

InfoBreak

alPHA's members' portal



Fall 2025

Key Highlights:

- Registration for the online 2025 alPHA Fall Symposium and Workshops has launched. Click [here](#) to register.
- Health Promotion Ontario has launched its Fall Webinar Series.
- Haliburton Kawartha Northumberland Peterborough has rebranded as [Lakelands Public Health](#).

Leadership in Action:

Since the last newsletter in July, alPHA is maintaining its strategic momentum:

Promoting Local Public Health Leadership:

- **Continuing to Strengthen Advocacy at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Annual Conference:** alPHA's Executive Committee and Chief Executive Officer, Loretta Ryan, along with several local public health units, maintained a strong presence at the annual AMO conference in Ottawa. Attendance at AMO is critical to advancing the profile and importance of local public health with decision-makers at the local and provincial levels.
- **Engaging with Medical Leadership:** Engagements continue as alPHA's Executive Committee and Chief Executive Officer met with Ontario Medical Association leaders. Dialogue focused on mutual interests, such as the importance of stabilizing local public health agencies, including the newly merged ones; the pivotal role that public health fulfills, given the primary care gaps; and the importance of working together on joint priorities such as a provincial vaccine registry.
- **Board of Health Orientation Support:** Since the June conference, alPHA staff delivered on Member requests for tailored Board of Health orientations. Most recently, the Board of Health Governance Course was delivered in Kenora to the Northwestern Health Unit Board of Health and senior staff. This was a follow-up to another successful course that was held in Cornwall with the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, following the AMO Conference. Further information on the course can be found [here](#).
- **Expanding Leadership Representation:** alPHA continues to work with the Affiliate Representative, Cynthia St. John, regarding the Association of Public Health Business Administrators' expanded membership. This represents an excellent outcome for alPHA as it broadens our Membership to include public health leaders in Corporate Resources, Human Resources, Finance, Communications, and Information Technology.

This update is a tool to keep alPHA's Members apprised of the latest news in public health including provincial announcements, legislation, alPHA activities, correspondence, and events. Visit us at alphaweb.org.

alPHA's Feedback and Input Opportunities:**• OPHS and Funding Review:**

- o While I write this update, the field is still awaiting news about the updated 2026 Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) and an update about the ministry's Funding Review for local public health agencies.
- o Once updates about these key pillars of the government's *Strengthening Public Health* initiative are announced, alPHA will work to provide initial feedback in a timely manner.
- o At this year's Fall Symposium, alPHA plans to provide and give opportunities for feedback on these key public health issues.

Open Channels for Feedback: alPHA is continuously open to receiving feedback. Your input is invaluable in shaping our strategic direction. Thank you to our Members for attending and providing feedback on our well-received government relations workshop in June! Please continue to share ideas that align with your priorities.



2025 alPHa Fall Symposium

SAVE THE DATE!

alPHa 2025 Fall Symposium and Workshops November 5-7, 2025

Registration for the Fall Symposium and Workshops, taking place **online** November 5-7, is now open! You can register [here](#). These events will discuss a variety of issues of key importance to public health leaders, and you won't want to miss out. The cost to attend is \$399.00 +HST.

New for this year: We will be extending the symposium to an all-day program. This means you will have an opportunity to hear from even more speakers, explore more topics, and participate in more discussions! On Friday, November 7, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., there is an exciting lineup of Symposium speakers and topics. Key speakers include Dr. Hsiu-Li Wang, alPHa Chair and more members of the alPHa Board of Directors, and more. Additional information about other speakers and topics is available on the symposium webpage.

In conjunction with the Symposium, we are also holding two half-day workshops. The first one, *titled Public Health and Engagement with Indigenous Communities*, will be held on Wednesday, November 5, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., and will feature Nicole Blackman, IPHCC, Darryl Souliere-Lamb, IPHCC, Julia Creglia, IPHCC, and Leonor Tavares, OCMOH. Participants will gain further insights into the importance of appropriate and inclusive Indigenous engagement with local public health efforts. The session will provide an opportunity for reflection on how public health agencies can foster meaningful relationships with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis (FNIM) communities and organizations. On Thursday, November 6, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., we will hold the second workshop featuring Marilyn Owston, TrendLine Consulting Services. This workshop is titled *Leading Others: Understanding Communication Styles*. This highly interactive session has been specifically designed to enhance leaders' ability to communicate more effectively with their teams. If you do not have time to attend both pre-symposium workshops, pick the one that interests you the most!

