



Sudbury & District

Health Unit

Service de
santé publique

*Make it a
Healthy
Day!*

*Visez Santé
dès
aujourd'hui!*

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November 27, 2009

The Honourable Dalton McGuinty
Premier of Ontario
Room 281, Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier:

**Re: Nutritious Food Basket
Cost of Eating in the Sudbury and Manitoulin Districts
2009 Report**

The 2009 Nutritious Food Basket Report was presented to the Sudbury & District Board of Health at its November 19, 2009 meeting and the following motion #58-09 was passed:

WHEREAS a nutritious diet is a basic requirement for health and poor nutrition leads to an increased risk for chronic and infectious diseases, pregnancy outcomes with greater risk for low birth weight; and has a negative impact on the growth and development of children; and

WHEREAS the Sudbury & District Board of Health annually monitors food affordability in Sudbury and Manitoulin districts in accordance with the Nutritious Food Basket Protocol, 2008, and the Population Health Assessment and Surveillance Protocol, 2008, as outlined in the Ontario Public Health Standards; and

WHEREAS the 2009 Nutritious Food Basket Report demonstrates that local households on social assistance or earning minimum wage cannot afford a nutritious diet after paying for housing costs and other necessities; and

WHEREAS the 2008 Ontario Hunger Report revealed that food bank use increased by 34.4% from September 2007 to September 2008 in Sudbury; and

WHEREAS the Analysis of Ontario sample in Cycle 2.2 of the Canadian Community Health Survey (2004) revealed that 9.7% of households in the Northern Ontario Health Region are food insecure and that households, most vulnerable to food insecurity are those on a low income, especially those relying on social assistance; and

WHEREAS the Sudbury & District Health Unit has supported the Community Strategy to Reduce Poverty in the City of Greater Sudbury (2008) and has endorsed the 25 in 5 Founding Declaration; and

WHEREAS under motion #15-09, the Sudbury & District Board of Health demonstrated their support for the Ontario-wide "Put Food in the Budget" campaign; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Sudbury & District Board of Health call on the provincial government to renew their efforts to ensure that the Poverty Reduction Strategy for Ontario remains a high priority; and

FURTHER THAT the provincial government review increases to social programs, such as an increase to Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Programs, by providing a monthly \$100 Healthy Food Supplement to all adults receiving social assistance. In addition to addressing Ontarians' ability to meet their basic food requirements, the provincial government is asked to establish a broad-based rent/housing allowance/assistance program for all low-income persons; and

FURTHER THAT the Sudbury & District Board of Health share the 2009 Nutritious Food Basket - The Cost of Eating in the Sudbury and Manitoulin Districts with appropriate community agencies, boards, mayors and councils throughout Sudbury and Manitoulin districts and request their support for local and provincial poverty reduction efforts.

The Nutritious Food Basket report annually monitors the community's ability to eat healthy and we believe that this information should inform the further development of targets and strategies within local and provincial poverty reduction initiatives.

Thank you for your attention to this important public health issue.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Penny Sutcliffe, MD, MHSc, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer

Encl.

c.: Chief Medical Officer of Health
Local MPPs
Manitoulin-Sudbury District Social Services Administration Board
Minister of Children and Youth Services
Minister of Community and Social Services
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Minister of Health Promotion
Sudbury & District Health Unit Constituent Municipalities