food and beverage marketing directed at children)*, was introduced, and passed by the Senate and the House of Commons, however, was not called to final vote in 2019. In 2016, Health Canada committed to protecting vulnerable populations as part of the Healthy Eating Strategy through restricting commercial advertising of food and beverages that do not support the health of children and youth. *Bill C-252, An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act (prohibition of food and beverage marketing directed at children)* was introduced in November 2021, and has been adopted by the Standing Committee on Health on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and presented to the House of Commons on April 26, 2023.

### **Current Legislative Action**

Health Canada has committed to implementing restrictions on food and beverage advertising to children by the fall of 2023 in their *Forward Regulatory Plan for 2022-2024*. Health Canada recently released a policy update in April 2023, indicating intention to amend the *Food and Drug Regulations* to "restrict advertising to children under the age of 13 of foods that contribute to excess intakes of sodium, sugars and saturated fat... focusing on television and digital media first" and is accepting comments until June 12, 2023.

### **Conclusion**

Legislation that regulates food and beverage advertising to children and youth helps to protect this population from negative health impacts. The current policy proposal from Health Canada limits restrictions to children under 13, leaving some youth vulnerable. It also limits legislation to television and digital media, allowing other persuasive advertising methods such as celebrity endorsements to continue. References for sources within this report are noted in [Appendix A](#).

This report was prepared by the Community Health Promotion Team, Healthy Living Division.



Dr. Alexander Summers, MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health



Emily Williams, BScN, RN, MBA, CHE  
Chief Executive Officer



## References for Report 35-23: Support for Health Canada's policy update on restricting advertising of food and beverages to children

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<http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/advertising-children.pdf>

June 21, 2023

The Honourable Sylvia Jones  
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health  
Ministry of Health  
777 Bay Street, Floor 5  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Email to: [sylvia.jones@ontario.ca](mailto:sylvia.jones@ontario.ca)

**Re: Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit 2024 Budget**

Dear Minister Jones,

On behalf of the Board of Health for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU), I wish to express appreciation for the Ontario government's investment in public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, the most extraordinary emergency response of our lifetime. Public health remains a cornerstone of the health system during pandemics and at other times, providing cost-effective services that have reduced overall provincial health care costs and kept many people out of emergency departments and hospitals, while at the same time maintaining a healthy and productive population.

Sufficient, predictable, and timely provincial funding into the future is vital to maintaining these essential cost-saving services. The *Public Health Resilience in Ontario* report and the 2023 pre-budget submission of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA), as well as the 2022 Annual Report from the Chief Medical Officer of Health (*Being Ready: Ensuring Public Health Preparedness for Infectious Outbreaks and Pandemics*) have spoken to the great value of the Province's ongoing investment in local public health.

The provincial Mitigation Funding of \$2.2 million provides a very important contribution to the Province's overall grant to the budget for SMDHU, which is vitally important in maintaining the Board's full range of services to the communities it serves. In addition, ongoing dedicated funding for COVID-19 would allow SMDHU to continue to respond to COVID-19 as a disease of public health significance in accordance with the provincial guidelines.

Specifically the continuation of these funds would help to ensure that residents and visitors of Simcoe Muskoka receive a full range of essential public health programs and services that have kept Ontarians out of hospitals, such as food safety inspections to prevent foodborne illness, ensuring safe drinking water to prevent community-wide outbreaks, supporting parents and families for healthy growth and development, tobacco control to prevent lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, promoting healthy nutrition to prevent diabetes and cardiovascular disease, improving mental health in school children, immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases, and preparations for future public health emergencies, to name but a few. Funding would also support SMDHU's continued presence throughout our region such that public health services are accessible to all via various modalities, including in our local offices and by ready phone contact.

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**Gravenhurst:**  
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**Huntsville:**  
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Given the impacts identified above and the value achieved through ongoing funding from the Province for local public health services in our communities of Simcoe County, the District of Muskoka, and the Cities of Barrie and Orillia, the Board urges that the Province include its Mitigation Funding within its base funding grant commencing in 2024, and also continue funding for the COVID-19 response (vaccination and outbreak management). In this context, the Board notes and supports alpha's position for a return to the provision of 75% of the funding by the Province for the base budgets of local public health units.

To maintain the public health services that are essential to the health of our communities, it is critical that local public health agencies be adequately resourced by the Province, now and into the future.

Sincerely,

**ORIGINAL Signed By:**

Ann-Marie Kungl  
Chair, Board of Health  
Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

cc: Councils of the Simcoe Muskoka obligated municipalities  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
Ontario Boards of Health in Ontario  
MPPs of Simcoe Muskoka



**Public Health**  
**Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

June 23, 2023

VIA EMAIL

The Honourable Sylvia Jones  
Minister of Health  
Ministry of Health  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 777 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3  
[Sylvia.jones@ontario.ca](mailto:Sylvia.jones@ontario.ca)

Dear Minister Jones:

**Re: Public Health Funding**

I am pleased to share with you Public Health Sudbury & Districts Board of Health motion in support of the Board of Health for the City of Hamilton, which calls on the provincial government to improve funding to Public Health.

At its meeting on May 18, 2023, the Board of Health carried the following resolution #31-23:

*THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts endorse the recommendations of the Board of Health for the City of Hamilton and urge the provincial government to:*

- *Fully fund the provincial portion, at least 70%, of the total costs of the mandatory public health programs and services provided under the OPHS;*
- *Continue the current mitigation funding until such time as the cost-shared arrangement is restored to the mixed 100% and 75%/25% model as it was the public health budget for 2018-2019; and,*
- *Include expectations or on-going response in the OPHS and provide permanent funding to sustain these requirements.*

Boards of Health play a key role in improving the health of communities and Public Health Sudbury & Districts is committed to an effective and accountable public health system. With inflation costs, increasing costs in wages and benefits and operating expenses, there are growing concerns about our ability

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The Honourable Sylvia Jones

June 23, 2023

Page 2

to meet the requirements of provincial legislation and related documents including the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) and the increasing needs of our communities with the current provincial funding policy. It is critical that Public Health be adequately resourced. Without adequate funding, our ability to deliver on our requirements risk erosion over time impacting the health of our communities. We urge the government to support sufficient, stable, and sustained funding for local public health agencies.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



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

cc: Jamie West, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury  
France G  linas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt  
Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health  
All Ontario Boards of Health  
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies



**Public Health  
Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

June 28, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building  
Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford:

**Re: Bill 103, Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act (Vaping is not for Kids), 2023**

Teen vaping has increased steadily across the nation and within Sudbury and districts since 2017. There are significant health risks associated with vaping and nicotine use including lung damage, changes to the brain, dependence or addiction, difficulty learning, and increased anxiety and stress. Furthermore, there is an increased risk for future tobacco cigarette use among youth who vape (Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, 2018).

Bill 103 aims to prevent youth from starting to vape and seeks to decrease vaping rates through a number of important actions, including prohibiting the promotion of vapour products, and raising the minimum age for purchasing vapour products.

At its meeting on June 15, 2023, the Board of Health carried the following resolution #35-23:

*WHEREAS vaping poses substantial health risks linked to the development of chronic illness, addiction, polysubstance use, as well as risks for injury and death; and*

*WHEREAS vaping rates among youth have grown with 30.6% of Grade 7 to 12 students in Northern Ontario reporting having used electronic cigarettes(vaping) in 2019, compared with 22.7% for the province; and*

*WHEREAS Board of Health motion 48-19 noted the Board's longstanding history of proactive and effective action to prevent tobacco and emerging product use and urged the adoption of a comprehensive tobacco and e-cigarette strategy; and*

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*WHEREAS Bill 103 – Smoke-Free Ontario Amendment Act (Vaping is not for Kids), 2023 aims to prevent youth from initiating vaping and decrease the current usage of vaping products by targeting legislation changes, including banning the retail of flavoured vaping products, increasing minimum purchasing age to 21, and prohibiting the promotion of vapor products;*

*THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts endorse Bill 103 - Smoke Free Ontario Amendment Act (Vaping is not for Kids), 2023; and*

*FURTHER THAT this endorsement be shared with relevant stakeholders.*

Vaping among youth is a complex public health issue that requires immediate action. This suggests that a single intervention or approach will be insufficient to address the high rates of vaping among youth. At Public Health Sudbury & Districts, our efforts in addressing youth vaping involve a multi-faceted, comprehensive, upstream, and strengths-based approach that supports positive youth development. Strategies are community and school-driven and influence risk and protective factors associated with vaping. The strategies include education, policy development, prevention programs, research, collaboration, and enforcement activities, fostering the development of supportive social and physical environments in which youth can thrive and flourish. Yet, this is just one piece in a comprehensive approach addressing youth vaping.

