

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

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Ontario Association of
Public Health Dentistry

Ontario Society of
Nutrition Professionals
in Public Health

5 May 2015

Hon. Eric Hoskins,
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Flr, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor St
Toronto, ON - M7A 2C4

Dear Minister Hoskins,

Re: Ontario's HPV Vaccination Program

On behalf of members of the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health (COMOH) and the 36 local public health units in Ontario that we lead, we are writing in follow up to our letter of March 15 to convey a sense of urgency in the timely approval of moving to a two-dose schedule for the administration of the Human Papilloma Virus vaccine in the publicly funded school setting.

While each health unit may vary slightly in the actual logistics of delivering the vaccine, such as in which month a vaccine is actually rolled out, we all share the goal of maximizing vaccine uptake in the most cost effective way possible while respecting the time and scheduling needs of our crucial partners in the education sector.

To these ends, being able to know this spring whether or not Ontario is moving to a two dose schedule for the 2015-2016 school year is critical. In the next couple of months, health units will be finalizing with principals and Directors of Education the schedules of public health visits to each school; precious room space in schools will be allocated and teaching schedules adjusted to accommodate vaccination clinic time.

HPV vaccination rates in Ontario are improving but have a ways to go before reaching desired levels. There is evidence to support the opinion that moving to a two-dose as opposed to three-dose schedule will improve uptake of the vaccine, as the requirement for three doses may be a deterrent for some people.

At a cost of approximately \$100 per dose, and with approximately 72,000 female students in Grade 8, moving to a two dose schedule may be expected to save over \$7 million in vaccine costs alone. By eliminating the third round of HPV campaign, there would also be substantial savings in public health nursing and administrative time. Local public health staff could then be better deployed in addressing local priorities or responding to other provincial initiatives.

The timelines under which schools and health units operate was not evident in our March letter and so we wished to now make those clear. In the interests of saving money on vaccine, increasing HPV vaccine uptake, optimizing use of public health resources and enhancing collaboration with partners in education, we respectfully ask that you now give urgent attention to moving to a two dose schedule for the HPV vaccine in Ontario's schools.

Many thanks for your consideration of this matter.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Sutcliffe', with a stylized, overlapping structure.

Dr. Penny Sutcliffe,
alPHa President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jaeger', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Valerie Jaeger
COMOH Chair

COPY: Dr. David Mowat, Interim Chief Medical Officer of Health
Dr. Bob Bell, Deputy Minister, Health and Long-Term Care