

May 27, 2009

Dr. S. J. Duckett
c/o Alberta Health Services Corporate Office
700 Manulife Place
10180 - 101 St.
Edmonton, AB T5J 3S4

Dear Dr. Duckett:

RE: Qualifications of Environmental Public Health Leadership

On behalf of the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors (CIPHI), I am writing to you with respect to the current reorganization of Environmental Public Health programming within Alberta Health Services. CIPHI is the professional organization that represents Environmental Public Health Professionals (EHPs) such as Environmental Health Officers and Public Health Inspectors in Alberta as well as across Canada. Additionally, CIPHI also operates the Board of Certification which administers the entry examination process for public health inspectors seeking the Certificate in Public Health Inspection (Canada); a credential that is required for individuals who administer the Public Health Act (Chapter P-37, RSA 2000) in Alberta.

With respect to the recent postings for Environmental Public Health positions such as the Director of Environmental Public Health (BY-00016-RP), we are concerned that the requisite qualifications for these positions have not included the Certificate in Public Health Inspection (Canada). The Public Health Act clearly sets out provisions for appointment of individuals as Executive Officers for administration of the Act and its associated Regulations. Further, the Qualifications of Executive Officers Regulation (Alberta Regulation 51/99) states, "A regional health authority shall not appoint a person as an executive officer unless the person holds a Certificate in Public Health Inspection (Canada) issued by the Board of Certification."

The certification process that CIPHI administers is an affirmation of the training and public health knowledge of individuals who successfully obtain their certificate. As such, by omitting the requirement to have this credential, Alberta Health Services cannot assure the people of Alberta of the training and capabilities of the individuals in such positions, as there is no certainty that those who do not hold the credential have the basic foundation and/or framework from which to provide meaningful insight or application of environmental public health ideals.

We urge you and Alberta Health Services to carefully consider the requisite qualifications for Environmental Public Health positions and include the requirement for all applicants to be holders of the Certificate in Public Health Inspection (Canada). If you would like more information with respect to our organization or the certification process, please feel free to contact me at 780-513-7519 or via email at president@ciphi.ab.ca.

Respectfully,

Koreen Anderson

Koreen Anderson, BSc, CPHI(C)
President



cc: Ken Hughes, Chair, Alberta Health Services Board
Dr. Gerry Predy, Senior Medical Officer of Health
Pam Whitnack, Executive VP, Rural, Public & Community Health
Carol Gray, Sr VP, Population & Public Health
Kathy Ahearn, Executive Director – Health Protection