The legislative solutions of Bill 103 are designed to make vaping less available and desirable for youth to address the increase in rates of vaping and to prevent the associated harms of vaping.

We thank you for your attention to this important health promotion initiative, and we continue to look forward to opportunities to work together to promote and protect the health for everyone.

Sincerely,



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

cc: France G linas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health  
Honourable Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services  
Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
All Ontario boards of Health  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies





July 3, 2023

Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health  
Province of Ontario  
Hepburn Block 10th Floor 80 Grosvenor Street Toronto,  
ON M7A 1E9  
Sent via email: Sylvia.Jones@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister Jones,

I want to begin by thanking you and your government for your continued commitment to keeping the health and safety of Ontarians a top priority. Your steadfast financial support for public health units throughout the COVID-19 pandemic was critical to ensuring our ongoing ability to meet the needs of our communities.

On behalf of the Board of Health for Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPRDHU), I am writing to you to share our concerns about significant funding shortfalls anticipated for 2024.

The Province of Ontario invested significant funds across the health sector to support the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The success of preventing the spread of COVID-19 through vaccination and other public health measures is something to celebrate. Given that COVID-19 is no longer a public health emergency of international concern, it is understandable that the scope and scale of interventions and financial support provided by the Province is pared back.

We are aware that several one-time buckets of funding are planned to end throughout 2023. This includes the School Focused Nurses Initiative, COVID-19 Extraordinary Funding, and Mitigation Funding. This leaves public health units to respond to increased community needs that arose during the pandemic (such as drug poisonings), address public health service back-logs (such as immunizations), and continue to manage COVID-19 as an endemic infectious disease using a base budget that is essentially the same as it was in 2018.

The end of the above-mentioned one-time funding, coupled with increased operational costs due to inflation, means that HKPRDHU will be challenged to meet the growing needs of our communities and the continued expanding requirements of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS). Our anticipated financial shortfall to maintain our existing programs, assuming that Mitigation funding is continued, is estimated at \$1.9 million. To illustrate the gap in funding solely related to inflationary pressures, had the consumer price index been applied annually since 2018 to the HKPRDHU base budget, the provincial portion of our base budget for mandatory programs would be \$14,728.994 (an increase of \$2.7 million dollars).

Although one-time funding enabled health units to address urgent needs arising in a timely fashion, the lack of sufficient, predictable funding is a barrier to establishing a permanent strong and resilient public health system. Strong infrastructure for local public health is paramount to ensuring that Ontario is ready for the next surge in COVID-19, the next pandemic, the next extreme weather event, or the next emerging health hazard.

## PROTECTION · PROMOTION · PREVENTION

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Minister Jones  
July 3, 2023  
Page 2

Now, more than ever, our communities need a robust public health system. While the threat of COVID-19 has dimmed, the need for an agile public health response to infectious disease threats was clearly articulated in the Chief Medical Officer of Health report for 2022 (insert link to Being Ready).

Public health units are a fundamental part of the solution to address the current challenges faced in primary and acute care. By preventing the spread of infectious diseases, preventing illnesses associated with environmental exposures, and preventing chronic diseases through policy development and health promotion, public health units keep people out of emergency departments and out of hospitals. Investing in public health is a long-term, sustainable approach to building a strong health care system.

For the above reasons, the Board of Health for HKPRDHU urges the provincial government to demonstrate their ongoing support for public health by increasing the provincial contribution to mandatory programs and continuing Mitigation funding. Should Mitigation funding end, we urge the provincial government to reverse the 70/30 policy decision made in 2019.

As we look to a future that holds a strong, resilient health system for all Ontarians, we urge the Province to provide the necessary supports for the recovery and strengthening of public health in a comprehensive and sustainable way.

Respectfully,

BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THE HALIBURTON, KAWARTHA,  
PINE RIDGE DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT



David Marshall, Chair, Board of Health

DE/nb

Cc (via email): The Hon. Doug Ford, Premier  
Laurie Scott, MPP Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock  
David Piccini, MPP Northumberland-Peterborough South  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Loretta Ryan, Association of Local Public Health Agencies

July 5, 2023

Honourable Minister David Piccini  
Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 777 Bay Street  
Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2J3  
Sent Via E-mail

**Subject: Request for Air Quality Monitoring Stations in the Porcupine Health Unit region**

Dear Minister Piccini,

We are writing to request the installation of air quality monitoring stations in the Porcupine Health Unit (PHU) region. On June 8, 2023, the Board of Health for the Porcupine Health Unit carried the following resolution #BOH-2023-06-66:

***Be It Resolved**, that the Board of Health for the Porcupine Health Unit direct the Medical Officer of Health/Chief Executive Officer and Board of Health Chair to write a letter requesting the installation of air quality monitoring stations in the Porcupine Health Unit Region.*

The implementation of these monitoring stations is crucial to ensure the health and well-being of the residents in this region. As per the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS), boards of health are required to prepare for emergencies, and protect public health and reduce the risk of adverse health outcomes resulting from poor air quality.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, the Porcupine Health Unit (PHU) region currently lacks the necessary infrastructure for comprehensive air quality monitoring. This deficiency prevents accurate assessment of poor air quality exposure and potential health risks faced by PHU communities, thus limiting data-informed and community specific recommendations for community members, especially those at higher risk of negative health impacts.

The need for this capacity has become more urgent with the ongoing forest fire season and significant air quality alerts due to wildfire smoke. As the largest geographic health unit in the province, covering over 274,000 square kilometers, sharing lands with 11 distinct First Nation communities, poor air quality due to forest fire smoke is not new however is an increasing concern and we need access to the appropriate information to respond to these emergencies.

Air pollution is a significant public health concern, as it has detrimental effects on human health. Exposure to poor air quality is associated with increased rates of respiratory diseases, cardiovascular conditions, and even premature death.<sup>2</sup> The PHU population experiences poorer health status compared to Ontario, with a higher percentage of the population reporting chronic diseases such as asthma, diabetes, high blood pressure,<sup>3</sup> and thus many community members are at greater risk from the ill effects of poor air quality due to pollution as well as wildfire smoke.

Climate change has exacerbated air pollution issues, leading to increased health risks and environmental challenges. Rising temperatures, increased frequency of wildfires, and changing weather patterns contribute to the release of pollutants into the air, posing significant health risks to our communities.<sup>4</sup> Monitoring air quality will enable a better understanding of the complex interactions between climate change and air pollution across the vast region, allowing us to assess exposure levels to air pollution and develop targeted strategies to address these interconnected issues.

