
December 17, 2015

Ontario's Consultation on Primary, Home, and Community Health Care

Today, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Honourable Dr. Eric Hoskins, launched a consultation process on primary, home and community health care, and to strengthen population and public health.

The provincial government in their discussion paper, "Patients First: A Proposal to Strengthen Patient Centred Health Care in Ontario", set out a series of proposals for public consultation. This will potentially involve a restructuring of primary and public health service delivery which may have implications for public health. There may also be an opportunity to explore the delivery of community paramedicine as a form of primary care, although this is not included in the scope of the discussion paper.

For public health, there are two major proposals being floated out in the Ministry's discussion paper. The first is to require Public Health Units to participate in formalized planning and joint initiatives with the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs).

The second proposal is that public health funding be flowed through the LHINs to Public Health units. This raises a number of significant municipal questions about funding and governance relationships. AMO will assess the appropriateness of such a transfer of responsibility, and if it occurs, provide advice so that it is done under the right conditions. AMO and its members will want to be assured that the Ministry provides a guarantee of current level of public health funding with growth funding within a designated envelope. Further, AMO will want to be satisfied that the LHINs will not be overly prescriptive and still allow for effective Boards of Health functioning and governance.

AMO expects to be involved throughout the Ministry's transformative strategy development and implementation discussions. AMO will be seeking the inclusion of an elected official on any consultation or advisory groups as municipal governments are the cofunders, and in some cases, the employers of Public Health Units.

AMO will be establishing its own municipal officials group to make recommendations directly to the Minister on the consultation paper questions.

The government's discussion paper and information on how to provide your council's input into the consultation are found on the Ministry [website](#). If commenting, we would ask you to provide AMO with your input by contacting Michael Jacek, Senior Advisor, so that it can inform our analysis and proposed approach.

In other health related news, the government also announced that the Province is investing \$16.2 million in 1,000 supporting housing units across the province, including \$4 million for 248 supportive housing units in 2016-17. For more information, see the [news release](#).

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