May 19, 2009

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper  
Prime Minister  
House of Commons  
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty  
Premier and Minister of Research and Innovation  
Room 281, Main Legislative Building  
Queen’s Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

RE: 2008 LISTERIOSIS OUTBREAK IN ONTARIO (2009-MOH-11)  
OUR FILE: P10-00

Honourable Sirs, please be advised the Health & Social Services  
Committee of Regional Council considered the above matter and at a  
meeting held on May 13, 2009 Council adopted the following  
recommendations of the Committee:

"a) THAT the following resolution embodied in clause 9 of Report #2009-  
MOH-11 of the Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health, be adopted  
as the Region’s position on the management of outbreaks caused by  
foodborne illnesses:

‘WHEREAS the 2008 listeriosis outbreak affected 7  
provinces and resulted in 56 confirmed cases being  
reported and 21 persons having died; and  

WHEREAS Ontario was the hardest hit province such that  
41 of the cases and 16 deaths occurred in this province; and  

WHEREAS Ontario’s Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health  
(CMOH) struck a Provincial Listeriosis Review Committee to  
provide him with advice on improving the public health  
response to foodborne outbreaks; and  

WHEREAS the CMOH released a Report on the  
Management of the 2008 Listeriosis Outbreak in Ontario  
with recommendations in the following areas:

• Clarify roles and responsibilities in outbreak  
management,
• Strengthen laboratory capacity,
• Enhance Ontario’s capacity to detect foodborne  
outbreaks
• Improve communication, and
WHEREAS it is important that these recommendations be fully implemented in order for Ontario’s public health system to effectively identify and respond to any future cross-jurisdictional foodborne or other outbreaks;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that alPHA urges the Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, Health Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and the Public Health Agency of Canada to act immediately to implement the recommendations of the CMOH’s Report on the Management of the 2008 Listeriosis Outbreak in Ontario; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that alPHA urges the Government of Ontario and Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health to ensure that boards of health receive sufficient provincial funding to ensure that local public health agencies have the capacity to investigate and report foodborne and other outbreaks in as complete and timely a fashion as possible; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that alPHA urges the Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health to track the implementation of his recommendations and publicly report on the status of implementation at least annually until they are fully implemented; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Prime Minister of Canada, Minister of Health Canada, Chief Public Health Officer of Canada, Premier of Ontario, Ministers of Finance and Health and Long-Term Care, Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health, and the Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion be so advised.; and

b) THAT this resolution be forwarded to alPHA for consideration by the delegates to the 2009 Annual Conference.”

Pat M. Madill, AMCT, CMM I
Regional Clerk

PMM/ff

c: The Honourable, L. Aglipkkaq, Minister of Health Canada
   D. Butler-Jones, Chief Public Health Officer
   The Honourable, D. Duncan, Minister of Finance
   The Honourable, D. Caplan, Minister of Health & Long-Term Care
c. cont:

D. Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health (A)
V. Goel, President and CEO, Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion
L. Stewart, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies

R.J. Kyle, Commissioner & Medical Officer of Health