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Kristi B. Adamo, PhD
Research Scientist and CIHR New Investigator
Director of HALO Research Laboratory
Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group
Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute

September 4, 2013

Dear Dr. Adamo,

The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) Reproductive Health Workgroup is pleased to provide a letter of support for the development of the proposed SmartMOMs Canada app. As noted in the attached letter, we are very excited about the prospect of having a Canadian-based resource available to the public in addressing the risk that unhealthy weights can have on the health of a pregnancy and birth outcome.

OPHA has not been given an opportunity to view the final product, but we would encourage that the product be developed so that it satisfies the Baby Friendly Criteria. Many of our members are associated with the Public Health sector in Ontario, and they endorse and support the Baby Friendly Criteria.

OPHA would also like to recommend that the app include a focus on preconception. As you know, research demonstrates that the pre-pregnancy weight of the mother, whether it is underweight or overweight, increases the risk of short and long term maternal and infant complications. As a result, including information on the preconception period can help to impact a woman's prenatal and postnatal experience as well as their child's birth outcome. A few examples of why and how to shift the focus to the preconception period may include:

- Obese women are more likely to experience gestational diabetes which places both mother and child at a greater risk of diabetes later in life¹. Women who have experienced gestational diabetes, should be screened for diabetes periodically and counselled on the importance of good blood sugar control prior to any future pregnancies².
- Obese women have approximately a two-fold increase in the risk of having a neural tube defect affected pregnancy¹. A very tangible recommendation for all obese women during the preconception period (whether planning a pregnancy or not) should be taking a multivitamin with folic acid before becoming pregnant.

With the prevalence of body weight increasing in the general population this is an issue that requires attention for women prior to becoming pregnant. Waiting for pregnancy to occur is too late.

OPHA members would like to offer up an observation and suggestion on your product labeling. In our experience, we have noted that many resources and products also use the term 'smartmoms'. This term is used broadly by many other companies and organizations. You may wish to consider adopting a unique identifier, in order to enhance uptake.

Lastly, we would encourage that you seek support from the Dietitians of Canada. This organization is a key stakeholder of OPHA's, and we value their opinion on healthy eating and nutrition matters.

We wish you and your team the best of luck with your funding application and we look forward to hearing the progress on the SmartMOMs Canada app. If funding is secured and once the app is developed, our workgroup would be happy to provide any pilot testing or feedback. If you have any questions on the attached letter or our above suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Siu Mee Cheng', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Siu Mee Cheng
Executive Director
Ontario Public Health Association

Cc: C. Mills, Co- Chair, Reproductive Health Workgroup, OPHA.

References:

1 – Leddy, M., Power, M., & Shulkin, J. (2008). The Impact of Maternal Obesity on Maternal and Fetal Health. *Rev Obstet Gynecol*, 1(4), 170-178.

2 - Guidelines for Preconception and Interconception Care. Preconception health Council of California, 012. Retrieved July 30, 2013 from:

http://www.everywomancalifornia.org/content_display.cfm?categoriesID=97&contentID=360