

Committee: **London Housing Advisory Committee**

Organization/Sector represented: **Independent**

Name: **Stephanie McKee**

Address:

358 Barker

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Occupation: **Public Health Nurse**

Work experience: **As a newly graduated nurse employed in public health, I currently work with at risk families of children under school age. The majority of the families I serve live in poverty, suffer from physical and mental disabilities, have experienced abuse, or are new immigrants. I visit these families in the community at their place of residence, whether this be in a house, apartment, or homeless shelter. I work with these families to identify barriers that make it difficult to achieve health and well-being, particularly those barriers that hinder children's growth and development. My work allows for close collaboration with professionals from other community agencies who share similar goals such as social workers, family doctors, pediatricians, child protection workers, teachers, and mental health workers. I was also employed as a peer leader in public health throughout my secondary school years, working on advocacy campaigns that ultimately led to provincial legislation under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act and municipal bylaws such as smoke-free parks and other public places. My volunteer and student nursing placement work experiences include the Regional Mental Health Centre, London Health Sciences Centre, Mind Your Mind, and the Children's Aid Society.**

Education: **After graduating from Western University in April of 2014 with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, I successfully passed the Canadian Registered Nurse Exam and became licensed with the College of Nurses of Ontario in June of this year. In addition to being CPR certified, I have completed training in paediatric advanced life saving and suicide prevention.**

Skills: **As a public health nurse visiting families in the community I am privileged with being welcomed into various types of residences. While some families I visit are financially stable, the majority live in subsidized housing, shelters, or are couch surfing. I am in the perfect position to attest to the fact that housing is a very important determinant of health and well-being. Clients share with me the difficulties that they experience with finding and keeping housing that is both safe and affordable. I am well versed in how to find and read valid literature and evidence of best practices. In working and volunteering with clients that have a vast variety of needs, I have learned to tailor my communication style to meet their learning needs. My work on various advocacy committees has allowed me to develop leadership skills that include moderating conflicts, public speaking, and active listening; I am also known to be a team player.**

Interest reason: **In working so closely with the vulnerable sector, I have been granted the privilege of seeing our city from a variety of perspectives. Many of my clients cannot communicate their needs for themselves and I see it as my duty to make their voice heard to decision makers and others in power. An increasing amount of attention has been placed on the under representation of women in all levels of politics. As a young woman I believe becoming active member of the Child Care Committee may help me develop the self-confidence and networks needed to become more politically involved in my community.**

Contributions: **In addition to the specialized body of knowledge and insight into the challenged faced my clients that I have previously mentioned, I believe my youth will prove to be an asset to this committee. My youth will help to bring fresh ideas, including the use of social media as a means of connecting with the public.**

Past contributions: **Working as a peer leader while completing my education, I sat on various committees focused on the topic of advocacy against the tobacco industry. While I worked on many campaigns, I led a campaign advocating for the ban of flavoured tobacco products. I worked with my colleagues on a campaign that included public education and raising awareness as well as creating new policy. Bill 131 was recently introduced in Ontario calling for the ban of flavoured tobacco products.**

Interpersonal: As a nurse, I have to communicate health care recommendations while considering the learning styles, communication needs, and cultural sensitivities of my clients. This requires active listening skills to develop an understanding of their perspectives. The nursing profession is different from other health care professions in that we have adopted a more holistic approach to health than the traditional medical model valued by other professions and western society. Collaborating with clients and other professions has helped me see the importance in addressing conflict forthright and engaging in the process of compromise.

Interview interest: **Yes**