

December 14, 2023

The Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy
Minister of Finance
c/o Budget Secretariat
Frost Building North, 3rd Floor
95 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1Z1

Re: 2024 Ontario Budget Submission

Dear Minister Bethlenfalvy,

Local public health agencies across Ontario are experiencing serious fiscal challenges, including the Middlesex London Health Unit (MLHU). This year, the MLHU had to make the difficult decision to restructure the organization to continue operating within the funding available. This resulted in the loss of front line and management positions, including nursing, dietitian, and health promoter roles that were directly serving the Middlesex-London community. It is noted that restoration of the \$47 million (previous Mitigation funding) and an increase of 1% to the base funding in each of the next three years is a positive step, however, it is insufficient for our Health Unit to be able to continue certain mandated services under the [Ontario Public Health Standards](#).

The Board of Health would like to highlight the following for your consideration when building the 2024 Budget:

- The need for consistent and sustained funding for the MLHU to conduct work under the [Ontario Public Health Standards](#) that reflects both inflation and population growth in the Middlesex-London region;
- The need for increased funding for staff working in Vaccine Preventable Diseases to address exponential growth in Newcomers to the region, who are frequently unattached to primary care providers;
- The need for increased funding for Tobacco Enforcement Officers to address massive expansion in Cannabis retailers;
- The need for increased funding for the mandatory Healthy Babies Healthy Children home visiting program, through the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, which has been stagnant since 2012; and
- The need for increased funding to support increased demand for the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program.

On behalf of the Middlesex-London Board of Health, thank you for providing an opportunity for organizations to provide a submission to the Ontario Government in building the 2024 Budget.

Sincerely,

Matt Newton-Reid
Board Chair

Dr. Alex Summers MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

Emily Williams BScN, RN, MBA, CHE
Secretary and Treasurer