

August 2, 2023

**Attention:**

The Honourable, Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
The Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health of Ontario  
City of London Council  
County of Middlesex Council  
Teresa Armstrong, Member of Provincial Parliament for London Fanshawe  
Terence Kernaghan, Member of Provincial Parliament for London North Centre  
Peggy Sattler, Member of Provincial Parliament for London West  
Rob Flack, Member of Provincial Parliament for Elgin-Middlesex-London  
Monte McNaughton, Member of Provincial Parliament for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex

**RE: Middlesex-London Health Unit 2024 Budget**

Dear Premier, Honourable Ministers, Members of Provincial Parliament, City of London Council, and County of Middlesex Council,

The Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU) is grateful to the provincial government for its continued commitment to keeping the health and safety of Ontarians a top priority, with steadfast financial support for the Health Unit throughout the pandemic. Public health provides a critical foundation for the broader public healthcare system, during pandemics and beyond, through the provision of efficient and effective interventions that keep Ontarians out of emergency departments and hospital beds. Within its mission to protect and promote the health of people in Middlesex-London, the team at the MLHU helps to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, prevent illnesses associated with environmental exposures, promote healthy growth and development for babies, children, and youth (including mental health), prevent injuries and chronic diseases, and ensure system readiness for public health emergencies. Investing in public health is therefore a critical long-term, sustainable approach to building a strong healthcare system.

The MLHU Board of Health wants to ensure the province was aware of the significant funding shortfall facing the MLHU in 2024. The MLHU anticipates funding reductions in 2024 with the end of the School Focused Nurses Initiative and COVID-19 Extraordinary Expense Funding. The proposed shift of Mitigation Funding to municipal partners introduces pressures beyond the funding increases required to keep pace with inflation, currently forecasted at 3.9% for 2024. Further, the rapidly increasing population creates greater need; between 2016 and 2021 the population of Middlesex-London grew by 10%.

Without adequate funding, it is anticipated that it will not be possible for the MLHU to execute substantial components of the Ontario Public Health Standards in 2024. One recent example is the MLHU Strathroy Dental clinic, recently opened in [June 2023](#), with capital funds from the Ontario Seniors' Dental Care Program to support low-income seniors and low-income children 17 and under. This is a vital program in Middlesex County and has a large waitlist of clients interested in seeking dental care. To date, operational funding has not been provided for this clinic, adding to the list of significant financial pressures facing the MLHU in 2024.

The MLHU shares the concerns of its public health colleagues from across Ontario regarding our collective ability to meet the [Ontario Public Health Standards](#), the legislative guideposts to ensure the health of Ontarians, set out by the Ministry of Health. We ask that the Ministry return the funding to the previous 75:25 Provincial/Municipal allocation, provide an increase to base funding sufficient to reflect ongoing accountability for managing COVID-19 as a Disease of Public Health Significance, and increase funding to address inflationary pressures. Sufficient and stable funding for public health is required to maintain the public health services that are essential to the health of our communities, now and into the future.

Sincerely,



Matt Newton-Reid  
Board Chair  
Middlesex-London Health Unit



Emily Williams, BScN, RN, MBA, CHE  
Secretary and Treasurer  
Middlesex-London Health Unit



Dr. Alex Summers MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC  
Medical Officer of Health  
Middlesex-London Health Unit

CC: All Ontario Boards of Health  
Middlesex-London Board of Health Members  
David Jansseune, Assistant Director, Finance, Middlesex-London Health Unit