



MUNICIPALITY OF CHATHAM-KENT

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HEALTH & FAMILY SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

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April 3, 2006

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty
Premier of Ontario
Room 281, Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier McGuinty:

RE: MEETING FOOD COSTS FOR ALL LOW INCOME AND ONTARIO WORKS RECIPIENTS

At the Regular Board of Health meeting of March 22, 2006, the Chatham-Kent Board of Health passed the following resolution regarding the above-noted matter:

WHEREAS the cost of eating well in Chatham-Kent shows a 7% increase in the cost of a Nutritious Food Basket since 1998;

WHEREAS the increase for basic needs by Ontario Works only increased by 3% during that same time frame;

WHEREAS the majority of people who work at minimum pay jobs do not make enough to purchase basic necessities, in addition to food, in accordance with the Canada Food Guide;

WHEREAS a healthy diet promotes optimal health, growth and development and can reduce the risk of chronic diseases (i.e. heart disease, cancer, diabetes and osteoporosis) later in life;

WHEREAS people with low incomes are the most vulnerable to poor health (Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2004);

WHEREAS barriers to food access include both economic and physical factors such as higher food prices, poor selection of healthy foods and distance to food retail outlets or farms.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chatham-Kent Board of Health recommends that the Province of Ontario ensure that all low income families receive an increase for monthly food costs and this be sent as a midmonth food support program cheque;

AND FURTHER that the Government of Ontario be urged to review the adequacy of Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program rates from a health perspective and that allowances for basic needs and shelter be based on actual representative costs;

AND FURTHER that the Chatham-Kent Board of Health calls upon the Province of Ontario to assume 100% of the cost for funding the food support program;

AND FURTHER that copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the local Members of Parliament, Members of Provincial Parliament, Minister of Community and Social Services, Minister of Children and Youth, Minister of Health Promotion, Minister of Finance, the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, the Ontario Public Health Association, all Medical Officers of Health and all Ontario Board of Health Chairs.

I am writing on behalf of the Board to urge you to act immediately on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Original Signed By

W. David Colby, BSc, MSc, MD, FRCP (C)
Acting Medical Officer of Health

WDC:mk

- c. Dr. Sheela V. Basrur, Chief Medical Officer of Health and Assistant Deputy Minister, MOHLTC
The Honourable Sandra Pupatello, Minister of Community & Social Services
The Honourable Mary Anne Chambers, Minister of Children and Youth Services
The Honourable Jim Watson, Minister of Health Promotion
The Honourable Dwight Duncan, Minister of Finance
Dave Van Kesteren, MP Chatham-Kent – Essex
Bev Shipley, MP Lambton – Kent – Middlesex
Pat Hoy, MPP Chatham-Kent - Essex
Maria Van Bommel, MPP Lambton – Kent – Middlesex
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA)
Ontario Boards of Health Chairs
Ontario Medical Officers of Health