



Sudbury &amp; District

Health Unit

Service de  
santé publique*Make it a  
Healthy  
Day!**Visez Santé  
dès  
aujourd'hui!***Sudbury**1300 rue Paris Street  
Sudbury ON P3E 3A3  
☎ : 705.522.9200  
☎ : 705.522.5182**Rainbow Centre**40 rue Elm Street  
Unit / Unité 109  
Sudbury ON P3C 1S8  
☎ : 705.522.9200  
☎ : 705.677.9611**Chapleau**101 rue Pine Street E  
Box / Boîte 485  
Chapleau ON P0M 1K0  
☎ : 705.860.9200  
☎ : 705.864.0820**Espanola**800 rue Centre Street  
Unit / Unité 100 C  
Espanola ON P5E 1J3  
☎ : 705.222.9202  
☎ : 705.869.5583**Île Manitoulin Island**6163 Highway / Route 542  
Box / Boîte 87  
Mindemoya ON P0P 1S0  
☎ : 705.370.9200  
☎ : 705.377.5580**Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est**1 rue King Street  
Box / Boîte 58  
St.-Charles ON P0M 2W0  
☎ : 705.222.9201  
☎ : 705.867.0474**Toll-free / Sans frais**  
1.866.522.9200[www.sdhu.com](http://www.sdhu.com)

May 11, 2015

VIA EMAIL

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

Dear Premier Wynne:

**Re: Increasing Alcohol Availability in Ontario**

The proposed measures for increasing alcohol availability to Ontarians in local supermarkets through the Liquor Modernization Project is of grave concern. As an organization, the Sudbury & District Board of Health believes that government decisions regarding alcohol should be made within the broader context of its known and measurable societal harms, negative economic impacts, and risks to the public's health and community safety. At the April 16, 2015 meeting, the Board passed motion 08-15:

*WHEREAS* alcohol is the second leading cause of death, disease, and disability in Canada and causally linked to over 60 diseases and injuries; and

*WHEREAS* 84% of SDHU adults (78% Ontario-wide) and 43% of SDHU teens aged 12-18 reported consuming alcohol in the last 12 months; and 27% of SDHU current drinkers over 12 years reported episodes of heavy drinking (five or more drinks on one occasion at least once monthly); and

*WHEREAS* the Regulatory Modernization in Ontario's Beverage Alcohol Industry initiative (2014), through the Ministry of Finance and the Alcohol Gaming Commission of Ontario, has increased alcohol availability in Ontario through initiatives including VQA wine in Farmers' Markets, LCBO Express Kiosks, support to industry, increased hours of sale and removal of special event and festival restrictions; and

*WHEREAS* the privatization of alcohol sales would set a precedent for further privatization across multiple venues throughout Ontario, such as the Government's currently proposed expansion of beverage alcohol in local supermarkets; and

*WHEREAS* alcohol is no ordinary commodity and decisions about its promotion and availability should be made within the broader context of alcohol's known negative societal, economic and health risks; and

*An Accredited Teaching Health Unit  
Centre agréé d'enseignement en santé*

*WHEREAS* local boards of health are required under the Ontario Public Health Standards to develop health promotion and protection strategies to mitigate against the risks of alcohol consumption and boards are held accountable under MOHLTC Accountability Agreements for reporting on local alcohol consumption rates;

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT* the Sudbury & District Board of Health endorse the correspondence from the Association of Local Public Health Agencies to Government Ministers and the Premier – while also informing the Premier of our serious concerns regarding the proposal for the increased availability of alcohol through VQA wine in Farmers' Markets, LCBO Express Kiosks, and the privatization of the sale of beverage alcohol through initiatives such as local supermarkets; and

*FURTHER THAT* the Sudbury & District Board of Health share these concerns and inform the community by means of an open letter; and

*FURTHER THAT* copies of this motion and subsequent correspondence to the community and Premier be forwarded to local Members of Provincial Parliament, Ministers of Health and Long-Term Care, Economic Development, Finance, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; the Attorney General, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Assistant Deputy Ministers, **Ontario Boards of Health**, Constituent Municipalities, and Ontario Public Health Association.

The current health care costs, enforcement, and other social costs related to alcohol misuse are estimated to be over \$5 billion a year.<sup>i</sup> However, in 2013–2014, the beverage alcohol sector only contributed approximately \$3 billion to the Ontario government.

When moving forward with the modernization initiatives, we urge you and your government to consider the health and wellness of the population and the potentially devastating consequences of increased availability of alcohol. The proposed private models of delivery and sales must include significant management and control from the LCBO, including training and responsible sale practices. We encourage your government to include best practices such as training staff, setting limits to hours of sale, product marketing and advertising, and ensuring separate retail and cash register areas.

We strongly recommend the province undertake a detailed analysis of the health and social impacts, including direct and indirect costs related to the proposed changes to Ontario's beverage alcohol retailing system.

The Board of Health continues to welcome the opportunity to collaborate with you on these important health concerns.

Sincerely,



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

cc: Hon. Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance  
Hon. Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister, Health and Long-Term Care  
Hon. Dipika Damerla, Associate Minister, Health and Long-Term Care  
Hon. Brad Duguid, Minister, Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure  
Hon. Jeff Leal, Minister, Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
Hon. Madeleine Meilleur, Attorney General  
Hon. France Gelinas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickle Belt  
Hon. Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma Manitoulin  
Hon. Glenn Thibeault, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury  
Dr. David Mowat, Chief Medical Officer of Health (Acting)  
Dr. Bob Bell, Deputy Minister, Health and Long-term Care  
Martha Greenberg, Assistant Deputy Minister (A), Health and Long-Term Care  
Roselle Martino, Executive Director, Public Health, Health and Long-Term Care  
Sharon Lee Smith, Associate Deputy Minister, Policy and Transformation  
Linda Stewart, Executive Director Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
Pegeen Walsh, Executive Director, Ontario Public Health Association

---

<sup>i</sup> Rehm, J., et al. (2006). *The Cost of Substance Abuse in Canada 2002 – Highlights*. Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse