

April 25, 2017

Striking Committee
12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Subject: Request to Serve on the Toronto Board of Health

Dear Deputy Mayor Denzil Minnan-Wong and members of the Striking Committee:

I am writing this letter to request membership with the Toronto Board of Health.

While the Board of Health is currently effective at advising on a wide range of public health issues and setting public health policy, there are several gaps which must be addressed in order to best serve the diverse and varying needs of Toronto's population. It is in a keen effort to help fill these gaps that I am interested in becoming a member of the Board of Health.

I have completed my Master in Education in Sociology and Equity Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. It is here that I developed a clear, decisive equity lens which I look forward to applying as part of the Board of Health. I have actively taken leadership roles with a number of community organizations, including Parent Action on Drugs, Canadian Tamil Congress, Youth Gang Work Group (City of Toronto), Malvern Community Coalition, Community Use of Schools Council, Scarborough Youth Task Group, and the Tsunami Relief Coordinating Committee, just to name a few organizations.

With my extensive background in social services and community services and having worked particularly with racialized communities, I bring a strong understanding of social determinants of health to the table. Conditions into which people are born into widely vary across the city and often determine health and well-being for many Torontonians. It is my vision that no one in Toronto should face barriers to reaching their full health potential due to their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, socioeconomic status or any other socially constructed situation.

In promoting greater health equity across Toronto, I am seeking to improve conditions of health for racialized and equity-seeking groups. As a manager for youth programs in Malvern, I developed and implemented over twenty programs in many different schools. Youth health in Toronto is also an area of priority for me.

I believe that all Torontonians have full capacity to bring forward many different social, cultural, political, and economic contributions to the City of Toronto. Let us ensure that health inequities do not get in the way of a vibrant, flourishing Toronto. I ask to be considered as a member of the Board of Health with the City of Toronto.

Sincerely,



Councillor Neethan Shan
Ward 42