

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](mailto:info@opha.on.ca)  
[www.opha.on.ca](http://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](mailto:gaslanyan@opha.on.ca)

**Interim Executive Director**

Connie Uetrecht  
E-mail: [cuetrecht@opha.on.ca](mailto: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

Charitable Registration  
Number 11924 8771 RR0001

May 9, 2006

Ms. Beth Pieteron  
Director General  
Drug Strategy and Controlled Substances Programme  
Health Canada  
123 Slater Street  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 1B9

Dear Ms. Pieteron,

The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) wishes to express support for the principles, goals and priorities outlined in the *National Framework for Action to Reduce the Harms Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs and Substances in Canada*. In addressing harms associated with substance use, the Framework acknowledges the full range of health promotion, prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction approaches.

Problematic substance use is an important public health concern as it is associated with injuries, communicable and chronic diseases, mental health concerns and public safety. It is also an economic issue. In the most recent cost study, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) estimated the social cost of substance abuse in Canada to be \$39.8 billion in 2002. Productivity losses amounted to the majority of the cost at \$24.3 billion while health care costs totalled \$8.8 billion and \$5.4 was spent in law enforcement. Tobacco accounted for approximately \$17 billion, alcohol accounted for \$14.6 billion and illicit drugs accounted for \$8.2 billion.

OPHA is in agreement with the principles guiding the Framework which take into account the need for a broad and integrated multi-sectoral approach, addressing social determinants of health, involvement of all stakeholders, and action that is evidence-based and evaluated. The process whereby the issues and priorities were identified for the Framework exemplifies meaningful stakeholder involvement and representation of a range of opinions and concerns related to problematic substance use.

A national Framework provides a strategic approach to address commonly identified priorities facilitating coordination and efficient use of human and economic resources and strengthened action. Fostering joint efforts, the Framework encourages strong partnerships at a variety of levels. In this spirit, OPHA looks forward to playing a role in continued discussions and making contributions in the implementation stages of this Framework.

With kind regards,



Dr. Garry Aslanyan  
President

cc: Michel Perron, Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse  
cc: Carolyn Franklyn, Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse  
cc: Marjorie Ward, Health Canada