

alPHA's members are  
the public health units  
in Ontario.

**alPHA Sections:**

Boards of Health  
Section

Council of Ontario  
Medical Officers of  
Health (COMOH)

**Affiliate  
Organizations:**

Association of Ontario  
Public Health Business  
Administrators

Association of  
Public Health  
Epidemiologists  
in Ontario

Association of  
Supervisors of Public  
Health Inspectors of  
Ontario

Health Promotion  
Ontario

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Dentistry

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Nursing  
Leaders

Ontario Society of  
Nutrition Professionals  
in Public Health

July 21 2016

Hon. Eric Hoskins  
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
Hepburn Block 10th Flr,  
80 Grosvenor St,  
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Hoskins,

**Re. alPHA Resolution A16-6, Comprehensive Province-Wide Healthy Eating Approach**

On behalf of member Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health and Affiliate organizations of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA), I am writing today to inform you of the passage of alPHA Resolution A16-6 (attached), which calls for the development of a province-wide strategy to promote healthy eating, including consideration of taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages.

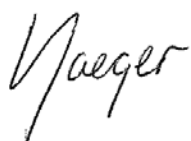
Your Government has made strong commitments to addressing chronic disease prevention and childhood obesity as part of Ontario's Action Plan for Health Care and we thank you for this. In line with this, we believe that the time is right to commit to a comprehensive province-wide approach to promote and support healthy eating, which is an absolutely critical factor.

Our members agree with the rationale and the recommendations set out in the recent Senate report *Obesity in Canada* and the Heart and Stroke Foundation position statement *Sugar, Heart Disease and Stroke*, and we believe that they contain the foundations of a road map for implementing such a strategy.

As part of this resolution, alPHA's members singled out a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages as an essential component of a healthy eating strategy, having been convinced by mounting evidence that consuming too much sugar is linked to heart disease, stroke, obesity, diabetes and other chronic conditions.

We look forward to providing our expertise and advice to a process that results in a comprehensive approach to healthy eating in Ontario.

Sincerely,



Dr. Valerie Jaeger,  
President

**Copy:** Sharon Lee Smith, Associate Deputy Minister, Policy and Transformation  
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Roselle Martino, Assistant Deputy Minister, Population and Public Health  
Division.

**TITLE: Advocate for a Comprehensive Province-Wide Healthy Eating Approach Integrating the Recommendations in the Senate's Report on Obesity and the Heart and Stroke Foundation Sugar, Heart Disease and Stroke Position Statement, including Taxation of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages**

**WHEREAS** In Ontario, between 1978 and 2004 the prevalence of overweight children aged 12-17 increased from 14% to 29% and obese from 3% to 9% (Shields, 2006) Youth who are overweight and obese are at higher risk of being overweight or obese in adulthood (Singh, Mulder, Twisk, van Mechelen & Chinapaw, 2008); and

**WHEREAS** The etiology of obesity is complex and involves interactions between genetics, social and environmental factors; and

**WHEREAS** A comprehensive approach has been found to be most effective to bring about social change in order to improve health and wellbeing and reflected in the five elements of the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion, World Health Organization(WHO), 1986, building healthy public policy, reorienting the health services, creating supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal skill; and

**WHEREAS** As part of a comprehensive approach, specific policy measures such as taxation can have a measurable impact, particularly when they are large enough to affect consumer behaviour, and revenues are redirected toward prevention efforts (Sturm et al, 2010); and

**WHEREAS** The Senate's Report on Obesity describes an innovative, whole-of-society approach to address this important issue — and urges bold but practical steps that can and must be taken to help Canadians achieve and maintain healthy weights (2016); and

**WHEREAS** It is estimated that Canadians consume as much as 13% of their total calorie intake from added sugars (Brisbois et al, 2014); and

**WHEREAS** In children higher intake of Sugar Sweetened Beverages has been associated with a 55% increased risk of being overweight or obese compared to children with lower intake (Te Morenga, Mallard & Mann, 2012); and

**WHEREAS** WHO recommends the consumption of free sugar, both added and natural sugars be limited to 10% of total energy intake to reduce the risk of overweight, obesity and tooth decay (2015); and

**WHEREAS** The position paper, Sugar, Heart Disease and Stroke by the Heart and Stroke Foundation identifies a comprehensive approach to address the overconsumption of sugar, sweetened (energy dense, nutrient poor) beverages which evidence shows is linked to overweight and obese children (2014);

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) petition the Ontario government to develop a province-wide comprehensive strategy to promote healthy eating and the taking into considerations the recommendations in the Senate's Report on Obesity and the Heart and Stroke Foundation Sugar, Heart Disease and Stroke Position Statement, including taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages.

**AND FURTHER** that alPHA request an update on the progress of the Healthy Kids Panel's recommendations.