



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Supportive Housing Services at 55 Bleecker Street

Date:	June 19, 2008
To:	Community Development and Recreation Committee
From:	General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division
Wards:	Ward 28
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

Through the *Local Health System Integration Act, 2006*, the Ontario government changed the funding and delivery of health care services in Ontario to operate through fourteen (14) Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) and local community-based health planning. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) established LHINs as “a critical part of the evolution of health care in Ontario from a collection of services to a true system that is patient-focused, results-driven, integrated, and sustainable”. The *Local Health System Integration Act, 2006*, placed significant decision-making power at the community level, focusing the local health system on individual community's needs, system integration and improvement of health results. In devolving authority to the LHINs, the MOHLTC set a mandate to facilitate the effective and efficient integration of health care services and make it easier for people to get the best care in the most appropriate setting, when they need it.

To fulfil this mandate, the MOHLTC required LHINs to develop integrated health service plans (IHSPs), through health system planning and community engagement. As of April 1, 2007, LHINs also assumed responsibility for funding a wide range of health service providers, and for managing the majority of service agreements with health service providers. The government continues to provide stewardship of Ontario's health system, setting direction, strategic policy, and system standards and delivering provincial programs and services.

In August 2007, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced a comprehensive ‘Aging in Place Strategy’ to expand community living options for seniors, through a wider range of home care and community support services, to enable people to continue leading healthy and independent lives in their own homes. The Aging in Place Strategy recognized that Ontario's population is aging. Recent estimates project the seniors'

population to double in the next 16 years, making it vitally important to ensure that there are resources available to assist those who wish to remain at home. Through the Aging in Place Strategy, the government of Ontario launched a four-year \$1.1 billion initiative designed to allow seniors to live healthy, independent lives in the comfort and dignity of their own homes.

The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care mandated the LHINs to lead this initiative on the MOHLTC's behalf, by identifying and providing funding for enhanced home care and community support services, as well as for innovative projects specific to the LHINs' assessed community need. Twenty percent of the year-one funding was earmarked for innovative projects, with the objective of inviting proposals for new projects to support non-traditional partnerships and new preventive and wellness services.

Each LHIN released proposal calls for health system improvement plans (HSIP), based on the priorities identified in their own IHSP. All HSIP proposals were required to be developed in partnership with at least one (1) other service provider. HSIPs from single service providers were ineligible for funding. In the Toronto Central LHIN, HSIP priorities included the provision of new community service options for seniors with mental health issues, including the provision of supportive housing.

The Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division submitted a health system improvement plan (HSIP) for the development of supportive housing services at 55 Blecker Street, a Toronto Community Housing Corporation building located adjacent to St. Jamestown. Partners in the submission were: (i) Central Neighbourhood House; and (ii) Toronto Community Housing Corporation.

On June 19, 2008, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced funding for twelve (12) Aging at Home Strategy HSIPs within the Toronto Central LHIN, including approval of provincial health funding for the proposed Supportive Housing Services project at 55 Blecker Street. The City of Toronto Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division will receive the new health funding, acting as an agent for the three (3) collaborators in the HSIP (HSIP partners).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager of the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division to enter into the requisite agreement with the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network, as a condition of receiving the provincial funding allocation of \$312,760.00 for the 2008-2009 fiscal year;
2. City Council authorize the General Manager of the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division to negotiate terms and conditions for the required agreements with Toronto Community Housing Corporation and Central Neighbourhood

- House (HSIP partners) as required by the approved Health System Improvement Plan (HSIP) and in a form approved by the City Solicitor;
3. City Council authorize the General Manager of the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division to pay Toronto Community Housing Corporation and Central Neighbourhood House (HSIP partners) for the services purchased at the level and rate outlined in the approved Health System Improvement Plan (HSIP);
 4. City Council authorize the General Manager to renew agreements with the LHIN, Toronto Community Housing Corporation and Central Neighbourhood House as required, acting as the agent for the City of Toronto and the HSIP partners in order to receive the authorized health services funding from the MOHLTC and Toronto Central LHIN and sustain supportive housing services at 55 Bleecker Street in subsequent years;
 5. the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Financial Impact

Although the details and timing of funding flow have not yet been communicated to the division, due to the immediacy of this funding announcement, the announcement confirmed that \$312,760.00 would be provided for supportive housing services at 55 Bleecker Street in the Province's 2008-2009 fiscal year.

