TITLE: **Maintaining Preventive Dental Services in the Ontario Public Health Standards (PSO)**

SPONSOR: **Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit**

WHEREAS   the relationship between poor oral health and poor overall health is well established; and

WHEREAS   there exists a relationship between poor oral health and social risks including poor speech development, inability to thrive and challenges to learn in children; and

WHEREAS   the burden of poor oral health is greater for marginalized child populations; and

WHEREAS   school based pit and fissure sealant programs and fluoride varnish applications in schools have been shown to be highly effective clinical preventive interventions; and

WHEREAS   most preventive oral health services in Ontario are "out-of-pocket" expenses that families of children cannot always afford; and

WHEREAS   in the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS), an objective of the Child Health programs is to reduce the prevalence of dental disease in children and youth; and

WHEREAS   the OPHS have mandated that all children in need of preventive oral health services receive essential clinical preventive services; and

WHEREAS   Requirement 13, regarding the Preventive Oral Health Services Protocol, will be removed from the Ontario Public Health Standards upon implementation of the new integrated Healthy Smiles Ontario Program; and

WHEREAS   only children of families that meet the financial eligibility criteria will be eligible for public health preventive oral health services, resulting in the exclusion of a significant population of vulnerable children.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies write to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care calling for the Province of Ontario to maintain the preventive dental services in the Ontario Public Health Standards so that all Ontario children who qualify clinically and are from families who cannot afford this care at a fee for service clinic will be offered this public health service.

ACTION FROM CONFERENCE: **Resolution CARRIED**