

October 18, 2012

Right Honourable Dalton McGuinty
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Room 281
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
M7A 1A1

RE: Adopting Bill 74 – An Act to help prevent skin cancer

Dear Premier McGuinty;

The Middlesex-London Board of Health wishes to commend you for your announcement on September 14, 2012 to adopt a private members' bill, Bill 74, "Skin Cancer Prevention Act, 2012" to prohibit the use of and access to tanning services by youth under 18 years of age to protect them from developing skin cancer.

In July 2009, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from tanning beds as Group 1 - "carcinogenic in humans". Skin cancer accounts for approximately one-third of all cancers diagnosed in Ontario, and this cancer was estimated to result in an economic burden of more than \$344 million in 2011. Melanoma skin cancer, the most deadly form, is one of the most common forms of cancer in young Ontarians aged 15-29 years and is largely preventable.

There is significant public support for Ontario legislation. An Ipsos Reid poll, commissioned by the Canadian Cancer Society in June 2011 showed that:

- 83% of Ontarians support a ban on indoor tanning by youth under 18 years;
- 77% said youth should be prevented from using tanning beds;
- 73% of Ontarians polled said the tanning industry cannot be trusted to regulate itself and government legislation is needed; and
- 80% of Ontarians support legislation to regulate the tanning industry

Studies show that using artificial tanning equipment before the age of 35 raises the risk of melanoma by 75%. Since most people receive 80% of their lifetime exposure to UV radiation by the age of 18, it is crucial that the use of indoor tanning equipment by youth be reduced and eliminated if possible.

The Middlesex-London Board of Health supports this important legislation and encourages you to enact Bill 74 without delay. Ontario will then join leaders in Canada like Nova Scotia, British Columbia and Quebec in protecting youth from the harmful effects of UV radiation, including skin cancer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Bryna Warshawsky, MDCM, CCFP, FRCPC
Secretary-Treasurer, Middlesex-London Board of Health