There is no net impact in the approved 2008 operating budget as a result of this report as the supportive housing services will be fully funded by the MOHLTC. However, this new funding may result in a minor year-end revenue and gross expenditure variance for the division, which will be explained in the year-end report. The total annualized impact of this funding will not be realized until 2009. The 2009 budget submission will be developed to include this new allocation.

The Deputy City Manager/Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial impact statement.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Through the Province of Ontario's *Local Health Integration Act*, Local LHINs assumed authority to plan health services on a local basis. There are five (5) LHINs serving various geographic areas of the City of Toronto, including the Toronto Central LHIN that serves the central area of Toronto.

On August 28, 2007, the Province of Ontario announced the 'Aging at Home Strategy' to expand community living options for seniors through a wide range of home care and community support services, with funding to flow through the LHINs. Each LHIN developed their own priorities for enhanced health services to meet the objectives of the Aging At Home Strategy in their geographic areas as part of their Integrated Health Service Plans (IHSP) and released calls for HSIPs.

In the call for proposals for HSIPs to support the Aging at Home Strategy, the Toronto Central LHIN requested proposals to expand supportive housing for seniors, in particular for marginalized seniors not well-served by other options. The Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division developed and submitted a HSIP in collaboration with Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) and Central Neighbourhood House (CNH) for the provision of supportive housing services at 55 Bleecker Street in the Jamestown community. Currently, this building has no identifiable program that supports and enables tenants to access the required health services.

The submission focused on providing supports and wellness programming at 55 Bleecker Street, recognizing the importance of coordinated access, the provision of supportive services, the reduction of social isolation and the facilitation of referrals in a preventative manner, before people suffer crises. Research shows that the stigma attached to mental illness often prevents seniors from coming forward and receiving appropriate care and services and that treatment of mental illness alone is generally not enough. Integration into other programs and services is needed to achieve stabilization and successful outcomes. Over twenty (20) percent of persons over the age of sixty-five (65) years of age who live within the Toronto Central LHIN boundaries live with mental illness. Although mental health problems are wide-spread and costly, they have received less attention than many other health issues.

On June 19, 2008, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care announced that the submission for supportive housing services at 55 Bleecker Street had been approved for funding.

COMMENTS

This newly funded program will include on-site coordination, mental health outreach, counselling, wellness programming, referral to other community services as warranted by assessment, homemaking services (e.g. laundry, cleaning, meal preparation), personal care (e.g. bathing, dressing), security checks and medication reminders for up to twenty-five (25) clients.

Components of the approved submission include:

1. a lease agreement for office and program space with Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC);
2. the hiring of 1.4 FTEs Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) to provide 7-day per week coverage to provide site coordination;
3. the hiring of 1.0 FTE Mental Health Counsellor to provide 5-day per week coverage; and
4. a purchase-of-service agreement with Central Neighbourhood House for the provision of Personal Support Worker (PSW) coverage, 24 hours a day, 7-day per week coverage to provide all aspects of the supportive housing service.

The Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division has an established working relationship with the Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC), providing supportive housing services (through on-site coordination and purchase-of-service agreements with community agencies for the provision of direct support services) in six (6) other TCHC buildings. The lease agreement for this new program is expected to be very similar to current lease agreements.

The Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division has an established working relationship with Central Neighbourhood House in the homemakers and nurses service program. This community agency has an established history in providing supportive housing services and community support services.

The accountability agreement executed between the Toronto Central LHIN and the City of Toronto Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division will fund this collaborative project between the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division, TCHC and CNH through the City of Toronto.

The Aging at Home Strategy expands services to help seniors stay healthy and live in their homes, such as community support services, home care, assistive devices, supportive housing, long-term care and end-of-life care. The Aging at Home Strategy breaks new ground with its focus on innovation – finding new ways to provide the supports and services that seniors require in order to spend more of their final years living “where they want, the way that they want”.

The goals of the Aging at Home Strategy are: ensuring that seniors’ homes support them; that seniors have supportive social environments; that senior-centered care is easy to access; and identifying innovative solutions to keep seniors healthy.

This new supportive housing option is consistent with the City of Toronto’s priority of opportunity for all and is consistent with the previous direction to the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division to explore expansion of the supportive housing program.

The supportive housing program at 55 Bleecker Street meets the goals of both the Aging at Home Strategy and the City of Toronto’s own priorities through an innovative and collaborative model of care. It provides service for a segment of the seniors’ population generally not well-served by other options.

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SIGNATURE

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