June 20, 2019

Dear Mayor Anne Eadie

Re: Ontario Budget Proposed Alcohol Changes: Public Health Considerations

The 2019 budget from the Ontario government outlines a clear commitment to increasing consumer choice and convenience by substantially expanding access to alcohol. This includes a plan to permit municipalities to designate public spaces for the consumption of alcohol, extend retail hours and increase availability in convenience stores. As you are likely aware, alcohol is the most commonly consumed drug in Grey Bruce and is a major risk factor for chronic disease, death and disability, as well as increased risk of injury and social problems.

Grey Bruce Health Unit is committed to continue to ensure the health and safety of our communities in light of these proposed changes. As such, Public Health encourages and supports an approach with consistent policies and procedures across Grey and Bruce Counties. Public Health supports the enhancement and enforcement of municipal alcohol policies, as these policies are one of the strongest tools municipalities have at their disposal to limit liability related to alcohol consumption within their communities.

Taking a preventive approach, the Grey Bruce Health Unit is committed to working collaboratively with municipal partners. We welcome the opportunity to act as a resource for municipalities to respond to your questions and concerns about the public health impacts of the alcohol reform plan. Our goal is to maintain an open dialogue and collaborate with municipalities during this time of significant change to ensure that the health and safety of Grey Bruce communities remains the highest priority. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Health Manager Lynda Bumstead at L.Bumstead@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca or 1-800-263-3456 ext. 1463.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Ian Arra MD, MSc, FACPM, ABPM(D)
Medical Officer of Health
Grey Bruce Health Unit

CC Sharon Chambers, CAO
Donna MacDougall, Clerk