



Head Office:

247 Whitewood Avenue, Unit 43
PO Box 1090
New Liskeard, ON P0J 1P0
Tel.: 705-647-4305 Fax: 705-647-5779

Branch Offices:

Englehart Tel.: 705-544-2221 Fax: 705-544-8698
Kirkland Lake Tel.: 705-567-9355 Fax: 705-567-5476

www.timiskaminghu.com

June 4, 2019

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care
Hepburn Block, 10th Floor
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto ON M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Elliott:

Re: Northeastern Regional Public Health Regional Boundaries

On May 29, 2019, at a regular meeting of the Board for the Timiskaming Health Unit, the Board passed the following motion:

Motion 35R-2019

Moved by: Sue Cote
Seconded by: Mike McArthur

That the BOH for Timiskaming send a letter to the Ontario Minister of Health to support the motion passed by the Sudbury and Districts Health Unit which endorses the position of the Board of Health for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit that the organization of their public health services remains intact as they transition to the new regional public health entity. Further, the BOH for Timiskaming asks that this letter be copied to the local MPP, Chief Medical Officer of Health for Ontario, the Premier of Ontario, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies and all Ontario Boards of Health.

Carried

Sincerely,

Chair Carman Kidd
Timiskaming Board of Health

cc. Honorable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Mr. John Vanthof, MPP, Timiskaming-Cochrane
Mrs. Linda Stewart, Association of Local Public Health Agencies
Ontario Boards of Health
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health



Public Health
Santé publique
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

May 28, 2019

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier:

Re: North East Public Health Regional Boundaries – Modernization of the Ontario Public Health System

At its meeting on May 16, 2019, the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts carried the following resolution #17-19:

WHEREAS the Health Protection and Promotion Act amendment effective April 1, 2005, enabled the merger of the Muskoka-Parry Sound Health Unit with the Simcoe County District Health Unit and with the North Bay & District Health Unit; and

WHEREAS North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit and Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) have invested greatly since that time to successfully transition to their respective new agencies; and

WHEREAS the new public health entity for northeastern Ontario is proposed to include the existing public health units in the region (Algoma Public Health, Public Health Sudbury & Districts, Porcupine Health Unit, North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, Timiskaming Health Unit) along with Muskoka District and a part of Renfrew; and

Sudbury

1300 rue Paris Street
Sudbury ON P3E 3A3
t: 705.522.9200
f: 705.522.5182

Rainbow Centre

10 rue Elm Street
Unit / Unité 130
Sudbury ON P3C 5N3
t: 705.522.9200
f: 705.677.9611

Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est

1 rue King Street
Box / Boîte 58
St.-Charles ON P0M 2W0
t: 705.222.9201
f: 705.867.0474

Espanola

800 rue Centre Street
Unit / Unité 100 C
Espanola ON P5E 1J3
t: 705.222.9202
f: 705.869.5583

Île Manitoulin Island

6163 Highway / Route 542
Box / Boîte 87
Mindemoya ON P0P 1S0
t: 705.370.9200
f: 705.377.5580

Chapleau

101 rue Pine Street E
Box / Boîte 485
Chapleau ON P0M 1K0
t: 705.860.9200
f: 705.864.0820

Toll-free / Sans frais

1.866.522.9200

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WHEREAS the northeast public health entity is the only one of ten proposed regional entities that would not respect existing health unit boundaries and would require the costly dissolution of existing health units; and

WHEREAS the demographics, socioeconomic status, health status, and important health care referral patterns of the Muskoka District are all distinct from those of the northeast; and

WHEREAS the proposed northeast public health entity is a massive area (402,489 km²) with significant administrative and geographic complexities, for which the incorporation of an additional distinct area would tax the region's ability to respond appropriately to diverse public health needs; and

WHEREAS the Board of Health for SMDHU having expressed similar observations, is requesting the support of northeast boards of health for their position that SMDHU remain intact as they transition to a new regional entity;

THEREFORE be it resolved that the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts endorse the position of the Board of Health for SMDHU that the organization of their public health services remains intact as they transition to the new regional public health entity.

Thank you very much for your attention to this important matter. The Board of Health is working hard with regional counterparts to be able to engage constructively with the anticipated Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care consultation process over the next number of months.

