

**Ministry of Health
and Long-Term Care**

Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister
Health Promotion Division

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**Ministère de la Santé
et des Soins de longue durée**

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HLTC2966MC-2014-1715

June 30, 2014

Dr. Valerie Jaeger
Chair, Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health
2 Carlton Street
Suite 1306
Toronto ON M5B 1J3

Dear Dr. Jaegar:

**RE: Letter from the Council of Ontario Medical Officers of Health (COMOH) on
Performance Indicator for Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines (LRADG)**

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and confirm the importance of the work of public health units in developing and implementing population based, health promotion strategies to ensure the public is aware of the impacts of alcohol consumption (increased prevalence of chronic diseases, injuries, birth defects and addictions), and to prevent or reduce excess alcohol consumption.

As part of our performance management work, we have taken your expressed concerns into consideration.

Due to the *Canadian Community Health Survey* (CCHS) alcohol module changes that came into effect January 1, 2013, the 2014 Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement *Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines* (LRADG) indicator is under review by the ministry.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the ministry) has consulted with both internal and external stakeholders to seek advice on how to best address the issues associated with this health promotion performance indicator. The ministry has decided to reposition the *percentage of the population (19+) who exceed the Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines* performance indicator as a monitoring indicator rather than negotiating targets and including the indicator as a performance indicator in the 2014 Accountability Agreement.

Monitoring indicators are used to ensure that high levels of achievement are sustained; to allow time for baseline levels of achievement and methods of measurement to be confirmed; and to monitor risks related to program delivery. Schedule C of the draft 2014 Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement indicates that reporting of monitoring indicators will be on an "as required" basis.

Public health units will not have a performance target and will not be required to report on this indicator. They will, however, be expected to continue work in this program area. The ministry may revisit the decision to reinstate the LRADG as an Accountability Agreement performance indicator.

Alcohol consumption remains an important population health issue. By positioning the LRADG indicator as a monitoring indicator, the ministry will be able to continue tracking provincial and local trends related to alcohol consumption.

The ministry intends to consider alcohol consumption, *Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines* and related performance measurement as part of the update of the *Ontario Public Health Standards*.

We appreciate the continued commitment by COMOH to continue working with us to strengthen public health performance in Ontario.

Sincerely,



Kate Manson-Smith
Assistant Deputy Minister

- c: Dr. Robin Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health (A), Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Honourable Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
Honourable Charles Sousa, Minister of Finance
Roselle Martino, Executive Director, Public Health Division, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Paulina Salamo Director (A), Public Health Standards, Practice And Accountability Branch, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Laura Pisko, Director, Health Promotion Implementation Branch, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care