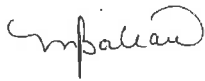
These targeted strategies for air pollution would also benefit environmental justice. Environmental justice is of the utmost importance in the Porcupine region, which is home to many equity-deserving and marginalized communities. These communities are often disproportionately affected by poor air quality and environmental hazards, resulting in disproportionate health disparities.<sup>5,6</sup> By installing air quality monitoring stations, we can better protect the health of all residents, regardless of their socio-economic status or geographical location. This initiative aligns with our commitment to promote environmental justice and reduce health inequities in the Porcupine region. Installing air quality monitoring stations in strategic locations of the Porcupine region would also be an investment in the health and well-being of our communities. By proactively monitoring air quality, we can detect pollutant trends, identify potential sources of pollution, and implement targeted interventions. This approach has been proven to reduce the burden of disease, improve overall health outcomes, and ultimately lead to cost savings for the healthcare system.<sup>2, 7, 8</sup>

Furthermore, the implementation of air quality monitoring stations would provide several immediate benefits to the communities in the Porcupine region. Firstly, it would increase public awareness and knowledge regarding air quality and its impact on health. With access to real-time air quality data, residents can make informed decisions about outdoor activities, particularly for higher risk groups such as children, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing cardiac and respiratory conditions. It is also critical to inform local collaborative emergency response plans to ensure risk reduction measures and indoor spaces with clean air are available to all, including the increasing population facing under housing and homelessness. Secondly, these monitoring stations would enable us to assess the effectiveness of pollution control measures and policies. By analyzing the data collected, we can evaluate the impact of various interventions, advocate for evidence-based policies, and ensure that air quality standards are being met.

We urge you to consider this request for the timely installation of air quality monitoring stations in the Porcupine Health Unit region. By doing so, we will fulfill our obligations under the OPHS, protect the health of our residents, and promote sustainable development. The availability of accurate air quality data will empower communities to make informed decisions, reduce exposure to pollutants, and improve overall health outcomes.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your positive response and discussing the next steps in implementing air quality monitoring stations in the Porcupine Health Unit region.

Yours sincerely,



Michelle Boileau  
Board of Health Chair



Dr. Lianne Catton  
Medical Officer of Health/Chief Executive Officer  
Porcupine Health Unit

Copy: Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier of Ontario, Minister of Health  
Honourable Steven Guibeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
Bernard Derible, Parliamentary Deputy Minister, Emergency Management, Treasury Board Secretariat  
Commissioner of Emergency Management  
Honourable George Pirie, Member of Provincial Parliament Timmins  
Honourable John Vanthof, Member of Provincial Parliament Timiskaming - Cochrane  
Honourable Guy Bourgouin, Member of Provincial Parliament Mushkegowuk-James Bay  
Honourable Charlie Angus, Member of Parliament Timmins  
Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Member of Parliament, Minister of Health  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health  
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Health Agencies (alPHA)  
All Ontario Boards of Health  
All Member Municipalities of the Porcupine Health Unit

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[https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph\\_standards/docs/protocols\\_guidelines/Healthy\\_Environments\\_and\\_Climate\\_Change\\_Guideline\\_2018\\_en.pdf](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph_standards/docs/protocols_guidelines/Healthy_Environments_and_Climate_Change_Guideline_2018_en.pdf) (2018, accessed June 7, 2023).
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July 7, 2023

The Honourable Sylvia Jones  
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health  
Ministry of Health

Delivered via email: [Sylvia.Jones@ontario.ca](mailto:Sylvia.Jones@ontario.ca)

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

Delivered via email: [Kieran.Moore1@ontario.ca](mailto:Kieran.Moore1@ontario.ca)

Dear Minister Jones and Dr. Moore,

On behalf of the Association of Ontario Public Health Business Administrators (AOPHBA), I write to you to express our interest in sharing our collective wisdom and experience to strengthen our public health system, enabling it to be responsive to growing demand and complexity, and accountable to Ontarians for the public dollars it spends. Our Association membership is comprised of business leaders in the 34 public health units across Ontario.

The AOPHBA wishes to acknowledge the Province of Ontario's support both past and on-going, in relation to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Whether through one-time funding for COVID-19 activities including case and contact management, enforcement, vaccination, the school-focused nurses initiative or through guidance documents, messaging, provision of cold storage units, information technology applications such as CCM and COVAX, your support allowed public health to increase capacity and our ability to respond to the ever-changing pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also wish to acknowledge the exhaustive efforts of our public health units' public health professionals that went above and beyond to care for their communities. But our collective work is far from over. We now need to regroup and reflect upon the learnings of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Dr. Moore's 2022 Annual Report, *Being Ready: Ensuring Public Health Preparedness for Infectious Outbreaks and Pandemics*, rightly points to a call for action to be prepared to protect ourselves from future health threats, but also to invest in building a strong and resilient system and communities that create the best possible health for all. Preparedness is an on-going process, not an end state.

Above all, to be effective in reducing the demand on the health care system while simultaneously building an adaptive and resilient public health system that is responsive to threats to population health, sustainable and stable funding is required. Sustainable and stable funding will not only allow public health units to meet the requirements of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS), but also the increased demand caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as build on current capacity to respond to emergent public health issues. The 2024 budget year presents a substantial risk to the capacity of public health units with the discontinuance of mitigation funding, rising operating costs, and increased and on-going work involving COVID-19. Head count reductions of highly valued health professionals will be required to address these pressures, negatively impacting our ability to meet the requirements of the OPHS.

We know that a balanced approach is necessary, managing the health care needs of today and preparing for the disease threats of tomorrow. Recognizing that there are always fiscal limitations, AOPHBA appreciates the need to ensure the system is designed to optimize the use of every dollar invested in public health. Our members have a keen interest and unique knowledge-base to contribute to system-wide or regional planning for an improved public health system, in particular with respect to administrative effectiveness and efficiency.

Dr. Moore's 2022 Annual Report states "To be ready for the next outbreak, Ontario's public health sector must take a collective, forward-thinking approach to pandemic planning. It must make sustained investments in strengthening sector and system, community, and societal readiness." We encourage you to create sustained public health funding levels that are supportive of public health's response to the requirements of the Ontario Public Health Standards, including sector and system readiness to emerging public health issues. We are eager for the opportunity to collaborate on the strengthening of public health and offer our collective wisdom and experience to create a strong, effective, and efficient public health system for the future.

Our Association Executive would be pleased to meet with you, in person, to discuss this matter of mutual importance and we are available at your convenience.

Sincerely,



Cynthia St. John  
President

Association of Ontario Public Health Business Administrators (AOPHBA)

C: The Hon. Doug Ford, Premier  
AOPHBA Membership  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) Board of Directors  
Ontario Boards of Health  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)  
Dr. Catherine Zahn, Deputy Minister of Health



## Rachelle Cote

---

**From:** allhealthunits <allhealthunits-bounces@lists.alphaweb.org> on behalf of Richardson, Elizabeth <Elizabeth.Richardson@hamilton.ca>  
**Sent:** July 10, 2023 5:30 PM  
**To:** AllHealthUnits@lists.alphaweb.org  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL---[allhealthunits] INFORM: City of Hamilton - Correspondence Endorsed at June 12, 2023 Public Health Committee Meeting  
**Attachments:** Coverage for Prescription Contraceptives.pdf; BOH Endorsement Ltr\_Household Food Insecurity\_May 2023.pdf; Letter\_support\_Bill\_93\_Lifejacket\_Legislation.pdf; Federal Letter re Federal School Food Policy.pdf; Provincial Letter re Student Nutrition Programs Urgent Needs.pdf  
**Categories:** Birthday

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

**ATTN:**  
Ontario Boards of Health  
ALPHA  
COMOH

This email is to provide notification that at its meeting on June 12, 2023 the City of Hamilton's Public Health Committee endorsed the following pieces of correspondence (originals attached for reference):

- **(2023-04-25) Chatham-Kent:**  
Universal, No-Cost Coverage for all Prescription Contraceptive Options to all People Living in Ontario
- **(2023-05-08) Timiskaming:**  
Addressing Household Food Insecurity in Ontario
- **(2023-05-16) Sudbury and Districts:**  
Bill 93, Joshua's Law (Lifejackets for Life), 2023
- **(2023-06-01) Huron Perth:**  
Federal School Policy
- **(2023-06-01) Huron Perth:**  
Request for Immediate Funding for Student Nutrition Programs and to Increase Funding for Future School Years

Thank you,

**Krislyn Fernandes** (She/Her)  
Administrative Coordinator to Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, Medical Officer of Health

Office of the Medical Officer of Health | Public Health Services  
Healthy and Safe Communities Dept. | City of Hamilton  
100 Main Street West, 6th Floor | Hamilton, ON | L8P 1H6  
t: 905.546.2424 x3502 | e: [Krislyn.Fernandes@hamilton.ca](mailto:Krislyn.Fernandes@hamilton.ca)

April 25, 2023

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
*Delivered via email: [premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)*

The Honourable Sylvia Jones  
Deputy Premier  
Minister of Health  
*Delivered via email: [sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org](mailto:sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org)*

Dear Premier Ford and Deputy Premier and Minister Jones:

**RE: Universal, No-cost Coverage for all Prescription Contraceptive Options to all People Living in Ontario**

At its meeting held on March 15, 2023, the Chatham-Kent Board of Health passed the following motion:

“That Administration prepare a letter of advocacy to the Provincial government encouraging them to cover the cost of birth control for all Ontario residents, and that this letter be copied to aPHa and any other appropriate partners.”

