

September 2, 2010

Honourable Michael Gravelle, MPP  
Minister of Northern Development and Mines  
Thunder Bay – Superior North  
215 Van Norman Street Suite 101  
Thunder Bay ON P7A 4B6

Honourable Sir:

**RE: Proposed Legislative Changes to CMOH Authority Over Boards of Health**

On behalf of the Board of Health for the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, we are writing to express our concerns about the proposed legislative changes to the Health Protection and Promotion Act (The Act) that are being recommended as a result of the Chief Medical Officer of Health's (CMOH) report, "The H1N1 Pandemic – How Ontario Fared."

The proposed amendments to the Act are intended to extend the chain of command of the CMOH to the local level, by giving the CMOH the power to issue directives to individual Boards of Health and/or Medical Officers of Health (MOH), formalizing CMOH involvement in the appointment of local MOH and enabling the CMOH to assume control of local facilities as needed or requested by the local MOH, which are expected to be introduced this fall. A memo to all Ontario Boards of Health, dated July 29, 2010 from Ms. Valerie Sterling, President – Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa) is attached providing summarized excerpts of the report and expected amendments to the Act.

The critical need to solve apparent problems at the local level by reinforcing this chain of command is troublesome, as we are not aware of any rationale for this need, nor are we aware of why the existing authority of the CMOH granted in the Act is inadequate.

We are concerned that the proposed legislative changes are premature, as the results of the formal H1N1 provincial review have not been concluded and we have not been afforded the opportunity to provide feedback. As in the past, we would appreciate the opportunity work with our provincial partners to make positive changes to Ontario's public health care system.

We respectfully request you to delay legislative action based on the CMOH report in order to provide an opportunity for the local public health partners to examine and discuss the content and recommendations of the CMOH report, as well as those of the formal provincial report once it is completed in order to make a mutually agreeable decision that will be in the best interest of the people of Ontario.

Yours very truly,

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Maria Harding  
Chair – Board of Health

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Dr. Henry Kurban, MD, MBA, MPH  
Medical Officer of Health (A)

cc. Mr. Bill Mauro, MPP – Thunder Bay Atikokan

Attachment: Memo to All Ontario Boards of Health, dated July 29, 2010 from Ms. Valerie Sterling, alpha President