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Charitable Registration
Number 11924 8771 RR0001

November 16, 2006

Elizabeth Moreau
Director of Communications and Public Education
Canadian Paediatric Society
2305 St. Laurent Blvd.
Ottawa, Ontario K1G 4J8

Dear Ms. Moreau,

The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) represents the interests of more than 3,000 community and public health practitioners across Ontario. The mission of the OPHA is to provide leadership on issues affecting the public's health, and to strengthen the impact of people who are active in public and community health throughout Ontario. The Breastfeeding Promotion Workgroup of the OPHA focuses on the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding.

The Ontario Public Health Association respectfully requests your consideration of our feedback regarding the information related to dehydration provided to parents in the *Parents and Caregivers* section of the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS) website, at www.caringforkids.cps.ca/babies/Dehydration.htm.

The information provided regarding dehydration and its management:

- 1) Does not state that gastroenteritis and dehydration are very rare in breastfed babies.
- 2) Does not highlight that breast milk is a nutritionally complete *clear* fluid, and that cue-based breastfeeding is not only a comfort to ill children, but also provides both fluid and nutrition for recovery from illness.
- 3) Does not note that a mother's breast milk supply will increase to meet the increased demand in the event that a child is refusing solid foods, but continues to breastfeed.
- 4) Does not emphasize the superiority of breast milk, nor point out the difference between breast milk, formula and oral rehydration solution (ORS) in rehydration and recovery.
- 5) Does not identify the differences in stool consistency between breastfed and formula-fed infants.
- 6) Does not take into consideration the stomach capacity of a newborn versus a five or six month old infant.

The Ontario Public Health Association further recommends that the Canadian Paediatric Society consider the following:

- 1) Separation of the information (e.g. two fact sheets) for parents of breastfed and formula-fed children to address the different needs of each population.
- 2) Promote frequent breastfeeding and provide guidelines to educate parents regarding signs of effective breastfeeding and transference of breast milk from mother to child.
- 3) Advise mothers how to maintain their breast milk supply if their child has reduced the frequency of breastfeeding due to illness (i.e. hand expression, pumping).
- 4) For children who refuse the breast during illness, encourage the provision of expressed breast milk via cup, syringe, dropper etc.
- 5) Provide information on the protective properties and rehydration benefits of breast milk.
- 6) Recommend breastfeeding assessment and support to ensure the child is receiving adequate fluids and nutrition.
- 7) Advise that any recommendation for supplementing a breastfed child with ORS should be based on a thorough assessment of the child, including a breastfeeding assessment.
- 8) Advocate for the establishment of human milk banks across the country to ensure breast milk is available to all children.

The Ontario Public Health Association thanks you for your consideration of our feedback, and looks forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Dr. Garry Aslanyan
President