

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

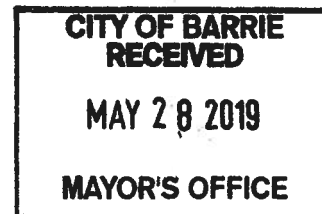
Office of the Deputy Premier
and Minister of Health and
Long-Term Care

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

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361-2019-2276

MAY 16 2019

His Worship Jeff Lehman
Mayor
City of Barrie
City Hall
70 Collier Street
PO Box 400
Barrie ON L4M 4T5

Dear Mayor Lehman:

Thank you for writing to me regarding the opioid crisis. I appreciate receiving Barrie City Council's resolution, and I am pleased to respond. Premier Doug Ford also wrote on your behalf.

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act gives governments the authority to declare an emergency. However, the specific criteria and limitations of this act, such as time limits, do not fit the particular circumstances surrounding the opioid crisis.

Our government takes the ongoing opioid crisis very seriously and is taking steps to ensure those struggling with drug addiction can connect with full wrap-around supports for treatment and rehabilitation services. Ontario has implemented a comprehensive suite of policies and programs to address opioid addiction and overdose. These policies and programs are focused on:

- appropriate prescribing and pain management;
- treatment for opioid use disorder;
- harm-reduction services and supports; and
- surveillance and reporting.

This has included investments specific to Simcoe-Muskoka to support local opioid response initiatives, including the development of the Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy; a Rapid Access Addiction Medicine clinic; community addictions counsellors; expanded naloxone distribution; and harm-reduction outreach.

Our government also announced a new Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS) model that will continue to save lives by preventing overdoses and connecting people to primary care, treatment, rehabilitation and other health and social services to ensure those struggling with drug addiction get the help they need. We have already approved 15 CTS sites and will continue to accept applications from interested organizations.

I understand Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit is working with community partners on a planned CTS application. Ministry staff are also available to provide advice and support as required throughout the process.

Our government's priority is to ensure that all efforts to combat opioid addiction are designed to introduce people into rehabilitation, and that those struggling with addiction get the help they need when they need it.

This is a critical first step as we invest \$3.8 billion to develop a comprehensive and connected mental health and addictions strategy for Ontario.

Thank you for taking the time to share your council's concerns with me.

Sincerely,



Christine Elliott
Deputy Premier and Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

c: Premier Doug Ford