Communication #1

Ministry of Health Promotion

Office of the Deputy Minister

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Ontario

July 16, 2009

Mr. Bill Fisch
Chair
Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket ON L3Y 6Z1

Dear Mr. Fisch:

The provincial government recognizes the significant cost of preventable diseases to Ontarians and to our health care system. The Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy is a key part of the government's strategy of promoting healthy living and preventing chronic disease. As indicated in my letter of May 29 regarding next steps for New Directions in Tobacco Control, tobacco control will continue as a key focus and priority for the Ministry and the government.

As you are aware, MHP has launched a process by engaging key stakeholders to advise us on the development of a long-term plan to refresh the SFO Strategy. As Ontario's public health system is a key partner in developing and implementing the SFO Strategy, each PHU will continue to have the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way to the vision so we maintain our progress towards a smoke-free Ontario. I look forward to discussing renewed outreach through COMOH, alPHa, and one-on-one opportunities with you.

I am pleased to advise that the provincial government has committed $186,100 to Regional Municipality of York for the following programming funded through the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy for the period January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009. This funding is subject to Regional Municipality of York entering into a grant funding agreement with the Ministry of Health Promotion.

Program allocations for your organization are:

1. Youth Action Alliance Program for the period January 1 to August 31, 2009: $76,667
2. Youth Engagement Funding for the period September 1 to December 31, 2009: $9,434
3. Tobacco Control Coordination for the period January 1 to December 31, 2009: $100,000

...2

Please be advised that notice of funding for tobacco enforcement will be provided in a separate letter by the end of July, 2009.

As indicated to health units in the May 11, 2009 teleconference, and subsequently discussed on June 8 with the Enforcement Task Group (on which all PHUs are represented by regional tobacco enforcement representatives), the Ministry will make every effort to minimize the impact of reductions to enforcement budgets. Criteria and factors to be considered include the current numbers of Full-Time Equivalents at health units funded by the Ministry for enforcement of the SFOA, the vendor and total population within health unit's catchment area, the geographic area covered by PHUs, and local smoking rates.

In addition, we would like to provide current information on the following:

- *Youth Engagement Strategy.* As you are aware, the Ministry has initiated an external advisory group to assist us in developing a new youth engagement strategy to advance Ontario's health promotion objectives, and to identify an inclusive framework for youth engagement.
- The Advisory group has indicated that, to arrive at a longer-term strategy for youth engagement, its work will continue throughout the summer and fall. That is why, to ensure the on-going ability of Regional Municipality of York to engage youth in health promotion activities, including tobacco control, the Ministry will provide $9,434 in youth engagement funding. This funding will allow a bridge from the current Youth Action Alliance programs, which will end on August 31, 2009, until the new youth engagement framework and program are rolled out early in 2010.
- This funding is intended to support youth engagement initiatives between September 1 and December 31, 2009. Based on recommendations from the Youth Engagement Advisory Group that the Ministry extend their work plan into early 2010, the Ministry will also make available additional funding to all health units for the January 1 to March 31, 2010 period, which completes the Ministry's fiscal year.
- Because we are moving toward new models that engage youth who are at risk, and go beyond tobacco control, some PHUs may chose to use their youth engagement funding to implement initiatives that do not involve paid employment for participating youth (e.g., they may fund youth events or share initiatives with other community partners).
- Health units will receive no staff funding for adult supervisor positions (such as the current Youth Advisors) and we encourage them to find opportunities with other like-minded community organizations to ensure necessary and appropriate supervision of participating youth (e.g. the United Way, schools and other youth-serving organizations).
- *Regional Planning through Tobacco Control Area Networks (TCANs)*: The Ministry views the seven TCANs as an important resource providing regional coordination and planning for joint action to achieve health promotion objectives. We will be consulting with the coordinating health units to evolve regional coordination processes to complement the Ministry's evolving healthy communities focus, including the new youth engagement strategy. As a first step, we are encouraging representatives of Heart Health Networks to connect with TCANs to discuss opportunities for collaboration. We are aware that some Heart Health Partnerships and TCANs are already in contact and working together, but we will provide an additional forum for collaboration and on-going joint planning in the fall.

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- *Tobacco Control Coordination Program and Collaboration across PHU Programming:* As you are aware, the TCC program is mandated to facilitate collaboration and coordination across programming within each Public Health Unit. This programming takes on added importance as we establish new directions for tobacco control, new approaches to youth engagement and the implementation of the new Ontario Public Health Standards. We continue to ask these staff to pursue opportunities for cross-program collaboration to ensure that health promotion investments are maximized.
- *Social Marketing:* As in previous years, we propose to continue to rely on TCANs as a hub for social marketing initiatives. In the near future, we will be identifying resources that can be made available at the regional or local level for priority social marketing initiatives. As usual, we will be exploring priorities and options with TCANs before providing one-time grants for these purposes. TCAN representatives are also part of the Ministry's Social Marketing Working Group on Tobacco's New Directions.

As usual, the administrative details regarding funding for your organization will be communicated to you shortly through the office of Denis Gertler, Director (A), Smoke-Free Ontario Branch.

Thank you for your continuing effort and co-operation in working with the Ministry to promote a healthier Ontario. Your important contributions, and continued hard work and dedication will help to improve the quality of life and health of all Ontarians.

