



May 2, 2012

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

RE: Bill 74 - An Act to help prevent skin cancer

Dear Premier McGuinty:

The Board of Health for the Peterborough County-City Health Unit (PCCHU) supports the Canadian Cancer Society's (CCS) call on the Government of Ontario to endorse the new Private Members' Bill tabled in the legislature by NDP MPP France Gélinas on April 26, 2012, Bill 74 - An Act to help prevent skin cancer, by restricting youth under 18 years of age from using indoor tanning equipment.

Nova Scotia bans children under 19 years of age from using tanning beds, and British Columbia will pass similar regulations in the fall for children less than 18 years of age. Enforcement of the legislation in Nova Scotia has been described as cost neutral as staff were redeployed from tobacco enforcement to enforcing compliance with the new indoor tanning legislation.

The PCCHU and the Peterborough CCS have collaborated and advocated on this important issue over the past few years because research has shown that tanning bed use before the age of 35 increases a person's risk of developing skin cancer by 75%. Melanoma skin cancer is one of the most common and deadliest forms of cancer amongst people ages 15 to 29, and is one of the most preventable. As reported in the PCCHU's Summary of Selected Cancers Report, January 2012 (<http://www.pcchu.ca/Plans/Cancer-report-2012.pdf>), the incidence rates of melanoma are increasing in Peterborough and Ontario, and rates in Peterborough are higher than the provincial average.

In 2009, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer classified Ultra Violet (UV) Radiation tanning beds as group 1 "carcinogenic in humans". Skin cancer accounts for about one-third of all cancers diagnosed in Ontario, and the economic burden of this cancer in Ontario was estimated to exceed \$344 million in 2011.

On April 26, 2012, the CCS reported that 24% of youth are introduced to indoor tanning by their parents, and that 52% of the parents pay for their children to use tanning beds. By grade 12, 21% of youth are using tanning beds. Since most people receive 80% of their lifetime exposure

to UV radiation by the age of 18, it is crucial that the use of indoor tanning equipment by youth be reduced and eliminated if possible.

The Board of Health of Peterborough County-City Health Unit asks that you protect Ontario youth from this known carcinogen by ensuring that Bill 74 becomes law.

Yours in health,

Original signed by

Andy Sharpe
Chair, Board of Health
for the Peterborough County-City Health Unit

cc: Hon. Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Jeff Leal, MPP Peterborough
France Gélinas, MPP Nickel Belt
Ontario Boards of Health