



Ontario Public Health Association
l'Association pour la santé publique de l'Ontario
Established/Établi 1949

The mission of 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.

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. David C. Onley
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

President

Carol Timmings
E-mail: ctimmings@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 Public Health Libraries
Association

Ontario Society of Nutrition
Professionals in Public Health

Public Health Research, Education
and Development (PHRED)
Program

Charitable Registration
Number 11924 8771 RR0001

April 17th, 2009

Dr. André Lalonde
Executive Vice-President SOGC
78 Promenade Echo Dr.
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5R7

Attention: Andre Lalonde, MD, FRCSC, FACS, MSc

Dear Dr. Lalonde:

The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) Breastfeeding Promotion Workgroup has reviewed the Joint Policy Statement on Normal Childbirth developed by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) and wishes to express our support. We agree with your statement that "Normal birth includes the opportunity for skin-skin holding and breastfeeding in the first hour after the birth". Just as mothers and babies form an inseparable dyad, birthing and breastfeeding need to be recognized as a continuous passage and not two separate events.

Implementation of the recommendations from this policy statement would support a baby's natural ability to find the mother's breast and initiate breastfeeding. When babies initiate breastfeeding early then there is less risk for delayed lactogenesis and mothers are less likely to stop breastfeeding early. Ultimately, this will support the goal of Health Canada to increase the rates of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding up to two years and beyond with the introduction of complementary iron-rich foods at six months.

The Ontario Public Health Association Breastfeeding Promotion Workgroup would like to be included in the groups which endorse this policy statement promoting normal childbirth. We believe that the recommendations can have a positive effect on national breastfeeding outcomes.

Please feel free to direct any comments or questions to Anne Smith, Chairperson of the OPHA Breastfeeding Working Group at smithan@nbdhu.on.ca.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Timmings
President