

April 15, 2011

Chairman and Trustees  
Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board Education Centre  
1994 Fisher Drive  
Peterborough, Ontario  
K9J7A1

RE: WiFi in Schools

Dear Chairman and Trustees:

The heart is a delicate and complex electromagnetic organ that can be adversely affected by exogenous signals from wireless technology and microwave radiation. For this reason it is unwise to expose students and teachers to WiFi radiation for internet access, especially when safer alternative wired options are available.

Children are particularly vulnerable to this radiation and the incidents of cardiovascular events including sudden cardiac arrest, seems to be increasing, especially among young athletes (up to the age of 19). In some cases this is due to undetected heart defects, blunt trauma to the heart in contact sports, and heat stress during strenuous exercise, but in other instances these irregularities may be exacerbated by or due to microwave signals interfering with the autonomic nervous system that regulates the heart.

I know this because I am a board certified cardiologist and have been a Fellow of the American College of Cardiology since 1977. At the Manchester Memorial Hospital in Connecticut, I served in several roles, including Chief of Cardiology, Director of Cardiac Rehabilitation, and Director of Medical Education.

In both Canada and the United States a large number of students are complaining that they feel unwell in classrooms that have WiFi technology. These complaints have been investigated and what emerges is the following:

1. Symptoms common among these students include headaches, dizziness, nausea, feeling faint, pulsing sensations or pressure in the head, chest pain or pressure, difficulty concentrating, weakness, fatigue, and a racing or irregular heart

- accompanied by feelings of anxiety. These symptoms may seem diverse but they indicate autonomic dystonia or dysfunction of the autonomic nervous system.
2. Symptoms do not appear in parts of the school that do not have this technology (WiFi-free portables) and they do not appear in homes that do not have wireless technology.
  3. We know that the heart is sensitive to and can be adversely affected by the same frequency used for WiFi (2.4 GHz) at levels a fraction of federal guidelines (less than 1%) and at levels that have been recorded in two Ontario schools with WiFi technology.
  4. The incidence of sudden cardiac arrests (SCA) among young athletes is increasing and doctors don't know why. In one small Ontario community, the number of students experiencing SCA is disturbingly high. Whether WiFi and nearby cell phone antennas exacerbate SCA needs to be investigated further before students are subjected to these fields.

In conclusion it is unwise to install wireless technology (WiFi) in schools. We do not know what the long-term effects of low-level microwave radiation are on students and teachers. The safety of this technology on children has not been tested and I would advise that you follow the precautionary principle that states the following:

*"In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation."*  
(Rio Conference 1992).

The principle implies that we have a social responsibility to protect the public from exposure to harm, when scientific investigations have found a plausible risk. That "plausible risk" exists for microwave radiation at very low levels. These protections can be relaxed only if further scientific findings emerge that provide sound evidence that no harm will result. In some legal systems the application of the precautionary principle has been made a statutory requirement.

Sincerely,

Stephen T. Sinatra, M.D., F.A.C.C., F.A.C.N., C.N.S.