Sincerely yours,

M Valentine
Acting Deputy

for Cynthia Morton
Deputy Minister

c: Dr. Karim Kurji, Medical Officer of Health
Margaret McCaffrey, Manager, Tobacco Education and Control
Joanne Bovair, Manager, Accounting and Financial Services
Tobi-Anne Lee, Senior Financial Analyst
Debbie Underwood, Administrative Support
Denis Gertler, Director (A), Smoke-Free Ontario Branch, Ministry of Health Promotion

Communication re: *Eat Smart!*

Dear Stakeholder,

The following is an important communication regarding the status of the *Eat Smart!* Program.

Eat Smart! Restaurant Program

The *Eat Smart! Restaurant Program* was launched provincially in 1999, followed by the introduction of the school and workplace cafeteria programs in 2002. Since its inception, almost all health units have implemented at least one component of the *Eat Smart!* program.

Over the past couple of years, challenges with implementation of the restaurant program within health units coupled with a shifting landscape in which the restaurant program operates in Ontario, have led to a decline in participation by both health units and restaurants. Yet, there has been a concurrent rise in the number of workplace and school cafeterias participating in *Eat Smart!*, which may be reflective of a shift in priorities.

Based on the current participation rates and Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP) strategic initiatives, MHP will no longer provide financial provincial support for the *Eat Smart!* Restaurant Program. Attention will be re-focused on the *Eat Smart!* School and Workplace Programs.

The impetus for communicating this decision is to provide Health Units with the information they need for strategic and financial planning. The Ministry of Health Promotion and the Nutrition Resource Centre appreciates the need to share this information before an investment of time and money is made. There are still details that need to be worked out and unfortunately some of your questions about *Eat Smart!* in restaurants cannot be answered at this time.

The Nutrition Resource Centre would like to encourage health units still implementing the restaurant program to re-assure existing restaurants that it is business as usual until their *Eat Smart!* Award of Excellence expires. For any new restaurants, health units are welcome to provide awards keeping in mind that provincial coordination and funding of the program in the restaurant setting will be ending shortly. More information on how the discontinuation of the *Eat Smart!* Restaurant Program will affect implementation at the local level will be released by the Ministry of Health Promotion later this year.

Any health units that do not have enough materials and do not wish to re-order or re-print are encouraged to contact Samara Foisy (sfoisy@opha.on.ca) at the Nutrition Resource Centre as there are a number of posters and table tents that can be used while the program is still operating as *Eat Smart!*

The Nutrition Resource Centre has been working with EatRight Ontario, the Ministry of Health Promotion and *Eat Smart!* provincial partners (Heart and

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Ontario Public Health Association

Stroke Foundation of Ontario and Canadian Cancer Society- Ontario Division) to discuss ways to provincially support health units who would like to continue to work with local food premises to provide information on how to modify menu selections to make healthier fare and enhance food safety practices.

Health Check

The Ministry of Health Promotion will also be supporting the implementation of a pilot program involving the Heart and Stroke Foundation's Health Check program. This program will align and work with EatRight Ontario in terms of support and consumer education. More details will be provided about this program in a future communication.

EatSmart! In School and Workplace

In terms of the *Eat Smart!* School and Workplace Program a decision has been reached to re-brand the program to align with EatRight Ontario. This decision has been reached internally based on several factors. In order to sustain a viable program and tie it in with provincial promotion efforts a re-brand is a necessary next step.

At this time the *Eat Smart!* School and Workplace program will maintain the *Eat Smart!* name and it's business as usual in these settings until further announcements are made. The re-brand will not affect the implementation structure of the School and Workplace Program.

A plan to launch the *Eat Smart!* Recreation Centre Program under EatRight Ontario is underway.

May 22, 2009

York Region

Clause No. 6 in Report No. 3 of the Community Services and Housing Committee was adopted, without amendment, by the Council of The Regional Municipality of York at its meeting on April 23, 2009.

6
2009 ONTARIO BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS
COMMUNITY AND HEALTH SERVICES PERSPECTIVE

The Community Services and Housing Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendation contained in the following report dated April 14, 2009 from the Commissioner of Community and Health Services.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. The Regional Clerk circulate this report to Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and local municipalities for their information.

2. PURPOSE

This report summarizes, from a Community and Health Services perspective, the key highlights of the 2009 Ontario Budget as outlined in *Attachment 1* of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

The Province presented the Ontario Budget on March 26, 2009

On March 26, 2009 the Ontario Minister of Finance presented the Province's 2009 budget. The Province tabled a $108.9 billion budget, with a deficit of $14.1 billion in 2009-2010. It anticipates that Ontario will run deficits for the next several years, with a proposed return to balance in 2015-2016.

Overall, the Ontario Budget builds on similar themes as in the recent Federal Budget by providing a mix of tax cuts, infrastructure investments, training and adjustment, and targeted supports to vulnerable residents in addressing the current economic slowdown. The Province has also introduced a new harmonized sales tax system designed to bolster business competiveness.

The 2009 Ontario Budget provides opportunity for the Province to invest in the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy

As reported to Council in Clause No. 2 of Report No. 1 of the Community and Health Services Committee on January 22, 2009, the Province released *Breaking the Cycle:*

Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy in December 2008 with a goal of reducing the number of children living in poverty in Ontario by 25% over the next five years (commonly referred to as "25 in 5"). The 2009 Ontario Budget represents the first opportunity to assess the Province's investment in this strategy for the coming year.

