

For Immediate Release
June 29, 2005

Ontario Public Health Association excited about focus on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

Toronto, June 29, 2005 - The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) welcomes the McGuinty government announcement on the appointment of Jim Watson to the new portfolio of Minister of Health Promotion. The Association, a volunteer organization of people who work in public and community health, looks forward to working with the new Minister in his efforts towards the provincial priority of Healthy Ontarians.

OPHA anticipates many positive outcomes of this appointment. “We look forward to seeing how this ministry operates” said Dr Garry Aslanyan, President. OPHA welcomes the opportunity to dialogue with the new Minister about the collaboration between this new mandate and the continuing work of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care and hearing about the role of the new Ministry in that context. This is so essential to the continuation of the programs and funding for Public Health in Ontario. It is with great anticipation that the Association also expects an announcement about the new Health Promotion and Protection Agency in Ontario which is presently being developed through intensive and well designed efforts. It is expected that the role of the Agency will compliment the new Minister’s role and mandate.

In addition, OPHA hopes that the Capacity Review of local Public Health Units will help to inform the new Ministry and to enhance the capacity to plan and implement optimal Public Health programs and services to respond to emerging needs in the province.

The Ontario Public Health Association would like to see a strong, well funded and coordinated public health system with a comprehensive focus on health promotion, disease prevention, health protection, health assessment and surveillance. We would not want to see a system that is further fragmented. We look forward to our work with Minister Watson in building a strong public health system in order to keep Ontarians healthy.

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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 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.

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