

August 27, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
Ministry of Health, 5th Floor
777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Elliott:

Re: Support to Establish the Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Hub Model as an Ongoing Program

At its August 27, 2021 meeting, the Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit recognized the continued importance of supporting long-term care homes and other community congregate living settings through provincially funded infection protection and control (IPAC) measures. Northern health units are uniquely positioned, and the temporary funding for each board of health to be the “Hub” in the IPAC “Hub and Spoke” model has been particularly effective and continues to be critical to ensure vulnerable residents are protected and outbreaks of infections such as SARS-CoV-2 are prevented.

Infection Prevention and Control programming is a requirement of Boards of Health under the *Ontario Public Health Standards*. In December 2020, Northern public health units received temporary funding to establish local networks to enhance IPAC practices in community-based congregate living settings, which resulted in enhanced partnerships between Social Services Boards, Associations for Community Living, and increased staff and management capacity for this important work which is carried out across the Northwestern Health Unit catchment area and throughout Northern Ontario.

The establishment of IPAC Hubs is a strong first step in addressing the need for supports related to IPAC within congregate living facilities, as identified in *Ontario’s Long-Term Care COVID-19 Commission April 2021 Final Report*, and while we would welcome the news of funding for this programming for the 2021/2022 period, **we would request that stable, annualized funding for this program be established in recognition of the criticality of the interventions.** Temporary or one-time funding does not allow us to successfully recruit trained professionals for the required positions, given the chronic recruitment challenges that have only been worsened by the pandemic.

With this in mind, the Board of Health carried the following resolution #79-2021:

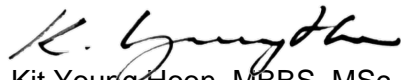


THAT the Board of Health for the Northwestern Health Unit make a request to the Provincial Government to make the IPAC Hub model an ongoing program with stable annual funding to provide for the protection from infectious diseases in community congregate living settings and long-term care homes.

AND FURTHER that this resolution be shared with Ministers of Health and Long-Term Care, area partners, Northern Boards of Health, Ontario Health, aPHa, and the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

Northwestern Health Unit is grateful to have been able to work with health units in the north to come together in support of protecting vulnerable residents from infectious diseases in long-term care and other congregate living settings; We thank you for the opportunity to do so.

Sincerely,



Kit Young Hoon, MBBS, MSc., MPH, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

cc: Honourable R. Phillips, Minister of Long-Term Care
Dr. K. Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ministry of Health
All Northern Ontario Boards of Health
C. Geiger, President and CEO, Public Health Ontario
M. Anderson, President and CEO, Ontario Health
B. Kytör, Transitional Regional Lead (Northern Ontario)