

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health Board of Health Meeting

Information Items

Wednesday, November 2, 2022



Listing of Information Items Board of Health Meeting – November 2, 2022

- 1. Peterborough Public Health Letter to Sylvia Jones, Monte McNaughton and Victor Fedeli re Niagara Region Public Health Paid Sick Leave dated October 4, 2022
- 2. Peterborough Public Health Letter to Sylvia Jones re AMO submission strengthening public health in Ontario: now and for the future dated October 4, 2022
- 3. Timiskaming Health Unit Letter to Merrilee Fullerton re funding for the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program dated October 7, 2022
- 4. Ontario Nurses' Association Letter re 50th Anniversary Celebration

The above information items can be found on the Hastings Prince Edward Public Health's website through the link in the Agenda Package or by going to our website at <u>hpePublicHealth.ca</u>.



October 4, 2022

Hon. Sylvia Jones Minister of Health Government of Ontario sylvia.jones@ontario.ca

Hon. Monte McNaughton Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development Government of Ontario <u>Minister.MLTSD@ontario.ca</u>

Hon. Victor Fedeli Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade <u>MEDJCT.Minister@ontario.ca</u>

Dear Honourable Ministers:

Re: Niagara Region Public Health – Paid Sick Leave

At its meeting on September 14, 2022, the Board of Health for Peterborough Public Health (PPH) considered correspondence from Niagara Region Public Health and passed the following motion:

That the Board of Health for Peterborough Public Health:

- receive the letter dated July 19, 2022 from Niagara Region Public Health (NRPH) for information;
- endorse the position from NRPH, and the supporting report "A Renewed Call for Paid Sick Leave in Ontario" from NRPH dated June 14, 2022, less the request to extend the provincial three paid sick days benefit (as that was recently extended by the province), given that PPH identifies that providing employees with paid sick days is one strategy to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 in our community;
- commits to working internally on an on-going basis to actively promote the health and economic benefits of paid sick day benefits to employers; and,
- communicate this support by writing to the Minister of Health and Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development and Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, with copies to the Association of Municipalities Ontario, the Ontario Public Health Association, local MPs and MPPs, and Ontario Boards of Health.

PPH has a long supported healthy workplaces with advocacy focusing on, amongst other issues, paid sick days for all working Ontarians. In February 2021, the Board of Health wrote to the Ministers of Health and Labour, Training and Skills Development to advocate for paid sick leave in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and on a sustained basis for public health protection.

Providing paid sick days for employees reduces the transmission of COVID-19 as noted in Ontario Science Table research that stated "enabling employers to provide paid sick leave to employees during the pandemic ensures workplace safety, and protection of the public."¹ University of Toronto research also identified that "there is evidence that paid sick leave protects workers from infectious risk exposures in workplaces, enables workers who currently cannot comply with quarantine and isolation measures, and mitigates the disproportionate effect of such measures on workers who cannot work from home."²

The Board of Health supports the need to provide paid sick leave, a measure that will significantly assist in our health promotion and prevention mandate. We urge the Provincial government to examine models to introduce and fund this important initiative.

Respectfully,

Original signed by

Mayor Andy Mitchell Chair, Board of Health

/ag Encl.

cc: Association of Municipalities of Ontario Association of Local Public Health Agencies Ontario Public Health Association Local MPs and MPPs Ontario Boards of Health

¹ Thompson, Alison, Stall NM, Born KB, et al. Benefits of paid sick leave during the COVID-19 pandemic. Science Briefs of the Ontario COVID-19 Science Advisory Table. 2021;2(25).

² Joint Centre for Bioethics, University of Toronto. (2021). Ethics of Paid Sick Leave for the COVID-19 Pandemic. Retrieved August 18, 2022 from https://jcb.utoronto.ca/ethics-of-paid-sick-leave-for-the-covid-19-pandemic/.



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July 19, 2022

The Honourable Sylvia Jones Deputy Premier and Minister of Health Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care 777 Bay Street, 5th Floor Toronto, Ontario M7A 2J3 The Honourable Monte McNaughton Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development 777 Bay Street, 5th Floor Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Ministers Jones and McNaughton,

First, let me congratulate you on behalf of Niagara Region Council and all Niagara residents for your reappointments to Cabinet. We look forward to working with you over the next four years and seeing our province benefit from your sage leadership.

