

9/19/2006

Hon. George Smitherman
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Flr, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor St
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Honourable Minister,

Re. alPHa Resolution A06-3 - Health-Based Regulation of the Management and Use of Artificial Tanning Equipment

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 Tanning Bed Safety (A06-3, attached) passed at alPHa's Annual General Meeting in June 2006.

As you know, our members are responsible for providing public health programs and services in areas specified in the Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines. The Chronic Disease Prevention program standards include the objective of slowing the rise in incidence of skin cancers by providing community-wide education aimed at reducing exposure to ultraviolet radiation from both sun and artificial sources such as tanning beds.

These educational programs would benefit a great deal from evidence-based regulation of the use and management of artificial tanning equipment, especially in light of the fact that their use is often marketed using claims of health benefits in the absence of any requirement to mention the risks of exposure to ultraviolet light, a probable human carcinogen.

We are therefore urging the Government of Ontario to pass and promote legislation governing the management and use of artificial tanning equipment based on recommendations contained in the World Health Organization's 2003 publication, *Artificial Tanning Sunbeds: Risks and Guidance*, which is intended to assist governments in developing regulatory policies. It is available at <http://www.who.int/uv/publications/en/sunbeds.pdf>

We look forward to a reply at your earliest convenience.

Yours truly,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Linda Stewart,
Executive Director

Copy: Dr. Sheela Basrur, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Hon. Jim Watson, Minister of Health Promotion

Encl.

alPHa Resolution A06-3

TITLE: Health-Based Regulation of the Management and Use of Artificial Tanning Equipment

SPONSOR: alPHa Board of Directors.

WHEREAS The World Health Organization's 2003 report, *Artificial Tanning Sunbeds: Risks and Guidance* concludes that Ultraviolet (UV) light from artificial tanning equipment is a probable human carcinogen linked to eye damage and increased risk of developing melanoma and other skin cancers; and

WHEREAS at present, the only regulation of tanning salons in Ontario is through the Federal government's Radiation Emitting Devices Act, which is limited in scope to the manufacturing, importing and sale/resale of artificial tanning equipment; and

WHEREAS tanning salon operators are known to make marketing claims that include the suggestion that artificial tanning is a "safe" method by which to tan and meet Vitamin D requirements; and

WHEREAS skin cancer is the most common type of cancer of Ontario; and

WHEREAS no legislation in Ontario currently exists that regulates the use of such equipment based on known health risks

THEREFORE BE IT RESLOVED THAT the Government of Ontario pass and promote legislation governing the use of artificial tanning equipment based on the above-named WHO Report's *Recommendations for the Management of Sunbed Operations*, that includes

- regulation of the safety claims permitted by tanning salon owners and operators
- training requirements for operators of artificial tanning equipment
- a ban on the use of artificial tanning for those under 18, subject to the advice of a regulated health professional
- the formulation of enforceable safe operating standards for the tanning industry, including, maximum exposure times and warnings to consumers related to the use of UV-emitting tanning equipment