

January 2, 2017

The Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins  
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
Hepburn Block, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
80 Grosvenor Street  
Toronto, ON M7A2C4

Dear Minister Hoskins:

**Resolution Regarding the Expansion of Provincial Publicly Funded Dental Health Programs for Adults with Low Incomes**

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016, at a regular meeting of the Board of the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit, the below resolution was brought forward for consideration and support by administration. The resolution supports the notion that good oral health is an essential part of attaining optimal overall health. To improve and achieve equitable health outcomes for all Ontarians, oral health care services must be accessible to all vulnerable populations within our communities, regardless of age.

The approved resolution states:

WHEREAS oral diseases, including dental caries and periodontal disease are among the most prevalent and preventable chronic diseases; and

WHEREAS oral health is essential to maintaining overall health; and

WHEREAS a mounting body of evidence shows a link between poor oral health and diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and results in social and psychological suffering and interferes with employment opportunities;

WHEREAS Ontario's universal health care system does not include dental care for adults;

WHEREAS Ontario only has public dental programs for low income children, and limited and insufficient dental coverage and programs for low income and vulnerable adults and seniors; and

WHEREAS in Windsor Essex County nearly 1 in 3 residents report having no form of dental insurance coverage and residents from low income households consistently have less dental insurance coverage,

WHEREAS approximately every 9 minutes a person in Ontario arrives at a hospital emergency room with a dental problem costing the health care system at least \$31 million annually;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Windsor Essex County Health Unit's Board of Directors endorses the importance of oral health as part of overall health and recommends the Province of Ontario expands publicly funded oral health programs to include low income and vulnerable adults and seniors, similar to what is offered to children through Ontario's Healthy Smiles program.

Sincerely,



Gary McNamara  
Chair, Windsor-Essex County Board of Health



Gary M. Kirk, MPH, MD  
CEO & Medical Officer of Health

c: Cheryl Hardcastle, MP Windsor-Tecumseh  
Brian Masse, MP Windsor-West  
Tracey Ramsey, MP Essex  
Dave Van Kesteren, MP Chatham-Kent — Leamington  
Percy Hatfield, MPP Windsor-Tecumseh  
Lisa Gretzky, MPP Windsor-West  
Taras Natyshak, MPP Essex  
Rick Nicholls, MPP, Chatham-Kent-Essex  
Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario  
Hon. Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance  
Valerie Jaeger, President, Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
Lynn Dollin, President, Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
Dr. Gary Mannarino, President, Essex County Dental Society  
County Clerks Offices – Windsor-Essex Regional Municipalities  
Windsor Essex County Board of Health

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References:

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King, Arlene. (2012). Oral Health - [More Than Just Cavities. A Report by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health.](#)  
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