4. ANALYSIS

The investment in infrastructure and changes in sales tax are aimed at increasing employment opportunities and business growth, along with more support to employment and training assistance

The Province highlights the value of infrastructure spending as a short-term measure while introducing significant changes in the Ontario sales tax and general cuts to corporate and business taxes as a way of improving the long-term business environment and employment growth.

Funding is also provided over two years to increase transitional employment and training assistance for unemployed and underemployed workers in Ontario. These skills and training initiatives are supported through federal funding enhancements announced in January 2009.

The Province accelerates Ontario Child Benefit payments, commits permanent funding for the Rent Bank Program, and increases allowances to Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program

From the perspective of the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy, the 2009 Ontario Budget proposes to accelerate planned increases to the Ontario Child Benefit, keeps commitments to raise the minimum wage, provides annual funding to the Ontario Rent Bank Program, and initiates community hubs in selected low-income neighborhoods that will help identify and provide social and educational supports.

In addition, increases to Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program allowances will help improve income support for residents accessing these programs. For December 2009, when the rate becomes effective for Ontario Works, the Province will pay 100% of the cost increase, however, beginning in January 2010 cost-sharing with municipalities will apply.
As part of the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Province has reiterated its commitment to undertake a review of social assistance with the goal of removing barriers and increasing opportunities for people trying to transition to employment.

Commitments to social housing repair and construction, support to social services agencies and new tax credits may assist lower and moderate income households

The Province announced matching provincial commitments to federal funding for social housing repair and construction, and additional capital funding to social services agencies. Also, the Budget includes improved refundable sales and property tax credits for lower and moderate income households as part of the move to a more harmonized sales tax regime in Ontario.

While the commitments to social housing construction is good news, the ongoing need for a sustainable and long-term funding model for affordable housing from the provincial and federal governments is still required to support the housing needs of lower and moderate income households in York Region.

The Budget provides no new funding for early learning, child care and health services

Access to child care and early learning is one of the poverty reduction strategies that supports the developmental skills of all children as well as the employment/re-employment/re-training of parents. However, the 2009 Ontario Budget provides no new funding for early learning and child care. It did however, mention an expected release this year of an expert report on implementing a full-day learning program for four and five year olds and called for more federal support to child care. For many policy makers and advocates, this gap in a budget designed to reduce poverty and create jobs is disappointing. More affordable, expanded daycare can be a powerful tool that gives parents the opportunity to retrain for better or new jobs, and help single parents lift their families out of poverty through work. York Region currently has a monthly average waitlist of about 3,500 (December 2008) for child care fee assistance.

For health services, the Budget does not make any significant commitments to public health services. Funding has been allocated to improve hospital infrastructure and increase hospital base funding. The Province has also dedicated funding to improve emergency room wait times, for the Aging at Home Strategy, access to family health care, e-health initiatives and increase the number of long term care beds.

Given the range of potential implications to the Community and Health Services Department, more detailed analysis will be required once specific program details are provided

The program and client implications related to the 2009 Ontario Budget will be reviewed and reported back to Council as appropriate once specific details are released by the Province. This includes on-going progress toward implementing the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy through provincial budgetary, program, and policy developments.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The implications of the 2009 Ontario Budget on Community and Health Services programs and services will be assessed and reported back to Council by the applicable program area once more information is provided by the Province on specific budget announcements.

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

There is no specific local municipal impact associated with this report. However, the Federal and Provincial Budgets will affect all residents across York Region including those who rely on the programs and services of the Community and Health Services Department.

7. CONCLUSION

This report provides a brief overview of the 2009 Ontario Budget from the perspective of Community and Health Services programs and clients. More detailed information is highlighted in *Attachment 1*.

For more information on this report, please contact Cordelia Abankwa-Harris, Managing Director, Strategic Service Integration and Policy, at Extension 2150.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.

(The attachment referred to in this clause is attached to this report.)

Council Attachment 1

2009 Ontario Budget Highlights
Community and Health Services Perspective

Ontario Budget Announcement	Implications for Community and Health Services
Social Services	
Ontario Child Benefit (OCB) • Accelerates phase-in of the OCB by two years through increasing benefits to up to $1,100 annually per child by July 2009. • Re-affirms commitment in the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy to raise maximum OCB to $1,310 annually within five years. • OCB program parameters and eligibility requirements will not change. • The OCB was originally scheduled to reach the maximum $1,100 benefit by 2011. The original scheduled level for 2009-2010 is $805. • The Ontario Budget indicates the change will provide over $400 million more in benefits over the next three years.	• The OCB is an income tested benefit for lower income families. The Ontario Budget will increase income support for these households in York Region. • The Ontario Budget also indicates that as outlined in previous budgets, adjustments would be made to social assistance benefits for children to further consolidate them with the OCB. Clarification will be required from the Province on how this will impact on Ontario Works (OW) participants and the level of net benefits they will receive through implementation of the OCB increases.
Increase Social Assistance Rates • Increase the adult basic allowance and maximum shelter allowance by 2% in November 2009 for Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) recipients and in December 2009 for OW recipients. • This includes families receiving Temporary Care Assistance and Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities, as well as those living in long-term care homes who receive the comfort allowance. • Municipalities will not be required to cost-share the rate increase until January 2010.	• The income of OW recipients will increase. Higher benefit levels may increase the number of residents eligible for OW. • Increases to OW and ODSP allowances will also increase the amount the Region will need to cost share. Costs to York Region for 2010 will also depend on caseload numbers. • Note that ODSP benefit costs will be fully uploaded by the province by 2011. Beginning in 2010, cost-sharing will shift to 90:10 provincial/municipal ratio. • As agreed through the Provincial Municipal Fiscal and Service Delivery Review, the upload of OW benefits costs to the Province will begin in 2010 at 3%. Full OW benefits costs will be uploaded in 2018. • Clarification will be required on whether increases will apply to the emergency shelter per diem and personal needs allowances.
Employment and Training Assistance • Invests more than $750 million over two years to provide additional transitional employment and training assistance to unemployed and	• The Ontario Budget indicates that these programs will be supported through the recent federal enhancements to the Ontario-Canada Labour Market Agreement and Labour Market Development