On behalf of Niagara Region's Board of Health, I write today to you on the matter of employer-paid sick days in Ontario. Specifically, on June 23, 2022, our Board of Health passed a motion requesting that:

- 1. The Government of Ontario extend the currently temporary three paid sick days in the Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA) set to expire July 31, 2022.
- 2. The Government of Ontario engage in consultation with local municipalities, employers, and broader communities regarding making permanent the three paid sick days, and increasing the number of paid sick days to be in line with the recommendations for adequate sick leave policies; this consultation should seek to understand the challenges to legislating these sick day policies, and identify the supports necessary to enable increasing the number of sick days and making them permanent.
- 3. The Government of Ontario review the impacts of the amendments to the Canada Labour Code that provided 10 paid sick days for all federal employees across the country.

A copy of our Public Health Department's report (PHD 11-2022) is enclosed for reference.

Staying home when sick is one of the most effective containment strategies for infectious disease, yet it is a benefit currently more accessible to some workers than others.

Workers without paid sick days are more likely to go to work sick, putting others at risk. Throughout the pandemic workplaces with precarious jobs and lack of paid sick leave have become hotspots for COVID-19 infection transmission, and suffered temporary closures To:Ministers Jones and McNaughtonPage 2Re:A Renewed Call for Paid Sick Leave in Ontario

during outbreaks. Low-wage racialized workers, who are more likely to be denied paid sick days, have faced higher rates of COVID-19 illness¹ as well as business owners in these areas that, therefore, suffered greater disruption and loss when unable to operate due to staff illness.

Paid sick days should form part of a suite of long-term, sustainable changes to our society to create a post-pandemic "new normal" where COVID-19 is controlled, ensuring the safety of residents and protecting the economy from further disruption. As well, paid sick days would reduce lost productivity and absenteeism due to transmission of other infections, which was estimated to be \$16.6 billion dollars nationally by the Conference Board of Canada in 2012; no doubt it has grown since then.ⁱⁱ

Paid sick days is a good policy for us to control this pandemic sustainably, make us more resilient to future pandemics, increase productivity, and enhance health equity. We urge your government to extend the current paid sick days policy, and study enhancing it and making it permanent.

Sincerely,

lim Bradley.

Chair, Board of Health, Niagara Region Regional Chair, Niagara Region

Enclosure: PHD 11-2022

cc: Premier Doug Ford Jeff Burch, MPP, Niagara Centre Wayne Gates, MPP, Niagara Falls Sam Oosterhoff, MPP, Niagara West Jennifer (Jennie) Stevens, MPP, St. Catharines Dean Allison, MP, Niagara West Vance Badawey, MP, Niagara Centre Tony Baldinelli, MP, Niagara Falls Chris Bittle, MP, St. Catharines All Boards of Health

Library/abstract.aspx?did=5780). Published September 23, 2013.

July 19, 2022

ⁱ Decent Work & Health Network. Before it's Too Late: How to close the Paid Sick Day Gap During COVID-19 and Beyond. Published August 2020. (Available from: https://www.decentworkandhealth.org/beforetoolate) ⁱⁱ The Conference Board of Canada. Available from (https://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-



Item #1 PHD 11-2022 June 14, 2022 Page 1

Subject: A Renewed Call for Paid Sick Leave in Ontario Report to: Public Health and Social Services Committee Report date: Tuesday, June 14, 2022

Recommendations

- 1. That Regional Council **RECOMMEND** that the Government of Ontario extend the currently temporary three paid sick days in the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* (*ESA*) set to expire July 31, 2022;
- 2. That Regional Council **RECOMMEND** that the Government of Ontario engage in consultation with local municipalities, employers, and broader communities regarding making permanent the three paid sick days, and increasing the number of paid sick days to be in line with recommendations for adequate sick leave policies; this consultation should seek to understand the challenges to legislating these sick day polices, and identify the supports necessary to enable increasing the number of sick days and making them permanent;
- 3. That Regional Council **RECOMMEND** that the Government of Ontario review the impacts of the amendments to the Canada Labour Code that provided 10 paid sick days for all federal employees across the country; and
- 4. That Regional Council **DIRECT** the Regional Chair to communicate the above recommendations to the Premier, relevant Members of provincial Cabinet, Niagara's Members of Provincial Parliament, Niagara's Members of Parliament, and all Ontario Boards of Health.

Key Facts

- The purpose of this report is to seek Council's support for extending beyond July 31, 2022, the currently temporary paid sick days through the *Employment Standards Act*
- Staying home when sick is one of the most effective containment strategies for infectious disease, yet a benefit currently more accessible to some workers than others.¹

¹ Decent Work & Health Network. Before it's Too Late: How to close the Paid Sick Day Gap During COVID-19 and Beyond. Published August 2020. (Available from: https://www.decentworkandhealth.org/beforetoolate)

- The gap in access to paid sick days is associated with transmission of infectious illnesses at workplaces² including COVID-19, as many lower paid employees are compelled to work while sick and infectious so as to be able to earn the income they need to live.
- In December 2021, Regional Council endorsed the recommendations in Report PHD 14-2021, expressing support for legislated paid sick days through the *Employment Standards Act.* Similar motions were also passed by Municipalities and Boards of Health across Ontario.
- In December, the Ontario Government extended the temporary three days employer paid sick time to expire on July 31, 2022.

