



February 21, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

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

Dear Premier Ford:

Re: Gender-based and Intimate Partner Violence

On behalf of the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts, I am writing to advise you that the Board of Health is adding its voice to the concerns your government and so many other share concerning the escalating crisis of gender-based violence (GBV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) in our province. We know that you agree that this is a matter of grave concern that demands immediate attention and collective effort.

At its meeting of January 18, 2024, the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts resolved to endorse the November 7, 2023, City of Greater Sudbury [motion](#) declaring gender-based violence and intimate partner violence an epidemic:

WHEREAS boards of health are required under the Ontario Public Health Standards to develop interventions to prevent injuries, including those caused by violence; and

WHEREAS police-reported family violence across Canada is increasing and locally, in 2022, the Greater Sudbury Police Service investigated 3,227 intimate partner violence reports, resulting in 867 intimate partner violence charges; and

WHEREAS in Sudbury, between 2018 and June 2023, there were 218 emergency department visits related to intimate partner violence; and

WHEREAS the [City of Greater Sudbury](#), [Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands](#), [Billings Township](#), and [93 other municipalities](#) in Ontario have declared gender-based violence and intimate partner violence as an epidemic; and

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WHEREAS calling out the urgency of the issue and denouncing violence contributes to changing norms and improving coordinated multi-sector action, ultimately improving health outcomes for those directly affected, as well as families and communities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts endorse the November 7, 2023, City of Greater Sudbury [motion](#) declaring gender-based violence and intimate-partner violence an epidemic.

As your government will be aware, gender-based violence and intimate partner violence cause immeasurable harm to individuals, families, and communities. These types of violence impact people of all genders, ages, socioeconomic, racial, educational, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. However, the rates of GBV and IPV are disproportionately higher among women, girls, and gender-diverse people. For many, this is often interconnected with broader societal and systemic issues, including poverty, discrimination, lack of access to resources, inadequate support systems and a legacy of colonialism.

The Board of Health urges the provincial government to allocate the necessary resources, funding, and policy frameworks to reinforce our health and social services. We thank you for your attention to and investment in this urgent public health issue, and we continue to look forward to opportunities to work together to promote and protect the health for everyone.

Sincerely,



René Lapierre
Chair, Board of Health

cc: Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
Honourable Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Honourable Marci Ien, Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth
Honourable Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
France Gélinas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt
Jamie West, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury
Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma-Manitoulin
Viviane Lapointe, Member of Parliament, Sudbury
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Dr. Eileen DeVilla, Chair, Council of Medical Officers of Health (COMOH)
All Ontario Boards of Health
Association of Local Public Health Agencies