For more information on how to register, please go the symposium webpage. The preliminary program is available [here](#).

alPHa would like to thank [Southwestern Public Health](#) for being this year's Fall Symposium co-host. A shoutout also goes to [Eastern Ontario Health Unit](#) and the [Dalla Lana School of Public Health](#) for their event support.

**Association of Local
Public Health
Agencies**

**Fall Symposium
and Workshops**

**November 5-7,
2025**

Co-hosted by

alPHA

**Association of Local
PUBLIC HEALTH
Agencies**

Sw SOUTHWESTERN
Public Health
Oxford • Elgin • St. Thomas

alPHA's Fall Symposium and Workshops will continue the important conversations on the critical role, value, and benefit of Ontario's local public health system.

Participate in engaging online workshops and in-depth plenary sessions with public health leaders.

**You must be an alPHA member to participate.
Pre-Symposium Workshops are included when you register for the
Fall Symposium: \$399 + HST.**

Registration will be available mid-September and further information will also be shared in alPHA's newsletter, InfoBreak, as details become available.

The Fall Symposium is generously supported by:



Dalla Lana
School of Public Health

2025 Fall EA/AA Workshop registration is open!

The logo for the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) is displayed. The letters 'al' are in a dark red color, 'PH' is in a lighter red color, and 'a' is in a dark red color. The background of the entire graphic is a dense field of vibrant red and orange autumn leaves.

Association of Local
PUBLIC HEALTH
Agencies

Executive Assistants / Administrative Assistants Fall Workshop November 4, 2025

In case you missed it, registration has opened for the 2025 alPHa Executive Assistant/Administrative Assistant Fall Workshop! This **online** event will be held on Tuesday, November 4 from 2 p.m.- 4 p.m., and is an opportunity to connect with colleagues from across Ontario and learn new skills. The cost is \$149+HST and the final day to register is Friday, October 31.

The workshop, that is titled *Working with Others: Understanding Communication Styles*, is being led by Marilyn Owston from Trendline. This highly interactive session has been designed to enhance participants' ability to deal more effectively with people whether they are colleagues, clients, members of the public, or representatives of other groups or organizations. To learn more about this event, you can view the flyer [here](#).

alPHa would like to acknowledge and thank Southwestern Public Health for being the symposium and workshop's co-host. A shoutout also goes to Eastern Ontario Health Unit and the Dalla Lana School of Public Health for their event support.

The words 'Online Event' are written in a large, white, serif font. The background is a blurred image of what appears to be a large indoor space, possibly a conference hall or a large room with many people seated at tables, with warm lighting.

Affiliates

Association of Local Public
Health Agencies

Announcing! HPO Fall 2025 Webinar Series

Health Promotion Ontario (HPO) is excited to announce that the HPO Professional Development Working Group will be hosting a Fall 2025 Webinar Series spotlighting **Emerging Topics in Health Promotion**.

This dynamic 3-part series will bring together experts and innovators to explore what's shaping our field today:

