



November 5, 2015

The Honourable Eric Hoskins, M.P.P.
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C4

Dear Minister:

RE: Amending the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* (SFOA) to increase protection from second-hand smoke in public places

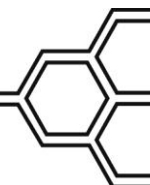
I am writing to you, on behalf of the Ottawa Board of Health. The Board applauds the Ministry's continued commitment to reduce tobacco use by articulating Ontario's goal to have the lowest smoking rates in Canada. I am pleased that on May 28, 2015, the *Making Healthier Choices Act, 2015* received Royal Assent and look forward to proclamation of the proposed regulations. There is much to celebrate on the accomplishments on the tobacco control front, yet there are opportunities to close additional legislation gaps in order to further reduce the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Ontario. As such, at its regular meeting on October 19, 2015, the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit passed the following motion:

WHEREAS Bill 45, *Making Healthier Choices Act, 2015* has recently received Royal Assent and the regulations have not yet been promulgated;

AND WHEREAS *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* does not apply to the smoking of non-tobacco combustible substances, including marijuana and non-tobacco substances smoked using water-pipes;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Chair of the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit write a letter to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care recommending that:

- 1. the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* be amended to include the smoking of anything combustible, including water-pipes and marijuana; and**
- 2. the regulations under the *Electronic Cigarettes Act*, which are not yet promulgated, include restrictions on use of electronic cigarettes that align with the existing restrictions on smoking under the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* and regulations.**



There is robust evidence of the harmful health effects of herbal water-pipe use and on the second-hand smoke (SHS) exposure to workers and to the general public. Furthermore, the use of water-pipes in public places and on patios undermines the progress made by the SFOA to protect people from second-hand smoke and causes enforcement complexities. Although the new proposed SFOA amendments expand seizure capability, they do not address the use of herbal water-pipe products and other substances and exposure of second-hand smoke. Prohibiting the use of water-pipes and other combustible substances in public places, indoor and outdoor, will improve health outcomes by protecting workers and non-smokers from second-hand smoke exposure; decrease water-pipe use and support quit attempts; and ease enforcement of the SFOA.

In respect to the *Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2015*, ensuring that that the regulations restrict use, sale/supply and display and promotion of electronic cigarettes in the same manner as tobacco products under the SFOA will eliminate regulatory gaps and create a seamless application of both Acts in order to decrease enforcement complexities.

Should you or your staff members wish to discuss this further, please contact Dr. Isra Levy, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit by telephone at 613-580-2424 ext 23681 or via email at Isra.Levy@ottawa.ca.

Sincerely,



Councillor Shad Qadri
Chair of the Ottawa Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit

Cc: Dr. Isra Levy, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit
Ms. Gillian Connelly, Board Secretary, Ottawa Public Health

