April 16, 2019

Wendy Pinder
Acting Executive Director
Ontario AIDS Network
296 Jarvis Street, Unit #5
Toronto, Ontario M5B2C5

Dear Ms. Pinder,

Re: HIV Case Management, Undetectable=Untransmittable.

At its March 21, 2019 meeting, under Correspondence item p), the Middlesex-London Board of Health voted to endorse the following item:

Date: 2019 March 5
Topic: Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health (COMOH) resolution on HIV case management
From: Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa)
To: All Boards of Health

Background:

On February 21, 2019, the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health (COMOH) affirmed the understanding that an undetectable HIV viral load poses effectively no risk of HIV transmission within a comprehensive public health approach to sexual health. COMOH further acknowledges the importance of communicating the Undetectable = Untransmittable (U = U) message as part of a comprehensive public health approach to sexual health.

Recommendation: Endorse.

The Middlesex-London Board of Health understands the importance of ensuring that science drives policy rather than an enforcement approach. The U=U message provides an opportunity to improve access to treatment and care, increase testing rates and decrease transmission rates. In support of U=U and as part of this endorsement, the Middlesex-London Health Unit has also registered to become a Community Partner with the Prevention Access Campaign.

Sincerely,

Trish Fulton, Chair
Middlesex-London Board of Health

cc: Mr. Brian Lester, Executive Director, Regional HIV/AIDS Connection
    Dr. Christopher Mackie, Section Chair, Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health
    Association of Local Public Health Agencies
    Ontario Boards of Health
RESOLUTION 2019-02-21
TITLE: HIV Case Management

WHEREAS advances in treatment and timely interventions and supports have allowed people living with HIV to manage their illness and live a healthy life; and

WHEREAS there have been no confirmed cases of sexually transmitted HIV to an HIV-negative partner when the HIV-positive partner was continuously on antiretroviral therapy (ART) with sustained viral suppression; and

WHEREAS when a person living with HIV on ART takes their medications consistently as prescribed and maintains a confirmed suppressed viral load, there is effectively no risk of their passing the infection on to their sex partners; and

WHEREAS Canada's Chief Public Health Officer and Provincial and Territorial Chief Medical Officers of Health have acknowledged the important work of the Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) campaign, which promotes the scientific evidence that indicates that when an individual is being treated for HIV and maintains a suppressed viral load, there is effectively no risk of sexual transmission; and

WHEREAS the Ontario Public Health Standards require the use of health promotion approaches to increase adoption of healthy behaviours among the population and create supportive environments to promote healthy sexual practices;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLUTION that the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health endorse the message that an undetectable HIV viral load poses effectively no risk of HIV transmission within a comprehensive public health approach to sexual health;

AND FURTHER that the Council of Medical Officers of Health join the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada and the Provincial and Territorial Chief Medical Officers of Health in acknowledging the importance of communicating the U=U message as part of a comprehensive public health approach to sexual health;

AND FURTHER that the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, Provincial and Territorial Chief Medical Officers of Health, Ontario Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and all Ontario Boards of Health be so advised.

CARRIED February 21, 2019