

Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé
et des Soins de longue durée



Public Health System Transformation
Public Health Division

Renouvellement du système de santé publique
Division de la santé publique

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Ms. Linda Stewart
Executive Director
Association of Local Public Health Agencies
425 University Avenue, Suite 502
Toronto, ON M5G 1T6

Dear Ms. ^{Linda} Stewart:

Thank you for your letter dated October 2, 2006 outlining aLPHa's Resolution A05-4. We acknowledge and recognize the work of aLPHa, the OPHA and the Sudbury and District Health Unit towards the development of a framework to integrate social and economic determinants of health into the Ontario mandate. The work of local boards of health in collaboration with other sectors and non-profit organizations on issues such as health disparities, food security, social inclusion, safe communities and housing has been a tremendous facilitator and stimulator for local action on the social and determinants of health.

The Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines (*MHPSG*) articulate the standards for public health programming to which all boards of health are expected to comply. At the same time, the guidelines are not intended to cover the total potential scope of public health programming. The 1997 *MHPSG* acknowledge the role of the determinants of health as part of the four principles underlying the programs and requirements.

The concepts of performance measures and management are key to the design of the renewed program standards. To this end, as part of the review process, there is a greater focus and emphasis on articulating the role of public health in our communities as well as developing requirements which are measurable. An important challenge in this framework is the issue of attribution of changes in health and social outcomes to investments in public health. As such, there is a need to further examine the best ways for *MHPSG* to serve as a vehicle for leveraging action on the social determinants of health. The Program Standards Technical Review Committee is in the process of examining this.

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As you note, the Ministry of Health Promotion's Inter-Ministerial Committee on Healthy Living provides a platform for the Ministries along with the CMOH to discuss broad issues affecting Ontarians' health. This provincial platform could function as an enabler in supporting approaches in addressing the determinants of health across government sectors.

We thank you for your interest in the renewal of the *MHP*SG. Your submission will be shared with Technical Review Committee members. We look forward to your continued support and participation as we move forward in this process.

Yours truly,



Dr. George Pasut
Co-Chair, Technical Review Committee
Executive Lead
Public Health System Transformation

- c: Dr. Bob Nosal, Co-Chair, Technical Review Committee
Dr. Graham Pollett, Chair, Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health
Dr. Sheela Basrur, Chief Medical Officer of Health and Assistant Deputy Minister,
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care