It is estimated that 30-40% of all pregnancies in Canada are unintended with those of lower socioeconomic status being one of the leading vulnerable groups impacted<sup>1</sup>. Timely access to effective contraception directly influences the rate of unintended pregnancies. In Canada, cost is the leading barrier preventing individuals from gaining access to effective contraceptives<sup>2/3</sup>. Cost should not be a barrier Ontarians face to obtain consistent and timely access to effective contraceptives.

OHIP+ has begun to address this issue in Ontario by providing no cost coverage for anyone under the age of 25 who is not covered by a private plan. This coverage needs to be expanded to all Ontarians without the restrictions put on those with private plans or those over the age of 24. Ontarians should have universal, no-cost, confidential access to effective contraceptives.

At the beginning of April, British Columbia started the journey of providing prescription contraceptive access equality for their province and we are advocating for Ontario in this journey.

.../2

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. We stand firmly in support of protecting and advancing sexual and reproductive health rights.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

Brock McGregor  
Chair, Chatham-Kent Board of Health

Copy to:

Hon. Monte McNaughton, MPP, Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development  
Trevor Jones, MPP, Chatham-Kent-Leamington  
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa)  
Ontario Public Health Units

- 1 Nethery E, Schummers L, Maginley S, Dunn S and Norman W. "Household income and contraceptive methods among female youth: a cross sectional study using the Canadian Community Health Survey (2009-2010 And 2013-2014)". CMAJ Open, vol. 7, no. 4, 2019 Retrieved from [www.cmajopen.ca/content/7/4/E646](http://www.cmajopen.ca/content/7/4/E646)
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- 3 Black, Amanda Y., et al. "The Cost of Unintended Pregnancies in Canada: Estimating Direct Cost, Role of Imperfect Adherence, and the Potential Impact of Increased Use of Long-Acting Reversible Contraceptives." Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology Canada, vol. 37, no. 12, 2015. pp. pp. 1086-1097., doi:101016/s1701-2163(16)30074-3.



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May 8, 2023

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building, Rm 281  
Queens Park  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1  
Sent via email: [doug.fordco@pc.ola.org](mailto:doug.fordco@pc.ola.org)

The Honourable Michael Parsa  
Minister of Children, Community and Social  
Services  
438 University Ave, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor.  
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8  
Sent via email: [michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org](mailto:michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org)

The Honourable Sylvia Jones  
Minister of Health/Deputy Premier  
777 Bay Street, College Park, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor.  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3  
Sent via email: [sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org](mailto:sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org)

Dear Premier Ford, Deputy Premier and Minister Jones, and Minister Parsa

**Re: Addressing Household Food Insecurity in Ontario**

---

On April 05, 2023, at a regular meeting of the Board of Health (Board) for the Timiskaming Health Unit, the Board recognized Household Food Insecurity (HFI) as an income-driven problem that requires income-based solutions.

Household food insecurity is a significant issue affecting our region, with 1 in 5 households in Timiskaming experiencing some form of food insecurity.<sup>2</sup> This vulnerability is closely linked to household income, and families with lower incomes are more likely to struggle with affording food, rent and other basic needs.<sup>1</sup>

The 2022 Monitoring Food Affordability findings show that a family of four in Timiskaming spends \$1,152 monthly on food.<sup>2</sup> This family would need to allocate a significant portion of their income towards rent and food, with 50% and 41%, respectively. Consequently, they would have a meagre average of \$228 left to cover other basic necessities such as childcare, transportation, utilities, and medication.<sup>2</sup> To afford the actual cost of living in Timiskaming, individuals would need to earn a living wage of \$19.70, highlighting a discrepancy between the current minimum wage and the living wage.<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, the Board endorsed the enclosed correspondence from the Ontario Dietitians in Public Health (ODPH) urging the Ontario government to adopt income-based solutions that effectively reduce HFI; these include the reinstatement of the basic income guarantee project, closing the gap between



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the minimum wage and living wage, increasing social assistance rates and indexing them to match the true cost of living, and reducing income tax rates for lowest-income households. These policies effectively reduce household food insecurity, improve health outcomes, and reduce long-term healthcare costs.<sup>1</sup>

Our Board recognizes that the province of Ontario has the power to reduce food insecurity and extreme poverty for households receiving social assistance. We kindly request that you take into consideration the motion passed by our Board regarding this pressing issue.

We appreciate your attention to this significant matter.

Sincerely,

Stacy Wight  
Board of Health Chair

cc John Vanthof, MPP – Timiskaming-Cochrane  
Anthony Rota, MP – Timiskaming-Nipissing  
Charlie Angus, MP – Timmins-James Bay  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA)  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)  
Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)  
Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA)  
Ontario Dietitians in Public Health (ODPH)  
Ontario Boards of Health  
Health Unit Member Municipalities

**References**

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2. Timiskaming Health Unit. (2023) The Cost of Eating Well in Timiskaming – Monitoring Food Affordability Report, 2022. Retrieved from <https://bit.ly/3ZTGh7f>
3. Coleman, A., Shaban, R. (2022). Calculating Ontario's Living Wages. Ontario Living Wage Network.



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**Board of Health MOTION #21R-2023 – April 05, 2023**

Moved by: Curtis Arthur      Seconded by: Mark Wilson

**WHEREAS**, it is a requirement under the Ontario Public Health Standards for public health units to monitor food affordability, assess and report on the health of local populations, and describe the existence and impact of health disparities; AND

**WHEREAS**, food insecurity is widely known to have adverse effects on both physical and mental health; AND adequate income is a crucial social determinant of health that significantly affects food security; AND

**WHEREAS**, 67% of households in Ontario with social assistance as their primary income source experience food insecurity; AND

**WHEREAS**, the 2022 Monitoring food affordability results demonstrate that households relying on social assistance do not have enough money to cover their living expenses, including food; AND

**FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Health for the Timiskaming Health Unit (Board) continues to increase awareness of, and work to reduce, health inequities, including those related to food insecurity; AND

**FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board endorses the Ontario Dietitians in Public Health (ODPH) call for the provincial government to take swift and immediate action in implementing income-based policy interventions for all in Ontario, aged 18–64 years as an effective and long-term response to household food insecurity; AND

**FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board calls on the Province of Ontario to increase social assistance rates to reflect the true costs of living, and to index Ontario Works rates to inflation moving forward; AND

**FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board urges the Province to resume exploring the feasibility of creating a guaranteed living wage (basic income) in the Province of Ontario; AND

**FURTHERMORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, That the Board of Health provide correspondence of these resolutions to John Vanthof, MPP (Timiskaming-Cochrane), Anthony Rota, MP (Timiskaming-Nipissing), Charlie Angus, MP (Timmins-James Bay), Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA), Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA), Ontario Dietitians in Public Health (ODPH), Ontario Boards of Health, and Health Unit Member Municipalities.

