

MEDIA RELEASE

Ontario Budget Pleases and Disappoints Public Health

700 Lawrence Ave. W., Suite 310
Toronto, Ontario M6A 3B4

Tel: (416) 367-3313
1-800-267-6817 (Ont)
Fax: (416) 367-2844
E-mail: info@opha.on.ca
www.opha.on.ca

Honorary Patron
The Hon. James K. Bartleman
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

President
Dr. Garry Aslanyan
E-mail: gaslanyan@opha.on.ca

Executive Director
Connie Uetrecht
E-mail: cuetrecht@opha.on.ca

Constituent Societies
ANDSOOHA – Public Health Nursing
Management in Ontario

Association of Ontario
Health Centres

Association of Public Health
Epidemiologists in Ontario

Association of Supervisors of Public
Health Inspectors of Ontario

Canadian Institute of Public Health
Inspectors (Ontario Branch)

Community Health Nurses' Initiatives
Group (RNAO)

Health Promotion Ontario:
Public Health

Ontario Association of Public Health
Dentistry

Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals
in Public Health

Public Health Research, Education and
Development (PHRED) Program

Toronto, March 23, 2007 - The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) congratulates the McGuinty government on many of the initiatives announced in yesterday's provincial budget, including those aimed at helping low-income children and families. At the same time, the Association, which provides leadership on issues affecting the public's health and strengthens the impact of people who are active in public and community health throughout Ontario, is disappointed that a number of key areas of public health have been overlooked. These include increased funding for Public Health units, injury prevention initiatives and the Ministry of Health Promotion's Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) strategy.

"Certainly there are some positive announcements in this budget," said Dr Garry Aslanyan, OPHA President, "The increase in minimum wage and the end of the clawback of the National Child Benefit Supplement are important steps toward alleviating poverty in Ontario."

OPHA is also pleased with increased funding to the Communities in Action Fund. "Much of our work, and indeed much of the work going on today in public health and health promotion, is about preventing chronic disease," said OPHA Executive Director Connie Uetrecht. "As we know, healthy eating and active living is an integral element of that challenge, and we would have been even more pleased with this budget if the government's own HEAL program's resources had been expanded to help carry out their essential work."

The government's announced plan to implement all 121 recommendations of the Walkerton inquiry and to increase funding for several safe water initiatives is also welcome news to OPHA, whose many members have actively sought changes that would ensure that all Ontarians have access to safe drinking water.

OPHA looks forward to continuing and expanding its work with the government on many initiatives and programs that promote and protect the health of the residents of this province.

-30-

Charitable Registration
Number 11924 8771 RR0001

MEDIA INQUIRIES: Susan Sperling, Communications and Public Relations Officer, 416-367-3313/1-800-267-6817 ext 230
(ssperling@opha.on.ca)