2009 Ontario Budget Highlights
Community and Health Services Perspective

Ontario Budget Announcement	Implications for Community and Health Services
underemployed Ontarians. • Includes $32 million more in 2009 for summer employment opportunities for youth. This includes targeted resources for youth in high-needs neighborhoods. • Includes $700 million over two years in new skills training and literacy initiatives and enhancements to existing programs, including: o $94 million to expand support for New Canadians, including bridge training and mentorship opportunities, serving 15,000 more clients per year. o $90 million to expand literacy and basic skills training, including funding for community projects, distance learning and workplace literacy, serving up to 13,000 more per year. • Develop a Green Jobs Skills Strategy over two years to respond to labour demands in the emerging green energy sector, including electricity.	Agreement. Both transfers federal funding to the province for training programs delivered through Employment Ontario for Employment Insurance (EI) recipients and non-EI eligible workers. • The Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) indicates that these are new funds which will complement on-going programs and that further program, funding, and delivery details will be forthcoming from the relevant provincial ministries (Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration). • Clarification will be required on how funding will be allocated to York Region-based service delivery agencies. Better access to provincial training programs for Ontario Works participants would help improve their employment outcomes and adjust to a changing labour market needs.
<u>Early Learning and Child Care</u> • Indicates that the coming year will bring forward the delivery of Dr. Charles Pascal's report on early childhood education. • The Ontario Budget calls for the federal government to initiate new funding measures to support child care.	• The Province has proposed the development of a full-day learning program for 4-5 year olds. Dr. Pascal has been asked to investigate implementation options and report back this year. • The Province has made earlier commitments of up to $300 million to support the proposed full-day learning program for Ontario children. The 2009 Ontario Budget does not provide increases to the funding associated for implementing full-day learning. • Earlier federal funding commitments to child care under the now terminated Early Learning and Child Care Agreement have been used by the Province to support the expansion of Best Start child care spaces and fee subsidies, including in York Region, through to 2009-2010. The Ontario Budget does not address the Province's specific spending plans for these and other child care initiatives.

2009 Ontario Budget Highlights
Community and Health Services Perspective

Ontario Budget Announcement	Implications for Community and Health Services
Housing and Long Term Care	
Social Housing Invests in social housing by committing: • $700 million over two years for social housing rehabilitation and energy retrofits to 50,000 social housing units • $360 million to create 4,500 new social housing units for low-income seniors and persons with disabilities • $175 million over two years to extend the Canada Affordable Housing Program which is creating new homes for low-income families, seniors, persons living with mental illness and victims of domestic abuse.	• These housing investments will be 100% provincially funded and will not require municipal cost-sharing. They match allocations announced in the January 2009 Federal Budget. More information is needed on the allocation of funding to York Region and program eligibility criteria. • The Province estimates that the construction of affordable housing will create 23,000 jobs. • More information will be needed to assess impact of the proposed single value-added sales tax (see below) on construction costs of new affordable social housing units and on the daily operations of non-profit housing providers. Currently non-profit housing developers are eligible for certain exemptions and rebates under the current Ontario Retails Sales Tax.
Rent Bank • Provide $5 million annually to the Ontario Rent Bank program beginning in 2009-2010.	• Community and Health Services currently administers provincial Rent Bank funding as part of homelessness prevention supports to low-income residents. With the announcement of permanent funding, the Province is currently working with municipal service managers to assess options for allocating the next round of funding.
Support to Seniors • Increase income threshold in 2009 under the Ontario Property and Sales Tax Credits for senior couples. • Re-confirms 2008 Budget plan to double the Ontario Senior Homeowners' Property Tax Grant from $250 to $500 for 2010.	• Provides additional relief to low and moderate income seniors with the cost of property taxes. • Starting in 2010, the current Ontario Property and Sales Tax Credit will be replaced with a new separate Ontario Sales tax Credit and Ontario Property Tax Credit (see above). Eligible senior homeowners will continue to receive the additional assistance provided through the Ontario Seniors Homeowners' Property Tax Grant. • The Province will also continue to invest in the Aging at Home Strategy allocating $223 million in 2009-2010 and will continue plans to increase the number of long-term care beds by 1,725 in 10

2009 Ontario Budget Highlights
Community and Health Services Perspective

Ontario Budget Announcement	Implications for Community and Health Services
	communities across the province by 2012.
Public Health, Emergency Medical Services, and Other Health Related	
Health Infrastructure and Funding • Invest about $7 billion over two years on hospital and other health capital projects. • Re-affirms commitment to create an electronic health record (eHealth) by 2015.	• Currently, the Province has over 40 hospital projects under construction, 15 of which are expected to be completed in 2009-2010. These projects will create and sustain many jobs in 2009-2010, covering a wide range of skills and trades. • Hospital base funding increase of 2.1 % in 2009-2010 originally announced in last year's Budget will continue to be maintained. • The Province will also continue plans to provide high growth communities with annual growth funding and implementing an ER Wait Times Strategy. • Plans to increase the number of Family Health Teams and nurse-practitioner-led clinics will also continue. • eHealth initiatives will help to improve sharing of health information for quality, safety and efficiency of patient care (e.g. diabetes registry, on-line management of prescription medications, eReferral).
Other Initiatives Related to Community and Health Services Programs and Clients	
Social Services Infrastructure • Provide more than $80 million for over 4,000 projects to undertake repairs and improve security, accessibility and energy efficiency at social service facilities used by low-income and vulnerable Ontarians across the Province. • Asks for matching federal funds to support an additional 4,000 projects.	• OMSSA indicates that the details for this program have yet to be developed and it is unclear if municipal service managers will be able to access this funding. • Could provide community agencies in York Region with capital dollars to improve service access and delivery depending on how funding is allocated across the province.
Reforming Ontario Sales Tax • Move to a single federally administered value-added sales tax by blending the current Ontario Retail Sates Tax (RST) of 8% with the	• More analysis would be needed to assess the impact of sales tax changes on lower income households. Exemptions proposed for the new sales tax will provide some partial relief. However, the addition

Ontario Budget Announcement	Implications for Community and Health Services
5% federal Goods and Services Tax (GST) for a combined new rate of 13% effective July 1, 2010. • As with the current GST, the new sales tax will not be charged on a range of items, such as basic groceries, prescription drugs, and medical devices. • Items currently exempt under the Ontario RST will have a point-of-sale rebate under the provincial portion of the new sales tax (i.e. 8%) for purchases of children's clothing and footwear, children's car seats and car booster seats, books, diapers and feminine hygiene products. • Purchases of new homes of up to $500,000 will receive a housing rebate on the provincial portion of the new sales tax.	of a number of other items that are currently not taxed will be an issue. The federal government already provides a refundable GST tax credit for low-income households. See section below on provincial measures proposed in the Ontario Budget.
<u>Other Tax Changes</u> The Ontario 2009 Budget proposes a number of transitional and permanent measures to help address the impact of the new sales tax on low and moderate income households. These include: • An Ontario Sales Tax Transition Benefit providing up to $1,000 for families and up to $300 for single people over three payments in June 2010, December 2010, and June 2011. Benefits would be received to all eligible tax filers aged 18 and over. The maximum benefit will be reduced by 5% for income over $80,000 for singles and over $160,000 for families. Up to 6.5 million individuals and families will receive the transition benefits. • A new and permanent refundable sales tax credit for low to middle income people of up to $260 annually for each adult and child paid quarterly starting in July 2010. This will be reduced by 4% of adjusted family income net income over $20,000 for singles people and over $25,000 for families. • An enhanced refundable property tax credit for low to middle income people of up to $250 annually for non-seniors or $625 for seniors -	• The Ontario 2009 Budget indicates that these measures will provide $10.6 billion in tax relief over three years and taken together will increase the progressivity to the tax system by providing a greater share of tax relief to low-to middle income households. As part of the agreement to move toward a single sales tax, the federal government is providing the Province with transitional funding to support part of these measures. • The Ontario Budget indicates that the new sales and property tax credits will provide an increase of more than $1 billion a year of income support to between 2.3 and 2.9 million families and individuals in Ontario. • The Province already provides a combined income-tested property and sales tax credit. The proposed new measures appear to extend the tax credits to more Ontario households and improves on the timeliness of when payments are received (e.g. from income tax refunds to quarterly advance payments). Unlike the current tax credit, the maximum benefits and income thresholds will be indexed for inflation.

Ontario Budget Announcement	Implications for Community and Health Services
plus 10% of occupancy costs (property tax paid or 20% of rent paid). The credit will not exceed occupancy costs and be will subject to a maximum of $900 for non-seniors and $1025 for seniors. It will be reduced by 2% of adjusted family net income over $20,000 for singles people and over $25,000 for families. • Reducing income taxes on the first bracket tax rate from 6.05% to 5.05%.	• Clarification will be required from the Province on how these new benefits will be treated under provincial income and needs tested programs.
<u>Community Hubs</u> • Invest $3 million in 2009-10 to help establish community hubs in selected low-income neighborhoods. The hubs will bring together a range of community partners to identify and provide social, community, and educational supports.	• Funding Community Hubs is part of the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Strategy calls for $7 million of annual funding to support community hubs. • Clarification will be required on which neighborhoods will be targeted to assess potential impact on York Region. • OMSSA indicates that the Province will also increase funding for the Community Use of Schools program and expand the number of Parenting and Family Literacy Centres for students in high-needs neighborhoods, both which are part of the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy. More information will be needed to confirm if these will include more supports to York Region schools or communities. • The Minister of Children and Youth Services has also indicated the Ontario Budget will provide more than $35 million over two years to enhance the Youth Opportunity Strategy, which helps youth in high-risk neighborhoods through jobs, training, and outreach.
<u>Minimum Wage</u> • Confirms already planned increases to the Ontario minimum wage.	• On March 31, 2009, the minimum wage increased to $9.50 per hour. This will increase to $10.25 per hour in 2010. • Supports increased market income for low-income residents employed in minimum wage jobs, including Community and Health Services clients, and reduces reliance on social benefit payments. • The Province has also indicated that it will invest an additional $4.5 million annually for employment standards officers to reduce the