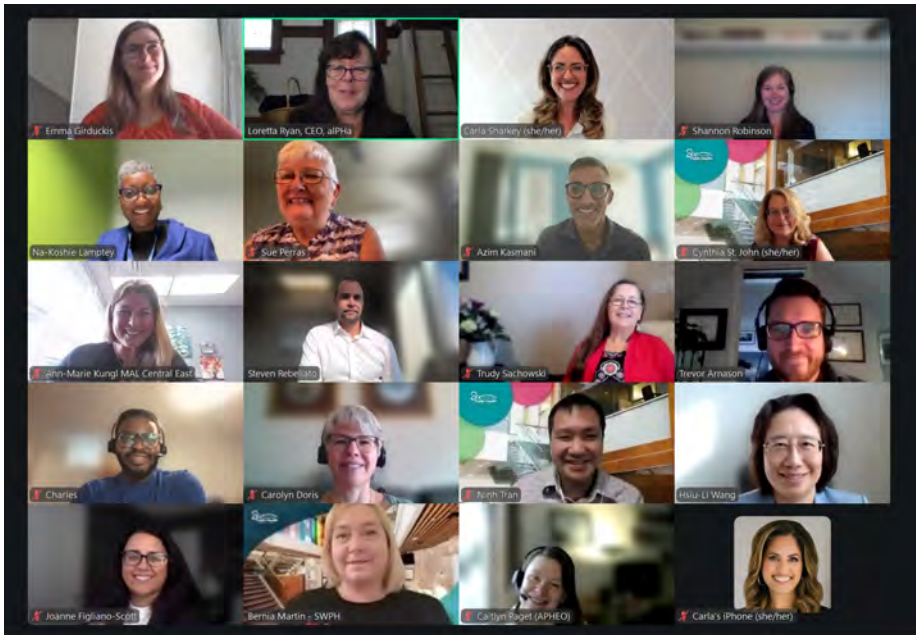
1. **Quality Improvement (QI) in Health Promotion** – *early October*
2. **Social Prescribing through a Health Promotion lens**– *late October*
3. **A Fireside Chat with Health Promoters** – *mid-November*

Featuring leaders who are driving innovative health promotion initiatives

Tune into this webinar series for thought-provoking conversations, fresh ideas, and practical takeaways to inspire your work!

To stay up to date on registration details and announcements, keep an eye out on HPO's on [Linkedin](#), [Facebook](#) or [X](#) pages to learn more.





alPHA Board of Directors - Team building session

The alPHA Board of Directors joined Carla Sharkey, Founder & CEO of Sharkey Coaching, for a highly engaging 3-hour session that helped to bring the Board team closer together—virtually and strategically. Together, they strengthened collaboration through engaging, highly interactive exercises. They clarified shared values to create a strong foundation for decision-making, and agreed how to work together and shape the board’s culture. By the end of the session, they had deeper connections with fellow board members, a clear set of shared values, and a foundation that enhances collaboration, fosters accountability, and increases governance effectiveness.





National Collaborating Centre
for Methods and Tools

Centre de collaboration nationale
des méthodes et outils

Workshops

The National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools (NCCMT)'s workshops help prepare you to meet the demands of today's public health challenges. These practice-based sessions use real-world examples to develop your skills for integrating evidence in your practice. Upcoming sessions include:

- **Evidence Synthesis for Public Health Decision Making:** This workshop will take you through the evidence review process with hands-on examples for steps in evidence synthesis and resources to support continued learning.
- **Implementation & Evaluation:** This workshop provides hands-on guidance through the steps involved in planning, implementing and evaluating change.

Click here to learn more and register: <https://www.nccmt.ca/workshops-webinars/>

Lakelands Public Health launches new brand identity following merger



Lakelands Public Health proudly unveiled its new name and brand identity, marking the official merger of the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit and Peterborough Public Health. This transformation reflects a unified vision for advancing public health across the City of Kawartha Lakes, City and County of Peterborough, Haliburton County, and Northumberland County, while honouring the legacy and strengths of both organizations. "This is more than a new name and logo," said Dr. Thomas Piggott, Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer of Lakelands Public Health. "It's a commitment to building a healthier future together for generations to come. By bringing our teams, expertise, and resources under one identity, we're better equipped to meet the evolving needs of our communities."



GenWell: Talk to a Stranger Week - Nov. 24-30

This campaign intends to educate, empower, and catalyze Canadians about the many benefits of talking to strangers.

Talk To a Stranger Week is an opportunity to build a sense of connection and community that many need in a post-pandemic world. It is seizing the opportunity that many of us have each day to make a difference in our own lives and the lives of others by simply saying hello, smiling or striking up a conversation with a stranger. To learn more, click [here](https://www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org).

Join us November 24-30, 2025

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Talk To A Stranger Week is an opportunity to build a sense of connection and community that many need in a post-pandemic world. It is seizing the opportunity that many of us have each day to make a difference in our own lives and the lives of others by simply saying hello, smiling or striking up a conversation with a stranger.

www.TalkToAStrangerWeek.org
[@GenWellProject](https://www.instagram.com/GenWellProject)

THE BENEFITS:

Connecting with strangers can enhance our happiness, optimism, empathy, and sense of belonging, grounding us in the world.

