

## **Service Agreements Awarded and Executed by the Medical Officer of Health for 2021**

**Date:** May 31, 2021

**To:** Board of Health

**From:** Medical Officer of Health

**Wards:** All

### **SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this report is to provide information on the purchase of service contracts awarded and executed by the Medical Officer of Health for 2021, according to the delegation of authority by City Council.

This report also requests approval for the Medical Officer of Health to award, execute and amend, on an ongoing basis, a purchase of service contract with Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC) to support the service delivery of the Creating Health Plus Program.

The Creating Health Plus (CHP) Program is a partnership program between Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, North York Harvest Food Bank, PARC, and Toronto Public Health in response to research that identified nutritional gaps in meals served at Toronto drop-ins. This program serves the City's most vulnerable people, many of whom are homeless or under-housed, have mental health or substance use issues and/or are street involved. Creating Health Plus provides regular and reliable access to five fresh foods at Toronto drop-ins on a weekly basis, including fruits, vegetables, milk, yoghurt and eggs.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the Medical Officer of Health to award, execute and amend, on an ongoing basis, a purchase of service contract for the Creating Health Plus Program with Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre, in a form approved by the City Solicitor.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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This report has no financial impact beyond what has already been approved by City Council in the 2021 Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health. Attachment 1 outlines \$16.783 million in service contracts awarded and executed by program to support delivery for 2021.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed the report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

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On July 28, 2020, City Council adopted the report from the Medical Officer of Health that outlined the service agreements awarded and executed by the Medical Officer of Health for 2020/2021.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2020.HL18.3>

On May 14, 2019, City Council adopted the report from the Medical Officer of Health that outlined the service agreements awarded and executed by the Medical Officer of Health for 2019/2020.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2019.HL6.3>

At its meeting on August 1, 2, 3, and 4, 2000, City Council delegated authority to the Medical Officer of Health to award, execute, and amend on an ongoing basis the purchase of service contracts.

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2000/agendas/council/cc/cc000801/pof10rpt/cl037.pdf>

## **COMMENTS**

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Toronto Public Health (TPH) currently has service contracts with partner agencies that support service delivery in the community for the Early Abilities program, which includes Preschool Speech and Language, Infant Hearing and Blind-Low Vision Early Intervention. There are also service contracts for the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program, the Sexual Health program, the Dental Care to Street Involved Youth and Low Income Adults program, the Ontario Seniors Dental Care program, the Mobile Good Food Market program and the Community Food Works program.

Purchasing services from community agencies is an effective and efficient way to provide essential public health services. This approach builds on existing service infrastructure in the community, facilitates community partnerships, supports continuity of service to clients, and maximizes service efficiencies.

## **Early Abilities Programs**

### **Preschool Speech and Language**

Toronto Public Health is the lead agency for the 100 percent Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) funded Preschool Speech and Language program. This program provides services to children up to school entry, and includes communication programming for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Current service contracts align with the provincial fiscal year for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

### **Infant Hearing**

The 100 percent MCCSS funded Infant Hearing Program supports:

- universal screening of newborns at hospital discharge and at community clinics;
- screening of high risk infants in hospitals and follow up audiological surveillance at 12 months;
- audiology diagnostic assessment at community sites; and
- referral to the Preschool Speech and Language for auditory-oral communication programming.

Service contracts have been established with two hospitals that have opted to hire their own dedicated staff for screening in the postpartum and/or neonatal intensive care units. Service contracts for four community-based diagnostic assessment clinics have been established with agencies that were designated by the MCCSS. All contracts are on a fee for service basis using a fee structure established by the MCCSS. In order to align with the provincial fiscal year, the contracts are awarded for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

### **Blind-Low Vision Early Intervention**

This 100 percent MCCSS funded program is standard throughout Ontario for children who have low vision or are blind. Early childhood vision consultation services are provided in Toronto through the purchase of service from Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada, Ontario Division, which is a Canadian National Institute for the Blind organization; and Surrey Place Centre. Family support is provided by Toronto Public Health staff. In order to align with the provincial fiscal year, the contracts are awarded for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

### **Healthy Babies Healthy Children Program**

Healthy Babies Healthy Children is a 100 percent MCCSS funded program that provides home visiting services to high at-risk families. In an effort to support local community capacity and avoid service duplication, the family home visiting service contracts were awarded to and executed with four local agencies engaged in providing peer home visiting services. In order to align with the provincial fiscal year, the contracts are awarded for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

## **Sexual Health Program**

The Sexual Health Program is a cost-shared program between the Ministry of Health and the City of Toronto. Purchase of service arrangements are in place with Hassle Free Clinic; the Birth Control and VD Information Centre; and the Immigrant Women's Health Centre. These clinics deliver services which address the needs of specific client populations and can identify and respond quickly to gaps in service or emerging sexual health needs.