Ontario Budget Announcement	Implications for Community and Health Services
	backlog of claims and proactively enforce the Employment Standards Act.
<u>Enhance Co-operative Education Tax Credit (CETC) and Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit (ATTC)</u> • Increases CETC rate from 10% to 25% and from 15% to 30% for small businesses and increases maximum tax credit available from $1,000 to $3,000 per work placement. • Increases ATTC rate from 25% to 35% and 30% to 45% for small businesses and increases maximum annual tax credit from $5,000 to $10,000. The ATTC will also extend the months payable from the first 36 months to the first 48 months of an apprenticeship program.	• Both the CETC and ATTC provides refundable tax credits to businesses that either employ postsecondary students enrolled in qualified co-operative education programs or pay salaries or wages to eligible apprentices. • The Ontario Budget indicates that this will provide an additional $50 million annually. • These could improve the incentive to York Region employers to hire youth, including those who access Community and Health Services programs, in supporting workplace skill development and employment outcomes.

Communication #4

CUPE SCFP Ontario

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September 1, 2009

To Mayors and Councils,

We are writing to ask that you and your Council endorse a day of recognition for the many people who work providing care to children in your community. Last year a record number of municipalities proclaimed and celebrated this day of appreciation, and it was a great a success.

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and our other labour partners representing child care workers across Ontario are asking that Wednesday October 21, 2009 be proclaimed as ***Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day*** in accordance with the attached resolution.

Many groups are recognized by way of Municipal Resolution. Such a day allows the community to recognize the work of various groups and to acknowledge the contributions they make in the lives of community members.

Many children, families and communities benefit from the work of child care workers. Child care also contributes to the economic life of communities. Research shows the many economic benefits accrued from affordable, accessible high quality child care. This benefit comes from the number of people employed in the child care industry and because the availability of child care allows parents to work and to contribute to the economic life of society.

Even if your Council does not issue official proclamations, there are many ways for your municipality to participate in and celebrate this special day. In this case, we ask your Council sponsor public announcements, display our posters and distribute pins. Many municipalities also organize events and contests for the day or have Councillors or the Mayor participate in events hosted by child care centres within the municipality. A list of ideas and examples is attached.

We hope that your proclamation of this day of appreciation, or your active support, will encourage and promote a day of community recognition for child care workers. Please fax the attached order to request posters and pins to help you raise awareness and celebrate.

Please advise us of your participation in this day of recognition so that we can acknowledge your community's role in celebrating child care workers across Ontario on October 21st. Please direct any correspondence on proclamations and/or celebration activities to the attention of Kathy Johnson, by mail: CUPE, 305 Milner Ave., Suite 800, Scarborough, ON M1B 3V4, or by fax: 416-292-2839.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Sid Ryan

Sid Ryan,
President, CUPE Ontario

Saarikoski

Tracy Saarikoski,
President, OCBCC

cc: CMSMs/DSSABs

:us/ cope491

9th Annual Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day

October 21, 2009

Resolution

Whereas thirty six years of research confirms the benefits of high quality child care for young children's intellectual, emotional, social and physical development and later life outcomes; and

Whereas child care promotes the well-being of children and responds to the needs of parents, child care workers and the broader community by supporting quality of life so that citizens can fully participate in and contribute to the economic and social life of their community; and

Whereas recent studies clearly show trained and knowledgeable Early Childhood Educators and child care workers are the most important element in quality child care, and further that good wages and working conditions are associated with higher job satisfaction and morale, lower staff turnover all of which predict higher quality care

Therefore Be It Resolved that October 21, 2009 be designated the 9th annual "Child Care Worker & Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day" in recognition of the influence, dedication and commitment of child care workers to children, their families and quality of life of the community.

:us/ cope491

Community and Health Services Department
Office of the Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Community and Health Services Committee Members

FROM: Joann Simmons, Commissioner of Community and Health Services

DATE: September 16, 2009

RE: **Service Indicators for Social Assistance and Housing**

Attached are the most current statistics for social assistance and housing that show the service pressures on these program areas and reflect the changing needs of our residents as they experience the effects of the current economic situation.

For August, 2009:

- The Ontario Works caseload had a 0.6% increase in August over the previous month and a 22.4% increase since November 2008.

- Net Ontario Works Allowance and Benefit expenditures remain within the 2009 year-to-date budget. However, this will be closely monitored as the year progresses. August expenditures are estimated.

- The number of households on the rent-geared-to-income waiting list increased by 2.2% over previous month, which is a 13% increase over September 2008.

Thank you.

