

June 7, 2024

Brian Ostrander, Warden, Northumberland County

Dear Mr .Ostrander,

I am writing to provide Northumberland County with an update on the work of Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPRDHU) towards merging with Peterborough Public Health (PPH).

In February 2024, following the decision to pursue a voluntary merger, a Joint Merger Steering Committee (JMSC) was established with PPH. The JMSC has equal representation from both boards of health and is focused on governance level decisions needed to support work towards a merger. Initial discussions focused on determining the composition of a new merged board of health and the equalization of municipal contributions to the new public health agency. The JMSC oversaw the development of a business case proposal, including a proposed three-year merger budget, that was submitted to the Ministry of Health on April 2, 2024.

The Ministry of Health has communicated that approvals of health unit merger business cases will likely occur during the summer of 2024. Once the business case and budget have been approved, a regulatory amendment will be required under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* to legally establish the new board of health.

Importantly, both HKPRDHU and PPH have clearly articulated to the Ministry of Health that should sufficient funding not be provided, the decision to merge will be rescinded. Both boards of health are committed to maintaining programs and services throughout the merger transition and in supporting our public health workforce with sufficient resources to do this properly.

Should the Ministry of Health approve the business case, and provide sufficient funding for the proposed merger, the new legal entity is scheduled to come into existence on January 1, 2025. The proposed representation from Northumberland County for the new board of health is two representatives, one less than your current representation. These representatives will be needed to support work towards the merger in the months leading up to the transition in addition to routine board of health meetings for HKPRDHU. We kindly request that you confirm the representatives in Sept 2024 if the merger is formally approved so we can proceed with the preparatory activities on governance.

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I would like to emphasize again that you can expect no immediate changes to existing partnerships or the public health programs and services that we deliver.

As always, we value your dedicated partnership and look forward to ongoing collaboration as we work to build a more cohesive, local public health system that delivers progress on population health outcomes while reducing health inequities.

We will continue to provide updates on this journey as it progresses. Please don't hesitate to connect with me, your municipal board representatives or Dr. Bocking if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

David Marshall  
Chair, Board of Health  
Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit