

2/15/2006

The Honourable Dwight Duncan  
Minister of Finance  
Frost Bldg S - 7th Flr  
7 Queen's Park Cres  
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7

The Honourable James M. Flaherty  
Department of Finance Canada  
140 O'Connor Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G5

Dear Ministers,

**Re. alPHa Resolution A05-16, Local Funding of Public Health Agencies.**

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On behalf of member Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health and Affiliate organizations of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa), I am writing today to introduce alPHa's resolution on Local Funding of Public Health Agencies (A05-16, attached).

When the province of Ontario pledged to increase its portion of the shared funding of public health unit programs and services to 75%, it was intended to serve a dual purpose – to increase stability of the public health unit funding base while offering some relief to municipalities that must rely on a very limited revenue stream to pay the costs of the services for which they are responsible. alPHa's members have expressed their support for the government's direction, and believe that funding for public health units should continue to be shared to ensure local decision making, central guidance, and a stable resource base.

This direction in and of itself does not however result in the necessary increases to the total public health unit funding envelope that have been consistently called for in order to properly protect and promote health and prevent disease in Ontario. The fact that municipalities must rely solely on the property tax base to underwrite local services puts significant constraints on them, as city councils must prioritize spending where revenues are so limited. Insufficient budgets for local public health unit programs and services are a common result.

The question of adequate funding for local public health units is one that is being addressed by several processes at present, most notably Ontario's Local Capacity Review, which is expected to make specific recommendations on how to ensure adequate and sustainable public health unit resources into the future. This resolution suggests a mechanism to ensure a strong local contribution.

Yours truly,



Linda Stewart,  
Executive Director

**Copy:** Dr. Sheela Basrur, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Hon. George Smitherman, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
Hon. John Gerretsen, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Pat Vanini, Executive Director, Association of Municipalities of Ontario

**Encl.**

**2005 alPHa Resolution A05-16**

**TITLE            Local Funding of Public Health Agencies**

**SPONSOR:**        The Board of Health for the Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit

**WHEREAS** the municipal sector in Ontario has had a long term involvement in the provision of public health service; and

**WHEREAS** there is continued benefit to the public in having public health services provided as close to the public as possible; and

**WHEREAS** there is urgent need to significantly increase the public investment in the provision of public health service; and

**WHEREAS** the municipal sector is having increasing difficulty in securing additional resources to support the needed cost of public health services;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) petition the federal and provincial governments to ensure that municipalities have additional means of revenue generation to ensure the availability of resources adequate to meet local public health needs.