



February 24, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

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

Dear Premier Ford:

Re: Community Engagement to Address Food Insecurity

At its meeting on February 16, 2023, the Board of Health carried the following resolution #08-23:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts, in recognition of the root causes of food insecurity, call on the provincial government to incorporate local food affordability findings in determining adequacy of social assistance levels; and

THAT the Board of Health reaffirm its support for the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) resolutions [A18-02](#) (Minimum Wage that is a Living Wage) and [A15-04](#) (Basic Income Guarantee); and

THAT the Board of Health intensify its work with relevant area agencies and community groups, and municipalities to shift the focus of food insecurity initiatives from food charity to income-based solutions, including but not limited to the sharing of data and evidence-based income solutions; and

FURTHER THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts Board share this motion with area partners, Ontario boards of health, ALPHA, and the relevant provincial government ministers.

Sudbury

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

Elm Place

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

Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est

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

Espanola

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

 le Manitoulin Island

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

Chapleau

34 rue Birch Street
Box / Bo te 485
Chapleau ON P0M 1K0
t: 705.860.9200
f: 705.864.0820

toll-free / sans frais

1.866.522.9200

phsd.ca


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The health consequences of food insecurity have serious adverse effects on people's physical and mental health and the ability to lead productive lives. Ontarians living with food insecurity are at greater risk for numerous chronic conditions including mental health disorders, non-communicable diseases (e.g., diabetes, hypertension and cardiovascular disease), and infections.¹ People who have chronic conditions and are food insecure are more likely to have negative disease outcomes, be hospitalized, or die prematurely.²

The health consequences of food insecurity are a significant burden on our province's healthcare and social service system. Adults in food insecure households are more likely to be admitted to acute care; they also may stay in hospital for a longer period and are more likely to be readmitted.³ Income-based policies that effectively reduce food insecurity offset considerable public expenditures on healthcare and social services in Ontario by reducing demands on these services and reducing costs.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue – the solutions for which will not only help many Ontarians in need but also protect the sustainability of our critical health and social services resources.

Sincerely,



Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

cc: Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Honourable Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health
Honourable Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services
Honourable Steve Clark, 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
All Ontario Boards of Health
Constituent Municipalities

¹ Tarasuk V, Li T, Fafard St-Germain AA. (2022). Household food insecurity in Canada, 2021. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved 15 February 2023 from <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>.

² Tarasuk V, Li T, Fafard St-Germain AA. (2022). Household food insecurity in Canada, 2021. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved 16 February 2023 from <https://proof.utoronto.ca/>.

³ Tarasuk V. Implications of a basic income guarantee for household food insecurity. Northern Policy Institute – Research Paper No. 24. Retrieved 16 February 2023 from: <https://proof.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Paper-Tarasuk-BIG-EN-17.06.13-1712.pdf>