

100% Provincial Funding for Toronto Public Health Sexually Transmitted Infections Program

Date:	February 15, 2011
To:	Executive Committee
From:	Medical Officer of Health
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report is submitted to request an amendment to the Toronto Public Health (TPH) 2011 Recommended Operating Budget. This amendment is required as a result of the provision of one-time, one hundred percent Provincial funding in the amount of \$100,000 as part of the Provincial Government's response to ongoing elevated rates of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and infectious syphilis in Toronto.

This funding will assist in compliance with the Ontario Public Health Standards defined in the Health Protection and Promotion Act. The Provincial Government requires that this funding be used to support a communication strategy encouraging HIV and syphilis screening among men who have sex with men (MSM) in Toronto in an upcoming HIV/syphilis testing initiative that TPH is implementing in conjunction with the Ontario AIDS Bureau and Hassle Free Clinic. Funding must be fully spent by March 31, 2011. Hassle Free Clinic is a long-standing community partner of TPH. TPH will flow these funds to Hassle Free Clinic which will coordinate the communication strategy and the syphilis/HIV screening initiative.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. City Council increase the Toronto Public Health 2011 Budget Committee Recommended Operating Budget for one-time funding of \$100,000 gross and

\$0.0 net as provided by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to support a communication strategy encouraging HIV and syphilis screening.

Financial Impact

The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has approved a one-time grant of \$100,000 gross and \$0.0 net to TPH to support a communications strategy encouraging HIV/syphilis screening in Toronto. This enhancement is for one-time, one hundred percent provincial funding and must be fully expensed by no later than March 31, 2011.

No new positions are being requested to implement this funding. There are no financial or service expectations created for future fiscal years as a result of accepting this funding.

One Time 100% Provincial Funding	Gross	Revenue	Net
Sexually Transmitted Infections Program	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0.0

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Health Protection and Promotion Act requires Boards of Health to prevent or reduce the burden of sexually transmitted infections (STI)/blood-borne infections and to promote healthy sexuality. The funding will assist the Toronto Public Health STI Program to continue to meet the standards as defined in legislation and comply with relevant Best Practice Recommendations for sexual health programs.

The goal of the STI program is to reduce the spread of sexually transmitted infections in Toronto populations by promoting STI testing and through the provision of partner notification services, education and counselling. The number of infectious syphilis cases (primary, secondary, early latent, and infectious neurosyphilis) reported to Toronto Public Health (TPH) has increased substantially since 2002. From 2002-2008 the annual number of cases varied from 190 to 336, peaking in 2004 (374 cases). In 2009, TPH identified a significant increase in the number of infectious syphilis cases within its jurisdiction. 579 cases were reported, representing a 72% increase over the number of cases reported in 2008. Data from the first six months of 2010 indicated that infectious syphilis case counts remained elevated. Infectious syphilis in Toronto primarily affects gay and bisexual men, or other men who have sex with men. Elevated rates of syphilis are also evident in many other European and North American urban centres.

"MSM" continues to be the most frequently reported exposure category in male cases of HIV in Toronto. MSM account for approximately 70 percent of the new HIV infections yearly in Toronto.

COMMENTS

Toronto Public Health received notification from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care on February 14, 2011 that additional one-time 100% provincial funding would be provided to Toronto Public Health to support a communication strategy encouraging HIV and syphilis screening among MSM in Toronto. The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care has provided accountability and administrative details relating to this funding, including the fact that the funding must be used to support a communications strategy encouraging HIV/syphilis screening and that this funding be fully expensed by March 31, 2011.

This funding will assist TPH in meeting the requirements of the Ontario Public Health Standards and will assist in addressing current elevated rates of infectious syphilis.

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SIGNATURE

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