Financial Considerations

As a corporation, Niagara Region has experienced a total cost of \$943,700 (not including Payroll Related costs) for time encoded as Paid Infectious Disease Emergency Leave for the period of April 19, 2021 to April 18, 2022.

Analysis

As stated in Reports PHD 14-2021 and PHD 1-2021, access to employer paid sick leave is an important policy measure for the following reasons¹:

- It is one of the most effective containment strategies for infectious disease;
- Workers without paid sick days are more likely to go to work sick, putting others at risk;
- Parents with paid sick days have been found to be less likely to send sick children to school, preventing outbreaks in schools;
- Workplaces with precarious jobs and lack of paid sick leave have become hotspots for COVID-19 infection transmission, and suffered temporary closures during outbreaks;
- Low-wage and racialized workers, who are more likely to be denied paid sick days, have faced higher rates of COVID-19 illness.

² Drago R, Miller K. Sick at Work: infected employees in the workplace during H1N1 pandemic IWPR.org (2010). (Available from: https://iwpr.org/iwpr-general/sick-at-work-infected-employees-in-the-workplace-during-the-H1N1-pandemic/)

The Ontario government's temporary pandemic-specific paid sick days is set to expire July 31, 2022. Since the start of the pandemic there have been many calls on the Ontario government to legislate adequate paid sick days. Calls on the government include, but are not exclusive to

- Bill-7 and Bill-8 introduced to the Ontario legislature in 2021;
- Ontario's Big City Mayors made up of Mayors from 29 cities across Ontario with a population of 100,000 or more;
- The City of St. Catharines as well as other municipalities across Ontario, including both Hamilton and Toronto;
- The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa);
- The Decent Work and Health Network.

Canada lags behind other nations globally in guaranteeing workers access to adequate paid sick days for short-term illness. On December 17, 2021, the federal government amended the Canada Labour Code to provide up to 10 days of paid sick leave to all federal employees. It was also announced that the federal government will convene the provinces and territories in early 2022, to develop a national action plan to legislate paid sick leave for all workers across the country. Starting January 1, 2022, British Columbia became the first province to expand permanent, employer-paid sick days, with five paid sick days for all full-time and part-time workers.

Paid sick days would form part of a suite of long-term, sustainable changes to our society to create a post-pandemic "new normal" where COVID-19 is controlled, ensuring the safety of residents and protecting the economy from further disruption from the pandemic, as well as lost productivity and absenteeism due to transmission of other infections. Moreover, paid sick days would improve health equity, supporting a Healthy and Vibrant Community.

Alternatives Reviewed

If the temporary paid sick days benefit expires on July 31, 2022, the burden of responsibility will fall to an individual to decide between staying home if they are sick, or going to work in order to get paid. Evidence indicates this results in spread of infectious disease, most pressingly COVID-19, to both customers and co-workers. However, as the pandemic continues, there will be substantial economic losses and inequitable human impacts due to infectious disease such as influenza, and COVID-19 will continue to afflict workplaces further increasing these losses and impacts.

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

Paid sick days will help to reduce transmission of COVID-19 and other infectious illnesses. Additionally, paid sick days will help to lessen the disproportionate impact COVID-19 is having on workers that do not have access to paid sick leave. This healthy public policy is linked to Council's Healthy and Vibrant Community strategic priority, in particular, the desire to improve health equity.

Other Pertinent Reports

<u>PHD 14-2021</u> Collaborative Action to Support the Need for Permanent Paid Sick Days (https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=20502)

<u>PHD 01-2021</u> Collaborative Acton to Prevent COVID-19 Transmission and Improve Health Equity by Increasing Access to Paid Sick Days (https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=14323)

Prepared by: Lindsay Garofalo Manager Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention **Recommended by:** M. Mustafa Hirji, MD, MPH, PCPC Medical Officer of Health & Commissioner (Acting) Public Health and Emergency Services

Submitted by: Ron Tripp, P.Eng. Chief Administrative Officer

This report was prepared in consultation with Dan Schonewille, Health Promoter, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention and Leanne Mannell, Senior HR Business Analyst, Corporate Administration and reviewed by David Lorenzo, Associate Director, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention.