Additionally, several long-term benefits arise from these connections, including:

- Increased well-being
- Greater happiness and optimism
- Stronger empathy and compassion for others
- Better cognitive performance
- Heightened sense of connection
- Higher trust levels
- Decreased feelings of social isolation, disconnection, and loneliness

TIPS TO CONNECT:

- Say hello
- Compliment someone
- Make eye contact and smile
- Celebrate or complain about the weather
- Strike up a conversation in a line-up
- Speak about a current event
- Ask for advice
- Tell a joke or make light of a situation

50 yrs.
How many years people have been told not to talk to strangers

20%
Percentage of Canadians that speak to strangers each day

>90%
How often talking to strangers is a positive experience for both people

Those who speak to strangers are up to 3x happier

"A stranger today can be a friend tomorrow."

Proud health partners:



Make a donation directly to GenWell

Help us scale our impact and bring social health to the forefront across Canada. Scan the QR to access our donations page for more details.





Unlock the Power of Local Data: Join the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System in 2026

Are you looking for reliable, timely, and locally relevant data to inform public health decisions in your community? The Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS) offers Ontario Public Health Units a proven, customizable solution for gathering actionable data on emerging and ongoing public health issues.

For over two decades, RRFSS has empowered health units across Ontario to monitor public awareness and opinion and risk factors on local health topics. Planning is beginning for the 2026 cycle, and now is the perfect time to explore how RRFSS can support your unit's strategic goals.

Why RRFSS?

- **Tailored to Your Needs:** Choose your own questions, set your sample size and your preferred mix of landline and cell phone interviews, and set a timeframe for collection (three cycles are available per year).
- **Ready-to-Use Questions and Data Dictionaries:** Access hundreds of pretested questions and shared analysis tools.
- **Cost conscious:** The RRFSS administration was simplified in 2024 resulting in administrative costs cuts. Survey packages can be customized to fit a wide range of budgets.
- **Local Impact:** RRFSS data is designed to reflect the unique characteristics and concerns of your community—making it a powerful tool for evidence-based planning and evaluation.

What's New and Why It Matters

RRFSS continues to evolve to meet the needs of Ontario's public health units with new questions that address critical issues, many of which are not available from other local data sources. New questions for 2025 include:

- Gambling frequency, modes and advertising
- Mental health supports
- Stigma related to mental health and substance use health



Unlock the Power of Local Data: Join the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System in 2026

These additions complement a robust set of existing questions on topics such as:

- Environmental health: climate change, radon testing, safe water, poor air quality, built environment
- Emergency preparedness: household planning for emergencies
- Infectious disease and prevention: Lyme disease, West Nile virus, influenza vaccination, public health inspection and food safety
- Health behaviours and access: cannabis, alcohol, tobacco, nutrition, physical activity and access to health services
- Familiarity and perceived credibility of the public health unit
- Sociodemographics

These topics represent pressing public health concerns where local, timely data is scarce—making RRFSS a vital tool for evidence-informed planning and response.

Take the Next Step

Don't miss the opportunity to strengthen your health unit's surveillance capacity with high-quality, locally relevant data. While you can join anytime, **the deadline for confirming 2026 participation is October 15.**

To learn more or discuss participation options, contact:

- Liza Mercier at lmercier@yorku.ca
- Katherine Russell, Epidemiologist & RRFSS Chair, Ottawa Public Health at katherine.russell@ottawa.ca
- Visit www.rrfss.ca

Ontario Early Adversity and Resilience Framework



The newly released Ontario Early Adversity and Resilience Framework was developed by members of the Public Health Ontario ACEs and Resilience Community of Practice and was endorsed at the June 19th alPHA meeting. This framework is a call for collective action across sectors and aims to inspire and mobilize communities to work together to develop innovative and meaningful solutions that prevent adversity, strengthen protective factors, build resilience, and support healing in families and communities.

A key message of the framework is that “Everyone has a shared responsibility to foster children's potential and build family and community resilience”.