CARRIED



**Public Health  
Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

May 16, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford:

**Re: Bill 93, Joshua's Law (Lifejackets for Life), 2023**

On behalf of the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts, I am writing to convey the Board's support for Bill 93 Joshua's Law (Lifejackets for Life), 2023 which recently passed second reading.

The matter of boating safety and drowning prevention is of great interest to the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts. On September 22, 2022, we advised your office of the Board's resolution to request the Government of Ontario to enact legislation requiring all individuals in a pleasure boat to wear a lifejacket or PFD.

Over the 10-year period from 2012 to 2021, 2147 Ontarians (65 Sudbury and districts) had emergency department visits that resulted from a drowning or submersion injury related to watercraft and, over the last 10 years of available death data (2009-2018), 198 Ontarians (8 Sudbury and districts) died of a drowning or submersion injury related to watercraft. The Board of Health is aware that of the nationally reported boating deaths from 2013 to 2017 for which data were available, 79% were not wearing a lifejacket or personal floatation device (PFD). Not wearing a lifejacket is the most common behavioural risk factor associated with boating drownings across the lifespan. In Canadian drowning deaths from 2013 to 2017 for which PFD data were available, 87% of 15–34-year-olds, 75% of 35–64-year-olds, and 80% of 65+ year olds were not wearing lifejackets. Not wearing lifejackets continues to be identified as the most common risk factor in drowning deaths beyond childhood.

**Sudbury**

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f: 705.522.5182

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[phsd.ca](http://phsd.ca)



Letter to the Premier of Ontario  
Re: Bill 93 – Joshua’s Law (Lifejackets for Life), 2023  
May 16, 2023  
Page 2

Bill 93 is an important first step to saving lives. Public Health will continue to strongly advocate for the Government of Ontario to enact legislation requiring all individuals to wear a personal flotation device (PFD) or lifejacket while on a pleasure boat that is underway, or while being towed behind a pleasure boat using recreational water equipment.

Thank you for your attention on this important issue.

Sincerely,



René Lapierre  
Chair, Board of Health

cc: Honourable C. Mulroney, Minister of Transportation  
Honourable S. Jones, Minister of Health  
Jamie West, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury  
France Gélinas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt  
Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin  
Viviane Lapointe, Member of Parliament, Sudbury  
Marc Serré, Member of Parliament, Nickel Belt  
Carol Hugues, Member of Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin-Kapuskasing  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
All Ontario Boards of Health





June 1, 2023

Honourable Karina Gould  
Ministry of Families, Children and Social Development

Email: [karina.gould@parl.gc.ca](mailto:karina.gould@parl.gc.ca)

Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau  
Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food

Email: [Marie-Claude.Bibeau@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Marie-Claude.Bibeau@parl.gc.ca)

Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos  
Ministry of Health

Email: [jean-yves.duclos@parl.gc.ca](mailto:jean-yves.duclos@parl.gc.ca)

Dear Federal Ministers Gould, Bibeau and Duclos:

**Re: Federal School Food Policy**

I write on behalf of the Huron Perth Public Health Board of Health. As the federal government prepares to release a National School Food Policy and invest in programs across the country, we wish to reiterate the call for the development of a universal, cost-shared school food program for Canada and share our concerns about the current state of student nutrition programs in Ontario and our region.

Currently across Ontario, many school programs are unable to meet current demands, shutting down before the end of the school year or having to limit the foods served in order to get through the to the end of the year due to insufficient funds. Many programs have felt the strain with limited increases to provincial funding since 2014, while the rising food costs of the last two years and increased demand have significantly out-paced current funding. Other schools who have not previously had a program are seeing a demand, but there are no funds for new programs. There are urgent and immediate needs now. Children and youth need access to nourishing food to thrive and, without further investment, many will not have access to nourishing food at school. The current state of school food programs across Canada is patchwork and resource-limited. While many schools in Ontario do have student nutrition programs partially funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, a significant investment from the federal government would allow for expansion of services and to address existing gaps. The current reliance on fundraising, volunteers, and donations is inconsistent, unsustainable, and puts schools who most need the support at a significant disadvantage. School food programs offer many academic and nutritional benefits and should be implemented along with additional income supports to reduce health inequities and food insecurity for families across Canada. School food policy and programs alone cannot alleviate poverty and food insecurity.<sup>1,2</sup> School food programs can, however, play an important role in improving nutrition

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<sup>1</sup> PROOF, Open Letter: Stop headlining the pan-Canadian school food policy as a way to reduce food insecurity among children. Dec 9, 2022. <https://proof.utoronto.ca/resource/open-letter-on-school-food-policy-consultation/>

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Dietitians on Public Health, Position Statement and Recommendations on Response to Food Insecurity. Dec 2020. <https://www.odph.ca/odph-position-statement-on-responses-to-food-insecurity-1>

intake, supporting healthy growth and development, supporting academic success, attendance and educational attainment, and improving mental health and well-being.<sup>3</sup>

Currently many elementary schools do not have adequate facilities to allow safe food handling and production of onsite food for meal/snack programs or for hands-on food literacy learning opportunities for students. Adequate funding for infrastructure improvements would benefit school food programs and academic learning across health and physical education, science and technology and other cross-curricular learning opportunities, which can build critical food skills for students when transitioning into adulthood.

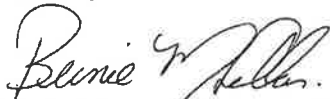
School food programs should be designed to<sup>4</sup>:

- serve tasty, nourishing, culturally appropriate foods
- ensure that ALL students in a school can access the program in a non-stigmatizing manner
- be a cost-shared model, including federal support
- be flexible and locally adapted to the context of the school and region, including commitment to Indigenous control over programs for Indigenous students
- support Canadian farmers and local food producers
- promote food literacy

Huron Perth Public Health Board of Health stands alongside other Boards of Health, School Boards, Municipalities, and other government agencies and organizations in supporting the Coalition for Healthy School Food's vision that every school-aged child and youth has a nutritious meal or snack at school daily.

We urge the federal Ministries of Families, Children and Social Development and Agriculture and Agri-Food to continue your work towards a comprehensive, cost-shared, universally accessible National School Food Policy and national school nutritious meal program with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous partners and stakeholders.<sup>5</sup> Every investment in children and youth counts.

Sincerely,



Bernie MacLellan, Board Chair  
Huron Perth Public Health

BM/ikl

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<sup>3</sup> Hernandez, Kimberley & Engler-Stringer, Rachel & Kirk, Sara & Wittman, Hannah & McNicholl, Sasha. (2018). The case for a Canadian national school food program. *Canadian Food Studies / La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation*. 5. 208-229. 10.15353/cfs-rcea.v5i3.260.

<https://canadianfoodstudies.uwaterloo.ca/index.php/cfs/article/view/260>

<sup>4</sup> Coalition for Healthy School Food. Guiding Principles. 2022. <https://www.healthyschoolfood.ca/guiding-principles>

<sup>5</sup> Prime Minister Mandate Letters. 2021. <https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters/2021/12/16/minister-families-children-and-social-development-mandate-letter> and <https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters/2021/12/16/minister-agriculture-and-agri-food-mandate-letter>



Huron Perth  
**Public  
Health**

- cc. Honourable Michael Parsa, Minister of Children Community and Social Services; [michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org](mailto:michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org)  
Honourable Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education; [minister.edu@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.edu@ontario.ca)  
Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health; [sylvia.jones@ontario.ca](mailto:sylvia.jones@ontario.ca)  
John Nater, MP Perth-Wellington; [john.nater@parl.gc.ca](mailto:john.nater@parl.gc.ca)  
Ben Lobb, MP Huron-Bruce; [ben.lobb@parl.gc.ca](mailto:ben.lobb@parl.gc.ca)  
Matthew Rae, MPP Perth-Wellington; [matthew.rae@pc.ola.org](mailto:matthew.rae@pc.ola.org)  
Honourable Thompson, MPP Huron-Bruce; [lisa.thompson@pc.ola.org](mailto:lisa.thompson@pc.ola.org)  
Ontario Boards of Health ([allhealthunits@lists.alphaweb.org](mailto:allhealthunits@lists.alphaweb.org))  
aPHa ([info@alphaweb.org](mailto:info@alphaweb.org))

June 1, 2023

The Honourable Michael Parsa  
Minister of Children, Community and Social Services

Email: [michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org](mailto:michael.parsaco@pc.ola.org)

Dear Honourable Minister Parsa:

**Re: Request for Immediate Funding for Student Nutrition Programs and to Increase Funding for Future School Years**

I'm writing to you on behalf of Huron Perth Public Health. HPPH has recently endorsed the [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#) (CHSF). The Ontario-chapter (ON-CHSF) members – many of whom deliver school breakfast, lunch, snack or other nutrition and food literacy programs – have identified the same concerns with their local *Student Nutrition Programs* (SNPs) as we are seeing locally.<sup>1</sup>

Currently across Ontario, many school programs are unable to meet current demands, shutting down before the end of the school year or having to limit the foods served in order to get through to the end of the year, due to insufficient funds. There has not been a substantial annual increase to core Ontario SNP funding since 2014. Many programs have felt the strain for years, but the rising food costs of the last two years<sup>2</sup> and increased demand have significantly out-paced current funding. Other schools who have not previously had a program are seeing a demand, but there are no funds for new programs-

There are urgent and immediate needs now. Children and youth need access to nourishing food to thrive and, without further investment, many schools will be unable to provide adequate nourishing food through the remaining school year. ON-CHSF members report, projected budget shortfall for future years is substantial.

We are writing to you to highlight the immediate and longer-term funding needs of SNPs in Ontario. The current reliance on fundraising, volunteers, and donations is inconsistent, unsustainable, and disadvantages those schools who most need the support.

A growing body of research demonstrates that school food programs can benefit students' physical and mental health, improve food choices, and lead to student success (e.g. academic performance, student behaviour, and school attendance).<sup>3</sup> These programs help reduce the \$5.6 billion/year in costs due to nutrition-related chronic disease injuries in Ontario. Well-designed and non-stigmatizing SNPs also have broad, positive impacts on families, communities, and the economy by reducing household food costs, creating jobs, and strengthening Ontario's agri-food sector.<sup>4</sup>

The Ontario government was among the first provincial governments to fund school food programs in Canada and now provides an annual \$27.9M for SNPs in the province. Since Ontario's initial investment, all provincial and

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<sup>1</sup> The national [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#) consists of over 250 member and 125 endorser organizations from every province and territory, representing the largest school food network in Canada. Together, we are advocating for the creation of a universal cost-shared school food program that would see all K-12 students in Canada having daily access to healthy food at school.

<sup>2</sup> [Consumer Price Index, monthly, not seasonally adjusted](#). Statistics Canada. Sept 2021 to Sept 2022, food costs increased 11.5% (have rates this high since 1981).

<sup>3</sup> [The case for a Canadian national school food program](#). Hernandez et al., 2018; [Nourishing Young Minds](#). Toronto Public Health, 2012; [The impact of Canadian School Food Programs on Children's Nutrition and Health](#). Colley et al., 2018; [Coalition for Healthy School Food](#)

<sup>4</sup> [The Burden of Chronic Disease in Ontario](#). CCO & PHO 2019.

Page 2

The Honourable Michael Parsa

June 1, 2023

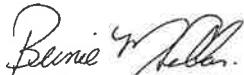
territorial governments have followed Ontario's lead. In response to recent urgent calls for additional funding because of greater participation and rising food costs, which are not unique to Ontario<sup>5</sup>, many provincial and territorial governments have increased their investments in school food. The 2022-23 school food funding increases include: \$500,000 in Newfoundland and Labrador; \$2 million in New Brunswick; \$2 million in emergency funding in Nova Scotia; \$1.3 million in Manitoba; \$16 million in Quebec; \$214.5 million over three years in Budget 2023 in BC; and \$500,000 in the Yukon. Many of these increases are to the programs' annual operating budgets. However, there has not been a substantial annual increase to core Ontario SNP funding since 2014.

We know Ontario's student nutrition programs have greatly appreciated the additional support that MCCSS provided to SNPs throughout the pandemic, and also your recent statement that no student will go hungry under your watch. We ask MCCSS to again recognize the urgent need at this time and to (1) allocate urgent funding to those programs who need it immediately, and (2) allocate more core funding to programs for the 2023/24 and future school years, when significant shortfalls are expected.

As the federal government prepares to release a National School Food Policy and invest in programs across the country, greater provincial investment in Ontario programs will be seen favourably. We believe that there is a great opportunity for Ontario to show further provincial leadership on student nutrition at this time and to ensure students are well-nourished during the school day.

Your attention to this urgent issue is needed.

Sincerely,



Bernie MacLellan, Board Chair  
Huron Perth Public Health

cc. Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education ([Stephen.Lecceco@pc.ola.org](mailto:Stephen.Lecceco@pc.ola.org))  
Hon. Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health ([sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org](mailto:sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org))  
John Nater, MP Perth-Wellington ([john.nater@parl.gc.ca](mailto:john.nater@parl.gc.ca))  
Ben Lobb, MP Huron-Bruce ([ben.lobb@parl.gc.ca](mailto:ben.lobb@parl.gc.ca))  
Matthew Rae MPP Perth-Wellington ([matthew.rae@pc.ola.org](mailto:matthew.rae@pc.ola.org))  
Hon. Lisa Thompson MPP Huron-Bruce ([lisa.thompsonco@pc.ola.org](mailto:lisa.thompsonco@pc.ola.org))  
Ontario Boards of Health ([allhealthunits@lists.alphaweb.org](mailto:allhealthunits@lists.alphaweb.org))

---

<sup>5</sup> For example, see recent media coverage from [PEI](#) and [Newfoundland and Labrador](#).



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Health Unit**

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TBDHU.COM

July 14, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honourable Sylvia Jones  
Minister of Health and Deputy Premier  
Ministry of Health  
College Park 5th Floor, 777 Bay St  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3  
sylvia.jones@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Jones:

**RE: Letter of Support – Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children**

On May 17, 2023, at the regular meeting of the Board of Health of the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, the Board considered a report on “Physical Literacy Endorsement” and a letter from Public Health Sudbury & Districts to Directors of Education, Local School Boards, Sports and Recreation Organizations and Early Learning Centres, encouraging them to work to improve physical activity levels among children and youth, including agencies that provide comprehensive physical literacy training to teachers, coaches, recreation providers and early childhood educators.

The following Resolution was carried:

*THAT with respect to Report No. 27-2023 (Healthy Living and School Health) we recommend that the Board of Health endorse correspondence from Public Health Sudbury and Districts, entitled “Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children;”*

*AND THAT the Thunder Bay District Board of Health write a letter of support to the Minister of Health and Deputy Premier;*

*AND THAT a copy of the letter be sent to the Minister of Education, Local School Boards, Sports and Recreation Organizations, Early Learning Centres and local Members of Provincial Parliament.*

Supporting programs that build Physical Literacy among children and youth at the community, recreation, school, and early-years levels will have a positive impact on physical activity levels, academic outcomes,

mental health, and chronic disease prevention. The Thunder Bay District Health Unit fully supports collaboration between agencies to promote physical literacy among children and youth, and thanks you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Don Smith, Chair  
Board of Health  
Thunder Bay District Health Unit

cc. Hon. Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education  
Thunder Bay and District Directors of Education  
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, aPHa  
Ontario Boards of Health  
Lise Vaugeois, MPP  
Kevin Holland, MPP  
Thunder Bay and District Social Services Administration Board – Childcare  
Services  
Local Recreation providers

Attachment



# Issue Report

<b>PROGRAM/ DIVISION</b>	Healthy Living and School Health Health Promotion	<b>REPORT NO.</b>	27-2023
<b>MEETING DATE</b>	May 17, 2023	<b>MEETING TYPE</b>	Regular
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Physical Literacy Endorsement		

## RECOMMENDATION

THAT with respect to Report No. 27-2023 (Healthy Living and School Health) we recommend that the Board of Health endorse correspondence from Public Health Sudbury & Districts, entitled “Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children;”

AND THAT the Thunder Bay District Board of Health write a letter of support to the Minister of Health and Deputy Premier;

AND THAT a copy of the letter be sent to the Minister of Education, Local School Boards, Sports and Recreation Organizations, Early Learning Centres and local Members of Provincial Parliament.

