

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Ontario Public Health Association lauds formation of  
Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion**

Toronto, March 20, 2006 - The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) welcomes the recommendations of the Agency Implementation Task Force regarding the formation of the new Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Agency). The OPHA, a volunteer organization of people who work in public and community health, looks forward to working with the new Agency as it embarks on its path to become "an internationally recognized centre of expertise dedicated to the promotion and protection of the health of all Ontarians."

"We are pleased to see that the new Agency will welcome cross-sector participation on the whole spectrum of public health issues including health promotion, chronic disease and injury prevention," said Dr Garry Aslanyan, OPHA President. "We are encouraged that the Agency is seeking field input into developing its Strategic Plan and setting priorities, and we look forward to providing input from our unique perspective."

OPHA is looking to form partnerships with the new Agency, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ministry of Health Promotion to move public health forward. "We see the new Agency and our Association as having complimentary roles in public health in Ontario," said OPHA Interim Executive Director Connie Uetrecht. "The Agency's research and knowledge creation and transfer will inform our work as we advocate for healthy public policy."

As well as welcoming the new Agency, OPHA also awaits the results of the Capacity Review of local Public Health Units that will enhance the capacity to plan and implement optimal Public Health programs and services to respond to emerging needs in the province.

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*Founded in 1949, the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) is a voluntary, charitable, non-profit association. OPHA is an organization of individuals and ten Constituent Societies from various sectors and disciplines that have an interest in improving the health of the people of Ontario. For more details visit [www.opha.on.ca](http://www.opha.on.ca).*

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