



Association of Local  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
Agencies

alPHa's members are  
the public health units  
in Ontario.

**alPHa Sections:**

Boards of Health  
Section

Council of Ontario  
Medical Officers of  
Health (COMOH)

**Affiliate  
Organizations:**

Association of Ontario  
Public Health Business  
Administrators

Association of  
Public Health  
Epidemiologists  
in Ontario

Association of  
Supervisors of Public  
Health Inspectors of  
Ontario

Health Promotion  
Ontario

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Dentistry

Ontario Association of  
Public Health Nursing  
Leaders

Ontario Dietitians in  
Public Health

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April 5, 2023

Hon. Chrystia Freeland,  
Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Finance  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Freeland,

**Re: Budget 2023 and Oral Health.**

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On behalf of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) and its Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health Section and Affiliate Organizations, we are writing to thank you for the dental health-related announcements in the 2023 federal budget and to remind you of our call for universal access to preventive and treatment dental health services for all Canadians.

Good dental/oral health is essential to maintaining overall health. alPHa believes that dental health should be treated similarly to any other health care service, with strong public programs for universal access, particularly early in life. Our members passed a resolution in 2005 (attached), calling on the Government of Canada, in consultation with Provincial, Territorial and Local Governments, to develop a comprehensive National Oral Health Strategy that would have, as its goal, providing access to all Canadians.

The Canada Dental Benefit has been an important step already, and we welcome its enhancement with the Oral Health Access Fund for vulnerable populations, which reduces barriers to accessing dental care, including in rural and remote communities. We also welcome the additional investments in the form of the Canadian Dental Care Plan, which aims to provide additional coverage to uninsured Canadians with annual family income of less than \$90,000.

We certainly understand the need for an incremental approach and agree with the current focus on vulnerable and lower-income families. We see these investments as a clear recognition of the fact that dental health and overall health are not mutually exclusive and hope that they will be considered as steps towards a comprehensive strategy with universal benefit.

We look forward to working with you and would welcome an opportunity to meet with you and your staff. To schedule a meeting, please have your staff contact Loretta Ryan, Executive Director, alPHa, at [loretta@alphaweb.org](mailto:loretta@alphaweb.org) or 647-325-9594.

Sincerely,

Trudy Sachowski,  
President

**Copy:** Rt. Hon Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada  
Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Health  
Dr. Theresa Tam, Public Health Officer of Canada  
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health (Ontario)

**Encl.**

The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership to Ontario's boards of health. alPHA represents all of Ontario's 34 boards of health, medical officers and associate medical officers of health, and senior public health managers in each of the public health disciplines – nursing, inspections, nutrition, dentistry, health promotion, epidemiology, and business administration. As public health leaders, alPHA advises and lends expertise to members on the governance, administration, and management of health units. The Association also collaborates with governments and other health organizations, advocating for a strong, effective, and efficient public health system in the province. Through policy analysis, discussion, collaboration, and advocacy, alPHA's members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention and surveillance services in all of Ontario's communities.

## 2005 alPHa Resolution A05-5

TITLE            **Access to Dental Care**

SPONSOR:       Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry

**WHEREAS** dental care is not an included service under the publicly funded medical care system and must be financed by individual Canadians;

**WHEREAS** low income (lower socio economic) individuals tend to suffer higher rates of dental disease and decay;

**WHEREAS** the current system of publicly funded dental programs varies from community to community, but is very limited for low income families and adults who do not typically have access to private dental benefits packages;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) supports the action of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and calls on the Government of Canada, in consultation with Provincial, Territorial and Local Governments, to develop a comprehensive National Oral Health Strategy that would have, as its goal, providing universal access of both preventive and treatment services to all Canadians.