

January 2, 2017

The Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Hepburn Block, 10th 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 17th, 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

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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