

Joint alPHa / OPHA Working Group on Social Determinants of Health

Terms of Reference

Initially drafted on June 10, 2007

Revised June 11, 2007

Revised June 2008

Revised April 7, 2009

Revised August 21, 2009

Revised April 13, 2010

Purpose

To foster improvements in social inequities in health for the population of Ontario, applying the following strategic approaches:

1. Promoting the inclusion of activities to address the social and economic determinants of health within the mandate of local public health units in Ontario;
2. Identifying, recommending and supporting the provincial advocacy efforts of alPHa and OPHA for improvements in inequities in health; and
3. Monitoring advocacy efforts and policy changes at the provincial and national level that impact inequities in health.

Objectives

The group will give priority to strengthening practice in relation to taking action on social determinants of health. Example activities include:

- Participating in provincial processes and helping to shape the implementation of the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS)
- Developing and reviewing key directions impacting public health
- Encouraging public health units and the three associated provincial ministries – Health and Long-term Care, Health Promotion, and Children and Youth Services - to use social determinants of health lens for the development of public health policy and programming.

Responsibilities

1. To monitor activity relevant to health inequities and the social and economic determinants of health at the local, provincial, and federal levels.
2. To develop action and communication plans associated with the items in the Working Group purpose and objectives.
3. To report activities as appropriate to alPHa and OPHA members, the Ministries of Health and Long-term Care, Health Promotion, and Children and Youth Services, as well as other stakeholders.

Membership

The working group consists of representatives from OPHA and alPha, and their associated constituent societies and affiliates.

For specific initiatives the group will work in partnership with other groups outside of Public Health. Active members participate in teleconference meetings and undertake project work between meetings. People interested in monitoring the activities of the workgroup, but not able to commit to active membership can be listed as corresponding members and sent periodic updates.

The Chair is to be determined by the membership on an ongoing basis.

Secretariat Support (agendas, minutes, members lists, etc.) is currently provided by the Sudbury & District Health Unit.

Meetings

1. Meetings will be held every other month by teleconference.
2. Face-to-face meetings may be called as necessary.
3. alPha and OPHA will share the cost of teleconferences.
4. Meeting agendas will be developed by the Chair

Decision Making

Decision making within the Working Group will be made by consensus. Recommended actions external to the two organizations will be forwarded to the alPha and OPHA Boards of Directors for decision making. Communications externally will be formatted with both alPha and OPHA logos and will be signed by the presidents of both organizations. Should a recommended action be agreed upon by only one organization, that organization can take action and execute external communication about the issue on its own letterhead but must not acknowledge either the other organization or the Joint alPha/OPHA Working Group on Social Determinants of Health.