



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### LTCHS Division – Request for Expenditure from Staff Education Donations Account – Preventing Bullying in the Workplace

<b>Date:</b>	July 17, 2008
<b>To:</b>	Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services
<b>From:</b>	General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services
<b>Wards:</b>	All Wards
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

#### **SUMMARY**

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In February 2008, the Advisory Committee endorsed a recommendation regarding expenditure for an educational pilot project for Wesburn Manor entitled “Preventing Workplace Bullying”. After exploring external contracted consultants, Wesburn Manor enlisted the expertise of Denise Koster, of Koster Consulting and Associates to conduct this education. Educational sessions were offered for staff at all levels within the home, including management and front-line staff and covered the topics of respect in the workplace, harassment and workplace bullying.

Managers attended a one-day workshop and sixty (60) front-line staff attended two ½-day sessions. Evaluations were completed for both management and front-line staff sessions, with 100 percent of the attendees indicating that they learned from the education. Participants were asked to rank value and learning associated with this educational initiative. Respondents ranked their learning between 82 percent and 92 percent in the category of “valued/learned a lot”. All comments reflected that this educational experience was beneficial and respondents indicated an interest in further learning and skill development in this area.

The prevention of workplace violence is a priority for both the City of Toronto and the Ministry of Labour. Recent events in health care have resulted in the Ministry of Labour placing a greater emphasis on the prevention of workplace violence, including the prevention of workplace bullying. As a result, the scheduling of prevention of workplace bullying education in all work locations throughout the division is viewed as a proactive and appropriate step.

The division met with CUPE Local 79 to jointly evaluate the outcomes from the Wesburn Manor pilot and to discuss the potential of expanding education to all homes. CUPE Local 79 is supportive of the division rolling out training to other work locations within the division, noting that the Wesburn Manor team clearly benefited from the educational experience.

This report advises of the division's desire to extend this educational program to the other nine (9) homes and head office staff as a means of building knowledge and skills about the prevention of workplace violence, including bullying and as a means to ensure that our work environments are free from harassment, bullying, intimidation, abuse or other intrusive behaviours.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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The General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services recommends that the Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services endorse the requested expenditure for \$53,250.00 plus GST and expenses, at an amount not to exceed \$58,500.00 from the Staff Education Donations Account.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no impact on the 2008 operating budget.

This expenditure request is for use of the Staff Education Donations Account and is made in accordance for the criteria for use of this fund.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

Many employers are recognizing that workplace bullying is a significant workplace issue that negatively affects staff morale. Some organizations have expanded their definition of workplace violence to include bullying. Currently, the City of Toronto's Occupational Health and Safety Coordinating Committee (OHSCC) is analyzing the results of a recent 'Preventing Workplace Violence' staff survey. Based on the results of this survey, the OHSCC will develop a work plan, including the roll-out of education on the prevention of workplace violence throughout 2008. However, it is not yet common in Canada to include workplace bullying in formal violence in the workplace programs. In addition, harassment and bullying do not fall within the Ministry of Labour's scope, unless a worker has been injured or has reasonable grounds to believe that she/he is at risk of injury.

Earlier in 2008, Wesburn Manor contracted with an external consultant who provided educational and consulting advice on the topics of respect in the workplace, harassment and workplace bullying. Wesburn Manor proposed to the General Manager that the home enlist the expertise of Denise Koster, of Koster Consulting and Associates to conduct education and workplace awareness sessions at all levels of the organization, including management and front-line unionized staff. The General Manager advised

CUPE Local 79 of the intent of the education and CUPE supported the plan. The evaluations indicated and the workshop was beneficial to staff and the residents.

An extension of this program is being planned for Head Office staff, CUPE Executive and staff of the remaining nine homes. The proposed plan would also allow managers in the nine homes to engage in self-directed learning and attend a one-day workshop. Front-line staff would be engaged in self-directed learning and would be able to participate in a three (3) hour session. Although the primary focus in terms of planning costs, scheduling and attendance has been on facilitating attendance of all full-time staff, each home would determine the final mix of full-time and part-time staff, based on internal needs assessment. Since only 60 Wesburn Manor staff attended the workshops, management and union staff of Wesburn Manor have requested an additional educational session to allow the remaining full-time staff to attend.

The cost of the total program would be fifty-three thousand two hundred and fifty dollars (\$53,250.00) plus GST and expenses, payable from the Staff Education Donations Account. The current balance in the Staff Education Donations Account is \$244,318.00.

## **COMMENTS**

This approach is strongly supported by the senior staff of the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division. The project will support learning, improved teamwork and respectful work behaviours at all Toronto LTC homes.

This educational endeavour is seen as a progressive step, with the goal of achieving more informed staff on the topics of workplace respect and workplace bullying and delivering improved workplace behaviours. The division's management team also strongly supports the plan, for what it can accomplish in workplace wellness and the enhancement of quality of life for residents and staff.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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