To access the full report, a 2-page graphic summary, and more information about the Community of Practice and why this framework was created, see earlyadversityandresilience.ca.

alPHA Correspondence

Through policy analysis, collaboration, and advocacy, alPHA's Members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention, and surveillance services in all of Ontario's communities. A complete online library of submissions is available [here](#). These documents are publicly available and can be shared widely.

- [alPHA Letter - CMOH 2024 Annual Report](#) - September 8, 2025
- [alPHA Letter - Resolution A25-01, OEAR \(CMOH\)](#) - August 6, 2025
- [alPHA Letter - Resolution A25-01, OEAR \(MoH\)](#) - August 6, 2025
- [alPHA Letter - Resolution A25-03, Heavy Metals](#) - August 6, 2025



Board of Health Shared Resources

A resource page is available on alPHA's website for Board of Health members to facilitate the sharing of and access to information, orientation materials, best practices, case studies, by-laws, Resolutions, and other resources. In particular, alPHA is seeking resources to share regarding the province's *Strengthening Public Health Initiative*, including but not limited to, voluntary mergers and the need for long-term funding for local public health. If you have a best practice, by-law or any other resource that you would like to make available via the newsletter and/or the website, please send a file or a link with a brief description to gordon@alphaweb.org and for posting in the appropriate library.

Resources available on the alPHA website include:

- Orientation Manual for Boards of Health (Revised Jan. 2024)
- Review of Board of Health Liability, 2018, (PowerPoint presentation, Feb. 24, 2023)
- Legal Matters: Updates for Boards of Health (Video, June 8, 2021)
- Obligations of a Board of Health under the Municipal Act, 2001 (Revised 2021)
- Governance Toolkit (Revised 2022)
- Risk Management for Health Units
- Healthy Rural Communities Toolkit
- The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction
- The Ontario Public Health Standards
- Public Appointee Role and Governance Overview (for Provincial Appointees to BOH)
- Ontario Boards of Health by Region
- List of Units sorted by Municipality
- List of Municipalities sorted by Health Unit
- Map: Boards of Health Types NCCHP Report: Profile of Ontario's Public Health System (2021)
- The Municipal Role of Public Health (2022 U of T Report)
- Boards of Health and Ontario Not-For-Profit Corporations Act



Calling all Ontario Boards of Health: Level up your expertise with our training courses designed just for you!

Don't miss this unique opportunity to enhance your knowledge and strengthen local public health leadership in Ontario.

BOH Governance training course

Master public health governance and Ontario's Public Health Standards. You'll learn all about public health legislation, funding, accountability, roles, structures, and much more. Gain insights into leadership and services that drive excellence in your unit.

Social Determinants of Health training course

Explore the impact of Social Determinants of Health on public health and municipal governments. Understand the context, explore Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and examine various SDOH diagrams to better serve your communities.

Reserve your spot for in-person or virtual training now! Visit [our website](#) to learn more about the costs for Public Health Units (PHUs). Let's shape a healthier future together.





Ontario Public Health Directory: September 2025 update

The Ontario Public Health Directory has been updated and is available on the alPHa website. Please ensure you have the latest version, which has been dated as of **September 8, 2025**. To view the file, log into the alPHa website.

Public
Health
Ontario

Santé
publique
Ontario

Apply Now for the Sheela Basrur Centre Grant

Effective public health communication is the foundation of a healthy and informed community. Yet today, public trust is increasingly challenged by misinformation, disinformation, and growing skepticism.

The Sheela Basrur Centre Grant is now accepting applications for projects of up to \$100,000. This new one-time funding opportunity supports public health units in leading innovative, community-driven projects that strengthen trust, improve communication, and counter the spread of misinformation across Ontario.

Applications are approaching fast and are due on October 1, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. ET. For more information about the grant, application requirements, and how to apply visit the [Call for Proposals](#).

Public Health Ontario

New Course Released! Infection Prevention and Control for Health Care Workers

The new [Infection Prevention and Control \(IPAC\) for Health Care Workers \(HCWs\) interactive course](#) has launched! This interactive scenario-based e-learning course is designed to help health care workers improve their IPAC knowledge and skills. It includes critical practice elements including understanding the chain of transmission, conducting a point-of-care risk assessment and critical IPAC practices such as hand hygiene, as well as the elements of additional precautions and actions to take when an infection is suspected or confirmed.

