

25 February 2005

The Honourable George Smitherman
Minister of Health and Long-term Care
Hepburn Block, 10th Floor
80 Grosvenor Street
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2C4

RECEIVED

MAR 15 2005

HEALTH SERVICES
REGION OF YORK
NEWMARKET

Dear Minister Smitherman:

At its 23 February 2005 meeting, the Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington (KFL&A) Board of Health passed the following motion:

"THAT the Board of Health support the resolution of Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Public Health Agency, requesting that the province require mandatory annual vaccination against influenza for all healthcare workers in Ontario through legislation; and

THAT the Board of Health write to Minister Smitherman, stating their support for this position; and

THAT all other relevant health agencies and Boards of Health be informed of this decision."

Attached for your information is the memo that Dr. Gemmill provided to the Board of Health as the basis for discussion of this recommendation. In it Dr. Gemmill outlines the various reasons why making such a policy would be beneficial to those whom healthcare workers care for in this province. Given that the province has funded a universal influenza immunisation programme, and given that the vaccine is safe and effective, it seems logical to ensure that all healthcare workers are immunised, so that they do not become the cause of morbidity, hospitalisation and mortality from this preventable infection.

We understand that there are opposing views on this matter, including the expression of personal choice by some healthcare workers. We submit to you that the protection from infection and complications far outweigh the personal right to choose and is consistent with the professional responsibility of healthcare workers to "do no harm". Moreover, as you are aware, influenza vaccine does not pose any significant risk to health, and, indeed, will provide a benefit to all of those who receive it.

KINGSTON, FRONTENAC AND LENNOX & ADDINGTON PUBLIC HEALTH

Main Office

221 Portsmouth Avenue, Kingston, Ontario K7M 1V5
Tel: (613) 549-1232 1-800-267-7875
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Branch Offices

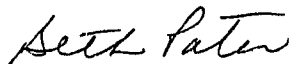
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Napanee	Tel: (613) 354-3357	Fax: (613) 354-6267

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Thank you for considering this recommendation. We understand that it will be a political decision, and we want to lend our support for it. If there is any way in which we can help with this process, we will do our utmost to assist you.

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Beth Pater
Chair, KFL&A Board of Health

cc: Ontario Boards of Health
Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA)
Hon. John Gerretsen, MPP, Kingston and the Islands
Hon. Leona Dombrowsky, MPP, Hastings, Frontenac, and Lennox & Addington

Attachment

25 February 2005

Mr. William Pettingill
Chair, Board of Health
Haliburton, Kawartha and Pine Ridge District Public Health
200 Rose Glen Road
Port Hope, Ontario
L1A 3V6

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HEALTH SERVICES
REGION OF YORK
NEWMARKET

Dear Mr. Pettingill:

At its 23 February 2005 meeting, the Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington (KFL&A) Board of Health passed the following motion:

"That the Board of Health support the resolution of the Haliburton, Kawartha and Pine Ridge District Public Health agency requesting that the province require mandatory annual vaccination against influenza for all healthcare workers in Ontario through legislation."

First, let me congratulate you for being the first board of health to support this important health intervention to reduce deaths and hospitalisations from influenza. The use of a safe and effective vaccine among healthcare workers will provide the additional ring of protection around the most vulnerable people to prevent the consequences of this common, but preventable, infection.

While discussing this issue, the KFL&A Board of Health also expressed a desire to forward this resolution to the Board of the Association of Public Health Agencies (alPHA) for discussion and possible adoption at alPHA's next Annual General Meeting (AGM). We would welcome very much if you would join us as co-sponsor for this motion at the alPHA AGM. Dr. Gemmill, our Medical Officer of Health, has already spoken to Dr. Noseworthy of your office to make the suggestion. We hope that you will reply in the affirmative.

Again, thank you for raising this issue for consideration. We are looking forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,



Councillor Beth Pater, Chair
KFL&A Board of Health

cc: / Ontario Boards of Health
Attachment

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