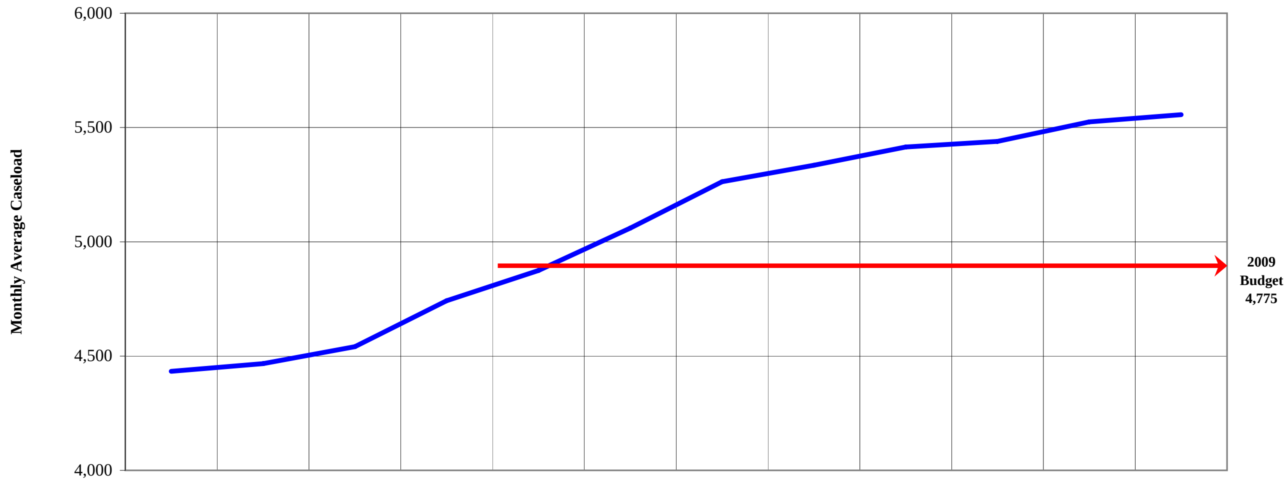
Joann Simmons

JS/tk

Attachment - 1

Chart 1

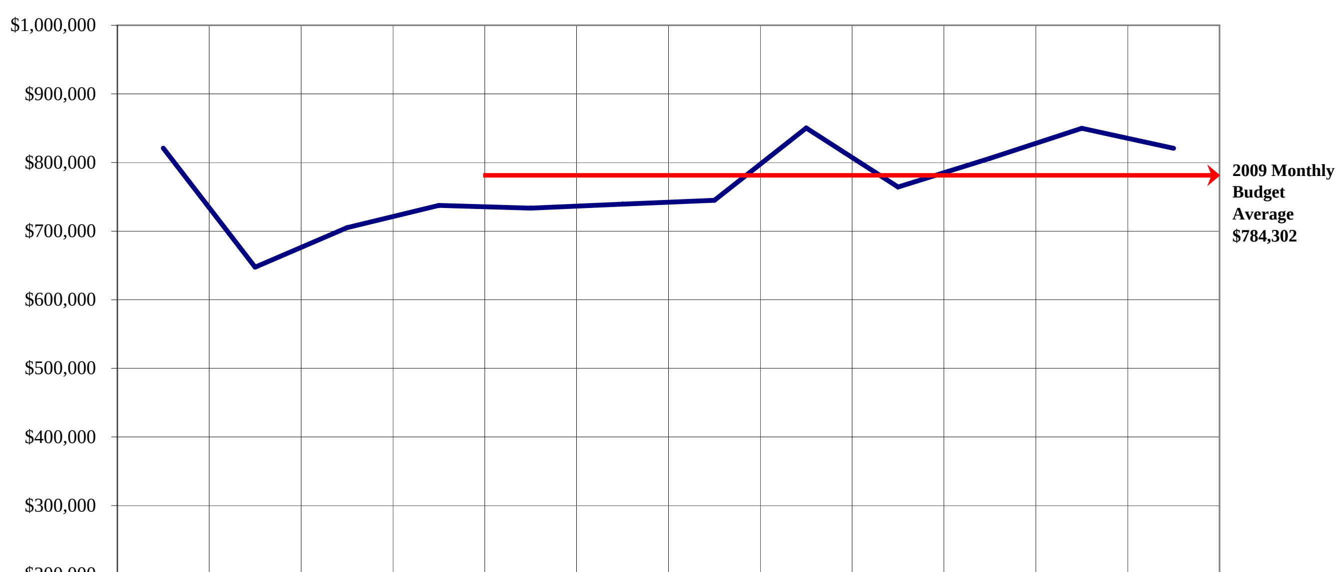
Ontario Works Monthly Average Caseload



	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09
Monthly Caseload	4,433	4,467	4,541	4,742	4,874	5,060	5,263	5,335	5,415	5,439	5,525	5,556

Chart 2

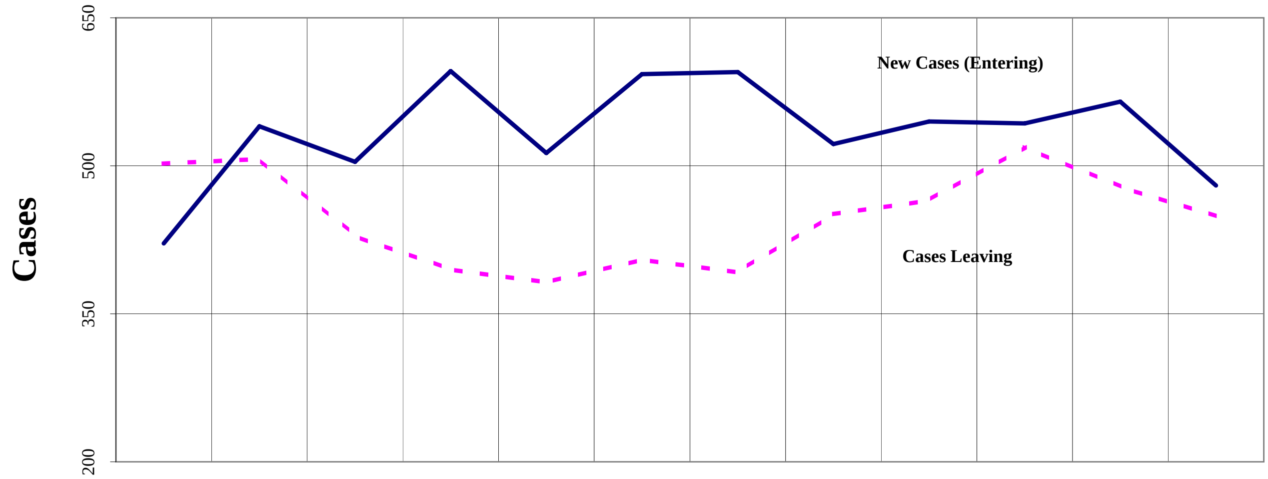
Net Monthly Cost - Ontario Works Allowances and Benefits



