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Providing leadership in public health management

Andrea Horwath, Leader
New Democratic Party of Ontario
Legislative Building
Room 113
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A1A5

August 17, 2011

Dear Ms. Horwath:

Re. alPHA Resolution A11-8 - Public Health Supporting Early Learning and Care

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 to introduce alPHA's Resolution on Early Learning and Care that was passed at our June 2011 Annual General Meeting.

alPHA strongly believes that supporting families and healthy early childhood development is a core part of the mandate of public health, as high quality investments in early childhood yield significant societal returns, not the least of which is improvement of health outcomes through addressing their determinants. We have made our support for the approaches and recommendations outlined in Dr. Charles Pascal's report, "*With our Best Future in Mind*" very clear since its release, and we are committed to playing an important role in realizing them.

As the provincial election is fast approaching, alPHA is urging you to make a strong, clear and specific commitment to the vision and strategy laid out in Dr. Pascal's paper, and to building on the foundations that have already been laid to improve supports for families and healthy early childhood development should your party be elected to form the next Government of Ontario.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Linda Stewart,
Executive Director

Copy: Tim Hudak, Leader, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario
Dalton McGuinty, Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario
Dr. Charles Pascal, Advisor to the Premier on Early Learning

Encl.

TITLE: Public Health Supporting Early Learning and Care

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WHEREAS the report “With our Best Future in Mind” (Charles E. Pascal, 2009) has been provided to the Premier of Ontario and provides recommendations on early childhood development in Ontario; and

WHEREAS supporting families and healthy early childhood development is a core part of the mandate of public health; and

WHEREAS public health work is driven by the population health approach; and

WHEREAS the evidence supports investing in early childhood development as a strategy to enable health and resilience throughout life; and

WHEREAS high quality early childhood interventions are extremely cost effective with significant societal returns on investment; and

WHEREAS achieving a politically sustainable system to support early childhood development will require support from decision-makers and the general public across the political spectrum; and

WHEREAS local public health has a unique role in early childhood development as a community agency that can take early learning and development beyond the walls of centres to reach the most vulnerable children and their families in their preferred setting; and

WHEREAS both local and provincial public health agencies have a key role to play in guiding the overall approach to supporting early childhood development; and

WHEREAS a comprehensive approach to early childhood development needs to include core services for all children and families, locally adapted services to address community context and intensive services to address the individual needs of the most vulnerable children and families; and

WHEREAS local and provincial public health agencies should continue to work with partners to clearly define better outcome measures and disseminate information about progress toward early childhood development goals more broadly;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that alPHa will actively engage in advocacy to strengthen public health programs to support families and healthy early childhood development;

AND FURTHER that alPHa will forward this resolution to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport, Ministry of Education, the Chief Medical Officer of Health and the Early Learning Advisor and in addition alPHa encourages all member agencies to transfer knowledge and information to decision-makers and the general public about the value of supporting early childhood development and the importance of adequate investment in early childhood development;

