



Pediatrics

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February 7, 2023

5.18 (f)

Attn: Hamilton Board of Health Members

RE: Movement to Restructure the Board of Health to Include Community Members and Health Experts

Dear Board of Health Members,

I am writing in support of Councillor Cameron Kroetsch's proposal to restructure the City of Hamilton's Board of Health to include expert and community voices among its membership. The COVID-19 pandemic has starkly illustrated the importance of having our public health policies be informed by health professionals. Hamilton is behind in including these critical perspectives among city health decisions makers compared to other Ontario cities, including Toronto and Ottawa. The strategic vision for Hamilton's health cannot be meaningfully informed or achieved without health experts on this board.

Furthermore, this restructuring should result in a membership that is more diverse by seeking and including community and health leaders from equity-deserving groups, including but not limited to: women, (in)visibly disabled people/people with (in)visible disabilities, Indigenous peoples, Black communities, racialized communities, 2SLGBTQIA+ folks, low-income communities, and newcomer communities. My colleagues and I in healthcare and anti-racist, anti-oppressive work have publicly called for a diversified, restructured board membership as crucial to addressing the impact of discrimination on health, seeking care, and health outcomes since 2021. Achieving progress towards equitable care requires equitable representation at policy- and decision-making tables.

I strongly support Councillor Kroetsch's motion and the echo the calls of my peers to restructure the Board of Health for the benefit of our city. By adopting this systemic change, we will ensure better health outcomes for residents, particularly the most vulnerable and oppressed members of our communities.

Yours sincerely,

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