	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09 Est.
Net Cost	$821,028	$647,428	$705,139	$737,435	$733,602	$739,272	$744,856	$850,361	$764,376	$805,921	$849,820	$820,708

Chart 3

Cases Entering and Leaving Ontario Works



	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09
New Cases	421	540	504	596	513	593	595	522	545	543	565	480
Leaving	502	507	429	395	382	405	392	451	465	519	479	449

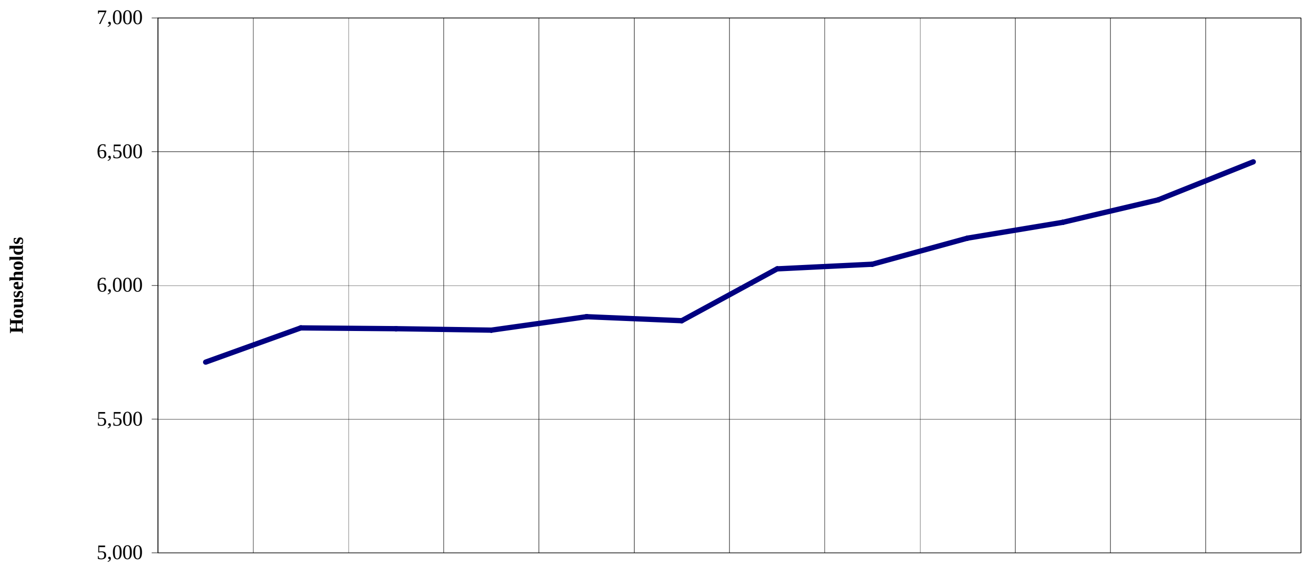
Chart 4

Ontario Works Caseload
Monthly and Year-over-Year Comparisons

	2007			2008			2009		
	Caseload	**Change over previous month**	**% change over previous month**	**Caseload**	**Change over previous month**	**% change over previous month**	**Caseload**	**Change over previous month**	**% change over previous month**
January	4,693	160	3.5%	4,651	180	4.0%	4,874	132	2.8%
February	4,683	(10)	(0.2%)	4,639	(12)	(0.3%)	5,060	186	3.8%
March	4,691	8	0.2%	4,536	(103)	(2.2%)	5,263	203	4.0%
April	4,616	(75)	(1.6%)	4,560	24	0.5%	5,335	72	1.4%
May	4,582	(34)	(0.7%)	4,496	(64)	(1.4%)	5,415	80	1.5%
June	4,482	(100)	(2.2%)	4,407	(89)	(2.0%)	5,439	24	0.4%
July	4,472	(10)	(0.2%)	4,432	25	0.6%	5,525	86	1.6%
August	4,475	3	0.1%	4,514	82	1.9%	5,556	31	0.6%
September	4,454	(21)	(0.5%)	4,433	(81)	(1.8%)			
October	4,409	(45)	(1.0%)	4,467	34	0.8%			
November	4,461	52	1.2%	4,541	74	1.7%			
December	4,471	10	0.2%	4,742	201	4.4%			
2008 Average Monthly Caseload	**4,541**			**4,535**			***5,308***	***Budget Variance Over/(Under)***	
						2009 Monthly Budget Caseload	4,775	533	11.2%

Chart 5

Total Eligible Households on Housing Services Waiting List



	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09
Wait List	5,713	5,841	5,838	5,833	5,883	5,868	6,062	6,079	6,177	6,236	6,320	6,462