

3 Sept 2019

Premier Doug Ford  
Ontario Premier's Office  
Legislative Building, Queens Park  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 1A1

Minister Christine Elliott  
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care  
80 Grosvenor Street  
Toronto, ON  
M7A 2C4

Dear Honourable Premier Ford and Honourable Minister Elliott:

We the undersigned emergency care providers write to you to express our grave concern regarding the Government's renewed commitment to cut critical funding to Toronto Public Health. Toronto Public Health services play a vital role in keeping people healthy and reducing undue stress on our already overburdened emergency departments.

As you know, we are in the midst of an opioid crisis – last month alone, Toronto paramedics responded to 188 suspected overdoses. Seven of those patients died. Every day, we treat such fellow Torontonians in our emergency departments; and countless additional overdoses are reversed in the community. Yet, in the midst of this crisis, funding has been cut for essential services such as Harm Reduction, Needle Exchange, and Supervised Injection Services. In addition to preventing overdose deaths, these services provide access to clean equipment to prevent serious transmissible infections such as Hepatitis and HIV.

Funding has also been cut for diabetes prevention programs. Diabetic emergencies are life-threatening, and a common reason for admission to the intensive care units in our hospitals. More common are long-term complications of diabetes such as kidney failure, chronic skin ulcers, and vision loss. Preventing diabetes is more cost-effective than treating diabetic complications and has a tremendously positive impact on quality of life.

Food safety programs are also on the chopping block. Specifically, funding will be cut for food-handler training and provision of educational materials to workers who prepare meals for our community members. These cuts will mean more patients in the ER with vomiting and diarrhea, due to entirely preventable conditions.

Every day at work, we see patients with heart and lung disease from smoking. By the time we see these patients, it is too late to prevent the toll that smoking has taken on their health. Cuts to public health mean less funding for smoking cessation and prevention programming.

These are just a few of the many examples of how sound public health measures can help prevent acute care visits. Our emergency departments and hospitals are under tremendous stress, and there is no end in sight for hallway medicine. Keeping people healthy and out of the emergency department is good for patients, our hospitals, taxpayers and ultimately the entire

community. We urge the provincial government to reinstate funding for public health immediately. We also recommend that the province engage with public health officials to develop collaborative solutions to continue strengthening Ontario's health system.

Signed,

Aaron Orkin MD MSc MPH PhD(c) CCFP(EM) FRCPC

Ahmed Taher MD MPH FRCPC

Aikta Verma MD MSc FRCPC Emergency Physician, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

Alexandra Stefan MD MSc FRCPC Emergency Physician, University Health Network & Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

Alia Dharamsi MD FRCPC Emergency Physician, UHN

Alice Chan, MD, CCFP (EM), Emergency Physician, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Center and Credit Valley Hospital

Alice Gray, MD MSc FRCPC Emergency Physician

Amir Allana PCP BAsC, Paramedic, Toronto Paramedic Services

Alun Ackery MD MSc FRCPC

Andrea Somers MD MPH CCFP (EM) Emergency Physician, University Health Network

Anil Chopra, Division Director, Emergency Medicine, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto

Aniket Hooda MD CCFP-EM

Anna Nowacki, MD FRCPC Emergency Physician, University Health Network

Anton Nikouline MD Emergency Medicine Resident, University of Toronto

Arjun Sithamparapillai MD, MSc (Global Health), Emergency Medicine Resident Physician at University of Toronto

Ashu Jain MD CCFP(EM)

Brian Steinhart MD FRCPC Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Brodie Nolan MD MSc FRCPC, Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Bruce Lampard MD FRCPC, Emergency Physician, University Health Network, Lecturer, Dept of Medicine, University of Toronto

Bryan Au, MD FRCPC, Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Cara Elliott MD Candidate, University of Toronto

Carly Ng MD CCFP-EM Emergency Physician, Lecturer, University of Toronto

Carolyn Snider MD MPH FRCPC Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Cheryl Hunchak MD MPH CCFP-EM Emergency Physician, Mount Sinai Hospital

Chris Keefer MD CCFP-EM Emergency Physician St Joseph's Health Centre

Claire Acton MD FRCPC, EM Physician, Lecturer, University of Toronto

Claire Heslop MD PhD FRCPC Emergency Physician, University Health Network

Colin Siu MD Emergency Medicine Resident, University of Toronto

Danesh Sood MD CCFP Family Physician

Danielle Lucky CCPA, Emergency Physician Assistant, Scarborough Health Network

David Ng MD CCFP-EM Emergency Physician, University Health Network, Michael Garron Hospital

Davy Tawadrous MD MBA FRCPC Emergency Physician

Dawn Lim MD MBA FRCP Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto

Dennis Cho MD FRCPC Emergency Physician, University Health Network

Derrick Chang MD CCFP(EM)

Dominick Shelton MD, MSc, CCFP(EM)

Don Melady, MD CCFP(EM) MSc(Ed), Mount Sinai Hospital Emergency Department

Edward Xie MD MSc CCFP(EM), Emergency Physician

Eileen Cheung MD CCFP-EM Emergency Physician

Emily Austin MD Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Evelyn Dell MD MPH FRCPC Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Glen Bandiera, Emergency Physician, Past Chief of EM, St Michael's Hospital

