



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Diversity Practice in the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division's Advisory Committee System

Date:	January 4, 2010
To:	Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services
From:	General Manager, Long-Term Care Homes and Services
Wards:	All Wards
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

Diversity refers to the broad variety of differences and similarities among people. Dimensions of diversity include race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, disability, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, same sex partnership, age, marital status, family status, immigration status, receipt of public assistance, political affiliation, religious affiliation and level of literacy.

The City's Vision Statement on Access, Equity and Diversity and Human Rights and Harassment Policy reflect this broad spectrum of diversity.

Currently, in addressing diversity issues, the City focuses on Aboriginal people; immigrants and refugees; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual and two spirit people; people with disabilities; people with low literacy; racial minorities; seniors, women and youth.

One of the 2009 objectives for the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division was to review the representation of all Home Advisory Committees and to report the findings to the Advisory Committee on Long-Term Care Homes and Services. This report provides the required feedback.

Financial Impact

There is no impact on the 2010 operating budget.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Long Term Care Homes and Services Division provides care and services for over 2,600 residents in the ten long-term care homes and provides services for over 3,000 clients through the various community programs. The resident-client population represents over 45 countries of origin, approximately 35 languages and over 50 different faith backgrounds.

There are many structures in place to ensure that the ethno-cultural needs of this diverse population are met. This includes Home Advisory Committees, Family Committees and Resident Councils.

The role of the Home Advisory Committee is to:

1. Act in an advisory capacity to the Administrator and home management, regarding issues related to the care of residents and the needs of seniors in the community;
2. Promote and encourage activities directed at the provision of quality of life for residents, including but not limited to physical care, comfort, spiritual, and psychosocial well-being;
3. Act as systemic advocates, making suggestions related to the rights and common good of residents of the home;
4. Promote effective community linkages; and
5. Receive regular reports on quality improvement initiatives, providing feedback to the Administrator on these reports, from the community's perspective.

In order to achieve this mandate, the membership of the Advisory Committee needs to be able to effectively represent the diversity of the resident population within the home and understand and respond to the needs of the external community in the home's neighbourhood.

COMMENTS

Ten interviews were conducted with the homes' Administrators. A series of questions was asked to review the representation of Home Advisory Committees and to determine any future plans to change committee membership. Administrators were asked if the Home Advisory Committees had raised any access or equity issues during the past year. In addition, they were asked to detail any comments or concerns made by committee members regarding the scope and diversity of programming available for residents.

Each Administrator described the composition of the home's resident population and verified that the Home Advisory Committee membership mirrored the current, majority resident population of the home.

Two issues were raised by Home Advisory Committees regarding access and equity. First, one Home Advisory Committee raised concern regarding the fixed presence of a cross in the worship centre. The cross is now portable and used for specific religious services only. One Home Advisory Committee raised concern that the division's menu plan does not meet the preferences of a portion of the residents' population. The Administrator is currently considering options to respond to these dietary preferences.

In researching the demographics of the broader neighbourhood, each Administrator reviewed the "Top Ten Ethnic Origin Groups" and the "Top Ten Tongue Groups" as reported by the Statistics Canada 2006 Census. Upon reviewing the statistics and comparing the current committee membership, each Administrator indicated that the current Home Advisory Committee membership did not accurately reflect the local neighbourhood, due to the changing nature of the neighbourhoods. Generally, the resident population represents the cultural mix of neighbourhoods of the 1970's and 1980's. In general, the homes' residents aged in their neighbourhoods and selected a long-term care home in that neighbourhood when admission was required. Changing neighbourhood demographics will require revised community engagement, when current neighbourhood residents age to the point of needing admission to a long-term care home.

Each Administrator indicated that a goal over the next few years will be to involve more representatives from the local community on their Home Advisory Committee.

The senior management of the Long-Term Care Homes and Services Division supports the interest in expanding the diversity in Home Advisory Committee membership and will continue to ensure that access and equity issues are addressed in the coming years.

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SIGNATURE

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