

April 3, 2019

The Honourable Lisa MacLeod  
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services  
56 Wellesley Street West, 14th Floor  
Toronto, ON M74 1E9  
[lisa.macleod@pc.ola.org](mailto:lisa.macleod@pc.ola.org)

Dear Minister MacLeod:

**Re: Funding for the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program**

At its meeting on March 13, 2019, the Board of Health for Peterborough Public Health considered correspondence from Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) regarding the above noted matter. We are in full support of TBDHU's call to action and share their concern and the concern of other local public health agencies regarding the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (HBHC) program funding.

Similarly, to other communities the demand for HBHC services in our community continues to climb, the need is great. As well, Peterborough Public Health has seen an increase in the complexity of clients in the HBHC program.

As you are aware, in 2016 the firm MNP performed a review of the HBHC program provincially and found a funding gap of approximately \$7.08M (Ministry of Children and Youth Services-Healthy Babies, Healthy Children Program Review Executive Summary p.7). This gap continues to grow every year with increases in salaries, benefits and operational costs. This gap creates barriers by reducing our reach to at-risk clients and families, as well as creating a wait-list for our services.

We appreciate your attention to this important public health issue.

Sincerely,

***Original signed by***

Councillor Kathryn Wilson  
Chair, Board of Health

/ag  
Encl.

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



## Thunder Bay District Health Unit

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TBDHU.COM

November 21, 2018

*SENT VIA EMAIL*

The Honourable Lisa MacLeod  
Minister of Children, Community and Social Services  
14th Flr, 56 Wellesley St W,  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 1E9

Dear Minister MacLeod,  
On behalf the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) Board of Health, it is with significant concern that I am writing to you regarding funding for the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (HBHC) Program.

The Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) program is a prevention/early intervention initiative 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 and is a mandatory program for Boards of Health.

In 1997 the province committed to funding the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program at 100%. Province wide funding allocations have been essentially "flat-lined" from an original allocation that was completed in 2008, with the exception of the one-time funding increases for implementation of the 2012 Protocol. In the interim, collective agreement settlements, travel costs, pay increments and accommodation costs have increased the costs of implementing the HBHC program. Management and administration costs related to the program are already offset by the cost-shared budget for provincially mandated programs.

Simultaneously the complexity of clients accessing the program has increased requiring that more of the services be delivered by professional versus non-professional staff. The TBDHU has made every effort to mitigate the outcome of this ongoing funding shortfall however it has become increasingly more challenging to meet the targets set out in HBHC service agreements. At the current funding level services for these high-risk families will be reduced.

In 2016 the firm MNP performed a review of the HBHC program provincially and found that "based on the activities of the current service delivery model, and using the targets outlined in the service agreements ... there is a gap in the current funding of the program of approximately \$7.808M." (Ministry of Children and Youth Services - Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program Review Executive Summary p.7)

The Thunder Bay District Board of Health continues to advocate that the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services fully funds the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program, including all staffing, operating and administrative costs.

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

Sincerely,

**Original Signed by**

Joe Virdiramo, Chair  
Board of Health  
Thunder Bay District Health Unit

cc. Michael Gravelle, MPP (Thunder Bay-Superior North)  
Judith Monteith-Farrell, MPP (Thunder Bay-Atitkokan)  
All Ontario Boards of Health