



Association of Local
PUBLIC HEALTH
Agencies

**Association of Local Public Health Agencies
Speaking Points
Toronto Board of Health
Re: 2019 Ontario Budget**

Monday, April 15, 2019

- Good afternoon, Chair and Members of the Toronto Board of Health and Dr. de Villa, Medical Officer of Health, and your team members who are present.
- I am Dr. Robert Kyle, President of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies, better known as alPHa, and have had the honour and pleasure as serving as a local medical officer of health in Ontario for over 30 years. With me is Loretta Ryan who is alPHa's Executive Director.
- alPHa represents all of Ontario's 35 boards of health and medical officers of health (MOHs)
- alPHa has been very engaged with the 2019 Ontario Budget deliberations since January of this year
- On January 25, 2019, In the [alPHa Pre-Budget Submission](#), alPHa noted that:
 - Public Health is on the Front Line of Keeping People Well
 - Public Health Delivers an Excellent Return on Investment
 - Public Health is an Ounce of Prevention that is Worth a Pound of Cure
 - Public Health Contributes to Strong and Healthy Communities

- Public Health is Money Well Spent
- Furthermore, alPHa recommended that:
 - The integrity of Ontario’s public health system be maintained
 - The Province continue its funding commitment to cost-shared programs
 - The Province make other strategic investments that address the government’s priorities of improving services and ending hallway medicine
- On the same day, alPHa released its Public Health resource paper entitled, [Improving and Maintaining the Health of the People: The Contribution of Public Health to Reducing Hallway Medicine](#), which has been shared with the [Premier's Council on Improving Healthcare and Ending Hallway Medicine](#)
- The paper was developed to explain the work of the public health sector and to highlight the important role that the sector can play in eliminating hallway medicine by reducing the demand on hospital and primary care services
- As you may know, this work is organized in the [Ontario Public Health Standards](#) as follows:
 - Chronic Disease Prevention and Well-Being
 - Emergency Management
 - Food Safety
 - Health Equity
 - Healthy Environments
 - Healthy Growth and Development
 - Immunization
 - Infectious and Communicable Diseases Prevention and Control

- Population Health Assessment
 - Safe Water
 - School Health
 - Substance Use and Injury Prevention
- The paper concluded that the public health sector serves the people of Ontario to ensure:
 - That healthy people can support a strong economy, providing a direct economic impact
 - Coordination of responses to community health concerns such as mental health and addictions, in partnership with community level organizations
 - Reduction of pressures on doctors and hospitals by concentrating on the community, starting at birth; and
 - A significant, cost-effective contribution to the elimination hallway medicine.
 - It is with the foregoing in mind that alPHa stated in its [news release](#) regarding the 2019 Ontario Budget that it is “surprised and deeply concerned to learn the Government’s plans to restructure Ontario’s public health system and reduce its funding by \$200 million per year... The reality is that this \$200M savings is a 26% reduction in the already-lean annual provincial investment in local public health. This will greatly reduce our ability to deliver the front-line public health services that keep people out of hospitals and doctors’ offices.”
 - alPHa went on to say that “the Government is proposing to replace 35 public health units and 35 local boards of health with 10 larger regional entities of unknown composition and size. As alPHa pointed out in its [response](#) to the previous Government’s [Expert Panel on Public Health Report](#) (which proposed a similar reduction), the magnitude of such is significant and will cause major disruptions in every facet of the system.”

- alPHa noted that:
 - Public Health initiatives show a return on investment
 - The health protection and promotion needs of Ontarians vary significantly depending on their communities, and preserving these partnerships is essential to meeting them regardless on the number of public health units

- alPHa concluded that its looks forward to receiving more details so that is can work with Ministry officials and other key stakeholders, including local partners/voices, to ensure the delivery of essential front-line health protection and promotion services, while at the same time ensuring broader municipal engagement, more efficient service delivery, better alignment with the health care system and more effective staff recruitment and retention.

- In closing, alPHa welcomes the Toronto Board of Health, and its other members, reflecting on the foregoing, amplifying the messages contained therein, and modulating them as they see fit.

- Thank you for inviting us to appear as a deputation and we are happy to take your questions at this time.