Sincerely,



René Lapierre
Chair, Board of Health

cc: Honorable C. Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Dr. D. Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
L. Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies
J. McGarvey, President, Association of Municipalities Ontario
F. Gélinas, MPP Nickel Belt
M. Mantha, MPP Algoma-Manitoulin
J. West, MPP Sudbury
J. Vanthof, MPP Timiskaming, Cochrane
Ontario Boards of Health

May 15, 2019

The Honourable Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Elliott:

I am writing on behalf of the Board of Health for the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) to recommend that the full territory of SMDHU remain intact and join with York Region to form a new regional public health entity on April 1, 2020. This is in response to information provided verbally to Dr. Charles Gardner, Medical Officer of Health for SMDHU by staff from the Ministry of Health and Long - Term Care on May 7th, 2019 indicating that public health services in the District of Muskoka will be provided by a regional public health entity that will also serve Sudbury, North Bay, Parry Sound, Algoma, Porcupine, Timiskaming and part of Renfrew; he also was informed that Simcoe County will be served by a public health entity that will also serve York Region. From this communication it is also Dr. Gardner's understanding that the provincial government is willing to consider feedback on these boundary changes. The Board appreciates having the opportunity to recommend that all of the territory served by SMDHU be combined with that of York Region in a new regional public health entity.

The Board and staff have worked very hard since the inception of SMDHU (the result of a merger prompted by the province in 2005) in order to create a cohesive public health agency that is highly successful in fulfilling its mandate. The District of Muskoka benefits from public health services provided in partnership with Simcoe County. The division of our Muskoka and Simcoe operations would disrupt and undermine program delivery.

The geographic area of the proposed *northeastern regional public health entity* is extremely large (over 400,000 kilometers, extending to James Bay). Providing public health services over such a large and low density area will be very challenging, and it will be very difficult for the governance and management of such a regional public health entity to provide attention to local service provision. The provision of public health services in the District of Muskoka would be more challenging within this very large public health entity than they would be if Muskoka were to join Simcoe County in a regional public health entity with York Region. The provision of public health services for the remaining communities in the proposed *northeastern regional public health entity* would also be further challenged with the addition of Muskoka to their territory.

The inclusion of the District of Muskoka with Simcoe County and York Region in a single public health entity would also be consistent with the observation that in general, the community and health care service referral patterns in Muskoka are directed to facilities in Simcoe County (Barrie and Orillia), and to communities further south (including in York Region).

Barrie:
15 Sperleng Drive
Barrie, ON
L4M 6K9
705-721-7520
FAX: 705-721-1495

Collingwood:
280 Pretty River Pkwy.
Collingwood, ON
L9Y 4J5
705-445-0804
FAX: 705-445-6498

Cookstown:
2-25 King Street S.
Cookstown, ON
L0L 1L0
705-458-1103
FAX: 705-458-0105

Gravenhurst:
2-5 Pineridge Gate
Gravenhurst, ON
P1P 1Z3
705-684-9090
FAX: 705-684-9887

Huntsville:
34 Chaffey St.
Huntsville, ON
P1H 1K1
705-789-8813
FAX: 705-789-7245

Midland:
B-865 Hugel Ave.
Midland, ON
L4R 1X8
705-526-9324
FAX: 705-526-1513

Orillia:
120-169 Front St. S.
Orillia, ON
L3V 4S8
705-325-9565
FAX: 705-325-2091

Finally, of great concern to the Board is the reality that the division of Muskoka from Simcoe would greatly increase the complexity, cost and duration of time required for the creation of the new public health entities, compared with having Muskoka and Simcoe join together with the public health services in York Region. A merger between SMDHU and York Region would be complex on its own, however the splitting of our operations between Simcoe and Muskoka at the same time as mergers both with York, and with six other health units to the north would be overwhelming in its complexity.

Given the inherent and substantial disadvantages of dividing Simcoe and Muskoka, the Board recommends that SMDHU join in its entirety with York Region in the modernization of public health.

Thank you for considering our recommendation.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL Signed By:

Anita Dubeau
Chair, Board of Health

CG:cm

cc. Mayor and Council of Simcoe and Muskoka
Members of Provincial Parliament for Simcoe and Muskoka
Boards of Health for York Region, Sudbury, North Bay, Parry Sound, Algoma, Porcupine,
Timiskaming, and Renfrew
Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, Association of Local Public Health Agencies
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Central Local Health Integration Network
North Simcoe Muskoka Local Health Integration Network