



**Public Health**  
**Santé publique**  
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

February 10, 2020

Mr. Jim Pine, Special Advisor  
Ms. Alison Blair, Public Health Modernization Executive Lead  
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Ministry of Health  
10th Floor, Hepburn Block  
80 Grosvenor Street  
Toronto, ON M7A 2C4

Dear Mr. Pine, Ms. Blair and Dr. Williams:

**Re: Transforming Public Health for the People of Northeastern Ontario**

On behalf of the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts, I am pleased to submit our agency's response to the Ministry of Health consultations on Public Health Modernization and the November 18, 2019 Discussion Paper. As a diverse board of health with representation from across our vast northern catchment area, we understand our communities, our people, and our partners. Our longstanding engagement with our local communities in support of public health uniquely positions us to comment on system improvements that would benefit public health in our area.

The enclosed submission was informed by rich dialogue among Public Health Sudbury & Districts management and careful review by the Board of Health. It was also informed by our collaborations with our North East public health partners and with the communities we serve.

I would be remiss to not raise the current global response to the novel coronavirus in the context of this consultation on Public Health Modernization. Our agency is responding to this Public Health Emergency of International Concern by activating our Emergency Response Plan. This ensures local public health readiness and coordination of community stakeholder responses and communications. Over the December holidays and into the New Year, our agency's Emergency Response Plan was also activated to enable our response to two sequential cases of hepatitis A in local food handlers.

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Letter

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These two very different incidents highlight the same point – the public health system needs to be robust. It needs to be robust enough to be able to surge and respond to the unexpected needs of our communities. At the same time, our responsive work needs to be accomplished without compromising the long-game of public health – our resilient forging ahead with carefully planned health promotion and disease prevention activities that achieve longer term health benefits. We believe that our submission contains critical considerations for Government which if implemented, would lead to the successful achievement of these ends in an effective modernized public health system.

Our Board has worked diligently over the years to ensure the best use of existing resources. This has resulted in many accomplishments, some of which are highlighted in the enclosed submission. We encourage the Government to not to lose sight of these hard-earned strengths in the public health system in Ontario.

We are grateful for the opportunity to provide input on Public Health Modernization. We respectfully request that you continue to engage with us going forward. We value the continued transparency of this process and anticipate further communication about the next steps following these consultations.

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you the enclosed submission.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

René Lapierre  
Chair, Board of Health

Encl.

cc: Board of Health, Public Health Sudbury & Districts