October 4, 2022

Hon. Sylvia Jones Minister of Health Government of Ontario sylvia.jones@ontario.ca

Dear Minister Jones,

Re: AMO Submission - Strengthening Public Health In Ontario: Now and For the Future

At its meeting on September 14, 2022, the Board of Health for Peterborough Public Health (PPH) received and endorsed the submission from the Association of Municipalities to the Ministry of Health, dated August 26, 2022, entitled <u>Strengthening Public Health In Ontario: Now and For the Future</u>.

Peterborough Public Health supports the recommendations outlined in the submission which include:

- The government must not make significant structural changes to public health during the COVID-19 pandemic, but rather promote stability in the system.
- The government must establish an independent inquiry as soon as possible to determine the lessons learned from COVID-19, at the local and provincial levels, and resume consultations, once the pandemic waves subside, about how to appropriately modernize and strengthen public health in Ontario.
- The government must immediately act to address the full scope of health human resource challenges with a strategy for the public health and the health care systems.
- The government must provide mitigation funding in 2022 to offset the financial impact to municipal
 governments from the cost-sharing changes in 2019 for 2020 and reverse the decision to restore the
 cost-share arrangement that existed prior to 2020. Further, the Health Protection and Promotion Act
 must be amended to enshrine the appropriate cost-sharing arrangement in legislation, rather than as a
 matter of provincial policy.
- The government must continue funding COVID-19 costs, including vaccine roll-out, and incorporate as a distinct line item in ongoing base budgets for as long as there is a pandemic and epidemic situation that requires prevention and containment activities.
- The government must provide new funding, starting in 2022, as required to address the backlog of non-pandemic related public health services.

These recommendations complement those <u>recently supported</u> by the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) which call for a continuation of the consultation process on the future of the public health system, as well as outline principles alPHa sees as critical to proceeding with changes to the public health system.

Local public health collaboration with the Province, municipalities, First Nations, and other partners has been the backbone of Ontario's successful response to the pandemic. Continuing this collaboration, while stabilizing and strengthening the public health system and structures, is essential to the health and economic recovery of the Province, our communities and residents.

Respectfully,

Original signed by

Mayor Andy Mitchell Chair, Board of Health

/ag

cc: Association of Municipalities of Ontario
 Association of Local Public Health Agencies
 Local MPPs
 Local Councils
 Ontario Boards of Health



October 7, 2022

Hon. Merrilee Fullerton Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services 56 Wellesley Street W, 14th Floor Toronto, ON M74 1E9 MinisterMCCSS@ontario.ca

Dear Hon. Minister Fullerton:

Re: Funding for the Healthy Babies, Health Children (HBHC) Program

At its meeting on September 7, 2022, the Board of Health for Timiskaming Health Unit considered correspondence from Public Health Sudbury and Districts (PHSD) regarding the above noted matter. We are in full support of PHDS's call to action and share their concern and the concern of other local public health agencies regarding the HBHC program funding.

Motion No: 2022-33R

Moved by: Nina Wallace Seconded by: Jesse Foley

"THAT the Timiskaming Board of Health endorse the letter from Public Health Sudbury & District (PHSD) regarding Healthy Babies Healthy Children Funding, respectfully requesting the Minister's commitment to carefully review base-funding needs for the HBHC program to ensure this essential program is sufficiently resourced to meet the current and growing needs of children and a healthy start in life, and that this be communicated in writing to the Ontario Minister of Children, Community and Social Services with copies to Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ministry of Health, Local MPPs, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies, Chair, Governing Council of Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health, Executive Director of Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health.

Sincerely.

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Carman Kidd Board of Health Chair

Enclosure

 cc: Dr. Kieran Moore, Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health Honourable, John Vanthof MPP for Timiskaming-Cochrane Sanober Diaz, Executive Director of Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health Dr. Jackie Schleifer Taylor, Chair, Governing Council of Provinc. Council for Maternal and Child Health Loretta Ryan, Executive Director Association of Local Public Health Agencies

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June 21, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services Government of Ontario 438 University Avenue, 7th Floor Toronto, ON M5G 2K8

Dear Honourable Minister:

Re: Healthy Babies Healthy Children Funding

The Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts remains wholly committed to the critical Healthy Babies Healthy Children program, however, has longstanding and increasing concerns about the Board's ability to meet clients' growing needs with current program funding. Please be advised that at it's meeting on June 16, 2022, the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts carried the following resolution #19-22:

THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts request the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) to review base-funding needs for the Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program to ensure this essential program is sufficiently resourced to meet the current and growing needs of children and a healthy start in life.

