



Ontario Society of Nutrition  
Professionals in Public Health

La société ontarienne des professionnel(le)s  
de la nutrition en santé publique

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The mission of OSNPPH is to provide leadership in public health nutrition. It represents its members and promotes their role in improving nutrition and health of people in Ontario

February 8, 2007

Helen Haresign  
Director, Dietitian Advisory Service (DAS)  
480 University Avenue, Suite 604  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada  
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Dear Ms. Haresign,

On behalf of the Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health (OSNPPH), I would like to extend our support on the development of the Ontario Dietitian Advisory Service (DAS). We are pleased that Dietitians of Canada will be working in cooperation with the Ministry of Health Promotion to establish a DAS as an element of the Health Eating and Active Living (HEAL) strategy announced in 2006.

OSNPPH is the independent and official voice of Registered Dietitians in public health in Ontario representing over 150 members working in every Health Unit/Department in the province. Members of OSNPPH work in public health units, public health nutrition education, and research and development. We are specialists in applied human nutrition, are members of the College of Dietitians of Ontario, and focus on health enhancement and disease prevention.

In our letter to the Hon. Jim Watson, Minister of Health Promotion in August 2006 we expressed that OSNPPH is well positioned to support the implementation of the HEAL strategy. As front line Registered Dietitians in public health, our members work in partnership on many of the successful programs highlighted in the Action Plan for the HEAL strategy.

The recent request of the DAS to public health and community nutrition personnel regarding client education materials that could be used by the DAS is

an efficient way to approach resource collection for your service and is much appreciated by our members. We agree that it is preferable to use the expertise and experience of front line staff regarding resources rather than recreating what may already be available to the public.

As the members of OSNPPH work in a variety of geographical areas across Ontario to provide public health nutrition services, we would encourage the DAS to gather data on which towns, municipality, or region that DAS callers are calling from in order to assist local health units and LHINs. It is important that health units and LHINs are able to ensure that provincial services are reaching all of their residents, which can be especially challenging for those regions where there are remote rural areas and smaller municipalities with limited access to health services. It would be most useful if agencies would be able to access DAS data to track how many of their residents are taking advantage of the DAS services, which would help us in planning how to reach those residents who are not able to use DAS. Many of our low income population, for example, are unable to afford telephone services, and therefore the DAS will be ineffective in reaching that segment of the population that is often most in need of the service.

OSNPPH would be happy to participate on an advisory committee to DAS. Having a voice on the advisory committee related to public health nutrition concerns specifically is critical. The challenges and issues experienced by Registered Dietitians working in the public health arena are very different than those experienced in a clinical or administrative setting, and addressing these issues requires the expertise of professionals focussed on public health.

Again, we would like to extend our support for the DAS and we look very forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Dianne Oickle, MSc, RD  
Chair, OSNPPH

Cc.

Honourable Dalton McGinty, Premier  
Honourable Jim Watson, Minister of Health Promotion  
Dr. George Pasut, Acting Chief Medical Officer of Health  
Ms. Connie Uetrecht, Executive Director, Ontario Public Health Association  
Mr. Garry Aslanyan, President, Ontario Public Health Association  
Ms. Colleen Kiel, Ministry of Health Promotion

