



Attachment 1

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Eric Gam, Commissioner

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Ms. Meighan Finlay
Executive Director
The Ontario Council on
Community Health Accreditation (OCCHA)
3370 South Service Road
Burlington, ON L7N 3M6

Dear Ms. Finlay:

Thank you for your letter of November 12, 2002 asking for Toronto Public Health's comments on the Draft 2002 Accreditation Principles, Standards, Components and Definitions.

I appreciate that you accommodated our schedule in granting an extension to your initial deadline. We have required the time until the end of January to consolidate our response. We needed to consider both the standards and the steps that will be required to prepare for the first accreditation of our amalgamated health unit.

Our staff have reviewed the draft standards in consultation with a number of Board of Health members. This letter and the attached response will be submitted to the Board of Health in early March for their information.

To begin, I wanted to applaud OCCHA for strategically moving forward with the inclusion of public health business into accreditation standards. Toronto Public Health (TPH) is in full support of the principle of accreditation and the role of OCHHA in providing leadership in this area.

TPH recognises that these additional standards once revised and approved, will enhance the accreditation preparation process.

The new draft standards clearly require Health Units to meet the requirements of the Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines. Health units determine their own timelines and strategies to achieve compliance by considering many factors including local needs, resources and priorities. Some of the draft standards acknowledge the local context for achieving compliance but others do not. Some of the draft standards are very specific about strategies to be used. Both the accreditation standards and process need to be very clear such that health units will be assessed on their own locally approved timelines and strategies for achieving compliance.

Health units provide a range of programs with various funding sources and accountabilities. For example, in Toronto, Dental Treatment & Animal Services are locally initiated and funded. The accreditation process should also allow for flexibility in assessment of programs that are not provincially mandated. This could be done by assessing that all health unit services are approved by the governing body and planned, resourced as appropriate, implemented and evaluated by the administrative body.

Specific comments about the draft standards are included in the Appendix.

Thank you again for asking for our input.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sheela V. Basrur
Medical Officer of Health

FS/dms

Attachment – Appendix