

HE-B2-1

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée



Executive Director's Office

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MAY 02 2012

Table with columns COPY TO: and FOR: containing distribution list for LEGISLATIVE SERVICES including Chair, CAO, Corporate Services, Public Works, Employee and Business Services, Health Services, Human Services, and Peel Living.

Mr. Emil Kolb
Chair
Peel Regional Board of Health
10 Peel Centre Drive
Brampton ON L6T 4B9

Dear Mr. Kolb:

Thank you for your letter dated February 23, 2012 to the Honourable Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, regarding the Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) Program - Resolution Number 2012-258. Your letter has been forwarded to me for a response.

The Ontario government is committed to improving the health of all Ontarians. I can assure you that the Ministry of Health of Long-Term Care (the ministry) recognizes the benefits of preventive oral care and its important link to overall health.

As part of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy, the government committed funding to provide access to dental services for low-income children and youth including, funding for the HSO Program.

As you are aware, on an annual basis the ministry provides funding to boards of health through the Program-Based Grants (PBG) process for the delivery of mandatory and related public health programs and services. The HSO Program is a 100% provincially funded related program with no-cost sharing to municipalities.

2012 PBG requests for mandatory and related programs, approved by each Board of Health, were due to the Public Health Division on Friday, March 30, 2012. Please be advised that we have received your board's submission. Staff in the ministry are currently reviewing your board's PBG submission, which includes a grant request for the HSO program. We hope to communicate funding decisions to boards of health/public health units by the end of June 2012.

REFERRAL TO RECOMMENDED
DIRECTION REQUIRED
RECEIPT RECOMMENDED

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Mr. Emil Kolb

With regard to your request for an additional \$600,000 for the HSO Program (for the reimbursement of local dentists to meet community needs), the ministry does not anticipate receiving any additional funding for the HSO Program, in the foreseeable future, given the government's direction for fiscal restraint. As such, the ministry is not considering increasing base funding for boards of health for the HSO Program at this time.

The HSO Program is in its second year and the ministry continues to monitor the implementation of the program, and will reflect on the recommendations in the recent CMOH Special Report on Oral Health. The ministry is collecting information from all public health units, including enrollment numbers and the rationale that established certain clients' ineligibility for the program. Should the ministry consider adjusting any of the eligibility criteria of the HSO Program, this information will help the ministry evaluate the impact of the current eligibility requirements.

As always, thank you for your input and for your commitment to reducing barriers and increasing access to the HSO Program. I look forward to working collaboratively with you on the common goal of improving oral health and overall health for low income families.

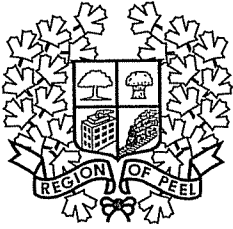
Warm regards,



Roselle Martino
Executive Director (A)

- c: Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health, Peel Public Health
Dr. David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health, Peel Public Health
Gayle Bursey, Director, Peel Public Health
Paul Sharma, President, Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry
Linda Stewart, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies

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Office of the Chair

February 23, 2012

Resolution No. 2012-258

The Honourable Deb Matthews
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Matthews:

Subject: Update on the Low-Income Dental Program for Children

On January 26, 2012 Peel Regional Council received an update on the current status of the Healthy Smiles Ontario program in Peel and passed the following resolution:

"That the Regional Chair write to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, on behalf of Region of Council, concerning the low-income children's dental program, known as Healthy Smiles Ontario, to request ongoing funding, increased funding to reimburse local dentists, and a review of the eligibility criteria;

And further, that a copy of the report of the Commissioner of Health Services, dated December 2, 2011, titled "Update on the Low-Income Dental Program for Children", be forwarded to the Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry (OAPHD) and the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa) for information."

In consideration of the above resolution, I am writing on behalf of Peel Regional Council to ask that your Ministry provide written confirmation of ongoing 100% provincial funding for the Healthy Smiles Ontario program. My understanding is that funding has been confirmed by your Ministry until March 31, 2013; however, there has been no communication regarding the continuation of 100% provincial funding of the program beyond this date.

As well, I am requesting additional funding for reimbursement of local dentists to ensure eligible children have access to the program. The overall funding for this program is adequate in Peel with the exception of the \$200,000 that is allocated to reimburse dentists. An additional \$600,000 is required to meet community needs.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to previous communication sent to you by provincial public health organizations such as the Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry (OAPHD) and the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa) regarding this program's eligibility criteria. On behalf of Regional Council, I support the position of these organizations and ask that a review be conducted by your Ministry on the eligibility criteria for this program.

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Resolution No. 2012-258

On behalf of Regional Council, I request that you give consideration to the above resolution and please quote the Region of Peel's resolution number in your reply.

For more information regarding our concerns, Ministry staff can contact Gayle Bursey, Director of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention at 905-791-7800 extension 2617.

Sincerely,



Emil Kolb
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer

EK:tr

c: Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health
Dr. David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health
Gayle Bursey, Director

Encl.

Copied:

Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry (OAPHD)
c/o Paul Sharma, President
Manager, Oral Health
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London, ON N6A 5L7

Linda Stewart
Executive Director
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa)
2 Carlton St., Suite 1306
Toronto, Ontario
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