November 21, 2019

Honourable Patty Hajdu
Minister of Health, Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Sent via email: patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca

Honourable Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier
Minister of Health, Ontario
Hepburn Block 10th Floor 80 Grosvenor Street Toronto,
ON M7A 1E9
Sent via email: christine.elliott@pc.ola.org

Dear Minister Hajdu/Minister Elliott:

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit would like to commend the Ontario Government on the decision to prohibit the promotion of vapour products in convenience stores and gas stations as of January 1, 2020. However, we believe that further steps are necessary to protect our youth and prevent the continued rise in vapour product use in youth and other vulnerable populations.

Vaping has been rapidly increasing in our youth, with a 74% increase in vaping among Canadian youth aged 16-19 reported from 2017 to 2018. While vaping products have been regarded as safer than combustible tobacco cigarettes, recent reports of severe pulmonary illness associated with vaping in the United States and Canada have given rise to concerns about the use of vaping products, especially among youth. Most vaping products contain nicotine at varying levels. This is concerning as children and youth may become dependent on nicotine more rapidly than adults leading to addiction and physical dependence. Research has demonstrated that youth are especially susceptible to the negative effects of nicotine, as it can alter their brain development and can affect memory and concentration. There are thousands of flavours of e-liquids available, including candy and fruit flavoured varieties that are greatly appealing to youth, and there is a strong body of evidence to support that flavours attract youth to e-cigarette use where research concludes that flavour influences youth to try and buy e-cigarettes and the appeal of ads promoting flavours is linked to uptake of vaping by youth.


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At its meeting held on November 21, 2019, the Board of Health for the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit approved a motion to write to you to request more stringent vaping regulations, similar to those regulating tobacco products, to address the rise in vapour product use in youth and other vulnerable populations.

These recommended regulations include:

- Require a ban on flavoured e-cigarettes to help prevent the further uptake of vaping by youth.
- Restrict the nicotine concentration in all vaping products.
- Require health and toxicity warnings on all vapour products.
- Require mandatory testing and reporting for vapour products.
- Require standardized and tamper proof packaging on all vapour products.
- Require an age of 21 years for tobacco, vaping and cannabis sales.
- Develop a robust and sustainable monitoring and surveillance strategy to ensure compliance.
- Revise the Federal Tobacco and Vaping Products Act (TVPA) to ban display, promotion and advertising, mirroring the restrictions on tobacco in the TVPA.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter for the protection of the health of our youth.

Sincerely

BOARD OF HEALTH FOR THE HALIBURTON, KAWARTHA, PINE RIDGE DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

Doug Elmslie, Chair, Board of Health

DE/lm

Cc (via email): The Hon. Doug Ford, Premier
Jamie Schmale, MP, Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock
Philip Lawrence, MP, Northumberland-Peterborough South
The Hon. Laurie Scott, MPP Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock
David Piccini, MPP Northumberland-Peterborough South
Dr. David Williams, Ontario Chief Medical Officer of Health
Dr. Paul Roumeliotis, Chair, Council of Medical Officers of Health
Ontario Boards of Health
Loretta Ryan, Association of Local Public Health Agencies