## REPORT SUMMARY

To provide the Board of Health with information relative to the request to endorse a letter from Public Health Sudbury & Districts, entitled “Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children.”

## BACKGROUND

On December 30, 2022, Public Health Sudbury & Districts submitted a letter to Directors of Education, Local School Boards, Sports and Recreation Organizations and Early Learning Centres, encouraging working together to improve physical activity levels among children and youth through collaboration with agencies that provide comprehensive Physical Literacy training.

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) is mandated to deliver programs and services that reduce the burden of preventable chronic diseases of public health importance and improve the health of school-aged children and youth. The health of individuals and communities is significantly influenced by complex interactions between social and economic factors, the physical environment, and individual behaviours and conditions. Participating in regular physical activity, and having the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to participate in physical activity, can reduce the risk of chronic disease, improve academic outcomes and support positive mental health.



### Physical Activity Levels

Canadian children are not getting enough physical activity. As highlighted by the 2020 ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity and Youth, approximately one-third of children and youth between the ages of 5 and 17 are meeting the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity.

Since 2005 the Ontario Ministry of Education has required that all students in Grades 1-8 have a minimum of 20 minutes of daily physical activity (DPA) during instructional time. A 2013-2014 evaluation indicated only 50% of classrooms in the province met the DPA policy, supporting the need for public health efforts to improve physical activity levels.

According to the 2021 Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey report, among students in grade 7-12:

- 21% of students are physically active on a daily basis for at least 60 minutes;
- 20% of students in grades 7-12 rate their physical health as “fair” or “poor” compared to 11% in the 2019 survey; and
- 83% of students spend 3 hours or more a day in front of an electronic screen in their recreational time, compared to 71% in the 2019 survey.

### Physical Activity and Physical Literacy

Engaging in regular physical activity is an important protective factor against chronic diseases. Increased physical activity levels also support cognitive development, brain health, and academic achievement and are associated with improved mental health.

“Physical Literacy” is often used interchangeably with terms such as “physical education”, “fundamental movement skills” or “motor skill development”. To ensure a consistent definition and understanding of the term, the International Physical Literacy Association released a consensus statement on the definition of physical Literacy in 2014:

*“Physical Literacy is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.”*

Public health interventions that support the development of Physical Literacy among children and youth can have an effect on physical activity levels later in life. When children and youth have the confidence, competence, and motivation to be physically active, they are more likely to sustain the behaviour change into adulthood.

### **COMMENTS**

TBDHU plans, implements, and evaluates a variety of interventions to promote physical activity and Physical Literacy. In 2018, the City of Thunder Bay and the

Thunder Bay District Health Unit received a grant from the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund to work on a project called "Building Physical Literacy Capacity in Thunder Bay." Partnering with Sport 4 Life, the project built Physical Literacy capacity in the community by training passionate leaders who work with children in the early years (0 to 6 years) to incorporate Physical Literacy into their programming. These Physical Literacy "Master Trainers" also gained knowledge, resources, and tools to train staff within their own workplace or organization. Sixty-six Master Trainers completed the program from 2018-2020.

Following a gap in Physical Literacy programming from 2020-2022 related to the COVID-19 response and staff re-deployment, Physical Activity Promoters from the Healthy Living Team and Public Health Nurses from the School Health team have resumed collaboration on physical activity and Physical Literacy interventions in schools:

- Currently, a 4-week Daily Physical Activity and Food Literacy Challenge called "Walk Broc and Roll" is running in 20 schools (including 3 District Schools and 2 First Nation Schools). Results of the challenge will be evaluated in June 2023 to determine effectiveness.
- The Healthy Schools Team is fostering environments that promote physical activity during the school day by providing support for the Active Recess program at local schools. Public Health Nurses provide training to peer leaders to organize and lead indoor or outdoor games during recess with an emphasis on inclusion, safety, fun and Physical Literacy.
- Additional plans for Physical Literacy promotion in 2023 include the development of an online Resource Portal for educators and early years providers, a Community of Practice for Physical Literacy Master Trainers, a Social Media Campaign, and Community Events related to Physical Literacy.

### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

There are no financial implications with this report.

### ***STAFFING IMPLICATIONS***

There are no staffing implications with this report.

### ***CONCLUSION***

It is concluded that supporting programs that build Physical Literacy among children and youth at the community, recreation, school, and early-years levels will have a positive impact on physical activity levels, academic outcomes, mental health, and chronic disease prevention;

It is further concluded that the Board of Health should endorse the correspondence from Sudbury & Districts Public Health entitled "Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children".

**LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Letter from Sudbury & Districts Public Health.

**PREPARED BY:** Joanna Carastathis, Manager - Healthy Living,  
Marianne Stewart, Manager - Family & School Health

**THIS REPORT RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:**  
Shannon Robinson, Director – Health Promotion

**DATE:**  
May 17, 2023

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Medical Officer of Health/Chief Executive Officer



Letter Re: Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children  
December 30, 2022  
Page 2

*knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engaging in physical activities for life<sup>vi</sup> and these skills help them make healthy, active choices that are both beneficial to and respectful of their whole self, others, and their environment<sup>vii</sup>; and*

*WHEREAS the school community offers one of the best opportunities to improve the quality of sport and physical activity participation for children and youth; and*

*WHEREAS the Ontario Public Health Standards require that: "community partners have the knowledge of and increased capacity to act on the factors associated with the prevention of chronic diseases and promotion of wellbeing, including healthy living behaviours, healthy public policy, and creating supportive environments."<sup>viii</sup> This includes knowledge of the importance and impact of physical literacy on increasing physical activity participation thereby reducing the risk of chronic disease;*

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts encourage all area school boards, sport and recreation organizations, and early learning centres to work to improve physical activity levels among children and youth across Sudbury and districts, including through collaboration with Sport for Life Society, Active Sudbury and Public Health Sudbury & Districts, agencies that provide comprehensive physical literacy training to teachers, coaches, recreation providers and early childhood educators; and*

*FURTHER THAT a copy of this motion be shared with the Sport for Life Society, Active Sudbury, local members of Provincial Parliament, all Ontario Boards of Health, and area school boards, early learning centres and sport and recreation organizations.*

As we look ahead to increase physical activity and to decrease sedentary behaviours in the population; the need for improving physical literacy is greater than ever before. It is crucial that we embrace physical literacy as a catalyst for children and youth to be active and healthy. We know that *it takes a village to raise a child* and the collaboration of multiple sectors to embed physical literacy development in plans, programs, and policies. Therefore the Board of Health for Sudbury & Districts encourages all area school boards, sport and recreation organizations, and early learning centres across Sudbury and districts to work to

Letter Re: Physical Literacy for Healthy Active Children  
December 30, 2022  
Page 3

improve physical activity levels among children and youth through collaboration with agencies that provide comprehensive physical literacy programming, including the Sport for Life Society, Active Sudbury and Public Health Sudbury & Districts.