The Board of Health recognizes that the Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) program provides a critical prevention/early intervention program and is designed to ensure that all Ontario families with children (prenatal to age six) who are at risk of physical, cognitive, communicative, and/or psychosocial problems have access to effective, consistent, early intervention services. Since 1997 the province has committed to resourcing the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program at 100%. Unfortunately, the HBHC budget has not been increased since 2015, resulting in significant erosion in capacity due to fixed cost increases such as collective agreement commitments and steps on salary grids, travel and accommodation costs, and operational and administrative costs.

Sudbury

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10 rue Elm Street Unit / Unité 130 Sudbury ON P3C 5N3 t: 705.522.9200 f: 705.677.9611

Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est

1 rue King Street Box / Boîte 58 St.-Charles ON POM 2W0 t: 705.222.9201 f: 705.867.0474

Espanola

800 rue Centre Street Unit / Unité 100 C Espanola ON P5E 1J3 t: 705.222.9202 f: 705.869.5583

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6163 Highway / Route 542 Box / Boîte 87 Mindemoya ON POP 1S0 t: 705.370.9200 f: 705.377.5580

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34 rue Birch Street Box / Boîte 485 Chapleau ON POM 1K0 t: 705.860.9200 f: 705.864.0820

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phsd.ca



This has been further compounded by the increased intensity of need in our communities pre-dating but further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The HBHC program has made every effort to mitigate the effects of the funding shortfalls over the years and to protect programming. The program, however, is not sustainable and significant service reductions will be required without increased to base funding.

It remains our priority to ensure that the HBHC program can effectively identify and support children and families most in need throughout the Sudbury/Manitoulin District. To this effect, we are submitting a revised 2022/23 HBHC program budget based on current needs and requesting consideration by the Ministry staff.

The Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts is respectfully requesting the Minister's commitment to carefully review base-funding needs for the HBHC program to ensure this essential program is sufficiently resourced to meet the current and growing needs of children and a healthy start in life.

Thank you for your attention to this important public health issue.

Sincerely,

Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

- cc: Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ministry of Health Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies Ontario Boards of Health
 - Dr. Jackie Schleifer Taylor, Chair, Governing Council of Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health
 - Sanober Diaz, Executive Director of Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health

Becid Oct 20/22



Ontario Nurses' Association 85 Grenville Street, Suite 400, Toronto, Ontario M5S 3A2 TEL: (416) 964-8833 FAX: (416) 964-8864

October 11, 2022

Dear Employer,

Re: Congratulate Ontario Nurses' Association Members as we Celebrate our 50th Anniversary!

I am writing with very exciting news! In 2023, the Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA), which represents 68,000 nurses and health-care professionals in a variety of sectors throughout the province of Ontario, along with 18,000 nursing student affiliates, is celebrating our 50th anniversary. ONA is the largest nurses' union in Canada.

We hope you will help us mark this major milestone by sharing a congratulatory message for ONA members in the form of a short video or letter.

As an employer, your message of congratulations will demonstrate to our members that they are valued day-in and day-out for the important work they do in our public health-care system.

Fifty years ago in Ontario, nurses and health-care professionals stood together to oppose poor working conditions and compensation that characterized a sector overwhelmingly worked by women. Solidarity brought change. Our working conditions improved, and over time our wages rose in recognition of our irreplaceable role in delivering care.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic – and long before – nurses and health-care professionals have sacrificed so much to ensure Ontarians received the best possible care. They worked long, exhausting shifts, sometimes putting themselves at risk. They experienced firsthand the devastation in many sectors that were ravaged by the pandemic. They ran vaccine clinics seven days a week with long lines. They provided a comforting touch and voice for patients when their families could not. They lived in constant fear that they could catch this virus or, worse yet, bring it home to their loved ones. Yet, throughout it all, they kept going.

For these reasons and so many more, I believe all Ontarians owe nurses and healthcare professionals our deepest gratitude, and ONA's 50th anniversary is the perfect opportunity to do so.

Provincial Office: Toronto Regional Offices: Ottawa • Hamilton • Kingston • London Orillia • Sudbury • Thunder Bay • Timmins • Windsor ONA has had 50 proud years of fighting for nurses, for health-care professionals and for the public who rely on the high-quality public health care our members provide. In 2022, our struggle for fairness and equitable treatment continues. Through ONA, we advocate to keep nursing united and strong.

Please join us in recognizing this proud history of advocacy and strength. Please submit your message of congratulations, in video or letter form to ONAmail@ona.org by December 1, 2022. Please feel free to email us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

ONTARIO NURSES' ASSOCIATION

Cathryn Hoy

Cathryn Hoy, RN Provincial President