Informed by input from partners from all health care sectors across Ontario and aligns with up-to-date recommendations from the Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee, this course can be incorporated into ongoing training, orientation for new staff, or as a refresher. This new course replaces our previous IPAC Core Competencies course.

Recent Knowledge Products

- [Measles in Ontario](#)
- [How to Recognize and Respond to Measles](#)
- [Mpox in Ontario](#)
- [Influenza Genomic Surveillance in Ontario 2024-25 Season](#)
- [iGAS Disease in Ontario](#)
- [Legionellosis in Ontario](#)
- [Updated: Substance Use and Harms Tool](#)
- [SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Surveillance in Ontario](#)
- [Ontario Respiratory Virus Tool](#)
- [Infection Prevention and Control for Health Workers Interactive Course](#)

Events

Be sure to keep an eye on PHO's [Events page](#) for their upcoming events.

Recent Presentations

- [Prospects and partnerships for building Indigenous food sovereignty, security and self-determination in Northwestern Ontario](#)
- [Building a Pediatric Infectious Disease Observatory in a Resource-Limited Setting](#)

Dalla Lana

School of Public Health

Upcoming DLSPH Events and Webinars

- Leadership for Change: Toward Sustainable Health Systems (Sept. 23-Nov. 4)
- Keystone Symposia: Predicting and Responding to Emerging Viral Infections (Oct. 13-16)
- Climate, Health & Sustainable Care 2025 Annual Symposium (Oct. 30)



In partnership with ALPHA, BrokerLink is proud to offer preferred home and auto insurance rates for members, get a quote today. Going boating? Make sure you're prepared and protected! Before you set sail, check our list to ensure you have the important items you need here.



Managing a public health unit may be complicated, but your technology doesn't have to be! Vocalmeet provides a modular, all-in-one platform purpose-built for member-based organizations. By combining key systems like online continuing education, certification, membership management/CRM, and events/conferences into one integrated solution, we help organizations streamline operations and reduce overhead. Our platform includes features like: Custom AI-powered reports and real-time analytics, professional development hosting with automated certificates of completion, seamless event registration and management (including Zoom and Teams integration), and integrated eCommerce and unlimited online stores. And, with Vocalmeet, you only pay for the modules you need! The result? Less manual work, and more time to focus on what truly matters: improving public health and safety.

Let's talk: <https://vocalmeet.com/contact/>

RSV Protection Webinar – Reaching Provincial Targets for Better Infant Outcomes together



Early health. Lifelong health.
Début en santé. Longue vie en santé.

Let's make this RSV season a success—together.

Join BORN Ontario for a live webinar designed for birthing units, NICUs, midwifery practice groups, and public health units to help prepare for the upcoming RSV season. We'll share practical information and tips to help your team reach the 90% protection target—a goal that's proven to reduce hospitalizations and prevent severe disease in infants.

Join one of two sessions available: Both live sessions will be identical— choose the date that works best for you and register at one of the links: [October 1 at 10 a.m.](#) and [October 2 at 1 p.m.](#) Note, these sessions will be recorded and sent out for those who are unable to attend.

Survey on the barriers to adult vaccination in Canada



QUICK SURVEY

The findings from this survey will contribute to identifying logistical, social, and systemic challenges in vaccination uptake, with the ultimate goal of informing strategies to create an adult immunization schedule. The survey is designed to take approximately 15 minutes to complete and is available in [English](#) and [French](#). The deadline to complete the survey is October 24, 2025.

This update is a tool to keep alpha's Members apprised of the latest news in public health including provincial announcements, legislation, alpha activities, correspondence, and events. Visit us at alphaweb.org.



NEWS

News Releases

The most up to date news releases from the Government of Ontario can be accessed [here](#).



alPHA's mailing address

Please note our mailing address is:

PO Box 73510, RPO Wychwood
Toronto, ON M6C 4A7

For further information, please contact info@alphaweb.org.



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