Godwin Lai, MD CCFP, Emergency Physician, Humber River Hospital and St. Joseph's Health Centre, Toronto

Hanna Bielawska MD CCFP(EM) Emergency Physician St Joseph's Health Centre Toronto

Hasan Sheikh MD CCFP-EM, Lecturer, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto

Ivy Cheng MD MSc PhD FRCP FACEM dABEM DipSM DiMM Emergency Physician Sunnybrook Health Sciences Center

Jennifer Bryan MD MSPH FRCPC Assistant Professor, Division of Emergency Medicine, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto

Jennifer Hulme MD MPH CCFP-EM

Jennifer Riley MD MScCH FRCPC Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Jesse McLaren MD CCFP(EM), Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto

Jessica Ellins CCPA, MSc, ER Physician Assistant, Halton Healthcare

Joel Lexchin MD Professor Emeritus, School of Health Policy and Management, York University

Joel Puetz CCFP-EM Emergency Physician, University Health Network

Jordan Levinter MPH(c), CCPA - Paediatric Emergency Physician Assistant at The Hospital for Sick Children

Joseph Choi MD MPH FRCPC, Assistant Professor, Division of Emergency Medicine, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto

Julia Wytsma MD CCFP-EM Lecturer, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto

Juliana Duffy MD BScN Emergency Medicine Resident, University of Toronto

Julianna Deutscher MD Emergency Medicine Resident, University of Toronto

Karyn Medcalf MD Emergency Medicine Resident, University of Toronto

Kate Hayman MD MPH FRCPC, Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto

Kealin Wong MD Emergency Medicine Resident, University of Toronto

Kevin Skarratt, MD, CCFP-EM, Emergency Physician, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

KM Mudrik CCFP(EM) Emergency Physician, Sunnybrook Hospital

Layli Sanaee, MD MPH FRCPC, Emergency Physician

Madeline McDonald MD Candidate, University of Toronto

Mandeep Agnihotri, CCPA, BHScPA, HBSce, Emergency Medicine Physician Assistant

Margaret Thompson, MD, FRCPC, ER physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Mark Unger MD CCFP (EM) Emergency Physician St. Joseph's Health Center

Martin Betz MD, FRCPC

Maxim Ben-Yakov, FRCPC, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto

Megan Landes, MD CCFP-EM MSc., Associate Professor, Department of Family and Community Medicine, University of Toronto

Michael Galvin MB BCh BAO

Michelle Klaiman MD FRCPC DABAM Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Mike Romano MD FRCPC

Mike Saccone MD Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Monika Kapoor MD CCFP(EM)

Natalie Wolpert MD FRCPC Emergency Medicine, St Michael's Hospital

Navpreet Sahsi MD CCFP (EM)

Nazanin Meshkat, MD, MHSc, FRCP, Emergency Physician, Associate Professor, University of Toronto

Neill Adhikari MDCM MSc FRCPC, Critical Care Medicine, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and University of Toronto

Nelson Saddler MD Candidate, University of Toronto

Nima Farkhani, MD, FRCPC, Emergency Physician, Sunnybrook and HRH

Paul Arnold, MD, Clinical Instructor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto

Paul Ellis BSc MSc MD FRCPC Emergency Physician, University Health Network

Payman Dehghani MD CCFP(EM)

Petar Novakovic MD CCFP(EM) Emergency Physician St. Joseph's Health Centre

Peter Switakowski, MD, CCFP(EM)

Priyank Bhatnagar MD BHSc Emergency Medicine Resident, University of Toronto

Rachel Poley, Emergency Physician, St. Michael's Hospital

Raghu Venugopal MD FRCPC

Roisin McElroy MD MPH CCFP(EM)

Saahil Vij MD Emergency Physician, Sunnybrook Hospital

Sahand Ensafi BHSc-PA, CCPA, Emergency Medicine PA, University Health Network

Sahil Gupta, MD FRCPC

Sameer Masood MD MPH FRCPC Emergency Physician, University Health Network

Samuel Vaillancourt, MD, MPH, FRCPC

Sarah Whynot MD CCFP Emergency Physician Mount Sinai Hospital & St Joseph's Health Centre

Shajan Ahmed MD CCFP(EM) - Lecturer University of Toronto, ER Physician

Soojin YI, MD, CCFP-EM, Emergency Physician

Steven Marc Friedman MD MPH CCFP(EM) FCFP, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto

Steven J Rhee MD CCFP(EM), Medical Director and interim Chief of SJHC ED

Sunil Bacharanianda, ER Physician Assistant, Southlake Regional Health Centre, Newmarket ,  
ON

Sunita Swaminathan MD CCFP-EM Lecturer, Department of Family and Community  
Medicine, University of Toronto

Victoria Myers MD

Victoria Woolner NP MN MSc Emergency Nurse Practitioner, University Health Network

Winnie Li MD MSc Emergency Medicine Resident, University of Toronto