Sincerely,



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

cc: Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Loretta Ryan, Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
France Gélinas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt  
Jamie West, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury  
Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin  
All Ontario Boards of Health  
Constituent Municipalities

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<sup>i</sup> Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthy Benefits of Physical Activity for Children (2021). Taken from: <https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/basics/adults/health-benefits-of-physical-activity-for-children.html>

<sup>ii</sup> Science Table. The Impact of Physical Activity on mental Health Outcomes during the COVID-19 Pandemic. (2022) taken from : [The Impact of Physical Activity on Mental Health Outcomes during the COVID-19 Pandemic - Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table \(covid19-sciencetable.ca\)](https://www.sciencetable.ca/covid19-science-table)

<sup>iii</sup> Statistics Canada. The unequal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the physical activity habits of Canadians. (2022) Taken from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2022005/article/00003-eng.htm>

<sup>iv</sup> Government of Canada. A common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: Let's Get Moving. (2018) Taken from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/lets-get-moving.html>

<sup>v</sup> Tremblay MS, Longmuir PE, Barnes JD, Belanger K, Anderson KD, Bruner B, Copeland JL, Delisle Nyström C, Gregg MJ, Hall N, Kolen AM, Lane KN, Law B, MacDonald DJ, Martin LJ, Saunders TJ, Sheehan D, Stone MR, Woodruff SJ. Physical literacy levels of Canadian children aged 8-12 years: Descriptive and normative results from the RBC Learn to Play-CAPL project. BMC Public Health. 2018;18(Suppl 2):1036.

<sup>vi</sup> The International Physical Literacy Association, May 2014. Taken from: <https://physicalliteracy.ca/physical-literacy/>

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vii Government of Ontario HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION, 2019 | The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8. 2019 taken from: <https://preview-assets-us-01.kc-usercontent.com/fbd574c4-da36-0066-a0c5-849ffb2de96e/db4cea83-51a1-458d-838a-4c31be56bc35/2019-health-physical-education-elem-PUBLIC.pdf>

viii Government of Ontario. (June, 2021) Ontario Public Health Standards: requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability. Taken from: [https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph\\_standards/](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph_standards/)

August 2, 2023

**Attention:**

The Honourable, Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
The Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health of Ontario  
City of London Council  
County of Middlesex Council  
Teresa Armstrong, Member of Provincial Parliament for London Fanshawe  
Terence Kernaghan, Member of Provincial Parliament for London North Centre  
Peggy Sattler, Member of Provincial Parliament for London West  
Rob Flack, Member of Provincial Parliament for Elgin-Middlesex-London  
Monte McNaughton, Member of Provincial Parliament for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex

**RE: Middlesex-London Health Unit 2024 Budget**

Dear Premier, Honourable Ministers, Members of Provincial Parliament, City of London Council, and County of Middlesex Council,

The Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) is grateful to the provincial government for its continued commitment to keeping the health and safety of Ontarians a top priority, with steadfast financial support for the Health Unit throughout the pandemic. Public health provides a critical foundation for the broader public healthcare system, during pandemics and beyond, through the provision of efficient and effective interventions that keep Ontarians out of emergency departments and hospital beds. Within its mission to protect and promote the health of people in Middlesex-London, the team at the MLHU helps to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, prevent illnesses associated with environmental exposures, promote healthy growth and development for babies, children, and youth (including mental health), prevent injuries and chronic diseases, and ensure system readiness for public health emergencies. Investing in public health is therefore a critical long-term, sustainable approach to building a strong healthcare system.

The MLHU Board of Health wants to ensure the province was aware of the significant funding shortfall facing the MLHU in 2024. The MLHU anticipates funding reductions in 2024 with the end of the School Focused Nurses Initiative and COVID-19 Extraordinary Expense Funding. The proposed shift of Mitigation Funding to municipal partners introduces pressures beyond the funding increases required to keep pace with inflation, currently forecasted at 3.9% for 2024. Further, the rapidly increasing population creates greater need; between 2016 and 2021 the population of Middlesex-London grew by 10%.

Without adequate funding, it is anticipated that it will not be possible for the MLHU to execute substantial components of the Ontario Public Health Standards in 2024. One recent example is the MLHU Strathroy Dental clinic, recently opened in June 2023, with capital funds from the Ontario Seniors' Dental Care Program to support low-income seniors and low-income children 17 and under. This is a vital program in Middlesex County and has a large waitlist of clients interested in seeking dental care. To date, operational funding has not been provided for this clinic, adding to the list of significant financial pressures facing the MLHU in 2024.

The MLHU shares the concerns of its public health colleagues from across Ontario regarding our collective ability to meet the Ontario Public Health Standards, the legislative guideposts to ensure the health of Ontarians, set out by the Ministry of Health. We ask that the Ministry return the funding to the previous 75:25 Provincial/Municipal allocation, provide an increase to base funding sufficient to reflect ongoing accountability for managing COVID-19 as a Disease of Public Health Significance, and increase funding to address inflationary pressures. Sufficient and stable funding for public health is required to maintain the public health services that are essential to the health of our communities, now and into the future.

Sincerely,



Matt Newton-Reid  
Board Chair  
Middlesex-London Health Unit



Emily Williams, BScN, RN, MBA, CHE  
Secretary and Treasurer  
Middlesex-London Health Unit



Dr. Alex Summers MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health  
Middlesex-London Health Unit

CC: All Ontario Boards of Health  
Middlesex-London Board of Health Members  
David Jansseune, Assistant Director, Finance, Middlesex-London Health Unit

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Association of Local  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Agencies

alPHA's members are  
the public health  
units in Ontario.

**alPHA Sections:**

Boards of Health  
Section

Council of Ontario  
Medical Officers of  
Health (COMOH)

**Affiliate  
Organizations:**

Association of Ontario  
Public Health Business  
Administrators

Association of  
Public Health  
Epidemiologists  
in Ontario

Association of  
Supervisors of Public  
Health Inspectors of  
Ontario

Health Promotion  
Ontario

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Dentistry

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Nursing  
Leaders

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August 23, 2023

Hon. Sylvia Jones  
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health  
Ministry of Health  
College Park 5th Flr, 777 Bay St  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Jones,

**Re: Public Health Funding and Capacity Announcement**

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On behalf of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) and its Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health Section, Boards of Health Section, and Affiliate Associations, I am writing to thank you for the commitments you made to local public health as part of your address to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) on August 22, 2023.

A healthier population contributes to a stronger economy and reduces demand for costly and scarce health care resources. Local public health agencies provide programs and services that promote well-being, prevent disease and injury, and protect population health. One of our foundational positions is that, regardless of the sources of funding for public health in Ontario, mechanisms must be included to ensure the total funding envelope is stable, predictable, protected, and sufficient for the full delivery of all public health programs and services.

alPHA is pleased about the restoration of the \$47 million in provincial annual base funding and to hear your message to our public health unit members that they can expect a guaranteed increase of 1% of the base funding in each of the next three years and it is a positive step forward. While this may not be sufficient to completely meet our mandate, we do appreciate knowing what our thresholds will be when planning our budgets during this time. alPHA notes your observation this will afford the opportunity and time to work together to address long-standing challenges in the system.

Thank you for recognition of the value of local public health expertise and for the opportunity to help shape the future of local public health. alPHA is committed to our work that supports the Ontario government's goals to be efficient, effective, and provide value for money.

We appreciated our recent meeting with you and look forward to collaborating with you further. To schedule a meeting, please have your staff contact Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHA, at [loretta@alphaweb.org](mailto:loretta@alphaweb.org) or 647-325-9594.

Sincerely,

Dr. Charles Gardner,  
President

**Copy:** Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ontario  
Elizabeth Walker, Executive Lead, Office of the CMOH  
Brent Feeney, Director, Accountability and Liaison, Office of the CMOH

The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership to Ontario's boards of health. ALPHA represents all of Ontario's 34 boards of health, medical officers and associate medical officers of health, and senior public health managers in each of the public health disciplines – nursing, inspections, nutrition, dentistry, health promotion, epidemiology, and business administration. As public health leaders, ALPHA advises and lends expertise to members on the governance, administration, and management of health units. The Association also collaborates with governments and other health organizations, advocating for a strong, effective, and efficient public health system in the province. Through policy analysis, discussion, collaboration, and advocacy, ALPHA's members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention and surveillance services in all of Ontario's communities.