



July 27, 2018

The Honourable Doug Ford  
Premier of Ontario  
Legislative Building, Queen's Park  
Toronto ON M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford;

Re: Implementation of Smoke-Free Ontario Act 2017

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The Board of Health for the Grey Bruce Health Unit urgently requests the provincial government proceed with the immediate implementation of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act 2017.

This legislation is an important component of an over-all strategy that aims to substantially reduce the negative health impacts from tobacco use as it addresses electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and other emerging products.

These new products were not part of the smoking milieu at the time of the development of the existing Smoke-Free Ontario Act, and therefore not adequately recognized in the regulatory framework. The Electronic Cigarettes Act provides some level of mitigation, but does not fully address the use of e-cigarettes in public places and workplaces and the display and promotion of e-cigarettes in retail settings. Also of note, the evidence is unclear as to the value of e-cigarettes to support cessation while there is evidence they can act as a gateway for young people to engage in tobacco smoking (Public Health Ontario, 2016).

Currently, no legislation addresses the use of smoking or vaping of medical cannabis in public places and enclosed places. This normalizes the use of such products to youth and young adults and exposes all Ontarians to the harms of second-hand smoke and vapour.

A consolidated approach, as taken by the Smoke-Free Ontario Act 2017, provides the best means to address many of these outstanding issues.

Grey and Bruce Counties adopted smoke-free bylaws several years before the province introduced the Smoke Free Ontario Act. Our experience has seen a reduction in youth smoking rates. Today, an estimated 98% of 12 to 18 year-olds in Grey Bruce have never smoked a whole cigarette, up from 67% in 2000 (Canadian Community Health Survey, 2015/16).

We also note that support for smoke free outdoor spaces in Grey Bruce is at an all-time high - ranging from 72% - 92% (Grey Bruce Health Unit 2014).

We welcome the enactment of an enhanced and consolidated Smoke Free Ontario Act 2017 and the important benefits it will provide to protect the health of all Ontarians.

*Working together for a healthier future for all.*

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Sincerely,



Al Barfoot  
Chair, Board of Health for the Grey Bruce Health Unit

Cc: Christine Elliott, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care  
Bill Walker, Member of Provincial Parliament, Bruce Grey Owen Sound  
Lisa Thompson, Member of Provincial Parliament, Huron Bruce  
Jim Wilson, Member of Provincial Parliament, Simcoe Grey  
All Ontario Boards of Health  
Association of Local Public Health Agencies  
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health