

From: Angela Sturdy [<mailto:asturdy@huroncounty.ca>]

Sent: March-09-17 1:33 PM

To: Karen Reece (karen@alphaweb.org); mwales@opha.on.ca; Alida Tanna; Ann Gray; Carol Koob; Davies, Cathy; Christina Luukkonen; Christine Miller; Cindy Crandall; Diane Charlton (diane.charlton@halton.ca); Dianne Wiegand; Elizabeth Dickson; Erin Meneray; Heather Bruce; Helen Hazlewood; Helen Tanevski; Helen Tolvaia; Jane Bonaldo; Karen Macleod; Karen Vance; Kathy Proksch; Kim Eitel; Lee Anne Damphouse (ldamphouse@wechu.org); Lisa Powers; Lorraine Johnson; Lynn Guy; Maria Cook; Melissa Rintoul (mrintoul@pdhu.on.ca); Nicole Desautels; Noreen Woodtke; Paula Ferreira; Rachel Quesnel; Rachelle Leveille; Sarah Stevens; Sheri Beaulieu; Sue Jackson (susan.jackson@county-lambton.on.ca); Sylvia Muir

Subject: CORRESPONDENCE: HCHU Board of Health Support for Basic Income in Ontario

ATTN: ONTARIO BOARDS OF HEALTH

At its meeting held on March 9, 2017, the Board of Health for the Huron County Health Unit requested that the attached correspondence be sent to your attention.

Sincerely,

Angela Sturdy
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We value breastfeeding and are committed to helping parents make informed decisions about infant nutrition.

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March 9, 2017

The Hon. Dr. Helena Jaczek
Minister of Community and Social Services

The Hon. Chris Ballard
Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy

Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M7A 1A1

Dear Ministers;

We are writing to convey our support for Basic Income in Ontario and the recommendations made in the Honourable Hugh Segal's discussion paper, "Finding a Better Way: A Basic Income Pilot Project for Ontario".

The Huron County Board of Health feels strongly that ensuring everyone has an income sufficient to meet basic needs and live with dignity is one of the most important initiatives the provincial government could pursue to promote health, well-being and equity amongst Ontarians. Our support for basic income is informed by overwhelming evidence of the powerful link between income and health. People living with a lower income are at far greater risk of preventable medical conditions across the lifespan, including cancer, diabetes, heart disease, mental illness, and their associated health care costs, compared with those living with higher income. Children are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of growing up with low income, due to its deleterious effect on early childhood development.

This letter also serves to support our views on the important principles and elements of Basic Income:

- the pursuit of both health and social equity,
- income security for all, across the lifespan and regardless of employment status,
- universality – that no one is left behind,
- non-conditionality, other than based on income level and family composition,
- ensuring dignity by creating a process for receiving basic income that is comparable to other well accepted income security programs in Canada, such as child and seniors' benefits,
- ensuring the autonomy of basic income recipients so that they have the ability to spend money as they see fit to support the wellbeing of themselves and their family,

Huron County Health Unit

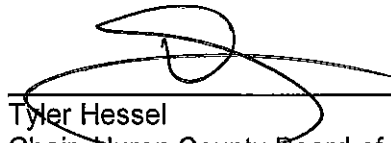
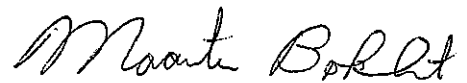
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- replacing Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) with basic income at rates that reflect the cost of living,
- the stipulation that no one is worse off than before the basic income program.

As has been conveyed by The Ontario Public Health Association and other Boards of Health in Ontario, we would emphasize that while basic income is an important form of income security for those on OW and ODSP, it is also crucial for those who are employed yet still living in poverty, including the precariously employed. While we see a great deal of promise in Basic Income, we also believe that basic income can only have a strong impact on the health-damaging conditions of poverty and precarious employment if it is part of, and not a replacement for, a comprehensive approach that includes progress on other key policies and programs. This includes affordable high quality child care, affordable housing, expanded health benefits, and labour law reform, among others.

Yours Sincerely,


Tyler Hessel
Chair, Huron County Board of Health
Maarten Bokhout
Acting Medical Officer of Health

cc:

Ontario Public Health Association – Mary Wales, Communications Coordinator
Association of Local Public Health Agencies
All Health Units

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