Toronto Public Health also has purchase of service agreements with five community agencies. These agencies deliver sexual health promotion services reaching specific high risk and hard to reach populations.

## **Dental Care to Street Involved Youth and Low Income Adults Program**

City Council has approved funding for three agencies that use volunteer dental professionals to provide dental services to street youth and low/no income adults, 18-64 year olds, who are unable to pay for dental care in the private sector. These agencies are: Parkdale-Queen West Community Health Centre (an amalgamation of Central Toronto and Parkdale Community Health Centres), Evergreen Centre for Street Youth Yonge Street Mission; and The Canadian Centre for Refugee and Immigrant Health Care.

The agencies use the funds to purchase dental supplies, repair dental equipment, subsidize dental assistant salaries and provide honorariums for dental professionals such as dentists and dental hygienists. These funds assist with keeping the clinics operating and attracting volunteers. Agencies that provide free dental care to these residents also receive funds through charitable donations.

## **Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program**

On November 20, 2019 the Government of Ontario launched the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP), a 100 percent Ministry of Health funded program for low income Ontario seniors. Dental treatments for OSDCP eligible seniors is available through clinics located within Public Health Units (PHUs), Community Health Centres (CHCs) and Aboriginal Health Access Centres (AHACs).

Under the Ministry of Health's Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement, TPH may enter into contractual partnerships with organizations to provide eligible OSDCP seniors with specialty dental services that are part of the OSDCP service schedule, but unavailable through PHUs, CHCs and AHACs.

## **Mobile Good Food Market Program**

The Mobile Good Food Markets Program is a cost-shared program between the Ministry of Health and the City of Toronto. Mobile Good Food Markets are produce stores on wheels bringing low cost, fresh fruits and vegetables into low income communities underserved by traditional suppliers. They focus primarily on Neighbourhood Improvement Areas where a high proportion of newcomers, single-parent families and seniors living in high-rise apartments do not have ready access to healthy food.

Launched in 2012, the program is a collaboration between Toronto Public Health and FoodShare Toronto. A donated Toronto Transit Commission Wheel-Trans vehicle was retrofitted as a Mobile Market. The Mobile Good Food Market operates multiple market locations throughout the year in low-income neighbourhoods across the city.

### **Community Food Works Program**

The Community Food Works (CFW) Program is a cost-shared program between the Ministry of Health and the City of Toronto. Community Food Works integrates food handler training and certification, food literacy and employment skills development. This is achieved through training and support of low income community participants, including newcomers and refugees, using an adult education, learner centred approach. Initiated in 2011, CFW had been delivered through TPH in collaboration with Working Women Community Centre (WWCC), other community partners, as well as, with Toronto Employment and Social Services.

For program continuity and the ability to expand and garner additional resources, the City of Toronto has entered into a Purchase of Service agreement with WWCC to operate the program. Toronto Public Health continues to support partnership development – both within City divisions and in the community – as well as strategic advice and evaluation support. As a well-established, not for profit community organization with considerable experience in project management, employment skills development, settlement services and community capacity building, WWCC is well positioned to operate the program and to provide considerable additional in-kind resources and external funding.

### **Creating Health Plus Program**

The Creating Health Plus (CHP) Program is a cost-shared program between the Ministry of Health and the City of Toronto. Creating Health Plus is a partnership program among Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, North York Harvest, Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC), and TPH in response to research that identified considerable nutritional gaps in meals served at Toronto drop-ins. In a climate of rising food insecurity that is exacerbated by rising food prices and increasing cost of living, this program serves the City's most vulnerable people, many of whom are homeless or under-housed, have mental health or substance use issues and/or are street involved. For most clients the meal served at the drop-ins is their primary or only source of food for the day. Creating Health Plus intervenes by providing Toronto's drop-ins regular and reliable access to five fresh foods on a weekly basis, including fruits, vegetables, milk, yoghurt and eggs, which provides a preventative health intervention.

This report requests approval for the Medical Officer of Health to award, execute and amend, on an ongoing basis, a purchase of service contract with PARC to support the service delivery of the Creating Health Plus Program.

This funding will support a part-time project manager to oversee the CHP. In addition to this, TPH provides in-kind support through nutrition advice and participation on the CHP advisory committee, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration provides funding annually to cover the cost of food, and PARC has the role of trustee and overall project

management of the program.

More information about programs, funding and contract amounts can be found in Attachment 1.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Dr. Eileen de Villa  
Medical Officer of Health

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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Attachment 1: Toronto Public Health - 2021/22 Service Contracts