

Friday, April 26, 2019

**PRESS RELEASE: Ontario medical students warn against cuts to public health**

**Toronto, ON:** The Ontario Medical Students Association (OMSA) is concerned about the province's plan to substantially cut support for municipal health units by reducing the provincial share of program funding. This shift in funding could represent up to a 1 billion dollars cut to Toronto Public Health alone over the next decade. These cuts would affect municipalities of all sizes throughout Ontario. Several municipalities, regional governments, and other healthcare stakeholders including the Ontario Medical Association have also expressed their concern about reducing support for local public health units.

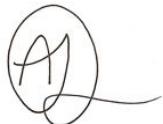
The vague nature of recent healthcare cuts have left the future of our provincial healthcare system unclear to both the general population as well as to healthcare students and professionals. **OMSA encourages a transparent and evidence-based approach to major funding decisions regarding healthcare-related services.**

Public health units across the province provide an essential array of services, including overseeing food safety, immunization programs, infectious disease prevention and control, substance abuse programs, sexual health initiatives, and school health programs. Public health initiatives are effective for both our population's health and our province's fiscal wellbeing. Public health interventions have an average return on investment of \$14 dollars for every \$1 spent ([source](#)). **We urge the Provincial Government to reconsider the financial implications of cuts to public health in Ontario.** Furthermore, cuts to public health are particularly devastating to our province's most vulnerable populations. **OMSA is particularly concerned that public health cuts will hit hardest for marginalized Ontarians.**

Lastly, the recent announcement to cut public health funding is ill-timed considering the resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases across Canada. This month alone, cases of measles were confirmed in Ottawa and in the York Region. **OMSA urges key decision makers to reverse the public health cuts in light of the recent increase in vaccine preventable diseases across Canada.**

For more information on OMSA's advocacy efforts, please [visit www.omsa.ca/en/advocacy-priorities](http://www.omsa.ca/en/advocacy-priorities) or contact [representation@omsa.ca](mailto:representation@omsa.ca).

Sincerely,



Andrew Dawson  
OMSA Chair



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