

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:**

ANDSOOHA - Public
Health Nursing
Management

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 Society of
Nutrition Professionals
in Public Health

July 16 2013

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

Dear Minister Matthews,

Re: OSNPPH Call to Action – Creating a Healthy Workplace Nutrition Environment

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 in strong support of the Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health (OSNPPH) *Call to Action on Creating a Healthy Workplace Nutrition Environment*.

As you know, alPHA's members are required by the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) to provide a range of programs and services related to healthy eating and active living, the aim of which is the prevention of a host of chronic diseases. While we believe that these make an important contribution to preventing the unhealthy weights that are a clearly demonstrated risk factor for such diseases, the fact that obesity rates continue to rise and that eating habits continue to worsen despite increased knowledge about healthy diets demonstrates the need for more comprehensive and multi-sectoral action.

We are very pleased that reducing childhood obesity has become such an important government priority, and alPHA and its members have contributed a great deal to the dialogue leading up to and following the release of the Healthy Kids Panel (HKP) Report. As we examined the OSNPPH Call to Action, it became quite apparent that many of the recommendations for a Healthy Kids strategy could be equally aimed at healthy adults.

The OSNPPH report identifies many of the same issues and many of the same interventions as the Healthy Kids Panel. For example, where the HKP singled out schools as the ideal location to reach and engage children, OSNPPH identifies workplaces as the ideal location to reach and engage working adults. In both cases, this provides the best opportunity for creating supportive nutrition environments, implementing nutritional standards and increasing access to healthy foods.

We certainly agree that focusing on children is critically important for ingraining lifelong healthy habits, but the reality is that Ontario's adults are just as likely to be making unhealthy choices for a variety of reasons, and the negative health outcomes are the same. A healthy food environment has been identified as a foundation for making healthy choices easier, and we agree with OSNPPH that workplaces are, like schools, ideal locations to begin creating it.

Yours truly,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Mary Johnson,
President

Copy: Dr. Arlene King, Chief Medical Officer of Health; Kate Manson-Smith, Assistant Deputy Minister of Health and Long-Term Care (Health Promotion Division); Roselle Martino, Executive Director, Public Health Division, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care