



Association of Local  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Agencies

alPHA's members are  
the public health units  
in Ontario.

**alPHA Sections:**

Boards of Health  
Section

Council of Ontario  
Medical Officers of  
Health (COMOH)

**Affiliate  
Organizations:**

Association of Ontario  
Public Health Business  
Administrators

Association of  
Public Health  
Epidemiologists  
in Ontario

Association of  
Supervisors of Public  
Health Inspectors of  
Ontario

Health Promotion  
Ontario

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Dentistry

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Nursing  
Leaders

Ontario Dietitians in  
Public Health

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May 5, 2023

Hon. Sylvia Jones  
Minister of Health  
College Park 5th Flr, 777 Bay St  
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Jones,

**Re: Ontario Public Health Nursing Leaders Recommendations**

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On behalf of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) and its Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health Section and Affiliate Organizations, we are writing to communicate our support for the Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders' (OPHNL) recent *Recommendation Information Sheet* (attached).

We agree with OPHNL's observations that public health nurses, along with other public health professionals who are on the front-line of ensuring the delivery of mandated public health programs and services, are essential to addressing service delivery backlogs and implementing innovative, convenient and easily accessible programs to promote health, prevent disease, and support the Province's identified priorities immediately and over the long term.

Public Health Nurses are highly skilled and qualified to continue to respond flexibly to local community needs and provide evidence-informed programs and interventions across the province. Investments in public health generate significant returns, including better health, lower health care costs, and a stronger economy.

We look forward to working with you and would like to request an opportunity to meet with you and your staff. To schedule a meeting, please have your staff contact Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHA, at [loretta@alphaweb.org](mailto:loretta@alphaweb.org) or 647-325-9594.

Sincerely,

Trudy Sachowski,  
President

**Copy:** Hon. Michael Parsa, Minister of Children, Community and Social Services  
Dr. Catharine Zahn, Deputy Minister of Health  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ontario  
Dr. Karima Velji, Assistant Deputy Minister & Chief of Nursing and Professional Practice  
Elizabeth Walker, Executive Lead, Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health

**Encl.**

The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership to Ontario's boards of health. ALPHA represents all of Ontario's 34 boards of health, medical officers and associate medical officers of health, and senior public health managers in each of the public health disciplines – nursing, inspections, nutrition, dentistry, health promotion, epidemiology, and business administration. As public health leaders, ALPHA advises and lends expertise to members on the governance, administration, and management of health units. The Association also collaborates with governments and other health organizations, advocating for a strong, effective, and efficient public health system in the province. Through policy analysis, discussion, collaboration, and advocacy, ALPHA's members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention and surveillance services in all of Ontario's communities.

# The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders

## Leading the Way for Public Health Nursing






The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders (OPHNL) fully supports the recent reports from the Chief Medical Officer of Health ([Being Ready](#)) and Association of Local Public Health Agencies ([Public Health Resilience in Ontario](#) and [Pre-Budget Submission: Public Health Programs and Services](#)). In addition, OPHNL recommends that:

**The Province increase and stabilize permanent funding for public health nurses to address service delivery backlogs and implement innovative, convenient and easily accessible programs to promote health, prevent disease, and support the Province's identified priorities immediately and over the long term.**

Public health units provide upstream programs and services that are key to mitigating the long-term health, psychological and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The public health workforce is comprised of a highly integrated interdisciplinary team of public health professionals. It is the role of OPHNL, while acknowledging the valuable work of our interdisciplinary partners, to speak specifically to the contribution that public health nurses make through mandated and locally innovative programs and services.




Public Health Nursing programs and interventions aim to address health inequities by focusing on priority populations. Through increased and stabilized permanent funding for public health nurses local public health units can flexibly respond to community needs and achieve the desired outcomes by scaling up or introducing interventions that support the Province's identified priorities.

The chart below represents a **few examples of nurse-delivered evidence informed programs and interventions** from across the province. These programs and interventions have been successfully implemented in collaboration with local communities to achieve desired outcomes.

Desired Outcome	Examples of Programs & Interventions
 Improved vaccination rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Community and school based vaccine clinics</li> <li>◆ Health teaching to decrease vaccine hesitancy</li> <li>◆ Health promotion to create supportive environments, tailor health services for priority populations, provide health education, and enforce legislation</li> </ul>
 Reduced impact of adverse childhood experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Health promotion to support healthy behaviours during preconception and pregnancy and reduce risk factors for poor fetal outcomes.</li> </ul>
 Increased number of children are ready for school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Home-visiting and community programs that (a) support healthy relationships between parents and children, and (b) support and assess healthy childhood growth and development (e.g.: Healthy Babies Healthy Children, Nurse Family Partnership, positive parenting programs)</li> </ul>
 Increased number of children with developmental concerns who are identified early	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Intersectoral systems navigation and coordination to improve access to services</li> </ul>
 Improved access to mental health supports across the lifespan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Health promotion programs that support social connectedness, positive self-esteem, resilience, and positive coping skills.</li> <li>◆ Groups that support perinatal and post partum mental health (e.g.: Cognitive Behaviour Therapy groups)</li> <li>◆ Screening and early identification</li> <li>◆ Intersectoral systems navigation and coordination to improve access to services</li> <li>◆ Peer to peer support</li> </ul>

# The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders

## Leading the Way for Public Health Nursing

Desired Outcome	Examples of Programs & Interventions
 <p>Increased support for mental and physical health in children and youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Partnerships with Boards of Education</li> <li>◆ Comprehensive School Health to create and implement school policies and environments that build resilience, support healthy behaviours and prevent chronic diseases</li> <li>◆ Support children and families with emerging health issues and future outbreak readiness</li> <li>◆ Support children and families for school readiness, healthy transition to secondary school, and healthy transition to postsecondary/workforce.</li> </ul>
 <p>Reduced harms of substance use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Comprehensive School Health to create and implement school policies and environments that support healthy behaviours</li> <li>◆ Home-visiting and community programs that support healthy relationships between parents and children and healthy behaviours</li> <li>◆ Outreach harm reduction programs (e.g. naloxone, safe supply distribution, consumption and treatment sites)</li> </ul>
 <p>Reduced impact of infectious disease on the population</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Health promotion to support healthy behaviours and reduce risk factors for severe illness from infectious diseases; and address health equity and reduce risk factors for infectious disease transmission</li> <li>◆ Infection prevention and control education and support</li> <li>◆ Case and contact management</li> <li>◆ Trusted community relationships across many settings to promote future outbreak readiness and facilitate quick response to public health concerns</li> </ul>

For more information about two key innovative public health nursing initiatives and how they make a difference in the community see the [Nurse Family Partnership Report](#) and [School Focused Nurse Initiative Evaluation](#) including [OPHNL's Recommendations](#).

The Ontario Association of Public Health Nursing Leaders, which includes the Chief Nursing Officers across the province, promotes and protects the health of Ontarians through excellence in public health nursing leadership. For more information visit <https://ophnl.org/>