

alPHa Resolution A24-07

TITLE: **Creating a Provincial Strategy for Indigenous Opioid Epidemic Supports & Funding**

SPONSOR: **Grey Bruce Public Health, Board of Health**

PREAMBLE: The opioid crisis continues to have profound effects on all Ontarians and Canadians and has reached critical mass in many Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. It has become apparent that Indigenous communities have been disproportionately impacted by a lack of provincial funding for mental health and addiction support, and, compounded with healthcare systems at the local level being understaffed and overwhelmed, have little capacity or resources to support in meaningful and beneficial ways. Addiction and mental health go hand in hand, with addiction problems often veiling concealed issues of past trauma. Indigenous communities in Ontario and Canada must be provided with the appropriate funding and resources needed to create impactful, positive change for present and future generations.

WHEREAS the lack of mental health and addictions funding awarded to Indigenous communities by different levels of government to aid in the opioid crisis, compounded by chronic homelessness and poverty, has resulted in a substantial and disproportionately negative impact on Indigenous people; and

WHEREAS the direct and indirect impacts of the opioid crisis are often unnoticed, dismissed, or misdiagnosed by healthcare system staff when it comes to mis-categorizing mental health struggles as unimpacted by addiction; and

WHEREAS Indigenous communities in Grey and Bruce counties alone have lost tens of people in the previous 5 years within an isolated population of only 750 people, meaning the opioid crisis has had a profound impact given the lack of resources and funding available to the Indigenous communities' programs; and

WHEREAS the provincial and federal governments have not provided the appropriate funding, resources, and supports to Indigenous communities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Association of Local Public Health Agencies support the petitioning of both the provincial and federal governments to invest and provide adequate and immediate funding, resources, and supports to positively impact the ability of Indigenous communities to care for their populations and provide appropriate substance use supports, programs, and community-based solutions.

CARRIED