

Public Health supports new tanning legislation

Prom season has arrived, but this year tanning is less likely to be part of the festivities. As of May 1, 2014, Ontario's Skin Cancer Prevention Act prohibits commercial tanning bed operators from selling or providing tanning services to youth under the age of 18.

This move is aimed at preventing youth from getting skin cancer through harmful exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from tanning beds. The Act also prohibits direct marketing of tanning services to youth and requires operators to post signs about the health risks of tanning beds.

?Young women who use tanning beds before the age of 30 increase their lifetime risk of getting the deadliest form of skin cancer, melanoma, by 75 percent,? said Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health for Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. ?The World Health Organization (WHO) classifies tanning beds as carcinogenic and in the same category that includes asbestos and tobacco.? Public Health enforces the Skin Cancer Prevention Act when a complaint is received.

To make a complaint about a tanning service location, call 1-800-265-7293 ext. 2673. Tanning bed operators may also contact Public Health to obtain the signage required for compliance.